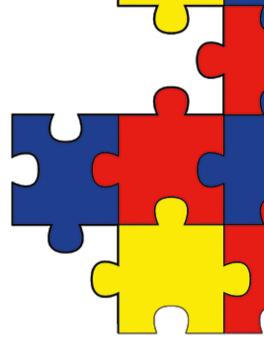


According to the most recent estimates by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects approximately 1 in 68 children. ASD is 5 times more common in boys (1 in 42) than in girls (1 in 189). Autism crosses all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic boundaries, and about half of the children diagnosed with ASD have average to above average intellectual ability.

ASD includes autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder – not otherwise specified and Asperger Syndrome. In 2013 all autism disorders were put under the umbrella of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Diagnosing ASD can be difficult, since there is no medical test, like a blood test, to diagnose the disorders. Doctors look at the child's behavior and development to make a diagnosis. ASD can sometimes be detected at 18 months or younger. By age 2, a diagnosis by an experienced professional can be considered very reliable. However, many children do not receive a final diagnosis until they are much older. This delay means that children with an ASD and their families might not get the help they need.



## **Detecting Behaviors**

In many cases, parents are the first to detect behaviors that may be signs of autism. According to Dr. Zwaigenbaum, who has spent his career devoted to Autism, "Parents are the experts when it comes to their kids and their observations are really valuable. In some respects, parents are picking up on differences at six and nine months of age that we have a

much harder time seeing in the clinic." Therefore, as parents, make sure to be an advocate for your child if you have concerns, as early intervention can help with skill development and improve outcomes. However, the signs or symptoms of autism vary greatly, thus making it even harder to detect. According to Autism Speaks, some common areas to

be aware of are:

- Social interaction challenges
- Communication difficulties
- The tendency to exhibit repetitive behaviors

For more detailed information go to https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/d efault/files/docs/adult\_symptoms.pdf



# **Autism Research**

There is still a lot to learn about ASD – researchers have yet to definitively determine a cause or identify a genetic pre-disposition. However, research on ASD has increased a great deal in recent years, and there is a large group of public and private organizations working to better understand ASD through research. Recent efforts to coordinate autism research are reflected in the "Strategic Plan for Autism Spectrum Disorder Research" by the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC).

What research has found is that there is no one cause for autism. Some researchers believe to have found several gene changes associated with autism and according to Autism Speaks, "in about 15% of cases, a specific genetic cause of a person's autism can be identified.

However, most cases involve a complex and variable combination of genetic risk and environmental factors". This is the case for many of the disorders and diseases we see through-out the world.

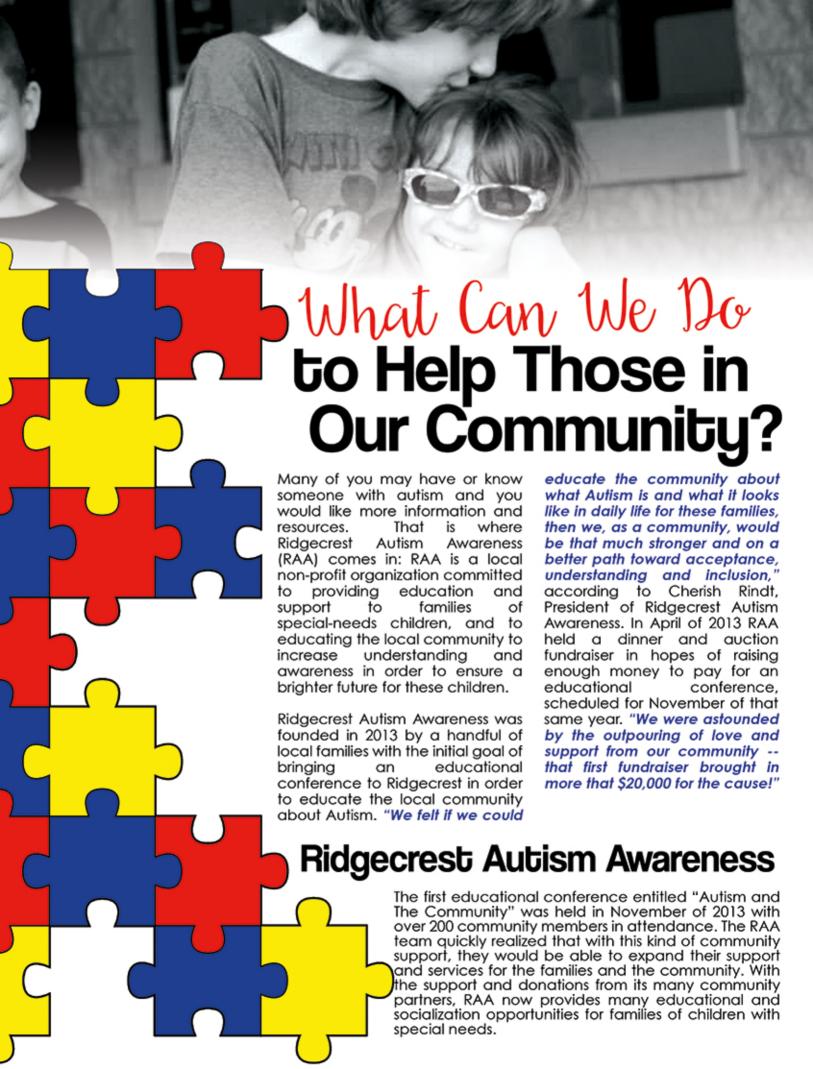


We have some where to go, a safe place to meet and talk about raising children with special needs.

Without being judged...

"It's a place where we all celebrate together the big and even small things that our children accomplish."

"We feel like we belong."





Ridgecrest Autism Awareness

RAA was founded to provide support and education for families of children with Autism. However, they have expanded their outreach to include all children with special needs or disabilities. All of their events are free for families of any child with special needs or disabilities. Cherish explains "We quickly realized that the struggles of families dealing with an Autism diagnosis are, in many ways, similar to a family dealing with Down syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and many diagnoses. **Families** need to know that they're not alone and that there are people in this community that will step up and help them."

Ridgecrest Autism Awareness is an all-volunteer organization that is funded totally by local donations. Ridgecrest Autism Awareness

Annual Fundraising Dinner & Auction

April 2nd, 2016

Kerr McGee Center, Ridgecrest

Ridgecrest Autism Awareness
(RAA) holds an annual fundraising dinner and auction to help raise money for the local organization. For more information, please visit www.RidgecrestAutismAwareness.com

"We would not be here today if it were not for the tremendous support that we have received from the Ridgecrest community. We as an organization, and the families that we represent, are eternally grateful for the total outpouring of love and support that we have received from the community."

### For More Information

about Ridgecrest Autism Awareness please see their website at www.RidgecrestAutismAwareness.com, visit them on Facebook at Ridgecrest Autism Awareness, or contact Cherish Rindt at 760-371-9116 or cherish.rindt@RidgecrestAutismAwareness.com.



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Kerr McGee Center, Ridgecrest

PLEASE CALL 760-499-3825 BEGINNING FEBRUARY 8TH

For More information on the Healthy LOOKout, visit www.healthylookout.com or contact Tera Moorehead at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital (760) 499-3825 - tera.moorehead@rrh.org