



Autism Society  
of North Carolina

# SPECTRUM

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Mental Health

Annual Conference

Policy Priorities

# Table of Contents

## Feature articles:

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 4  | Mental Health in the Autism Community                     |
| 7  | Learn More about the Autism Experience at 2023 Conference |
| 8  | Policy: Celebrating Progress and Looking Ahead            |
| 12 | Celebrating Direct Support Professionals                  |

## Also in this issue:

- |    |                        |
|----|------------------------|
| 3  | Message from the CEO   |
| 10 | Camp Royall            |
| 14 | Chapters               |
| 16 | Hispanic Affairs       |
| 18 | Fundraisers and Events |
| 20 | Donations              |
| 23 | Call on Us             |

## Mission Statement

The Autism Society of North Carolina improves the lives of individuals with autism, supports their families, and educates communities.

## The Spectrum

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## Work with Us

The Autism Society of North Carolina is always looking for qualified candidates who are passionate about helping individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. ASNC has offices in Asheville, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Greenville, Raleigh, Newport, and Wilmington.

A variety of part- and full-time positions are available. Please visit [www.autismsociety-nc.org/careers](http://www.autismsociety-nc.org/careers) to learn more about current ASNC career opportunities. We appreciate referrals; please help us recruit the best talent by sharing the above link.

## Privacy Policy

The Autism Society of North Carolina respects the privacy of its members and those who receive our publications. We do not sell or otherwise share our mailing list, email notification list, or any personal information with other businesses or organizations.



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# A message from the CEO

At the Autism Society of North Carolina, we are committed to helping individuals with autism build their best lives. One of the pillars of a fulfilling life is good health – physical, mental, and emotional. We want our community to be able to access providers who understand autism, communicate their concerns about how they're feeling, and set and achieve wellness goals that help them feel their best. For some, those goals might include learning more about nutrition and exercise; for others, it's learning how to work with a mental health professional so that they get the emotional support they need.

The Autism Society of North Carolina has worked in multiple fields over the decades to ensure that people with autism are included in decisions affecting their health and understood in health care settings. We educate legislators and partner with the State of North Carolina to advocate for policies and initiatives that will improve whole person health (you'll find an update on our policy initiatives and Medicaid Transformation on page 8 of this magazine). We provide trainings to health care providers and first responders so that their services can be informed by an understanding of autism. We create programming for our community that teaches them about wellness and how to advocate for their health needs.

Our commitment to a high standard of whole person care is reflected in the theme of this year's conference: The Autism Experience: Brain, Body, and Behavior. We've invited experts to speak on topics including medical issues, anxiety, suicide prevention, behavioral strategies, and using a team approach to care. Our event also includes a panel of autistic adults, who will provide their perspective on mental health needs.

We hope to see you March 10-11 in Charlotte to learn more about these issues. If you can't attend, we will continue to bring you and your family the resources necessary to understand health issues; for example, this issue includes an article on mental health issues specific to autism from our Clinical department.

If your health and wellness goals include more exercise, I invite you to join us at one of the Run/Walks for Autism! Our spring events are in Beaufort, Greenville, and Wilmington. While you'll have the chance to run or walk, these events can help you connect with other individuals and families. Building a community and connection with others is an important part of emotional well-being.



We know the challenges of the past years have affected physical, mental, and emotional health for many we serve, as well as their families. We will continue to help the autism community build their best lives with that understanding, and we will continue to develop the tools and programs that help autistic people achieve their goals. That work is made possible by you – people with autism, caregivers, professionals, and donors – so, as always, I thank you for your partnership and support. We look forward to another year of improving lives, supporting families, and educating communities.

My best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracey Sheriff".

Tracey Sheriff, Chief Executive Officer

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# Mental Health in the Autism Community

*By Jenna Flynn, MSW, LCSW, NADD-DDS, Integrated Care Professional*



Mental health disorders are conditions that affect our thinking, mood, and/or behavior to the extent that it interferes with our ability to function. These disorders include, but are not limited to, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder. For the general population in the United States, the CDC estimates 20% of adults (or one out of every five) are currently experiencing a mental illness.

For people with autism, the statistics are very different. According to a 2021 Drexel University study, an estimated 78% of children with autism also experience a mental illness. For adults, the rates have been estimated to be as high as 50-70%.

## **The Overlap between Autism and Mental Health**

Research has identified several *potential* reasons why individuals with autism experience mental health disorders at such a high rate.

First, autistic people (and other neurodivergent individuals) can struggle to fit into or make sense of a world built largely by and for neurotypical people, which can lead to feelings of depression, anxiety, and isolation. For example, public spaces can be loud, busy, have bright lights and smells, and require any person who is sensitive to these environments to either build “coping skills” or avoid the experience. When we don’t shift to make these environments accessible, we continue to put the burden of coping on neurodivergent citizens, which can be exhausting day-after-day. Continued stress can contribute to changes in thinking, mood, and behavior, all of which can lead to developing a mental illness.

Second, within the mental health system, there can be significant delays and insurance barriers when trying to get a diagnosis and treatment. Individuals with autism often encounter waitlists for appropriately trained providers and often must travel longer distances to access these supports. Furthermore, diagnostic overshadowing, or incorrectly attributing new symptoms to a diagnosis already known, can be a common pitfall. Individuals with autism may have their experience of anxiety or depression explained away as features of autism rather than separate conditions that would benefit from identification and treatment.

Third, research has taught us two important things about mental illness and autism. People with autism are more likely to experience trauma, stigma, and discrimination than people who do not have autism, all of which take a tremendous toll on mental health. Research has also found biological factors or vulnerabilities that make some people (including those with autism) more susceptible to mental illnesses.

Lastly, if and when autistic individuals do get connected to mental health therapists or counselors, many of these helping professionals are simply not trained in autism. They may use the strategies they use for everyone else, but mental health interventions like “talk” therapy are only best practice for autistic clients when they are autism-informed and include modifications.

## **The Importance of Accessibility**

While all the above is true, we also know that when it’s accessible, mental health treatment can be very effective



for individuals with autism. Accessible means easy to understand and use.

One of the first steps to making mental health treatment more accessible for people with autism is to provide education about what mental illness looks like when it co-occurs with autism. It's important to know that people with autism (both those with high and low support needs) can experience all the same mental illnesses as people who do not have autism. What gets tricky is that the characteristics of autism can sometimes change how the characteristics of mental illnesses look, which is one of the reasons why getting a diagnosis can be challenging. This is also why it's so important for anyone providing a diagnosis or treatment to know as much about autism as possible so that they can adapt or adjust their efforts to help the process make sense for the autistic person.

### **Autism and Symptoms of Mental Illness**

ADHD and autism occur together across the lifespan at about 39%. ADHD and autism share some similarities: both can impact attention, the ability to organize and sequence information, communication, and behavior. One of the main differences is the type of attention – for individuals with autism, we talk about focused attention, and for individuals with ADHD, we think about attention that bounces from subject to subject. Determining if symptoms are due to ADHD, autism, or both is the role of a skilled clinician, but as a silver lining, there are some clear treatments that are beneficial if you have either diagnosis or both. Behavioral treatment is the primary way to build self and emotion regulation strategies that can help when experiencing either diagnosis (or both).

Forty percent of individuals with autism also have an anxiety diagnosis and/or obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). When left untreated, anxiety symptoms can lead to the development of other mental disorders like depression, aggression, and self-injury. It can make transitioning through a typical day incredibly challenging and exhausting for the autistic individual. When anxiety occurs with autism, it can come in the form of specific phobias and fears, intrusive thoughts, and social anxiety. While there are many medications on the market to treat anxiety, there is not much research on these medications specifically related to autism, and sometimes finding the right “fit” can take time. Like other mental illnesses, adapted cognitive behavioral therapy can be a tremendous support for an anxiety disorder.

Depression is the most common mental illness in the adult population. People with autism are four times as likely to have depression than people who do not have autism, but it's often a diagnosis that goes unrecognized and untreated. Depression for individuals with autism can sometimes look like typical depression: low mood, disinterest in things that were once enjoyable, difficulty concentrating, and decreased self-care to name a few symptoms. But for people with autism, these symptoms might be hard for others to observe and challenging for autistic individuals to report. For folks with autism, it may also look like a limited number of friendships and connections, experience of rejection or bullying, strong preference to be alone or isolated from others, and rumination on past events. It also may come out through reports of tiredness, physical pain, irritability, or behavioral changes that others notice. For depression, medication is often a method of treatment, but individual and group therapies can also be incredibly effective and beneficial, provided they are adapted to meet the person with autism's individual needs.

### **Adapting Treatment**

One way that we can make treatment accessible to people with autism is to encourage therapists to be flexible in their approaches. Many therapists use cognitive behavioral interventions that include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT). Strategies from these interventions can be incredibly helpful to focus on what parts of life create suffering and how to begin to make changes. CBT tends to focus on the client-therapist relationship and can be almost entirely verbal; the treatment sessions often focus on reporting symptoms or recent events and discussing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that resulted. For folks with autism, this entirely verbal set-up can be incredibly unsuccessful, exhausting, and challenging to do.



From the beginning, to make therapy as effective as possible for someone with autism, the therapist should get an understanding of the person, how they best learn and process information, and what their preferences are. Do they enjoy verbal discussion but need visuals to stay on track, like an agenda for the session? Do they benefit from someone drawing out what they're discussing so they can review it and confirm if that's what they're trying to explain? Do they prefer worksheet-led discussions where they can put their thoughts on paper rather than discuss them entirely verbally? Do they benefit from an agenda ahead of time to know what to expect during the next session? Does telehealth work or do they do their best in person? Once therapists know these preferences and needs, it's incredibly important that they honor them as much as possible. And therapists should be prepared to be flexible when teaching new skills.

It's also important to recognize that the human experience is complex and filled with "gray" areas that can be challenging for someone with a social-communication disorder like autism. Part of the therapist focus in treatment can be on making abstract information more concrete; in other words, therapists can help demystify some aspects of the life experience. Strategies to effectively do this will vary for each individual; making information visual is a big first step toward this. If a therapist is attempting to identify what parts of friendship are easy or hard, rather than asking an open-ended question they might prepare a sorting activity with pre-loaded answers or examples. Instead of asking "how do you feel?" a therapist might instead provide possible answers and have the client choose which feel accurate. A therapist might also focus less on the name of the emotion and more on how it feels in the body, which is an excellent precursor to teaching coping and relaxation skills for clients of any age.

It's also recommended that any therapist consider the length of time that is most effective for the patient. Typical therapy sessions are 50 minutes long, but this length of time may not work for the client. For individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, research also shows that progress tends to take longer, so more sessions over a longer length of time are recommended. Therapists should also take time to build a strong trusting relationship with autistic clients that includes an understanding of the therapist's role and how it differs from other relationships the client has. ■



*Jenna Flynn joined the Autism Society of North Carolina in 2022 as an Integrated Care Professional and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). She previously worked for ASNC as a Direct Support Professional and at the Creative Living day program in Raleigh. She has a Bachelor's in Psychology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and received her MSW from UNC Chapel Hill in 2011. Jenna has previous experience in the NC Managed Care Organization (MCO) system and at the UNC TEACCH Autism Program.*

#### Resources

- NC Complex MH/IDD Resources: <https://complexmhidd-nc.org>
- North Carolina Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources & Treatment (NC START): <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mental-health-developmental-disabilities-and-substance-abuse/nc-start>
- Psychology Today has an online listing of therapists: [www.psychologytoday.com/us](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us). You can search by "issue" (autism) and what type of insurance the therapist accepts.



## We're Hiring!

Do you know someone who is passionate about helping individuals on the autism spectrum and their families? Let them know that the Autism Society of North Carolina is always looking for qualified candidates to join us as we improve lives.

#### Why work for ASNC? We offer:

- Extensive training and education
- Full- and part-time positions across the state
- Flexible hours and customized schedules
- Competitive pay
- Benefits starting at 20 hours
- Extensive client matching to ensure good fit
- Rewarding and relevant job experience

#### We are always looking for candidates or referrals for the following positions:

- Autism Support Professionals
- Employment Support Professionals
- Autism Services Coordinators
- Social Recreation & Camp Counselors
- Behavior Technicians





# Learn More about the Autism Experience at 2023 Conference



Make plans to join parents, self-advocates, and professionals in Charlotte on Friday and Saturday, March 10-11 for the Autism Society of North Carolina's annual educational conference. The 2023 theme is **The Autism Experience: Brain, Body, and Behavior**, and the event will focus on best practices for understanding and improving physical and mental health, medical and behavior issues, and the needs of autistic people.

## Conference Program

Speakers and topics include:

### Medical Issues and Autism

**James Bedford, MD**

### Behavior and Autism

**Peter Gerhardt, EdD**

**Shanna Bahry, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA/LBA**

### Mental Well-being & Suicide Prevention

**Lisa Morgan, MEd, CAS**

**Brenna Maddox, PhD**

### Using a Team Approach to Care

**Jenna Flynn, MSW, LCSW, NADD-DDS**

### Personal Perspectives & Insights

A panel of adults with autism

### Autism and Anxiety

**Kimberly Carpenter, PhD**

**Jill Howard, PhD**

### Conference rates

#### Parent/Caregiver

*Two-day: \$300*

*One-day: Friday or Saturday - \$175*

#### Adult with Autism/Autistic Adult

*Two-day: \$200*

*One-day: Friday or Saturday - \$125*

#### Professional

*Two-day: \$325*

*One-day: Friday or Saturday - \$200*

Please note that processing fees apply to all rates. Registration includes access to all lectures and panels, exhibit hall, continental breakfast, lunch, and refreshments. Spanish interpretation is available.

## Registration

The deadline to register is March 3, but past conferences have sold out, so we encourage you to register early. To provide the safest conference experience, attendance will be limited to 350 people.

Register at [www.autismsociety-nc.org/conference](http://www.autismsociety-nc.org/conference).

### Discounted Hotel Rooms

Conference attendees can reserve a room at the Hilton Charlotte University Place for a discounted rate, subject to availability. Discounted rates are available for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Call the hotel at 704-547-7444 or visit <https://bit.ly/3PzzZ9k> to book your room.

### Exhibits & Sponsors

We are pleased to announce that SpecialCare Mass Mutual returns as our primary sponsor for the conference. The NC Council on Developmental Disabilities is a sponsor of this event. Business owners, organizations that serve the autism community, and interested individuals are eligible to apply to be a conference sponsor or exhibitor. Contact David Laxton at [dlaxton@autismsociety-nc.org](mailto:dlaxton@autismsociety-nc.org) or 919-865-5063 to learn more.

### Financial Assistance

**CAP/Innovations Waiver Funding:** Innovations waiver recipients and their natural supports system (family, caregivers, etc.) are eligible for funding assistance to cover registration fees for the conference. Contact your care coordinator at your managed-care organization (MCO) and let them know that you wish to use Natural Supports Education funds through your Innovations waiver.

### The Jean Wolff-Rossi Fund for Participant Involvement:

The Rossi Fund, administered by the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities enables individuals with I/DD and their family members to be considered for reimbursement for specific expenses for seminars and conferences designed to improve their knowledge, networking, and skill levels for advocacy.

*Please note that there is no virtual option for the conference.*

# Policy: Celebrating Progress and Looking Ahead

*By Jennifer Mahan, Director of Public Policy*

When you have been advocating for a long time, it can feel like no progress is being made. When we see growing waiting lists and know that services for people with disabilities remain understaffed, it is easy to lose hope. There is good news to share: there is now an option for Tailored Care Management for people with Medicaid. Medicaid is planning on rolling out new 1915(i) services for people with intellectual and or developmental disabilities (I/DD) under the Tailored Plans on April 1 (timeline subject to change), the North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) increased some Medicaid rates 5% to support Direct Support Professional (DSP) wages, and many DSPs also received bonuses in the last NCGA budget. We need to acknowledge when progress has been made and the advocacy effort that has gone into creating change over time, while still recognizing the unmet needs that exist and push ahead with making our voices heard.

## Tailored Care Management

As part of Medicaid Transformation's shift to more whole person care under the new Tailored Plans, 2022 saw the new option of independent care management for people with Medicaid in those plans. Tailored Plan participants can now choose from a growing number of options for care management, including Tailored Care Management agencies (CMA), local management entities (LME/MCOs), and in some cases, care management via advanced medical health homes. The Autism Society of North Carolina has advocated for choices in Medicaid care management since the 2011 managed care proposals and subsequent legislation which removed it from our services array.

## 1915(i) Services

Medicaid will be offering new services called 1915(i) services to people with I/DD, including autism, as well as those with mental health issues and substance use disorders beginning April 1 (timeline subject to federal approval and state rollout). 1915(i) services will eventually replace B3

services. Unlike B3, 1915(i) services are an entitlement. This means that the program does not run out of funds to help people and does not keep waiting lists (like the waiver). The same set of 1915(i) services will be offered across the state, unlike B3 which may be different from place to place.

These 1915(i) services include:

- Community Transition
- Respite
- Community Living and Support
- Supported Employment
- These and other services to support those with a primary diagnosis of mental illness or substance use disorders

You must be eligible for Medicaid, as well as be determined to be in need of these types of services, in order to

get them. You can use 1915(i) services and remain on the waiting list for an Innovations waiver slot. These services will be available through your Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization, through Medicaid Direct for those in pre-paid health insurance plans, and through the Specialized Family and Child (Foster Care) Plan when launched. ASNC has long advocated for North Carolina to adopt a set of "entitlement" services for people with I/DD to address long waits for Innovations waivers and to offer choices for community-based living. When Federal



***"The one thing  
all our priorities  
have in common  
is that they  
need you."***

## Resources

For more information about Medicaid Transformation, please visit [www.autismsociety-nc.org/medicaidtransformation](http://www.autismsociety-nc.org/medicaidtransformation) or scan the QR code.





laws changed in 2010 to allow for 1915(i) options under Medicaid, ASNC began advocating with NC DHHS to create a set of state plan services to support people with I/DD.

### 2023-24 Policy Priorities

ASNC creates public policy priorities every two years based on feedback from our public policy survey; our work with individuals, families, professionals, coalition partners and policymakers; and our staff and Board of Directors. You won't see many changes in our new policy priorities; the small gains made in additional community services are overwhelmed by rapid growth in our state – more people than ever want to be able to live, work, and recreate in their local communities and need viable options to do so. Our state's growth has meant expanding needs in every area, from early intervention to school supports, from community-based services to affordable housing, from employment supports to the ability to age in place.

ASNC is focused on building on recent policy successes while pushing for increased direct support wages and career options; improving access to community services; and following the significant learning losses during the pandemic and the stresses on school systems, advocating for equitable school and special education funding. We are also kicking off an effort to modernize training in our justice systems.

#### ASNC selected three focus areas for our policy priorities:

**Focus Area 1:** People with autism live in and contribute to their communities.

Make meaningful progress in increasing investments in services to reduce or eliminate the 16,000-person waiting list and eliminate disparities between wait times in different counties.

Ensure people with disabilities have staffing for services by paying direct support staff a sustainable wage, supporting the DSP career path, and increasing provider rates support these outcomes.

North Carolina develops sustainable, supportive housing options for people on the autism spectrum.

**Focus Area 2:** People with autism have opportunities for growth and are not left behind their peers.

Assure access to diagnostic assessments by increasing rates and directly funding low or no cost programs.

Increase special education funding and remove funding disparities, including caps on local special education funds, to better support students in schools, expand teacher training/mentoring, and provide access to the same learning resources.

Make sure adults on the spectrum do not “fall off a services cliff” after leaving high school: youth transition to employment opportunities, secondary education programs, and meaningful activities; adults have access to an array of services that work for them and their families.

Close health care coverage gaps and assure access to affordable health care coverage.

**Focus Area 3:** People with autism are treated justly.

End the use of seclusion and restraint in schools by implementing evidence-based alternatives.

Modernize training on autism for law enforcement and require training for detention officers and other sheriffs' personnel.

Ensure NC's guardianship program has stable funding, training for courts and families, and focuses on retention and/or restoration of rights when possible.

The one thing all our priorities have in common is that they need you – your voice speaking up along with ours to make the needs of all our communities visible to our elected and appointed officials. This year, we hope you will make a commitment to writing to your state and federal elected officials to talk about your needs, those of your family, those of your community, and those of others on the autism spectrum. For tips on telling your story and ways to keep up with autism advocacy please see our Make Your Voice Heard page:

[www.autismsociety-nc.org/make-voice-heard](http://www.autismsociety-nc.org/make-voice-heard). ■

# The Magic of Working at Camp

Camp Royall is a magical place because of our incredible staff. So many people work hard to make Camp Royall a reality, including facility staff, lifeguards, activity directors, and counselors. Our low counselor-to-camper ratios are crucial to the success of our campers, which is why we're always looking for more enthusiastic and motivated people who want to join the staff. If you know a hard-working and passionate person looking for an amazing experience, we hope you will help spread the word about working at Camp Royall. We provide all the training they will need to work with campers, and Camp Royall is often the first step in a rewarding career helping others.

## Learn more about why some of our staff loved working at Camp Royall:

### Activity Director: Jen Speakman

When Jen Speakman first saw Camp Royall in 2011, she thought, "This is how you do camp right." She loved working as a counselor at a camp truly designed for people with autism, and that experience, along with the strong connections made with campers and counselors, has brought Jen back to work and volunteer at Camp Royall whenever possible. That's no small feat, given that Jen is from New Zealand and works in The Netherlands!

This summer, Jen worked as an Activity Director. Some of her favorite activities included watching campers enjoy Music and Motion, the pool, and the zap line. "You see personalities come out at Music and Motion," she said. "Even the campers who are quiet show a whole new side

during that activity." She says the zap line is a great place to observe campers' personal growth: "Some of the campers are nervous because they've never been on a zap line. Afterwards, you see them smiling because they're really proud of themselves. They overcame a fear, which is what camp is all about."

Jen praised Camp Royall's 1:1 counselor-to-camper ratio, saying she's never seen it anywhere else before. She also loves how inclusive camp is for both campers and staffers: "Everyone who comes here is appreciated for who they are, their background, their personality, their quirks. Everyone can be their full self here, and it's very rare to find that."





Jen is a human resources professional specializing in change management and the employee experience, and she said her time at Camp Royall has informed the way she approaches her job. “Camp Royall has a diversity and inclusion approach to make sure everyone feels welcome and safe. That’s how I design processes for clients. I learned to think more about the user perspective and to bring in the diverse needs and views of employees so that the processes are more inclusive of everyone using them.”



While Jen said that her job and Camp Royall may seem like very different worlds, the benefits of working at Camp Royall translate to any career, and that’s why she encourages all young people to consider working here for the summer. “It’s going to change your life,” she said. “There’s nowhere else you can get the same level of joy, learning, and connection that you get at Camp Royall.”

**Activity Director and Facilities:** Kellum and Anna Thomson

Siblings Anna and Kellum Thomson thrive on details. Both love working at Camp Royall because each camper’s unique details are considered and accommodated.

Anna, who worked in the kitchen and with the facilities staff, enjoyed being able to serve meals that even the pickiest of eaters enjoyed. She had previously worked at bigger camps where every camper had to eat the same thing. “I like that here we recognize how important it is for kids to be able to go to summer camp but also know they can eat their favorite peanut butter and jelly,” she said. She enjoyed helping to create meals that allowed campers to exercise choice, such as custom pasta bowls or build-your-own-burrito and said that she loved seeing campers who were nervous about the food realize they could have their favorites.

Similarly, Kellum who worked as an Activity Director, encouraged caregivers to be as detailed as possible when describing their campers. “One of the things I really like about Camp Royall is that there’s no requirement for how you have to be to come here,” he said. “No matter how

specific the needs are, we can help and make sure the experience is successful. We’ve got all the systems in place, and we want to know all those details about your camper because we want them to have a good time.”

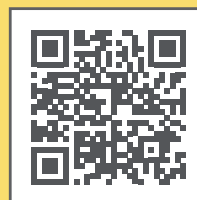
Kellum and Anna, who have an older sister who attended Camp Royall when they were children, agreed that having a sibling around provided a great level of camaraderie, but that the entire staff was supportive and helpful. “This was the first camp I worked at where I could tell that not only did they care about campers’ well-being, they cared about the staff as well,” Kellum said. Anna explained that she’s the kind of person who likes to do things on her own, but working in the kitchen helped her teamwork skills as she learned to share tasks to get meals served on time.

“It’s better than working in a restaurant,” Anna said of Camp Royall’s kitchen. “You learn all the same skills, but I wanted to make a difference. I feel like I’m having a positive impact on the campers.”

Kellum, a nursing major, said working at Camp Royall has provided insight into his future profession. “I’ve learned how to communicate and connect with someone who isn’t able to speak what they need,” he said. “People with disabilities can be forgotten in the medical system, and their needs aren’t listened to as much. Working here has helped me think about what a person is trying to communicate. Something I’ll take with me is really listening and doing everything I can to make sure someone is getting their needs met.”

Kellum and Anna enjoyed working at Camp Royall because they felt their strengths and individuality was celebrated alongside the campers: “Everyone has a spot here. Everyone can be successful here. Staff and campers,” said Kellum. “Everyone is welcome and encouraged to be their authentic self here.” ■

If you or someone  
you know is  
interested in working  
at Camp Royall,  
please scan the QR code:



[autismsociety-nc.org/careers](https://autismsociety-nc.org/careers)

# Celebrating Direct Support Professionals

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Each September, the Autism Society of North Carolina celebrates Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), the staff members who work one-on-one with individuals with autism. We employ hundreds of DSPs across the state. They teach skill acquisition and support individuals in reaching their life goals. We applaud each and every one; we honored four standout DSPs with achievement awards.

## MeKayla Sheene Named 2022 Roman Award Winner

Direct support professionals often become honorary members of the families they work with because of their presence during highs and lows, good times and bad. McKayla Sheene began working with Casey Drakeford in May 2022, less than two weeks before his mother's death. For consistently going above and beyond during this difficult time in Casey's life, Sheene is the 2022 winner of the John and Claudia Roman Direct Service Award. This annual award honors a direct service employee of the Autism Society of North Carolina who demonstrates outstanding dedication to individuals with autism and their families.

"McKayla's work during a tumultuous time made her a true friend to Casey, but her positivity, love, and dedication has had a positive impact on his family as well," said Autism Services Coordinator Laura Belmar-Ramos, Sheene's supervisor. Casey's mom was his best friend and biggest advocate, and her death was the first time Casey lost a loved one. Sheene supported Casey during his final hospital visit

to see his mother and was there for him when he received the news she died. She helped Casey navigate his grief by using social narratives, answering his questions, and being there as he expressed his emotions and talked about his mom. Her presence was comforting and uplifting for Casey as well as his family.

Sheene has also supported Casey through the first milestone occasions without his mother. For his parents' wedding anniversary, Sheene helped Casey get a special gift for his father and write a card. For his first birthday without his mother, she organized a visit to Wake Forest Comic Con, because Casey is passionate about superheroes and action figures. The family reported that it was Casey's best birthday in several years.

"McKayla has been a standout staff member," said Belmar-Ramos. "She truly brings her best self each day. Even if this hadn't been Casey's most challenging year to date, it's clear that McKayla would've been just as supportive. She is an incredible friend to Casey and helps advocate for him day after day across all settings."

"I love all the little things that make Casey who he is," said Sheene, describing the excitement he has for his job at the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's library, his fondness for singing along to Disney music in the car, and of course, his detailed knowledge of action figures. A typical week for the two also includes working on skills in the home, exercising at a local gym, and cooking treats to share with his coworkers. "My favorite part of the job is hanging out with Casey," she said.

For Casey and his family, that friendship means the world.

"There are not enough words to describe the ways in which McKayla has made a difference in Casey's life during such a challenging year," said Bill Drakeford, Casey's father. "In a short time, she has proven a reliable and caring staff that always follows through."





## Becca Martin, Kaitlin Warren, and Angela Wideman Honored with McCrimmon Award

The McCrimmon Award is named for Ed McCrimmon, a longtime member of the Autism Society of North Carolina staff. He was known for his outstanding dedication and integrity as he served individuals with autism. Tragically, he died in 2017. The McCrimmon Award was established to keep Ed's memory alive, and at the same time, celebrate others like him who give their heart and soul in providing critical care to individuals with autism. This award is sponsored by Rob and Jennifer Christian.

This year, three direct support professionals were chosen to receive the McCrimmon Award for their outstanding work. Learn more about their impact, directly from the people who nominated them:

### Becca Martin

*Nominated by Melissa Ledgerwood*



Becca is truly remarkable in every way. She has been sharing her love for special needs children with our family for 15 years. Becca came into our lives shortly after we adopted our son and has been a part of the family ever since. They are best friends!

Becca goes above and beyond in her work with our son. She supports us in teaching him to be the best he can be, implementing modifications that make his goals achievable. Through her hard work and dedication, Caleb participates in many activities, such as a part-time job, recreational programs, and various community events. She works alongside us in using ASL and picture schedules to best support our son. Together, we are teaching him how to be as self-sufficient and independent as possible by acknowledging his strengths. As he transitions into adulthood, he is learning self-advocacy and healthy boundaries with her help. Without Becca's support, Caleb would undeniably not be where he is today. With Becca's support, the possibilities are endless!

### Kaitlin Warren

*Nominated by Ruth Little*

Kaitlin had only been working with my daughter Caroline a few months when the COVID pandemic hit. Caroline has profound learning disabilities as well as autism. She had to drop out of school as she couldn't learn online. As a result, Caroline was very depressed and felt worthless. Kaitlin helped Caroline believe in herself by not only encouraging

her but establishing small incremental goals with visual aids to measure Caroline's progress and achievement. Kaitlin is excellent; she pushes Caroline just the right amount to

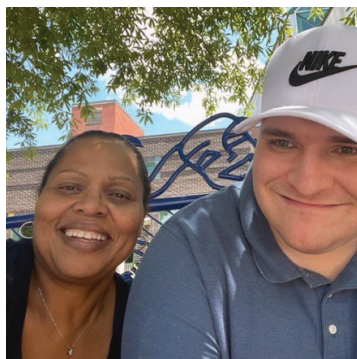


improve her skills. Caroline got a job as a dishwasher but struggled to do the steps correctly. Kaitlin went to work with Caroline and provided job coaching with visual aids. Caroline has been successful in her job for over a year and her self-esteem has improved

exponentially! The girl who felt worthless now makes a salary, has learned to follow a budget (another Kaitlin accomplishment), and loves to shop for bargains! Kaitlin has encouraged Caroline to eat healthy and exercise. Caroline used to hate it but now she even initiates running with Kaitlin. Kaitlin is dependable, and she goes above and beyond. She has helped Caroline believe in herself - a priceless gift!

### Angela Wideman

*Nominated by Carolyn Crews*



Angela is Bobby's person. Angela has everything you need to be a caregiver. She's loving, patient, positive and confident. She has a huge heart and Bobby loves her. Angela treats Bobby with respect and she expects everyone else to as well. She helps Bobby be all he

can be. She encourages him to try new things. But the most important thing is Angela loves Bobby.

*Nominated by Sherry Smith*

Angela is not my son's direct care worker. That is what makes her even more extraordinary. We met Angela on our first visit to check out the supported living house. Angela let us know that she would look out for my son, Matthew, when he moved into the house. She gave me her cell phone number and told me if we had any concerns or wanted to know how Matthew was doing, we could call her. She genuinely cares about Matthew, and we feel so fortunate to have someone like Angela in Matthew's life. I can't adequately put into words how much her thoughtfulness and her caring nature has meant to me, as Matthew's mom. ■

# Where You Belong

Is your family looking for a place to belong?  
Friends who understand your joys and challenges?  
Join your local ASNC Chapter!



Our 60+ county-based Chapters are open to all who have autistic loved ones or work with individuals with autism. They typically offer one to two gatherings per month, such as a coffee chat for caregivers, a park playdate for families with children, or an educational meeting. Their mission is to provide family-to-family support, education, and autism awareness in their communities. We invite you to learn more about your local Chapter and get involved as a participant or volunteer!

## Read on for some of the highlights from the past few months:

The **Craven County Chapter** met at a local park for pizza and fun in October. The weather was perfect, and families enjoyed a meal together, then played on the playground.

The **Crystal Coast Chapter** restarted its monthly Music with Mary sessions this fall after a long pause due to the pandemic. Families can attend the free monthly sessions with a certified music therapist to sing, dance, and learn together.

The **Davidson County Chapter** has a new leader and held its first meetup since reactivating. Families enjoyed getting together at a local park.

**Davie/Forsyth Chapter** families celebrated the holidays in December with crafts and lots of bonding time for parents. The group has held regular monthly meetings, and families discussed adding more special events as well as meetups for fathers.

The **Franklin County Chapter** Leader invited staff from the local Managed Care Organization to present to Chapter families about the steps to apply for the Innovations waiver and to address their questions about the wait list.

The **Granville/Vance Chapter** organized a team for ASNC's Triangle Run/Walk for Autism, but instead of attending the event in Raleigh, families walked on a local track, wearing their ASNC T-shirts. This gave them a chance to get to know each other even as they raised money for ASNC and spread autism awareness in their community.

**Harnett County Chapter** families had fun with a Sensory-Friendly Trail of Treats in October. With the weather turning cold, Leaders are looking for more indoor gathering opportunities, including a sensory-friendly movie event with popcorn and cocoa.

**Haywood County Chapter** families have enjoyed many events throughout the fall, including a private evening at a corn maze, sensory-friendly visits with Santa, and parents' nights out. Chapter Leaders and volunteers again this year gave generously of their time to support the WNC Run/Walk for Autism by soliciting sponsors, forming a team, recruiting participants, raising donations, and volunteering before and during the event.

**Inner Banks Chapter** families played bingo and decorated cookies at their monthly meeting in October. In the past few months, they have also gathered for a potluck dinner and a holiday party with gift exchange.



**Iredell County Chapter** families got together for bowling at an alley that sponsored the event, giving families a discount. The Chapter's monthly meetings continue to be well-attended, often with presentations from local organizations, such as Special Olympics.

The **New Hanover County Chapter** provided a panel discussion about the guardianship process for families in the fall at the Wilmington ASNC office. Panelists included ASNC staff as well as experts from other local organizations and providers, and caregivers were grateful for the focus on this critical topic.

The **Onslow County Chapter** invited families to gather at a local park in the fall to enjoy some camaraderie and a sweet treat: cupcakes from a local bakery.

**Orange/Chatham Chapter** families have enjoyed several events this fall, including a yoga session in November. The Chapter partnered with the town of Carrboro and a local coffee shop that hires adults with disabilities.

The **Pender County Chapter** hosted a masquerade brunch in October. Co-Leader Kristina Butcher posted: "The best part, by far, was the time we invested in 'us' to decompress, talk it out, and be people. Congrats in investing in yourself today attendees!"

The **Person County Chapter** had a sensory-friendly trunk-or-treat with over 170 attendees in October. The event was candy-free; the Chapter ordered various fidgets for people to hand out. Chapter families also came together for a Thanksgiving meal and participated in their local Christmas parade.

The **Pitt County Chapter** recently partnered with Family Support Network of Eastern NC to provide a Storytime with Santa event with sensory gift bags.

The **Rowan County Chapter** continues to host coffee chats each month and offered a teen game night at a local church. One attendee said, "My boys both had so much fun and are already asking about the next time we can get together."

At the **Sampson County Chapter's** park playdate in October, families enjoyed the camaraderie, sharing of ideas and resources, and fun. Leader Winnie White posted, "We discussed the Innovations Waiver and some things that it covers - AAC devices, habilitation technicians, and even YMCA memberships! Parents are the best resources. This is why we are #StrongerTogether!"

**Surry County Chapter** families enjoyed several events during the past few months, including a fall bowling event and a catered holiday party with Santa, a photo booth, and a DJ. Families also received gingerbread house kits to build at home.

The **Wake County Chapter** welcomed 120 participants to a fall event at a local farm with trick-or-treating for fidgets and treats in addition to time on the playground and with animals. Twenty volunteers from the community helped to make this event a success.

The **Wayne County Chapter** hosted a coffee chat with a great turnout and conversation. This was the Chapter's first in-person meetup in a while, and families look forward to scheduling more.

**Wilson County Chapter** families attended several events together in their community during the past few months, including visits with Santa at a local firehouse and a sensory-friendly Halloween party sponsored by the City of Wilson.

*If you would like to join a local Chapter, find one near you at [autismsociety-nc.org/chapters](https://autismsociety-nc.org/chapters) or contact Marty Kellogg, State Chapters Coordinator, at [mkellogg@autismsociety-nc.org](mailto:mkellogg@autismsociety-nc.org).*



Photos above from top to bottom: Granville/Vance walk, Onslow cupcakes at the park, Wayne coffee chat, Iredell bowling night, Haywood hayride

Photos on opposite page: Person pumpkin painting (left), Wake farm outing (center), Davidson park playdate (right)



# Recursos y Eventos para las Familias Hispanas

El Departamento Hispano de la Autism Society of North Carolina [Sociedad de Autismo de Carolina del Norte] (ASNC, por sus siglas en inglés) está comprometido activamente en apoyar a las familias que nos contactan en español, a través de llamadas, correos electrónicos y la participación en seminarios web y grupos de apoyo que se realizan en español. Puede contactarnos a través Mariela Maldonado, enlace de asuntos hispanos, al 800-442-2762, o en [mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org](mailto:mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org).



## Sitio web de ASNC en español

Nuestra página de recursos en español ofrece información sobre el autismo; los programas de la ASNC (como los grupos de apoyo para hispanos, servicios clínicos y mucho mas); artículos traducidos, vídeos, narrativas sociales y kits de herramientas, así como próximos eventos.

Además, cualquiera de las páginas del sitio web de la ASNC se puede traducir al español al hacer clic en el icono del globo terráqueo de la esquina superior derecha y seleccionar "Spanish/Español" en el menú.

## Reuniones del grupo de apoyo para hispanos

Las reuniones del Grupo de Apoyo se realizan el primer martes de cada mes a través de videoconferencia. También se realizan eventos presenciales. En los últimos meses, organizamos picnics hispanos, reuniones de Acción de Gracias y cenas de Navidad con la presencia de Papá Noel. Próximamente tendremos eventos de Zumba, campañas de

sensibilización en tiendas hispanas locales, y la celebración del Mes de Sensibilización sobre el Autismo en abril

## Facilitadores del grupo de apoyo para hispanos

Nos complace anunciar que el Departamento Hispano cuenta con dos nuevas facilitadoras para apoyar los eventos que se llevan a cabo en Carolina del Norte. Denisse Avilez, es madre de un niño en el espectro autista y se encarga de las regiones de Wake, Durham, Johnston y Lee. Xochitl Garcia, madre de 4 niños en el espectro autista cubre los condados de Guilford, Alamance, Winston Salem y Sanford. Puede comunicarse con Mariela Maldonado [mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org](mailto:mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org) si le interesa ser facilitador. Para consultar nuestra lista completa de facilitadores, visite [autismsociety-nc.org/recursos](http://autismsociety-nc.org/recursos). También recordamos a las familias del área de Triad que Vanessa Vázquez Catala es nuestra especialista bilingüe en recursos para el autismo. Puede comunicarse con ella a través de [vcatala@autismsociety-nc.org](mailto:vcatala@autismsociety-nc.org) o al 336-893-0602.

## Seminarios web en español

El Departamento de Asuntos Hispánicos de la ASNC ofrece seminarios web en español por Internet donde los padres pueden escuchar la charla en su celular, tableta o computadora. Este 2023 vamos a tratar temas como estrategias para problemas de conducta, independencia, relaciones con profesionales, el Plan de Educación Individualizado (IEP, por sus siglas en inglés), cómo lidiar con el acoso escolar y cómo los padres pueden abogar por los derechos de sus hijos.

### Próximos seminarios web

- **2 de marzo:** Cómo puedo ayudar a mi hijo  
*How to Help My Child*
- **23 de marzo:** Cómo organizar mis documentos  
*Organizing My Documents*
- **20 de abril:** La importancia del Conocimiento  
*The Importance of Knowledge*
- **11 de mayo:** Comunicación y dispositivos  
*Communication and Devices*
- **1 de junio:** Cómo puedo ayudar a mi hijo  
*How to Help My Child*
- **22 de junio:** Como organizar mis documentos  
*Organizing My Documents*

## Conferencia anual sobre autismo 2023

La conferencia anual se celebra el 10 y 11 de marzo de 2023 en Charlotte centrada en el tema - La experiencia del autismo: cerebro, cuerpo y conducta. El evento se enfocará en las mejores prácticas para comprender y mejorar la salud física y mental, problemas médicos y de conducta, así como las necesidades de las personas con autismo. Puede inscribirse previamente para evitar que se agoten los cupos en [autismsociety-nc.org/conference](https://autismsociety-nc.org/conference). Los grupos de apoyo para hispanos se encuentran trabajando en la realización de eventos de recaudación de fondos destinados a ofrecer becas a los padres.

## Donaciones para el Departamento de Asuntos Hispánicos

Las donaciones para el Departamento Hispano ayudan a proveer servicios de traducción y becas para la Conferencia Anual para familias hispanas. Si desea ser patrocinador puede comunicarse con Mariela Maldonado a través de [mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org](mailto:mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org)



## Cómo prepararse para una reunión del IEP

Un Programa de Educación Individualizado (IEP, por sus siglas en inglés) es un plan o programa elaborado para garantizar que un niño con una discapacidad identificada reciba instrucción especializada y servicios adecuados mientras asiste a la escuela.

Aquí encontrará algunos consejos:

- Tiene derecho a convocar una reunión del IEP en cualquier momento.
- Los padres pueden solicitar modificaciones en el IEP en cualquier momento.
- Como padres, pueden invitar a cualquier persona para que les apoye durante la reunión del IEP.
- Revise las actas de las reuniones anteriores del IEP y elabore un orden del día.
- Prepárese para colaborar

Visite nuestro sitio web en español para consultar narrativas sociales, artículos de interés y vídeos sobre este y otros temas:

[www.autismsociety-nc.org/recursos-en-espanol](https://www.autismsociety-nc.org/recursos-en-espanol)





# Fundraisers & Events

## Fall Run/Walks for Autism Raise \$222,000

We're grateful to all the participants who made our Fall Run/Walk for Autism events a success! Together, the WNC, Triad, and Triangle events raised more than \$220,000. More than 2,200 people registered to participate in-person or virtually. To see photos from each event, please visit our Flickr page: [flickr.com/photos/autismsocietync](https://www.flickr.com/photos/autismsocietync)

## Join Us for a Spring Run/Walk for Autism

Make plans to join us for a Spring Run/Walk for Autism! These events improve the lives of children and adults with autism while providing an amazing feeling of community. For each event, we're offering the opportunity to participate virtually, which is a great option for friends and family across the country who want to be part of your team and help fundraise. Proceeds will support local programs of the Autism Society of North Carolina.

Registration is online only: [RunWalkforAutism.com](https://RunWalkforAutism.com)

## AmeriCarna LIVE Raises \$500,000 for IGNITE

The 10th Annual AmeriCarna LIVE, hosted by Ray Evernham and presented by Trane Technologies and MSC Industrial Supply Co., was held on November 26. After two years of virtual events, the car community returned to break all previous records!

"I can't begin to express my deepest appreciation," said Ray Evernham, NASCAR Hall of Fame crew chief. "The generosity of the car enthusiast community is simply amazing. We were blessed with an incredible day on Saturday as we broke every record we had – most cars entered, most people in attendance, and most money raised. Our impact is changing lives and we couldn't do that without your support and generosity."

The event raised more than \$500,000 for IGNITE, the Autism Society of North Carolina's program for young adults with low support needs. IGNITE offers activities and educational groups that foster independence and social interaction. Members work toward financial, educational, and employment success.

### Crystal Coast Run/Walk for Autism March 4

Beaufort

[crystalcoastrunwalkforautism.com](https://crystalcoastrunwalkforautism.com)

### Eastern Run/Walk for Autism April 1

Greenville

[easternrunwalkforautism.com](https://easternrunwalkforautism.com)

### Coastal NC Run/Walk for Autism April 22

Wilmington

[coastalncrunwalkforautism.com](https://coastalncrunwalkforautism.com)



## Fall Event Sponsors

We thank the following sponsors of our fall events! These events would not be possible without them. Please support these businesses and thank them for helping to improve the lives of individuals with autism and their loved ones.

### Gold Level



### Visionary Level



### Champion Level



### Partner Level

ABS Kids  
Cornerstone Physical  
Therapy, Inc.  
Fleet Feet Asheville

Grinz Orthodontics  
Mission Children's Hospital  
OOWEE products

Sunshine Beverage  
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We Rock the Spectrum  
Kid's Gym  
Yes Weekly!

### Advocate Level

501st Legion  
Apex Analytix  
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Carolina Pediatrics of the  
Triad  
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Pediatric Possibilities, P.A.  
Pepsi  
Raleigh Neurology Associates  
Raleigh Pediatric Dentistry  
Spyglass Promotions  
Starbucks  
The Hop Ice Cream  
Triad Moms on Main

### Friend Level

Bruegger's Bagels  
Cold Mountain Corn Maze  
Culligan Water

Higher Ground Pediatric  
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Catherine & John Faherty  
Lionheart Academy of the  
Triad

PORTER House Bar & Grill  
POWER of Play Foundation  
Publix  
Riveter

Shoebox Tasks  
Triad Coordinated Services

# Thank You!

The Autism Society of North Carolina would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our donors. While we appreciate every gift, we have limited the donation list to Honorarium/Memorial gifts in the interest of space and printing costs. Thank you for your tremendous support.

This list reflects donations received on or between July 1 and December 31, 2022. Please contact Beverly Gill if you have any questions or corrections at 919-865-5056 or [bgill@autismsociety-nc.org](mailto:bgill@autismsociety-nc.org).

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*Larry Huneycutt*

### Stephanie Huntoon

*Maura & William Waugh*

### Jakob Johnson

*Melissa Jo Joyce & Ken*

*Johnson*

### Savannah Johnson

*Nancy & Rick Baker*

### William Kazakewich

*Susan Friend*

### Keagan Kelly

*Rosemary & Michael Spagnola*

### Riley Kenna

*Pattie Rae & David Grothe*

### Nolan Kovac

*Pat & Jimmy Kovac*

### Joseph Krevat

*Madhavi & Matthew Krevat*

### Dessie & David Laxton

*Holly & Matt Dressman*

### Ben Lucero

*Anita & Robert Lucero*

### Jessie Lundsford

*Kathy & Lanny Vaughan*

### Mac Lynch

*Michelle & Doug Lynch*

### Luke Marcum

*Brenda Marcum*

### Karen Mauldin

*Lucille & Richard Floyd*

### Mason Mazzeo

*North Carolina Autism Hockey*

*League*

### Christopher McHenry

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**Rachel & John Schimmelfing**  
*Rebecca & Cheryl Ann*  
*Stirewalt*  
**Colin Schmitt**  
*Kathy & Dan Schmitt*  
**Julie, John, & Will Seibert**  
*Gail & Bob Pope*  
**Tracey Sheriff**  
*Bell Schaefer Family*  
*Foundation*  
**Bri Sherwood**  
*Heather & Pawley Thomas*  
**Nevin Shore**  
*Sheila & Skip Brewer*  
**Tyler Shore**  
*Sheila & Skip Brewer*  
**Molly Simons-Schimek**  
*Jane Pahner*  
**Drew Sipe**  
*April & Jon Miller*  
**The Slack Family**  
*Laura and Zell McGee*  
**Cooper Vander Sluis**  
*Jess Carlos*  
**Matthew Smith**  
*Sherry & Dan Smith*  
**Ryan Smith**  
*Sherry & Dan Smith*  
**Joey Stephens**  
*Jamie & Richard Stephens*  
**Cleo & Robert Stewart**  
*Martha Doolittle*  
**Mr. & Mrs. Doug Stokes**  
*Beth & Ronald Swanner*  
**Max & Stephen Stryker**  
*North Carolina Autism*  
*Hockey League*  
**Whitney & Adam Sukonick**

*Ellyn & Steve Sukonick*  
**Suzanne Surratt**  
*Beth & Ronald Swanner*  
**Connor Termini**  
*Patricia Devereaux*  
**Charlotte Thomson**  
*Susan & Jacques Astre*  
*Wendy & James*  
*Weatherington*  
**Vicky & Chris Thornton**  
*Ann & Craig Thornton*  
**Nathan Vieyra**  
*Joe Regan*  
**Evelyn Voegeli**  
*Stephanie Alger & Colin*  
*Woodlock*  
*Colleen & Luke Armstrong*  
*Lesley & Cassie Fraser-Ball*  
**Ryan Webb**  
*Dr. Jamison Kovach*  
*Stephanie Leach & Col. Hobbs*  
**Maddy Webber**  
*Sherry & Matt Attaway*  
**Judge & Mrs. William Wellons**  
*Donald Beck*  
**Buddy Whiteside**  
*Vian's Valley Presbyterian*  
*Church*  
*Florence Berryhill*  
*Cynthia & Nathan Biehl*  
*Marcia Owens*  
*Mary & Gary Pyatte*  
*Maxine Runion*  
**Alison Wilcox**  
*Carolyn Egan & Chris Nikitas*  
*Mary Hatton*  
*Bettie & Rick Lambeth*  
**Jesse Wills**  
*Vicki & James Fuller*  
*Gale & Charlie MacNeill*  
*Roberta & Albert Smith*  
**Anna Wilson**  
*Donald Miller*  
**Jay York**  
*Kristin & Jeffrey York*  
**Eric Zhang**  
*Cindy Ma & Ying Zhang*

## Memorials

**Leon Melvin Albright**  
*Hafele America*  
*Nancy Woods & John Martin*  
**Andy Anderson**  
*Angie & Doug Brown*  
**William "Billy" Andrews, Jr.**  
*Vickie & Randall Gordon*  
*Trudy & Tommy Murphy*  
**Ernest Clifton Batchelor, Sr.**  
*Marcelo Caetano and Team*  
*Faye Cash*  
*Pam Evans*  
**Evelyn "Brownie" Bond**  
*Carol & Tommy Roe*  
*Betty & Al Scarborough*  
*Katie & Lewis Wills*  
**Fred A. Bowes**  
*Herbert Grissom*  
**Jacob Luther Carpenter**  
*Beth Ackerman*  
**George Michael Carrano**

**Victor Castello**  
*Jean & John Lomax*  
*Carrie & Curt Lucas*  
*Frances Picone*  
*Alison & Jeff Regan*  
*Doreen & Tom Riebe*  
*Kari Spitz & John Jolin*  
*Cherie & Jim Sutorus*  
**William Matthew Chalkley**  
*Edith & Harold Greer*  
*Betty Kibby*  
*Joan & James Matthews*  
**Ella Champ**  
*Crosby Hunt*  
**Ronald Lee Coe, Jr.**  
*Daniel Casey*  
**Thomas Walter D'Alonzo**  
*Kirschbaum, Nanney, Keenan*  
*& Griffin, P.A.*  
*T & A Investment Club*  
*Thomas Ambrosi*  
*The Ament Family*  
*David Arky*  
*John Barney*  
*Ann & Paul Brunswick*  
*Lynda & Doug Campbell*  
*Rachel & Seth Cohen*  
*Sarah & Bill D'Alonzo*  
*Laurie & Drew Finn*  
*Cathy & Rick Giertsen*  
*Craig Hille*  
*Marjorie & Michael Hille*  
*Michelle & Pete Jones*  
*William Keane*  
*Pamela Keenan*  
*Peggy & Bill Mate*  
*Katie & Wilson Mitchell*  
*Priscilla & David Nanney*  
*Jack Phillips*  
*Peter Pollock*  
*Catherine & James Rossi*  
*Anne & Greg Slonaker*  
*Jake Slonaker*  
**Robert "Bobby" Lee Dunn, Jr.**  
*Phyllis Babb*  
*Suzanne Blackwell*  
*Vickie & James Boykin*  
*Mary & Dr. Lindsey De*  
*Guehery*  
*Sitha & John Deans*  
*Mary Dempsey*  
*Katharine Dupree*  
*Leslie Gibbs-Van Der Have*  
*Sharyn Hardister*  
*Margaret & Michael Hendley*  
*Mary Jo Kimbro*  
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*Maggie & Billy Lamm*  
*Cathy & Phil Langdon*  
*Brittany McClanton*  
*Allison & Jason Taylor*  
*Katherine & William Vaughan*  
**Hunter Lee Everhart**  
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*Resources Commission*  
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*Cheri Corry & Johnny Norris*  
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*Katherine Davis*  
*Diane Everhart*

*Dena Harris*  
*Tina Kuykendall*  
*Samantha & Frank Livesay*  
*Melissa McGaw*  
*Reba Miller*  
*Elaine Rohlik & Stan Yancey*  
*Patty & Jim Thompson*  
*Betty & Charles Timberlake*  
**Tracy Lorraine Shaner Farrell**  
*Marilyn & Gene Clements*  
*Beth & David McLaurin*  
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*Elizabeth Perry*  
**Peyton Dildy Holton**  
*Doug Hill*  
**Alice L. Honohan**  
*Mary Jolly*  
*Adele Oakley*  
**Bruce Howard**  
*Pamela Mathews*  
*Lynnette Miller*  
**Lois Estella Howell**  
*Helena Drennan*  
**Charles "Chuck" Hydeman**  
*Jane Hydeman*  
**John Robert Kirby, Jr.**  
*Jean Featherston*  
**Dave Kocienda**  
*Reina Kocienda*  
**Desiree Leacock**  
*Anita & Robert Lucero*  
**Ben Lucero**  
*Sandy & Fernando Arrufat*  
**John J. McGovern**  
*Jean & Mark Calkin*  
*Karen & Michael Crow*  
**Brandon McNeely**  
*Virginia Gaynor*  
**Debra Meredith**  
*Carolyn Crews*  
**Kevin "Grant" Mitchell**  
*Sarah McCormick*  
*Elaine & Jeff McKinney*  
*Pamela Rohlfing*  
*Steven Sokal*  
*Barbara Tobias & Jason*  
*Josephs*  
**Roger Alston Moore**  
*Moore & Van Allen, PLLC*  
*Eb Borden-Parker*  
*Jane Brewer*  
*John Carter*  
*Gail Connell*  
*Valerie & William Darner*  
*Sally & Alex Erwin*  
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*The Speares Family*  
*Susan Stevenson*  
*Betsy Strickland*  
**Lois Elizabeth Fisher Owen**  
*Virginia & James Howard*



**Colleen Margaret Philipps***Tracey Ivy  
Rachel Stickney***Shirley Oakes Purcell***Nancy Ellis***Anne Reed***The Micheli Family***Bobby Cecil Riddle, Sr.***Sandra & Terry Ward***Helen Gambill Smith***Kay & Richard Fox***Robert & Paula Trufant***Christine Trufant***Judy Vicars***Rose Luster***Rosiland Walker***Ed Bunch**Jean Rich***James "Buck" Vance White, Sr.***Sandra Colyer**Peggy Ferebee**Lynn & Brian Magyar**Marlene Pratto**Ann Shaw**Christine Tucker**Debra and Marshall White**Frann White***Buddy Williams***Sharon Ennis***Linda Louise Nelson Winstead***Laura Webb***Henry Carroll Woodruff***Deborah & Glenn Ammons**Joann & Melvin Lutz*

## Host a Fundraiser to Help Families

Volunteers throughout our state host fundraisers to benefit the Autism Society of North Carolina. They rally friends, families, and colleagues to attend unique events or donate proceeds from the sale of various items. It all starts with an idea. If you are interested in hosting your own fundraiser, please contact Heather Hargrave at [hhargrave@autismsociety-nc.org](mailto:hhargrave@autismsociety-nc.org) or 919-865- 5057. ASNC is grateful to the many individuals and businesses that hold fundraisers to support families affected by autism.

Facebook fundraisers have also become a popular and easy way for our supporters to encourage contributions from their friends. In 2022, they raised more than \$26,190 to improve lives, support families, and educate communities.



Here is a list of recent events and supporters:

321 Coffee - Farmer's Market

Abbott's Creek

AmazonSmile Foundation

Beta Delta Chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa Sorority

Bonfire Funds

Books For Good, Inc. - Lynn Vorys

Bullpen Fitness

CADCO Construction - Golf Tournament

Carson Dellosa Publishing

CBX Global - 2022 Giving Back to the Community Drive

Charlotte Ruff Ryders Charity Ride

Christopher Radko - "Puzzle Pieces Pine" ornaments

Coop-a-loop - Jess Carlos

Credit Suisse's Holiday Charity Initiative

Dawson Webb - Hatman of Canes Cord

Delta Coaches, LLC

East Coast Winter Wonderland &amp; Jingle Ball

Facebook

Fortitude Roofing Company

Giving Tree Realty - Gonzalo Arriagada

Givinga Foundation

High Point University - Anna Turning

I Am Salon and Day Spa

Immaculate Heart of Mary School

K-9 Raleigh Social Club

Keller Williams Realty - Spring Fling Fundraiser

Kristyn Bacot - Running for ASNC

MSL Swamp Golf Fundraiser - Kristin Selby

NC Conference Branch Women's Missionary Society

NC Rock Autism Music Festival - DiAnna &amp; Daniel Jordan

NCSU Men's Lacrosse

North Carolina Autism Hockey League

OneHope Foundation

Paypal Giving Fund

Queens Grant Charter School

Raleigh Elks Lodge No. 735 - Golf Tournament

Robert Whitehill

Rotary Club of Davidson

St. Matthew Catholic School -N.U.T.S. Fundraiser

The House of Awareness fundraiser

The Players Golf Association

The Soap Bakerz - Buff Gives Back

Tim Morris - Rockism for Autism Fundraiser

Tuna Run 2022 - Team Nerd Herd

Wines for Humanity

Wingmen Motorcycle Club - Autism Rally Fundraiser

# Call on Us!

The Autism Society of North Carolina improves the lives of individuals with autism, supports families affected by autism, and educates communities.

**Autism Resource Specialists** connect families to resources and provide training to help you become your child's best advocate. As parents of children with autism themselves, they understand your concerns. Find yours: [autismsociety-nc.org/ARS](https://autismsociety-nc.org/ARS)

**Workshops and conferences** with our Autism Resource Specialists or Clinical staff will help you learn more about topics that concern you, such as early intervention, evidence-based practices, IEPs, transitioning to adulthood, and residential options. [autismsociety-nc.org/workshops](https://autismsociety-nc.org/workshops)

**Online resources**, including toolkits, webinars, a blog, and a Staying Safe section, provide opportunities to learn on your own time from your home.

**Chapters and Support Groups** provide a place for families who face similar challenges to feel welcomed and understood as they offer each other encouragement. Find one near you: [autismsociety-nc.org/chapters](https://autismsociety-nc.org/chapters)

**Skill-building and support services** provide children and adults with autism the skills to increase self-sufficiency and participate in the community in a fulfilling way. ASNC's services across the state include skill-building in areas such as communication, socialization, community integration, and personal care; family consultation; respite; and adult day programs. Services are provided through the NC Innovations waiver, state funding, B3, and private pay. [autismsociety-nc.org/skillbuilding](https://autismsociety-nc.org/skillbuilding)

**Clinical Services** offer a variety of supports for individuals with

autism and their families to increase independence and empower children and adults. The Autism Society of North Carolina provides Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) through **LifeLong Interventions**. LifeLong Interventions is available in Asheville, Morganton, the Triangle (Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill), and Wilmington. We accept ABA clients of any age and any skill level. We use proven, individualized strategies to meet each person's unique needs. **Rapid Response Clinical Consultation (RRCC)** is available in all 100 NC counties via telehealth for children and adults. RRCC is a short-term consultation service (2-4 weeks) that provides tips and strategies to address social communication, behavior intervention, and other skills. **Behavior consultations** provided by our psychologists and Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) can help explain why behaviors are occurring, develop comprehensive behavior plans, and coach caregivers on effective strategies. [autismsociety-nc.org/clinical](https://autismsociety-nc.org/clinical)

**Employment Supports** helps individuals with autism explore their skills and interests, then assists them in finding, keeping, and thriving in a job. Services are funded through the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. [autismsociety-nc.org/jobservices](https://autismsociety-nc.org/jobservices)

**Adult programs** serve individuals ages 16 to 28 with a focus on job readiness, development, placement, and training, as well as financial literacy, daily living and independence skills, and social skills. The year-round programming includes small group instruction in

centers and one-on-one support in the community. [autismsociety-nc.org/adults](https://autismsociety-nc.org/adults)

**IGNITE** community centers in Davidson, Raleigh, and Greensboro offer activities, skills training, and educational workshops that foster social, financial, educational, and employment independence for young adults with low support needs. [autismsociety-nc.org/ignite](https://autismsociety-nc.org/ignite)

**Camp Royall** is the nation's oldest and largest camp for individuals with autism. Located near Pittsboro, Camp Royall serves all ages and offers year-round programming. [camproyall.org](https://camproyall.org)

**Social Recreation** programs provide opportunities for participants to bond over common interests, practice social skills, and try new activities. In Newport, Wilmington, and Winterville, social recreation programs include summer day camp, afterschool programs, and adult programs, with support from Trillium Health Resources. In other areas, summer camp and group activities may be available. Contact us to learn which services are available in your area. [autismsociety-nc.org/socialrec](https://autismsociety-nc.org/socialrec)

**ASNC's public policy** efforts aim to advocate for the needs of individuals with autism and their families by maintaining a wide range of ties with the executive and legislative branches of state government. You can get involved and make your voice heard. [autismsociety-nc.org/policy](https://autismsociety-nc.org/policy)

[www.autismsociety-nc.org](https://www.autismsociety-nc.org)

We have regional offices in Asheville, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Greenville, Newport, Raleigh, and Wilmington. Contact our state office to be connected to resources.

State Office: 800-442-2762  
5121 Kingdom Way, Suite 100, Raleigh, NC 27607  
Sign up online to receive our email updates:  
[autismsociety-nc.org/contact-us](https://autismsociety-nc.org/contact-us)



Autism Society  
of North Carolina

5121 Kingdom Way, Suite 100  
Raleigh, NC 27607

Join us this spring. Register today!

MARCH 10-11 2023  
CHARLOTTE

2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**THE AUTISM EXPERIENCE**  
BRAIN · BODY · BEHAVIOR

MORE INFORMATION ON PAGE 7  
REGISTER: AUTISMSOCIETY-NC.ORG/CONFERENCE



**March 4**

Crystal Coast Run/Walk  
Beaufort

**April 1**

Eastern Run/Walk  
Greenville

**April 22**

Coastal NC Run/Walk  
Wilmington



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**RunWalkforAutism.com**