

BRANDON'S VOICE
presents

BONFIRE BONANZA

An Autism Charity Event

April 24th-April 29th



BRANDON'S VOICE

Changing the voice of Autism

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.



About Us

Jean and Kirk Schultz welcomed their second child, a baby boy named Brandon, into the world on August 15th, 2007. With an uncomplicated birth, they took their youngest child home and began to navigate the uneasy waters of having a newborn. At just four months old, things changed when Brandon fell ill. This was just the beginning of many medical issues that would affect Brandon and his family. A tumor was found underneath his armpit, requiring several surgeries and interventions, and he received several new diagnoses including epilepsy, GERD, asthma, lymph/vascular malformation and cervical adenitis. Despite all of the additional new factors regarding Brandon's health, he was able to meet all of the expected growth milestones such as rolling, crawling, walking, smiling, waving, pointing etc., which was reassuring to his parents, but they knew something was still different with their newest child.

Brandon began exhibiting puzzling and concerning behavior patterns consistent with what would become his next diagnosis. The first sign was sleep pattern disruption. Previously past the sleep training stage of development, Brandon was now only able to sleep for a maximum of two hours at a time before suddenly waking up screaming. At 15 months, he began engaging in self-injurious behaviors such as banging his head, and then at 16 months he stopped saying Mom. Just before his second birthday, on July 20, 2009, Brandon was officially diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Individuals on the autism spectrum, like Brandon, face daily struggles to have a meaningful place in our world. ASD impacts each individual differently, but many present with communication deficits and sensory processing differences that hinder their ability to participate in both necessary and enjoyable life activities. Even though persons with autism often have unique strengths of their own, their differences are consistently highlighted in negative ways, and categorized by what they can't do, rather than what they can. In order to create a better, more inclusive tomorrow for individuals on the autism spectrum, Jean and Kirk Schultz created a non-profit in their son's name, called Brandon's Voice.

Brandon's Voice is a nonprofit organization based in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, located just outside of Philadelphia, that strives to better support those whose lives are affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder; including caregivers, educators, therapists, and most importantly, individuals with Autism, whose voices need to be heard. Unlike other large organizations dedicated to raising funds and awareness, Brandon's Voice is proud to state that 100% of the funds raised go directly to the cause. Your support and donations through our website and fundraisers will help to raise critically needed funds to not only support those with autism throughout their lifespan, but also will help to fund research exploring the cause, prevention, and development of better, more effective treatments for ASD. Help us to ignite the change, by creating a better more inclusive world for neurodivergent individuals such as Brandon. We empower you to be the voice for those who may not have one, and to help individuals with ASD find a meaningful place within our world.

Through targeted action, we aim to change the voice of autism 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 children with autism
- Paving the road to understanding autism



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AUTISMFACTS

IN 2021, THE CDC REPORTED:

approximately **1 in 44** children in the U.S.

is diagnosed with an **Autism Spectrum Disorder.**

1 in 27
boys
identified
with
autism

1 in 116
girls
identified
with autism

**BOYS ARE FOUR TIMES
MORE LIKELY TO BE
DIAGNOSED WITH
AUTISM THAN GIRLS**

31% of children with ASD have an intellectual disability
25% are in the borderline range, and
44% have IQ scores in the average to above average range

Autism affects all ethnic and socioeconomic groups, but minority groups tend to be diagnosed later and less often

**EARLY INTERVENTION AFFORDS THE
BEST OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT
HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVER
BENEFITS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN**

Developmental regression, or loss of skills, such as language and social interests, affects 1 in 5 children who will go on to be diagnosed with autism and typically occurs between ages 1 and 3

An estimated 40% of people with autism are nonverbal

Nearly two-thirds of children with autism between the ages of 6 and 15 have been bullied

Nearly half of those with autism wander or bolt from safety

Nearly 28% of 8 year olds with ASD have self-injurious behaviors. Head banging, arm biting and skin scratching are among the most common

Attention Deficient Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) affects an estimated 30 to 61% of children with autism

More than half of children with autism have one or more chronic sleep problems

AUTISM CAN AFFECT THE WHOLE BODY

ANXIETY DISORDERS AFFECT AN ESTIMATED 7% OF CHILDREN AND 26% OF ADULTS WITH AUTISM

AS MANY AS 1/3 OF PEOPLE WITH AUTISM HAVE EPILEPSY (SEIZURE DISORDER)

Children with autism are 8x more likely to suffer from one or more chronic gastrointestinal disorders than are other children

Studies suggest that schizophrenia affects between 4 and 35% of adults with autism. By contrast, schizophrenia affects an estimated 1.1 % of the general population

Autism-associated health problems extend across the life span, from young children to senior citizens. Nearly 1/3 of 2-5 year olds with autism are overweight and only 10% are medically obese.

On average, autism costs an estimated \$60,000 a year through childhood, with the bulk of costs in special services and lost wages related to increased demands on one or both parents. Costs increase with the occurrence of intellectual disability.

Mothers of children with ASD, who tend to serve as the child's case manager and advocate, are less likely to work outside the home. On average, they work fewer hours per week and earn 56% less than mothers of children with no health limitations and 35% less than mothers of children with other disabilities or disorders.

Over the next decade, an estimated 707,000 to 1,116,000 teens **(707,000 to 11,600 each year)** will enter adulthood and age out of school based autism services.

Teens with autism receive healthcare transition services half as often as those with other special healthcare needs. Young people whose autism is coupled with associated medical problems are even less likely to receive transition support.

Many young adults with autism do not receive any healthcare for years after they stop seeing a pediatrician.

More than half of young adults with autism remain unemployed and unenrolled in higher education in the two years after high school. This is a lower rate than that of young adults in other disability categories, including learning disabilities, intellectual disability or speech-language impairment.

Of the nearly 18,000 people with autism who used state-funded vocational rehabilitation programs in 2014, only 60% left the program with a job. Of these, 80% worked part-time at a median weekly rate of \$160, putting them well below the poverty level.

THE COST OF CARING OF AMERICANS WITH AUTISM HAD REACHED \$268 BILLION IN 2015 AND WOULD RISE TO \$461 BILLION BY 2025 IN THE ABSENCE OF MORE EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN.

The majority of autism's costs in the U.S. are for adult services- an estimated \$175 to \$196 billion a year, compared to \$61 to \$66 billion a year for children.

Research demonstrates that job activities that encourage independence reduce autism symptoms and increase daily living skills.

Passage of the 2014 Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act allows tax-preferred savings accounts for people with disabilities, including Autism, to be established by states.

Passage of autism insurance legislation in all 50 states is providing access to medical treatment and therapies

WE CAN HELP CHANGE THE VOICE OF AUTISM, WITH YOUR SUPPORT. PLEASE VISIT US AT BRANDONVOICE.ORG TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN MAKE AN IMPACT.



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Thank you for participating in Brandon's Voice:
Bonfire Bonanza Fundraiser 2022 for the benefit of Autism!!

We sincerely appreciate your support of this year's auction.
All proceeds will fund autism research, education, and
programming for adults and children on the spectrum.





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