

Ideas for Autism Awareness Events

You can use your imagination to come up with an autism awareness event. Factors to consider include the time you have to spend in organizing an event, the number of members in your group, the size of your local community, available space (if needed), willingness of community partners to help, and monetary budget. Below are some suggestions for low cost awareness events that you might consider. **BE SURE** to contact your local media to publicize your event!

If you have any other great ideas for awareness events, please post them on the group leader listserv!

Choose at least one local group and offer to speak at one of their regularly scheduled meetings. Ideas for such groups are included in this packet.

Give a talk in a classroom at a local school about how to be a good friend to a classmate with autism. There is a worksheet in this packet to help you.

Sponsor a walk in your community. Pick a date and map a route. Start small...have your members invite family and friends. Have everyone wear a certain colored shirt, carry signs, and hand out awareness flyers.

See if your local library would host an awareness event one evening during April. You and the members of your group could be on hand to distribute awareness materials to library patrons.

Order rolls of jigsaw puzzle piece ribbon. Cut the ribbon and use safety pins to form a loop. Distribute them in your community on a certain day or throughout the month.

Create a special, brightly colored flyer and visit local businesses. Ask them to display your flyer in a window for the month of April.

If you have a supportive local restaurant, ask if you might hold an event during lunch or dinner one day during April. You can simply set up a table, greet patrons, and provide information.

Sponsor a community art show. Provide art supplies to the children attending your next support group meeting. Find a venue to display the artwork during April (think library, school, hospital, local business). Be sure to display information about your group!

Sponsor a car wash in your community. Check with a local business (the local Wal-Mart might be a place to start).

Inquire about posting a positive message on a business sign within your community. Many banks and local grocers have space to post special messages.

This list was compiled by Debbie Lorence, LCSW for the Kentucky Autism Training Center. If you have any feedback on this list, please contact debbie.lorence@louisville.edu or (502) 852-7811. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, nor an endorsement of any product or service.
January 2010