



Why Easter Seals and Autism?

UNTIL THERE'S A CURE, THERE'S EASTER SEALS

More than a generation ago, Easter Seals was front and center during the polio epidemic, working tirelessly to help children and adults with polio gain the skills they needed to live independently through medical rehabilitation and various therapies. And now, Easter Seals is the country's leading provider of services for people with autism today.



Help and Hope for 85 Years

Easter Seals has been providing services and support to children and adults with disabilities, and to the families who love them, for more than 85 years.

Over the last 20 years, Easter Seals has seen a dramatic increase in the number of people with autism the organization serves—both through its services developed specifically for people with autism and through services that include children and adults with autism among other service recipients.

As Many as 1 in 150 Children Now Diagnosed

The Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) new findings on the prevalence of autism validate what many have believed for some time* – autism is an epidemic of our time. The fact is, many families are living with autism today and there is an urgent need for increased funding, services and supports for individuals with autism.

Autism is Treatable

While there is no known cause or cure, nor one single effective treatment – autism is treatable. People with autism, at any age, are capable of making significant progress through personalized interventions and therapy; and can and do lead meaningful lives. That's where Easter Seals comes in.

Getting the right support at the earliest stage in life can help a child gain the skills he or she needs to be successful—but it's never too late! Easter Seals autism services support people at any age:

- Providing early diagnosis and early intervention for very young children with developmental delays and autism
- Working with children with autism, encouraging families to find treatment approaches that deal with the whole child
- Helping young adults, supporting them through transitions from school-to-meaningful work and independent living opportunities
- Teaming up with adults with autism in employment and day programs across the country

* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2007



Until There's a Cure... There's Easter Seals

While there are a number of organizations researching to find the cause and cure for autism, Easter Seals is unique as the nation's leading provider of services and support for children and adults living with autism and their families. We're working nationally to provide children and adults with autism individualized treatment plans and comprehensive services.

Easter Seals also advocates in Washington, DC, encouraging Congress to finance research to improve services and supports and pursuing public policy solutions for the challenges families with autism face.



It Takes a Village...

Easter Seals is working closely with other autism organizations—such as the Autism Society of America (ASA)—to identify solutions, share knowledge, seek breakthroughs, improve training and professional development, and learn how advances in research can be applied to therapy, as quickly as possible.

Family Support

Autism generates more stress on families than any other disability.* As children and adults with autism usually find it difficult or impossible to relate to other people in a meaningful way, by nature, this “affect” of autism can contribute to the increased stress on a family.**

Parental and family involvement is pivotal. As parents are their children's life-long advocates and social partners, children with autism benefit by having their families actively involved in their treatment. Easter Seals trains parents as interventionists and treatment partners to work alongside its autism service professionals. And, the organization also provides recreation and respite programs to give the entire family a little time for play or a small break from intensive care giving responsibilities.

Help for Kids and Adults Living with Autism Today

In general, research on autism is sparse, funding for research, therapy and services are inadequate, quality services—especially for adults—are limited, unemployment among adults with autism persists, and general knowledge and understanding gaps prevail. Easter Seals wants to change this, to make a difference for families living with autism today.

www.easterseals.com

Visit easterseals.com to learn more about autism, find services at an Easter Seals near you, or help Easter Seals change the lives of people living with autism by becoming a donor or volunteer.

* Bromley, Hare, Davison, & Emerson, 2005; Dumas, Wolf, Fisman and Colugun, 1991; and, Holyrode and MacArthur, 1976

** Hobson and Harris, 1994

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To help families living with autism visit easterseals.com

