

WELCOME TO

BRANDON'S VOICE

presents

Fall Festival

An Autism Charity Event

October 2nd & 3rd

BRANDON'S VOICE

Changing the voice of Autism



BV

About Us

Brandon's Voice is a nonprofit organization with the vision of creating a better tomorrow for those impacted by autism. We are committed to helping children on the spectrum have better opportunities and helping families learn how to better communicate with their autistic children, as well as supporting autism research. We believe the key to understanding is research. More needs to be done to find out why people develop Autism, how Autism can be prevented, and how to treat people with Autism. And this research must include input from the people who are on the front lines of Autism every single day- parents, teachers, therapists and, most importantly, people who have Autism, whose voices need to be heard.

Brandon's Voice wants to change the conversation about Autism. Our fundraising efforts have the ultimate goal of getting funding to the people doing the most for the cause, not only to find a cure, but to provide the best treatment for children with Autism.

While there are many large organizations raising money and awareness for autism at a national scale, Brandon's Voice is based right here in Bryn Mawr, and seeks to work neighbor by neighbor, school by school, and family by family to change the voice of autism. We are proud that 100% of the funds we raise goes directly to the cause.

Jean and Kirk Schultz founded Brandon's Voice after their lives were touched by autism. Their son Brandon, now 13, was diagnosed with autism at nearly 2 years old. But Autism isn't Brandon's whole story. He was also diagnosed with epilepsy, GERD, asthma, lymph/vascular malformation and cervical adenitis. Brandon was born with no complications on August 15, 2007. Jean and Kirk dealt with only the usual challenges of having a newborn, until Brandon fell ill at four months old. This was the beginning of his many medical issues. Despite all of this, Brandon was able to meet all of the expected growth milestones- rolling, crawling, walking, smiling, waving and pointing. He seemed to be on track until just before his second birthday, when he suddenly began exhibiting signs of Autism. The first sign was sleep pattern disruption, he could only sleep for two hours at a time before waking up screaming. At 15 months, he started banging his head and at 16 months he stopped saying mom. Brandon was officially diagnosed with Autism on July 20, 2009.

Through targeted action, we aim to change the voice of autism across the nation by :

- Raising critically needed funds for clinical research and treatments
- Generating awareness through education and events
- Providing support for families impacted by autism
- Building a community for parents of autistic children
- Paving the road to understanding autism

But what is living with Autism like? Imagine yourself in a constant state of panic, where you have difficulty expressing yourself and people have difficulty understanding you. It's like living in a bubble, where you can see and hear but can't connect. Brandon's story, while unique, may be similar to what you or other families affected by Autism experience. We are hoping that together we can help Brandon and children like him, and figure out how to get inside the bubble.



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Help us change the voice of autism!



Do you want to help your community and enhance the lives of those affected by autism? Join our team, and you'll do exactly that!

Our non-profit organization is growing rapidly, and we need more talented volunteers, to support our autism advocacy, education, and fundraising efforts. If you want to help, but don't know how—that's ok! We offer a diverse range of service opportunities for volunteers of all ages and abilities. Contact us, and we'll find the perfect fit for you in our cause.

Resumé experiences you'll get as a volunteer:

- Writing grant applications.
- Setting-up and working events at venues.
- Finding corporate sponsorships for our events; including ads, etc.
- Planning and putting materials together for events.
- Working with a team.
- Community Service Hours.

To get involved, please email us at jean@brandonsvoice.org

JOIN US IN OUR FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

People with autism spectrum disorders and related conditions often face extreme social isolation because of how they can react in social situations. Beyond raising funds for clinical research and treatments, we believe that as a society we must redefine our relationship with autism and disorders along the spectrum in order to fundamentally change how we view people who have this diagnosis.

The only way to combat isolation is through inclusion—and it starts with our youth. Working with neuro-typical young people in schools and communities, Brandon's Voice seeks to build a community of young ambassadors who foster acceptance and inclusion, rather than fear and marginalization.

People with autism respond well to a peer mentoring style of social skills instruction, where they are being led into pro-social situations by same age, similarly situated peers. Having adults instruct teenagers in standard social mores is rarely successful, because in fact adults don't know the unspoken rules of the culture they are attempting to emulate.



Poppin' for the Spectrum!

Just as popcorn bursts kernel by kernel, we are looking to change the voice of autism one voice at a time. Poppin' for the Spectrum is a fun and easy way for every family and every community to support our mission.

Brandon's Voice invites you to host your own Poppin' for the Spectrum popcorn stand to raise money for autism research, programming, and awareness. Find guidance, templates, and more at brandonsvoice.org or contact us for details.

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Thank you for coming to our Fall Festival!

We sincerely appreciate your support of autism. This year Brandon's Voice has continued to support research efforts to help improve the lives of those affected by autism. We also have been educating local schools and businesses on how to build inclusive environments.

Brandon's Voice has as its central mission to develop new, applied, innovative programming that can be used to fill in 'gaps' in the education of people with autism. Whether this involves learning about how to functionally use public transportation, acquiring coding/programming skills, or fostering true friendships with peers, we believe that people with autism can exceed current expectations.

This year, Brandon's Voice has been collaborating with psycholinguist Dr. Felicia Hurewitz, Ph.D., BCBA, to develop a curriculum for what we term a "Linguistically Informed" autism program. The objective of this endeavor is to help teenage learners who have stalled in language acquisition despite using standard instructional methods. Such learners may use telegraphic language when speaking, such as "go car no", instead of "my toy car isn't going." This new curriculum explicitly teaches such students to use full language, one grammatical construction at a time, utilizing a multisensory, sequential paradigm. In a pilot of this curriculum, we have found success helping a child go from speaking simple nouns to full grammatical structures. Excitingly, this approach has allowed these students to correct many of the idiosyncratic elements of speech, leading to improved articulation and intonation. Along with this increase in speech usage, we have seen substantial progress in reading, writing and mathematics amongst these students. In the future, we hope to scale up the linguistically informed program to more children, and to manualize this innovate new curriculum so that it may be disseminated.

Thank you again for your generosity and support.

With Appreciation,

Jeanie Schultz

President, Brandon's Voice

Please show these donors our gratitude for their generous support of Brandon's Voice and our mission — to change the voice of autism!

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Special thank you to all the families who purchased a lane or the beer & bourbon tasting and donated the money due to need to hold the event virtually! Thank you also to all those who have donated their precious time to help with the event.

All of you have and continue to make a difference. It is because of your efforts and generosity, Brandon'sVoice was able to donate to help support research, educate and begin to build programming!



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