
AUTISM TREE VOLUNTEER TRAINING



AUTISM TREE

ZOOM RULES:



- MUTE yourself when you are not speaking
- We recommend SPEAKER VIEW for presentation
- Sharing video is OPTIONAL
- Please type all questions/comments into CHAT

AGENDA



- About Autism Tree, Our Core Pillars, Our Purpose & Our Mission
- History of Autism Tree & Our Programs
- What is Autism?
- What are the signs of autism?
- Practical tips on how to engage with autistic people of all ages
- Advice on how to be an Autism Tree Rockstar Volunteer

ABOUT AUTISM TREE

(WHO ARE WE?)



FOUNDED IN 2003, AUTISM TREE IS A 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO
IMPROVING AUTISM COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD
AND BENEFITS THE ENTIRE FAMILY.





OUR PURPOSE (WHY DO WE EXIST?)

AUTISM TREE EXISTS TO HELP THE
AUTISM COMMUNITY LIVE OUR BEST LIVES.

OUR FOUR CORE PILLARS:



EMBRACE. CONNECT. EMPOWER. CREATE.

WE EMBRACE EVERY FAMILY WITH LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE.

WE CONNECT EVERY FAMILY WITH A COMMUNITY OF RESOURCES.

WE EMPOWER YOU TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD BY INVESTING IN YOUR VISION.

WE CREATE ORGANIC RELATIONSHIPS, MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES, AND LASTING FRIENDSHIPS.



OUR MISSION

(WHAT DO WE DO?)

PROVIDE OVER 200 COMMUNITY-BASED FAMILY EVENTS (UNDER 19 PROGRAMS) ANNUALLY AT NO CHARGE TO OUR FAMILIES. EACH PROGRAM IS CREATED TO ENGAGE THE AUTISM COMMUNITY IN A VARIETY OF PLAY-CENTERED ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO BUILD SOCIAL CONFIDENCE, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS.

OUR 19 PROGRAMS:

- ADAPTIVE ART PROGRAM
- ADAPTIVE DANCE PROGRAM
- BOOK CLUB PROGRAM
- BRIDGE TO THE BEACH PROGRAM
- CODING PROGRAM
- FOOD, FARMING & NUTRITION PROGRAM
- GIRLS IN STEM PROGRAM
- INTERN & VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
- LEGO THERAPY PROGRAM
- LUNCH & LEARN WEEKLY SERIES
- NAVIGATING NEURODIVERSITY PROGRAM
- NCL GIRLS MENTOR PROGRAM
- MUSICAL PLAYGROUP PROGRAM
- PARENT MENTOR PROGRAM
- PLNU SOCCER PLAYER MENTOR PROGRAM
- SIBLING SUPPORT PROGRAM
- TEEN TIME/COLLEGE READINESS PROGRAM
- USD BASEBALL PLAYER MENTOR PROGRAM
- USD FOOTBALL PLAYER MENTOR PROGRAM



OUR HISTORY

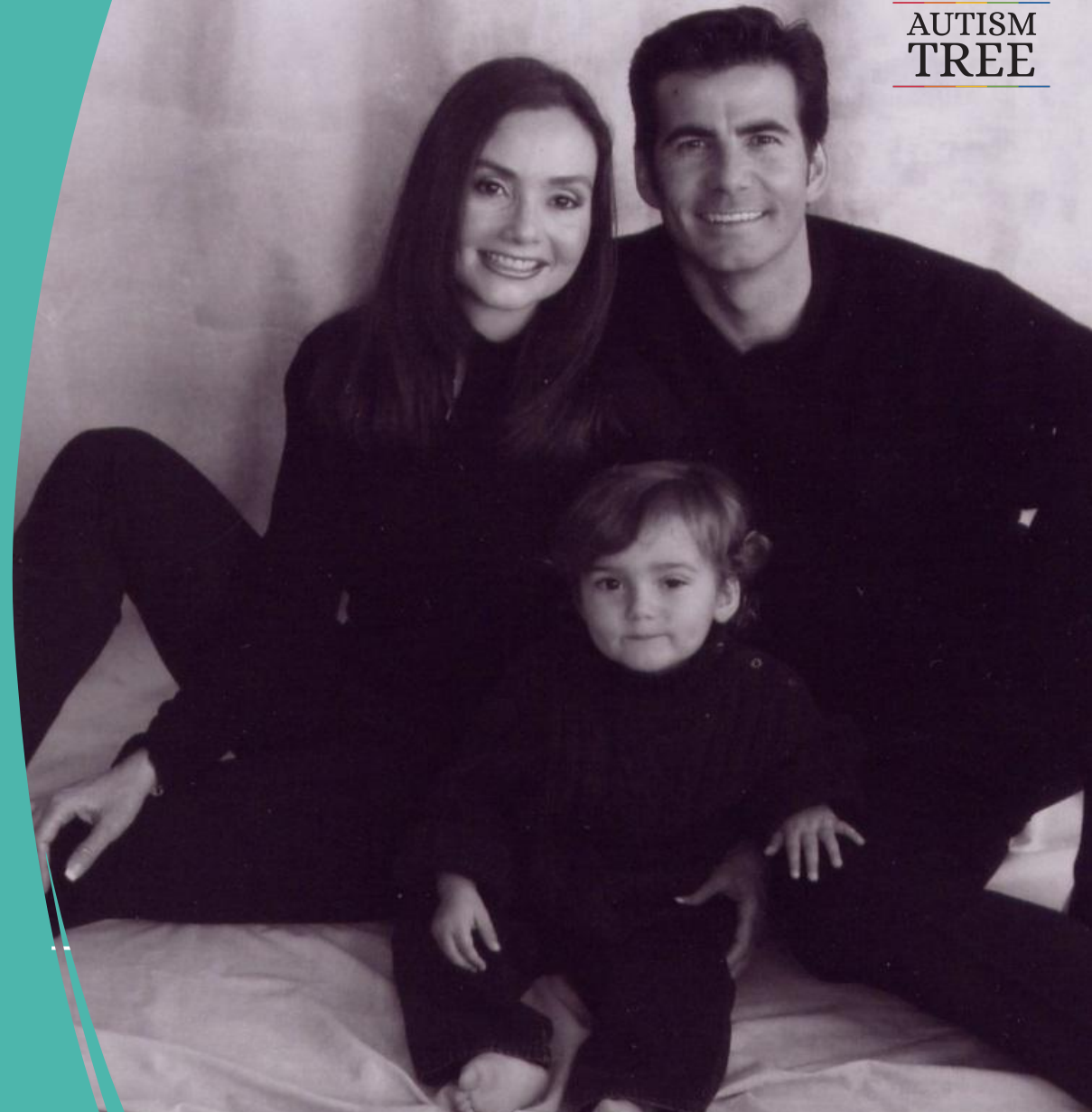
***SERVING ONE FAMILY AT A TIME
SINCE 2003***
FOUNDED BY THE HOFF FAMILY

**“Every family tree
is touched by autism.”**

Autism affects 1 in 44 children.

***Center for Disease Control & Prevention, 2021.**

PICTURED: DAYNA, TODD & GARRET HOFF





WHAT IS AUTISM?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a **neurological and developmental disorder that affects how people interact with others, communicate, learn, and behave.** Although autism can be diagnosed at any age, it is described as a “developmental disorder” because symptoms generally appear in the first two years of life.

SIGNS OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (& MYTHS)



FACTS

- Difficulty interacting
- Does not point (struggle with joint attention)
- Fleeting eye contact
- Echolalia speech
- Uneven motor skills
- Sensory Perceptions affect their physical or mental functions
- Difficulty expressing needs
- Tantrums for no readily apparent reason
- Concrete Thinkers

MYTHS

- Never make eye contact
- Cannot show affection
- Do not talk
- Do not smile
- Do not want friends
- Unable to have relationships
- Is an emotional disability

PRACTICAL TIPS ON HOW TO ENGAGE WITH AUTISTIC PEOPLE OF ALL AGES



- Give a “high five” (optional)
- Start the conversation...keep the convo focused & simple
- Follow their lead & expect the unexpected
- Offer choices (two is good!)
- Give a effective instructions: get their attention, make sure it is an instruction not a request, be clear what needs to be done, tell them what you want them to do instead of what you don't want them to do
- Remember sensory perceptions are affected (sensory seeking vs. sensory avoidant)
- Remember People with Autism may take things literally
- Help with social interactions



ADVICE ON HOW TO BE A ROCKSTAR VOLUNTEER



- Be Patient
- Be Persistent and Resilient
- Always Stay Positive
- Be Affectionate Yet Respectful When It Comes To Physical Touch
- Show Your Heart & Interest
- Learn From Them
- Believe In Them



THANK YOU!

Rebecca Barron

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Helpful Links:

www.autismtreeproject.org

<https://linktr.ee/autismtree>

Social Media:

Facebook: @AutismTree

Instagram: @autismtree

YouTube: Autism Tree



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