



# World Autism Month



World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) aims to put a spotlight on the hurdles faced by people living with autism every day. As a growing global health issue owing to its increasing exposure in the press and common knowledge, autism is an issue that is only now gaining more understanding. WAAD activities are planned every year to further increase and develop world knowledge of children and adults who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

On World Autism Awareness Day, we recognize and celebrate the rights of persons with autism. This year's observance takes place amid a public health crisis, unlike any other in our lifetimes. This crisis places persons with autism at disproportionate risk as a result of the coronavirus and its impact on society.

Autism is a developmental disorder that impairs the ability to communicate and interact. Autism spectrum disorder impacts the nervous system. The range and severity of symptoms can vary widely. Common symptoms include difficulty with communication, difficulty with social interactions, obsessive interests and repetitive behaviors.

Early recognition, as well as behavioural, educational and family therapies, may reduce symptoms and support development and learning.

Persons with autism have the right to self-determination, independence and autonomy, as well as the right to education and employment on an equal basis with others. But the breakdown of vital support systems and networks as a result of COVID-19 exacerbates the obstacles that persons with autism face in exercising these rights. We must ensure that a prolonged disruption caused by the emergency does not result in rollbacks of the rights that persons with autism and their representative organizations have worked so hard to advance.

Join us for World Autism Awareness Month to help us spread kindness and autism awareness through our social media as we stay home safely.