We are here for you!

Since 1993, Howard County Autism Society has provided support for individuals with autism, their families, and community. Our parent-founded organization serves as a resource to over 2,000 individuals including persons with ASD, families, professionals, and the greater community.

Howard County Autism Society
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Howard County Autism Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and is a national affiliate of the Autism Society of America.

United Way #46730
MCC #521857721

Facts about autism:

- Prevalence in the United States is estimated at 1 in 68 births (Center for Disease Control).
- ASD is the fastest growing developmental disability with an average 17% growth rate per year.
- ASD occurs in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups.
- Howard County has the highest incidence of ASD per capita in Maryland. The state average is about 10% of the special education population. In Howard County, over 15% of its special education population are children with autism.
- Children do not “outgrow” autism, but studies show that early diagnosis and intervention lead to significantly improved outcomes.
What is autism spectrum disorder?

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person’s ability to communicate and interact with others. ASD is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a “spectrum disorder” that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees.

No two individuals with autism are alike.

While it is easy to generalize about characteristics, no two individuals with ASD are alike. ASD is diagnosed by behavioral characteristics and symptoms. Here are signs to look for:

• Lack of or delay in spoken language
• Repetitive use of language or motor mannerisms
• Little or no eye contact
• Lack of interest in peer relationships
• Lack of spontaneous play
• Persistent fixation on parts of objects

Early diagnosis of ASD leads to early intervention. Children diagnosed by age three are more likely to work and live on their own as independent adults.

About HCAS:

Howard County Autism Society (HCAS) serves individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), their families, and their communities by providing information, support, and advocacy; by promoting awareness of autism that values the dignity and uniqueness of each individual; and by working to improve the quality of and access to services and to educational opportunities.

We believe that there is a place for every person with ASD in our world, a place of value, and a place of worth. Much of our work is directed at raising awareness and educating the public about the complexities of ASD. Once people better understand ASD, they are better able to welcome and support people living with autism into our community.

HCAS Programs & Services:

• Monthly support group meetings
• Social outings that help prevent isolation
• Advice and support on special education issues and services in Howard County through consultations, workshops, and seminars
• Free phone consultations with the Disability Rights Maryland, if necessary
• Autism trainings for caregivers, businesses, government agencies, first responders, schools, and others
• Workshops for families and individuals with autism related to lifespan topics
• Sensory-friendly events
• Exercise/fitness activities
• 9-1-1 Flagging System in partnership with first responders
• Advocacy, both locally and nationally

Visit our Special Education News Center for info on:

• Accommodations & Modifications
• Behavior & Discipline Issues
• Common Core Standards
• High Stakes Testing
• Transitions
• IEP Tips
• Spanish & Korean Language Resources

specialed.howard-autism.org