

NATIONAL AUTISM MONTH

There's a good chance that autism touches someone in your life. In 2014, the Centers for Disease Control issued a report concluding that the prevalence of autism had risen to 1 in every 68 births in the United States. Autism is a complex developmental disability that affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others.

Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum disorder", meaning that it affects people differently and to varying degrees. Children do not simply "outgrow" autism, but there are treatment and therapy options to help them reach their full potential. Early diagnosis and intervention with ongoing professional support is key.

What to look for:

- Lack of or delay in spoken language
- Repetitive use of language and/or motor mannerisms (e.g., hand-flapping, twirling objects)
- Little or no eye contact
- Lack of interest in peer relationships
- Lack of spontaneous or make-believe play
- Persistent fixation on parts of objects

The behaviors of autism may be apparent in infancy (18 to 24 months), but they usually become more obvious during early childhood (24 months to 6 years).

As part of a well-baby or well-child visit, your child's doctor will perform a "developmental screening," asking specific questions about your child's progress. Exhibiting certain behaviors doesn't necessarily mean that it is autism, but there may be cause for further evaluation by a multidisciplinary team.

The diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder can be stressful and overwhelming. Early support is crucial, but families may not know where to turn. The Autism Society of the Bluegrass is a great place to start. As a chapter of the Autism Society of America, the ASBG offers support and education for Central Kentucky families, individuals, and professionals affected by autism.

Sources: Autism Society of the Bluegrass (asbg.org), Autism Society (autism-society.org)

Connect with the Autism Society of the Bluegrass

Online: ASBG.ORG
 Facebook: Autism Society of the Bluegrass
 Phone: 859-299-9000



Autism Workshop April 16th

Exhibitors and presenters will provide specialized information needed for problem-solving when working with a child with autism.

- Receive information on managing challenges.
- Meet and collaborate with professionals to design and develop visual tools that support language and behavior.
- Review medical, sensory, music and other therapies that promote appropriate learning experiences.

Time: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm Lunch at 12:00 pm
Location: Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital, Lexington, Kentucky.

Cost: \$25.00 for the first attendee; additional family or group members \$10. Scholarships available.

Register on-line at www.asbg.org or email hazel.forsythe@uky.edu or call 859-299-9000 for more information.

Monthly Meetings

ASBG meets on the last Monday of each month at 6:30 pm for discussion, presentations and activities related to autism. Meetings last about 2 hours and take place at St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr. Lexington, KY. All are welcome. Free, experienced childcare is provided.



Bluegrass Autism Walk

Sunday August 28

Time: Registration/Fair/Silent Auction 2pm; 2K walk begins at 3pm

Location: Whitaker Bank Ballpark, Lexington, Kentucky

Pre-register: asbg.org and follow the links.
Cost: \$20 per adult, \$10 per child.

Proceeds will be used for education, advocacy and support for Central Kentuckians on the autism spectrum and their families and caregivers.