Autism OKLAHOMA.ORG

HISTORY

AutismOklahoma had grassroots beginnings in 2002 when families began meeting together to help problem solve family challenges. We started in Edmond as a parent support group. Beginning with just two families, the group grew quickly to over 50 families and by 2007, had grown 350 families. Parents would drive across the state to attend the Edmond group, reflecting the need for groups in other parts of Oklahoma. In 2007, we received 501c3 nonprofit status and began serving children, adults and families throughout Oklahoma.

AutismOklahoma is a local non-profit organization that believes that every person with autism is unique and important. We help individuals with autism reach their full potential, help families thrive, and help communities understand and embrace differences.

AutismOklahoma was founded by parents in Oklahoma to improve quality of life and create opportunities for our loved ones with autism. We strive to encourage parents, providers and the community to think about how they might also create a unique opportunity for someone with autism.

That's our secret for Quality of life, for life!

We measure our impact on Quality of Life for Individuals, Families and Communities.

MISSION

Investing together to grow, learn, and serve the families of Oklahoma affected by autism.

Through a holistic approach, we create opportunities for families, children, teens and adults to have more happiness, joy and a higher quality of life, for life.

VISION

Bringing hope and empowerment as we help Oklahoma become more autism-friendly and aware.

WHAT IS AUTISM?

A group of related brain-based disorders that usually appear before the age of three. The cause of autism is not known. Research is exploring genetic and environmental factors that may impact a developing fetal brain. There is no cure for Autism, but 40% of individuals with autism can make progress and function in school and their community with the right support and treatments

What does autism look like? Everyone is different. There's a famous saying in the autism world, "If you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism."

Communication Problems About 40% of children with autism do not speak at all. Another 25%–30% will speak some words at 12 to 18 months of age and then stop speaking them. Others may speak, but not until later in childhood.

Social Problems Inability or difficulty relating to others because of trouble interpreting facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice. Trouble making or keeping friends. Problems with group settings.

Behavior Problems Use behavior to communicate what they want or what they are trying to avoid. Behaviors may be socially inappropriate, quirky, distracting, disruptive, repetitive.

Prevalence of Autism The Centers for Disease Control reports 1 in 54 children are diagnosed with autism. The number of kids diagnosed with autism is greater than AIDS, cancer, and diabetes combined. It is not uncommon for families to have more than one child with autism.

WHAT WE DO & HOW WE DO IT

100% LOCAL

AutismOklahoma is a local non profit organization founded in 2002. 100% of every penny donated and raised stays in Oklahoma to directly serve Oklahomans. Funds raised support the 4,500 children, adults and families directly served by us each year in 13 Oklahoma communities. Our 113 programs and activities are free or very low cost. AutismOklahoma only maintains studio space in Oklahoma City. We rely on community partners, such as churches and community centers, to carry out programs and events in other communities. Tax-deductible donations provide local support for local families. Our Tax ID number is 26-0807671.

VOLUNTEER LEADERS

With a staff of just five, we utilize 826 volunteers throughout the state for a variety of jobs, ranging from daily to a few hours a year. About 40 of our volunteers are trained leaders who work within their communities to create the opportunities wanted and needed.

LIFE IS YOUR MISSION

We provide a platform and infrastructure for creating opportunities for our loved ones with autism. These opportunities are created by parents who want to help their own family or child and a few others, professional partners or by the community, and a few opportunities and programs are developed and administered by our staff, contractors and board members.

PROGRAMS

ART

Swanky, Little Swanky, Bee's Knees are art programs that include weekly classes, summer camps and culminate in the annual Big Swanky Art Show.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES & SKILLS BUILDING

Groups of teens, young adults and adults meet monthly and build friendships while teaching the nuances of social interactions which are often troublesome for those with autism.

FAMILY EVENTS

We host swim parties, ice cream socials, bounce houses, game and karaoke nights. We want families to enjoy a higher quality of life, have hope and fun as a family, and to build success upon success. Providing these opportunities allows them to have them all.

QUALITY OF LIFE, FOR LIFE

Our BIG DREAM is quality of life, for life, for every individual in Oklahoma who has autism. We believe that every person with autism is unique and important

2019 STATS

12,207 Volunteer Hours Given
10,000 Served Through Outreach
4,500+ Families Directly Impacted
1,578 Participant Experiences
826 Volunteers
113 Programs and Activities
40 Outreach Programs

FILM MAKING

Invisible Layers Productions meets weekly to teach all aspects of creative and commercial film making to post-high school young adults. Their films have won top awards throughout Oklahoma and California.

SAFETY

Specialized swim programs, building fences, and granting GPS tracking systems, door locks, and pool alarms are a few of the ways we grant peace of mind to families whose child's safety is at risk.

13 COMMUNITIES

From SW to NE Oklahoma, Connection Circles and hometown events connect families in these towns and cities to each other and are the platform providing an avenue for networking, brainstorming, problem-solving and celebrating.

SOME OF OUR ANNUAL EVENTS

PIECEWALK

The PieceWalk is Oklahoma's largest autism event and unifying autism voice. Held annually in OKC and Tulsa with 8,000+ participants, the event includes a Resource Fair and special Kids Zone. Teams form, recruit members, hold community and Facebook events, and raise funds. The PieceWalk is AutismOklahoma's largest source of revenue.

DRIVE FORE AUTISM

Drive Fore Autism is a golf tournament held in each year in OKC and Tulsa. The four-person scramble includes a day of fun, with lunch, prizes, contests, and proceeds help fund our programs.

APRIL, AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

On and around April 2, World Autism Awareness Day, a variety of community-based awareness and outreach events are held, including Autism Awareness Day at the Oklahoma State Capitol, where autism self-advocates showcase their areas of talent and expertise

BIG SWANKY ART SHOW

The Big Swanky Art Show highlights the talents and works of AutismOklahoma artists. Pieces are displayed and originals, prints and gallery guides are sold to the public. Artists are on hand to discuss their pieces and sign their works .

GREEN TEA PARTY

Through song, dance, poetry, art and, sometimes their silence, each girl has gained the confidence to stand before the audience and share with them their hopes, dreams and talents. After lunch, a red-carpet runway walk features our girls dressed up and showing their beauty, inside and out.

THINK DIFFERENTLY WITH...

This annual fundraising event brings the work and lives of notable creative artists with Oklahoma ties to an intimate audience. Celebrities have included Academy Award-Winner Gray Frederickson and Wade Tower.

CONTACT AND ASSETS

CONTACT

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WEBSITES

AutismOklahoma.org

PieceWalk.org

STORY IDEAS

- Creating Filmmakers with Autism
- One PieceWalk Two Cities
- How We Leverage 800+ Volunteers to Provide Programs in 13 Communities
- Life Is Your Program
- Life-Saving Piece of Mind Program
- Autism Awareness Month in April
- Autism Never Takes a Break
- Social Groups Expand Horizons
- Quality of Life, For Life

IMAGE AND VIDEO DROPBOX LIBRARY INCLUDES

AutismOklahoma Logo

PieceWalk Logo

PieceWalk Crowd Shot

PieceWalk Runner Shot

Drive Fore Autism Logo

I Love Someone With Autism Logo

Autism Awareness Month Logo

Invisible Layers Productions Reel

Quality of Life Video

Together We Can Video

Green Tea Party

Art Pieces

SOCIAL MEDIA