

# *Angels with Autism*

COLUMBUS, OHIO



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP PACKET



Autism Spectrum Disorder is a pervasive developmental disorder, affecting how a child functions in several areas, including speech, social skills and behavior. It affects about 1 in 150 in the U.S., and the number of affected children appears to be rising, even as much as four times since 1975. Fortunately, there is treatment available that can make a huge difference in the lives of these children and adults. Unfortunately, the treatment is very expensive, and rarely covered by insurance.

The Angels with Autism foundation was formed in 2005 by parents of autistic children to support autism research and locally, the Columbus Children's Hospital Autism Center. Ellen Koutras is the proud mother of Allison, and Stella Studer is the proud mother of Sarah. Mrs. Koutras and Mrs. Studer saw a need for financial support of the wonderful community of therapists, researchers, and teachers that they had in the City of Columbus. They then gathered from their network of friends and family and expanded this group to be a well-run, fully functioning non-profit corporation that is 100% staffed by volunteers to maximize the amount that we can give to autism related entities. Angels with Autism sponsors one major event per year. Several other events throughout the year provide the much-needed financial support to Angels with Autism.

**We are committed to making a difference in the quality of life for our “angels with autism”.**

### **ARCHANGEL SPONSOR - \$20,000+**

- Official Host for Annual Benefit Event (limit is two Archangel Sponsors)
- Company/Individual Name Listed in Program
- Company/Individual Logo Listed in Program
- Company/Individual Name Listed in promotional materials
- Company/Individual Logo Listed in promotional materials
- Direct Link from [angelswithautism.com](http://angelswithautism.com) website
- Company/Individual Name Listed in media releases
- Ten Complimentary tickets to September event (\$500 value)
- Verbal recognition of Archangel Level sponsorship at Annual Benefit Event
- Opportunity to donate logo items for distribution at Annual Benefit Event
- Opportunity to donate premium auction/raffle item Annual Benefit Event

### **GUARDIAN ANGEL SPONSOR - \$10,000+**

- Company/Individual Name Listed in Program
- Company/Individual Logo Listed in Program
- Company/Individual Name Listed in promotional materials
- Company/Individual Logo Listed in promotional materials
- Direct Link from [angelswithautism.com](http://angelswithautism.com) website
- Company/Individual Name Listed in media releases
- Ten Complimentary tickets to September event (\$500 value)
- Verbal recognition of Guardian Angel Level sponsorship at Annual Benefit Event
- Opportunity to donate logo items for distribution at Annual Benefit Event
- Opportunity to donate premium auction/raffle item Annual Benefit Event

### **FRIENDSHIP ANGEL SPONSOR - \$5,000+**

- Company/Individual Name Listed in Program
- Company/Individual Name Listed in promotional materials
- Direct Link from [angelswithautism.com](http://angelswithautism.com) website
- Company/Individual Name Listed in media releases
- Eight Complimentary tickets to September event (\$400 value)
- Verbal recognition of Friendship Angel Level sponsorship at Annual Benefit Event
- Opportunity to donate premium auction/raffle item Annual Benefit Event

### **PEACE ANGEL SPONSOR - \$3,000+**

- Company/Individual Name Listed in Program
- Company/Individual Name listed on [angelswithautism.com](http://angelswithautism.com) website
- Six Complimentary tickets to September event (\$300 value)
- Verbal recognition of Peace Angel Level sponsorship at Annual Benefit event
- Opportunity to donate auction/raffle item at Annual Benefit

### **ANGEL SPONSOR - \$1,000+**

- Company/Individual Name Listed in Program
- Company/Individual Name listed on [angelswithautism.com](http://angelswithautism.com) website
- Four Complimentary tickets to September event (\$200 value)
- Opportunity to donate auction/raffle item at Annual Benefit Event

### **CHERUB SPONSOR - \$500+**

- Company/Individual Name Listed in Program
- Company/Individual Name listed on [angelswithautism.com](http://angelswithautism.com) website
- Two Complimentary tickets to September event (\$100 value)
- Opportunity to donate auction/raffle item at Annual Benefit Event



Angels with Autism  
Corporate Sponsorship

Reach and Scope

Angels with Autism is a new foundation that is growing rapidly in several markets, and reaches thousands of people.

- With the addition of the September Annual Benefit Event, there is potential for participants from 11 countries, and almost every state in the union.
- Columbus, Ohio still is the strongest reach for us, and monies raised go directly to Central Ohio Autistic children and adults, along with national research that directly benefits Central Ohio.
- Your company will reach some of the most influential consumers and business leaders in the Central Ohio area. We expect these business leaders to attend the September Conference event as they've done in the past.
- The September event will tend to draw researchers, families, and supporters of autism research that will represent the upper third of income levels.

In addition to supporting a very worthy cause, it is our greatest hope that the events will be mutually beneficial for your company and for the foundation.

## ✧ What is Autism / PDD? ✧

Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) is a neurological disorder that affects a child's ability to communicate, understand language, play, and relate to others. PDD represents a distinct category of developmental disabilities that share many of the same characteristics.

The different diagnostic terms that fall within the broad meaning of PDD, include:

- Autistic Disorder,
- Asperger's Disorder,
- Rett's Disorder,
- Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, and
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).

While there are subtle differences and degrees of severity among these conditions, treatment and educational needs can be very similar for all of them.

In the diagnostic manual used to classify mental disorders, the *DSM-IV-TR* (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), "Autistic Disorder" is listed under the heading of "Pervasive Developmental Disorders." A diagnosis of autistic disorder is made when an individual displays 6 or more of 12 symptoms across three major areas: (a) social interaction, (b) communication, and (c) behavior. When children display similar behaviors but do not meet the specific criteria for autistic disorder (or the other disorders listed above), they may receive a diagnosis of Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified, or PDD-NOS.

Autism is one of the disabilities specifically defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal legislation under which infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities receive early intervention, special education and related services. IDEA defines the disorder as "a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive



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All of our publications and resource lists are online—help yourself! Visit us at:

[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

If you'd like personalized assistance, email or call us:

[nichcy@aed.org](mailto:nichcy@aed.org)

1.800.695.0285  
(V/TTY)

activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences." See 34 *Code of Federal Regulations* §300.8(c)(1).

### ✧ **How Common is Autism / PDD?** ✧

Information from the National Institute of Mental Health and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that between 2 to 6 per 1,000 children (from 1 in 500 to 1 in 150) have some form of autism/PDD. These disorders are four times more common in boys than in girls, although Rett's Disorder has only been reported and diagnosed in girls.

The causes of autism or PDD are unknown. Currently, researchers are investigating areas such as brain development, structure, genetic factors and biochemical imbalance in the brain as possible causes. These disorders are not caused by psychological factors.

### ✧ **What are the Signs of Autism / PDD?** ✧

Some or all of the following characteristics may be observed in mild to severe forms:

- Communication problems (e.g., using and understanding language);
- Difficulty relating to people, objects, and events;
- Unusual play with toys and other objects;
- Difficulty with changes in routine or familiar surroundings; and
- Repetitive body movements or behavior patterns.

Children with autism/PDD vary widely in abilities, intelligence, and behaviors. Some children do not speak; others have language that often includes repeated phrases or conversations. Children with more advanced language skills tend to use a small range of topics and have difficulty with abstract concepts. Repetitive play skills, a limited range of interests, and impaired social skills are generally evident as well. Unusual responses to sensory information—for example, loud noises, lights, certain textures of food or fabrics—are also common.

## Other Helpful Things to Know

These NICHCY publications talk about topics important to parents of a child with a disability.

*Parenting a Child with Special Needs*

*Your Child's Evaluation*

*Parent to Parent Support*

*Questions Often Asked by Parents About Special Education Services*

*Developing Your Child's IEP*

All are available in English and in Spanish—on our Web site or by contacting us.

*Early diagnosis and appropriate educational programs are very important to children with autism/PDD.*

## ✧ *What Research is Being Done?* ✧

### *Want More Info?*

NICHCY's *State Resources Sheets* list organizations in each state related to autism, early intervention, special education, parent centers, and other disability-related issues and concerns. Help yourself!

Our "*A to Z Topics*" include connections to a treasure trove of links to the latest research, publications, conferences and more!

(Just two of the many resources available to you online and at no cost from NICHCY.)



Thanks to federal legislation—the Children's Health Act of 2000 and the Combating Autism Act of 2006—nearly \$1 billion over the next five years (2007-2012) has been authorized to combat autism through research, screening, early detection, and early intervention. The National Institutes of Health and the CDC are the lead entities conducting and coordinating multiple research activities. On the education front, the PDA Center at the University of Washington has several sites around the country that provide training and support to schools and families for students with autism spectrum disorders. Research on instructional interventions for children with a broad range of needs is an ongoing national endeavor. Check NICHCY's Research to Practice database and OSEP's discretionary projects directories on our web site to learn more. Additional information can also be found on the web sites included in the list of Organizations at the end of this publication.

## ✧ *What about School?* ✧

Early diagnosis and intervention are very important for children with autism/PDD. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), children with autism/PDD may be eligible for early intervention services (birth to 3) and an educational program appropriate to their individual needs. In addition to academic instruction, special education programs for students with autism/PDD (ages 3 to 22) focus on improving communication, social, academic, behavioral, and daily living skills. Behavior and communication problems that interfere with learning often require the assistance of a professional who is particularly knowledgeable in the autism field to develop and help implement a plan which can be carried out at home and school.

The classroom environment should be structured so that the program is consistent and predictable. Students with autism/PDD learn better and are less confused when information is presented visually as well as verbally. Interaction with nondisabled peers is also important, for these students provide models of appropriate language, social, and behavioral skills. Consistency and continuity are very important for children with autism/PDD, and parents should always be involved in the development of their child's program, so that learning activities, experiences, and approaches will be most effective and can be carried over into the home and community.

With educational programs designed to meet a student's individual needs and specialized adult support services in employment and living arrangements, many children and adults with autism/PDD grow to live, work, and participate fully in their communities.

# Myths & Facts About Autism

**Myth:** Autism can be cured.

**Fact:** Autism is a lifelong disability. Currently, there is no cure. However, progress can be made with effective treatment. Both early detection and appropriate intervention are vital to the future development of a child with autism.

**Myth:** People with autism don't smile, make eye contact, or show affection.

**Fact:** People with autism do smile, make eye contact, and show affection but may do so less frequently or in an atypical way. For example, one individual with autism may make only fleeting eye contact, while another individual may smile or laugh without an apparent reason.

**Myth:** Individuals with autism do not talk.

**Fact:** Many individuals with autism do develop speech. Their vocabulary may consist of a few words or many words; sentences may be simple (one or two words) or complex.

**Myth:** Bad parenting causes autism.

**Fact:** There is no research to support that autism is caused by psychological factors in the child's environment. Rather, there is a lot of evidence that autism is a genetic disorder.

**Myth:** Autism affects only males.

**Fact:** Autism is four to five times more prevalent in boys than girls.

**Myth:** Autism affects only middle class American families.

**Fact:** Autism is found throughout the world, in families of all racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds.

**Myth:** Autism is a rare disorder.

**Fact:** Autism is estimated to affect more than one in 500 people. One preliminary study estimated as many as one in 150 people. Autism is the third most common developmental disorder, more common than Down syndrome.

**Myth:** Individuals with autism can't learn.

**Fact:** Research indicates that individuals with autism respond well to highly structured, specialized education programs. Teaching must be tailored to the specific needs of the individual and must be delivered in a consistent, comprehensive, and coordinated manner.

# Foundation Officers & Contact List

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