



Improving the Lives of All Affected by Autism

Texas

A National Autism Awareness Month Guide for Schools



April is

NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH



Did you know?

Every 20 minutes someone is diagnosed with autism

Individuals with autism, speaking and non-speaking, may use a variety of different and unique ways to communicate

Many individuals on the spectrum stay in school until they are 21

People with autism have very special gifts and talents!

To contact us with questions
please call 512-479-4199.



AUTISM SOCIETY

Since the 1970's, the Autism Society has been celebrating National Autism Awareness Month (NAAM) to highlight the growing need for concern and awareness about autism. The United States recognizes April as a special opportunity to educate the public about autism and issues within the autism community. April is National Autism Awareness Month and there are thousands of ways you can help support students with and without autism raise acceptance and awareness. We have compiled a list of ideas that we think might help teachers, administrators and staff create a space of acceptance and support for students with autism. Please feel free to reach out to the Autism Society of Texas with any questions, concerns, or inquiries.

Awareness Ideas

Here is a basic list of awareness ideas that you can use to help spread awareness and acceptance of autism in your school:

- 1.) Post facts about autism on puzzle pieces around the school or talk about them in the morning announcements. You can find a list of Autism Society approved facts at: <http://www.texasautismsociety.org/about-autism/>
- 2.) Invite speakers to talk about autism. Speakers can be people on the spectrum, family members of individuals with autism or professionals in the field. Reach out to the Autism Society of Texas to see if we can support you.
- 3.) Ask classmates, friends and teachers to wear autism shirts to raise autism awareness on a particular day.
- 4.) Ask the School Library to set books about Autism out on display through April. See attached listed of book below!
- 5.) Show a movie about autism during lunch time! See attached list.
- 6.) Post ideas that students can do on puzzle pieces around the school. See attachment for ideas
- 7.) Create an Autism Awareness Ambassador Program <http://www.autismnj.org/ambassador> or club at your school to help raise money and spread awareness

Fundraising Ideas

Help raise financial support for the Autism Society of Texas by participating in one of the following activities:

- 1.) Create or join a team for our Annual Bike Ride and Fun Run at Georgetown High school on April 2nd 2017 (go to autismbikeride.greatfeats.com for more information)
- 2.) Attend or volunteer at one of the other local events happening in April see attached calendar for ideas.
- 3.) Hold a bake sale and decorate food items with puzzle pieces or other symbols to represent acceptance and awareness.
- 4.) Hold a penny war. In a penny war, two or more groups (grades) compete to win a fundraising competition. Each group has a bucket for collecting coins or dollar bills. The value of any pennies collected by a group count positively toward that group's point total, while the value of other coins or dollar bills are subtracted. See which grade can raise the most.
- 5.) Hold a jean day. A Jean Day Fundraiser is when a school allows students to wear jeans to for one day and in return the students make a small donation (usually \$5) to the Autism Society of Texas.
- 6.) Host a yard sale in the parking lot. Spring clean and sell your items at the same time, encourage families to participate and donate earnings to the Autism Society of Texas.

Classroom Learning Ideas

Help students learn about and more easily accept others with autism by one of the following activities:

- 1.) Teach a lesson on tips for being a friend to someone with autism. See attachment.
- 2.) Choose books or stories for students to read that have individuals with autism as characters. See attached suggestions.
- 3.) Have student decorate autism ribbons or puzzle pieces and decorate the classroom or door with the creations.
- 4.) Have elementary/ school students make a pocket-sized booklet about Autism to spread awareness
- 5.) Encourage students to write letters to legislators about the needs of students with disabilities, including autism. Student will need to think critically about this issue and learn how to constructively write and advocate for this cause.
- 6.) Create a pen pal system where students write letters, draw pictures, or cards to students with special needs, particularly autism, fostering friendship and connection as well as reading and writing skills.



Books about Autism

Borrowed from The Autism Society of Arkon

Elementary School Students

Andy and His Yellow Frisbee by Mary Thompson

Russell is Extra Special by Charles Amenta, III

Captain Tommy by Abby Ward Messner

My Best Friend Will by Jamie Lowell and Tara Tuchel

Ian's Walk-A Story about Autism by Laurie Lears and Karen Ritz

The Autism Acceptance Book by Ellen Sabin

Tobin Learns to Make Friends by Diane Murrell

Taco's Anyone by Marvie Ellis and Jenny Loehr

Keisha's Doors by Marvie Ellis

Nobody Knew What to Do: A Story about Bullying by Becky McCain

A is for Autism by Jennifer Blook

Middle-High School Students

Of Mice and Aliens by Kathy Hoopman

Buster and the Amazing Daisy by Nancy Ogaz

Lisa and the Lace Maker by Kathy Hoopman

Wishing on the Midnight Star by Nancy Ogaz

Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night by Mark Haddon

A Spot of Bother by Mark Haddon Clay by Colby Rodowsky

Haze by Kathy Hoopman To OZ and Back: A Bones and Duchess Mystery by Alexandra Eden

A Wizard Alone: The Sixth Book in the Young Wizards Series by Diane Duane

Things Students Can Do

- 1.) Learn about kids with autism
- 2.) Talk to your parents about autism
- 3.) Say hi to kids with autism
- 4.) Be a good role model and defend them against bullies
- 5.) Invite a friend with autism to play or to your birthday party
- 6.) Sit with a friend with autism at lunch



Movies about Autism

Life Animated

Autism the Musical

Best Kept Secret

Family Next Door

Rain Man

Jack and the Red Hearts

Autism in Love

The Story of Luke

Tips for Being a Friend to a Student with Autism

Borrowed from The Autism Society of Akron

Understanding autism starts at a young age, and there is no greater place than the classroom to start. Understanding autism and how to interact with people with autism comes from being exposed to them, and being taught how to treat and talk to someone with autism. Children naturally want to be helpful. Give them that opportunity by encouraging them to be a buddy to someone with autism. It is up to teachers and parents to teach children about differences, acceptance, and understanding.

Here are some ideas on how to get started.

- People are born with autism and while they look just like you and me, autism changes the way their brain works.
- Some people with autism talk and others do not. Just because they cannot talk doesn't mean they don't have anything to say.
- Nobody knows what causes autism, but we do know that a person with autism will always have autism.
- Kids with autism are the same as other kids in a lot of ways. They like birthdays, swimming, and having friends.
- Being kind and compassionate is one of the best things you can do to help someone with autism.
- Here are a few ways to be a friend:
 - o Playing games they like to play.
 - o Talking to them like you would any other kid.
 - o Giving them a high five when you're having fun!
 - o Sitting next to them in the lunchroom.
 - o Visiting them at their house.
 - o Inviting them to your house.
 - o Show them what to do so they can imitate you.
 - o Being a buddy to them on the playground.
 - o Walking with them to the next class.
 - o Supporting them with kindness and understanding.



AUTISM SOCIETY

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Texas

Word Search Puzzle

R M B F N S T E W S G U D U W
D I U D I Y D R L A M G K N T
M N B V E U C X O M V T K D T
A W H B L F P W B P W Y G E T
U F S C O Q V T A Y P I D R P
T I N A V N N W C S F U E S S
I I V W K R F L B A Q G S T S
S L M O D G A U N O J X H A D
M I X W V S P U Z Z L E S N N
B U E O S A Q R A G P G F D E
A I E R S S E N E R A W A M I
G T O X Q I C C L Q Z H S W R
X O F A T Y Z I J T Y L B R F
M I W E I T X S E B V M M Q S
D R R C Z Q U B K L Z Q H K V

AUTISM
FRIEND
PUZZLE
UNDERSTAND

AWARNESS
FUN
RIBBON

CLASSROOM
INCLUDE
SUPPORT



AUTISM SOCIETY

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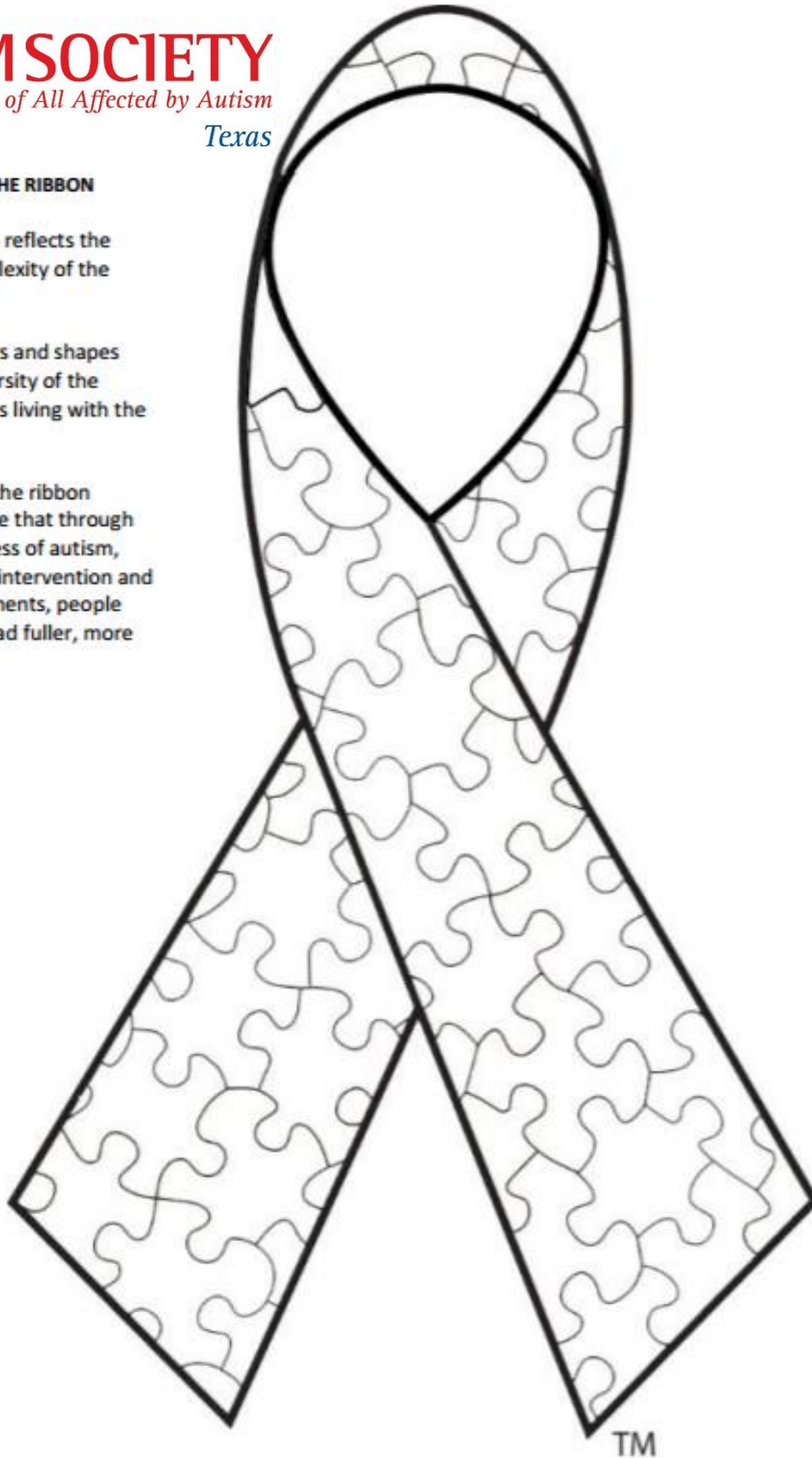
Texas

THE MEANING OF THE RIBBON

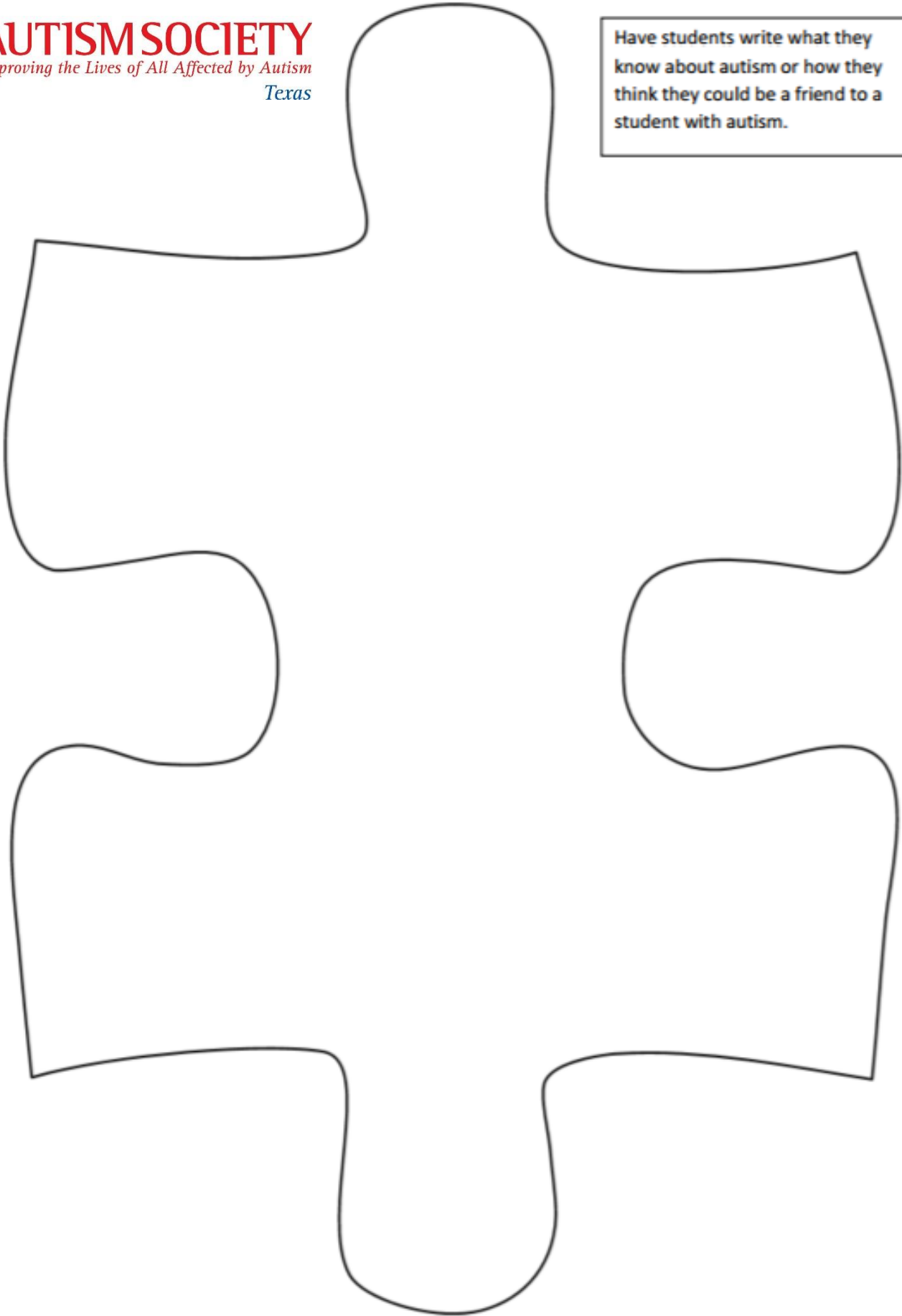
The puzzle pattern reflects the mystery and complexity of the autism spectrum.

The different colors and shapes represent the diversity of the people and families living with the condition.

The brightness of the ribbon signals hope—hope that through increased awareness of autism, and through early intervention and appropriate treatments, people with autism will lead fuller, more complete lives.



Have students write what they know about autism or how they think they could be a friend to a student with autism.



AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH APRIL 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 Attend Crossfit for All at Crossfit City Limits @ 10:30AM
2 Attend Autism Bike Ride & Fun Run in Georgetown @ 7:30 AM - 1:30 PM	3 Write a letter to a loved one with autism	4 Try out an Autism Friendly Business	5 Read a book about autism or with a character with autism	6 Share something on social media about autism	7 Invite a friend or family member with autism to your house	8 Watch a movie about autism
9 Attend Bowling Fundraiser Event in San Antonio @ Main Event 4PM-8PM	10 Change your Facebook header picture to an image about autism	11 Subscribe to the Autism Society of Texas Newsletters	12 Attend Texas Autism Advocacy Day at the Texas State Capital @ 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM	13 Watch the Brown Bag Learning Lunch @ 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	14 Wear an autism shirt	15 Donate to the Autism Society of Texas via Facebook or the website
16 Talk to a stranger about autism	17 Write a letter to your legislators to advocate for individuals with autism	18 Order your Amazon goods via Amazon Smile and select Autism Society as the organization	19 Attend Taco About Autism Event at Chuy's near 183 (all day)	20 Attend Autism Society open house @ 5PM & Quiz for a Cause at Nomad Bar @ 8PM (21+)	21 Create an autism friendly workplace	22 Ask for a shout-out for autism awareness month on the radio
23 Share educational facts about autism on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram	24 Ask your employer to match your donations to Autism Society of Texas	25 Thank someone who has helped you or your loved one affected by autism	26 Learn & share information about autism safety	27 Practice or watch someone with autism's talent & sign up for the May Talent Show	28 Call a caregiver of someone with autism and let them know that you care	29 Share a story about how you have or would want to accept someone with autism
30 Attend sensory friendly hours at the Thinkery 8:00AM-10:00AM						



For more information and events online,
Visit our website
texasautismsociety.org

