

APRIL IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

What is Autism?

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex neuro-developmental condition that typically appears during the first three years of life. The result of neurological disorder that affects the normal functioning of the brain, autism impacts development in the areas of social interaction and communication skills.

Both children and adults with autism typically show difficulties in verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and leisure or play activities. One should keep in mind that autism is spectrum disorder and it affects each individual differently and to varying degrees. Early diagnosis is crucial to have the best possible long-term outcomes. With early identification, a child can begin benefitting from one of many specialized intervention programs. According to the CDC, the prevalence rate for autism is now 1 in 59 children. ASD is reported to occur in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. ASD is about 4 times more common among boys than among girls.

Safe Haven Farms, established in 2010, is a community of adults with ASD in Madison Township, Butler County, Ohio. Our church has been supportive of this Farm through its mission of decorating the Hatton Center for Christmas, financial contributions, and prayers.

Suggestions for our response in Prayer:

Pray for all people with ASD.

Pray for greater awareness of the condition.

Pray for better public services in health, education, specialist speech therapy and respite care.

Pray for tolerance and understanding towards people with ASD.

Pray for access to training and jobs for people with ASD.

Pray for parents and caretakers of children and adults with ASD.

Pray for national governments that they will provide public services and listen to the voices of disability communities.

Pray for teachers in mainstream schools and special schools that they will think of real educational strategies to help children with ASD.

Pray for medical professionals as they reach out to all people with ASD.

Pray for the improvement of communication and social skills for children and adults with ASD.

Pray for the residents of Safe Haven Farm as they learn to live with one another and grow in their abilities to learn new tasks.

Pray for their caretakers—that they respect each individual that is entrusted to their care. Give them patience and deep understanding of each individual's inner needs.

Pray for the management of Safe Haven Farm—that they develop innovative programs that nurture the continued development of adults with ASD.

ALELULIA, AMEN!

Sue Wilson