

Autism Acceptance Month (April) and World Autism Day (April 2) are chances to raise awareness for the acceptance and inclusion of individuals on the autism spectrum.

A Shift from Awareness to Acceptance to Foster Change

In 2007, the United Nations declared April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day. April was recognized as World Autism Month and was widely referred to as Autism Awareness Month. For over a decade many people across the world have celebrated the differences of those living with autism using this language.

But in recent years, some advocates have called for a change reminding us that although education about autism is important, **inclusion** is a critical factor needed to show support for their community. In response, there has been an intentional evolution to deem April as **Autism Acceptance Month**.

In 2021, we shifted our language to match the growing need for acceptance within the autism community. **While building awareness is a good foundation, acceptance and inclusion promotes action.**

CELEBRATION SCHEDULE

APRIL 1: Share Your Support on Social

 **Update your social media profile photo** using one of our World Autism Acceptance Month images.

- Just click on the icon [▼] below your favorite image to download it.



[▼] [blue 1](#)



[▼] [teal 1](#)



[▼] [yellow 1](#)



[▼] [orange 1](#)



[▼] [black](#)



[▼] [blue 2](#)



[▼] [teal 2](#)



[▼] [yellow 2](#)



[▼] [orange 2](#)




[▼] [gray](#)

A SPECTRUM OF OPINIONS

The spectrum of Autism also includes differences in perspective. Please take a moment to learn other ways autism advocates choose to be recognized and celebrated. Above all, please understand that Munroe-Meyer Institute and Autism Action Partnership support the Light It Up movement as well as people with advocacy viewpoints that align with other color symbolism.

The ultimate goal for **ALL OF US** is to spread awareness, promote acceptance and ignite change.


APRIL 2 (12 a.m.-11:59 p.m.): Light It Up for World Autism Day

 **24 Hour Photo Mosaic* on Facebook:** How do YOU 'Light It Up' for Autism Acceptance? Share to Facebook a photo of you, your family, pet, stuffed animal, artwork, something else, (go ahead - get creative!) **lighting it up & sharing a message of autism acceptance** – we'll collect and compile these into a photo mosaic.

*** How to participate:**

1. Post a photo to Facebook & set the post to 'Public' - [what's this?](#)
2. Tag Us: [@MunroeMeyerInstitute](#) [@autismaction.org](#)
3. Add: [#LightItUpMosaic](#) [#AutismAcceptanceMonth2022](#) [#unmcMMI](#) [#AAP](#)
4. Post during the 24 hours (12 am-11:59 pm) of Friday, April 2, 2022

APRIL 2: Bob Shines for World Autism Day!

 **The Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge** is a loyal supporter of shining in celebration of autism acceptance! This year, we asked Bob to light up yellow and blue to show our solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

APRIL 2 (1-4 p.m.): Celebrate World Autism Day with MMI and AAP at KANEKO

 **World Autism Day | Omaha** – get a SNEAK PEEK of Common Senses Festival before it opens to the public!
KANEKO
1111 Jones Street
Omaha, NE

Together with UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI) and WhyArts, Autism Action Partnership (AAP) is excited to host a World Autism Day Celebration at KANEKO on Saturday, April 2nd, 1-4 p.m.

Members of the autism community are invited to an exclusive first viewing of the Common Senses Festival installations housed at KANEKO. During this event, individuals with autism and their families can engage in interactive installations every 30 minutes and connect with the national experts behind these innovative works. They will also have an opportunity to participate in dance/movement and visual arts activities put on by WhyArts. -- No need to register ahead of time. We hope to see you there!

Learn more about WhyArts at www.whyartsinc.org

BEYOND April 2

Common Senses Festival

 **Experience Common Senses all month long at KENEKO!**

Explore the human senses during April 2022.

Common Senses Festival, a production of Autism Action Partnership is a multi-faceted, city-wide festival during the month of April. Attendees will experience interactive installations, live performances for neurodiverse communities, and lectures from experts who dedicate their work to cutting-edge research and technologies that promote inclusion in our community. Events are sensory-friendly and there are events for EVERYONE in the community.

Visit www.common senses festival.com to learn more and to view the full schedule of events. Join us.

We are all similar. We are all unique.

I Spy Billboard Contest* on Facebook

- Five billboards will spread autism acceptance messages on Omaha streets in April. Find one, or all, and take a photo (safely, of course!) and post it to Facebook for a chance to win. Remember to tag our social accounts and add our autism acceptance hashtags!



Special Shout Out

BIG thanks to LAMAR, who partners with us yearly to help our community celebrate Autism Acceptance Month. With their support, our message reaches hundreds of thousands of community members and travelers!

Where to find them:

- Highway 75 (Kennedy Freeway) & L Street
- 60TH & Grover
- 55th & Center
- Northwest Radial Highway & Military Avenue
- Military Avenue & 72nd Street

* How to participate:

- Post a photo of the billboard to Facebook and set the post to 'Public' - [what's this?](#)
- Tag Us: [@MunroeMeyerInstitute](#) [@autismaction.org](#)
- Add: [#iSPYbillboardContest](#) [#AutismAcceptanceMonth2022](#) [#unmcMMI](#) [#AAP](#)

Social Media

Follow Us & Tag Us in Your Posts

	Facebook		@autismaction.org		@MunroeMeyerInstitute
	Instagram		@AutismActionPartnership		@unmc_mmi
	Twitter		@AutismActionAAP		@unmc_mmi

Use Hashtags

- #AutismAcceptanceMonth
- #AutismAcceptanceMonth2022
- #UniquenessUnitesUs
- #AutismAdvocate
- #AAP
- #unmcMMI

HASHTAG ACCESSIBILITY TIP

DidYouKnow that capitalizing the first letter of each word in a hashtag makes it more accessible for people of all abilities?

Learn more: <https://www.boia.org/blog/make-your-hashtags-accessible>

I am an #AutismAdvocate* Facebook Messages

Look for #AutismAdvocate posts throughout April on MMI and AAP's Facebook pages. Learn why our staff and others involved in our organizations believe so deeply in advocacy for people with autism. Share your own autism advocacy story to spread messages of acceptance and inclusion for yourself or those you love living with autism.

Tara Fahmie, PhD, BCBA-D
Associate Director
Severe Behavior Department
Munroe-Meyer Institute, UNMC

"Autistic people deserve better."

UNMC
MUNROE-MEYER INSTITUTE

Autism Action Partnership

* How to participate:

1. Share a photo or words about autism advocacy to Facebook and set the post to 'Public' - [what's this?](#)
2. Tag Us: [@MunroeMeyerInstitute](#) [@autismaction.org](#)
3. Add: [#AutismAdvocate](#) [#unmcMMI](#) [#AAP](#)





More Activities & Events

CHECK OUT THESE EVENTS OR SEEK OUT OTHER WAYS TO CELEBRATE AUTISM ACCEPTANCE & INCLUSION!

- **April 7: Autism Acceptance Month Miniseries** – hosted by Kennedy Krieger Institute's Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD).
 - Learn more at [Autism: An Evolving Perspective Tickets, Thu, Apr 7, 2022 at 12:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)
- **April 24: Omaha FunFest 2022** – presented by Autism Society Nebraska
 - Learn more at <https://www.givesignup.org/funfest2022>

Education and Advocacy

FOLLOW OUR FACEBOOK PAGES THROUGH APRIL FOR THESE RESOURCES AND MORE!

- **Beyond Autism Awareness... To Acceptance and Appreciation;** by Autism Explained.
 <https://youtu.be/haBENW96T5g>
- **12 Fast Facts About Autism FOR KIDS!;** by Autism Explained.
 <https://youtu.be/dUbsyd8Fnyw>
- **Amazing Kids – Autistic Spectrum Condition;** by Amazing Things Project
 <https://youtu.be/RBkiIHWybV4>
- **Autism Acceptance Playlist;** by Autistic Self Advocacy Network
 <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLG18VRFaDwLZOmpGjkf47oo3ox6sCZIYe>



The inclusion of information and links in this toolkit is shared as a courtesy in the spirit of inclusion and celebration of autism acceptance, and does not imply endorsement from UNMC, MMI, or AAP.

Autism Programs, Services & Supports

Autism Action Partnership

10110 Nicholas Street, Suite 202

Omaha, Nebraska 68114

402-763-8830

www.autismaction.org

Email: info@autismaction.org

Autism Action Partnership serves the Nebraska autism community by providing **support** to families, advancing **inclusion** throughout our community, and creating pathways to **prosperity**.

AAP's mission is to improve the quality of life of persons on the autism spectrum and their families through education, advocacy and support, thereby enabling them to be an integral part of the community.

Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI), UNMC

6902 Pine Street

Omaha, Nebraska 68106

402-559-6418

www.unmc.edu/mmi

Email: munroemeyer@unmc.edu

MMI's mission is to lead the world in transforming the lives of all individuals with disabilities and special health care needs, their families and communities through outreach, engagement, premier educational programs, innovative research and extraordinary patient care.

The integrated Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (iCASD) at MMI serves families of children with autism spectrum disorder and related disorders by:

- Providing the most comprehensive and effective treatment services available;
- Promoting the widespread dissemination of new technologies through specialized training and consultation;
- Addressing the disparities in access to effective treatments for autism spectrum disorder in underserved rural and remote areas through advanced, web-based technologies; and
- Engendering the continual development and refinement of effective treatments through systematic research.

Campaign Contacts

Autism Action Partnership: Katie Ping | email: kping@AutismAction.org

Munroe-Meyer Institute: Nicole Hackendahl | email: nhackendahl@unmc.edu

Additional Disability Learning



Web Accessibility

This is the inclusive practice of ensuring there are no barriers that prevent interaction with, or access to, websites on the World Wide Web by people with physical disabilities, situational disabilities, and socio-economic restrictions on bandwidth and speed. When sites are correctly designed, developed and edited, generally all users have equal access to information and functionality.

Website accessibility features are the elements of a site designed to improve the ability of people with disabilities to independently use it. Sometimes website include extra options specifically to enhance some people's use and these are noted by the 'accessibility icon' shown, which is a generally a stick person with arms outstretched symbol inside a circle. Learn more: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_accessibility