
HOUSE RESOLUTION

DECLARING THE MONTH OF APRIL OF EACH YEAR AS AUTISM AWARENESS
MONTH IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, this body finds that autism is part of a complex
2 group of neurodevelopmental disorders, collectively called
3 autism spectrum disorders; and
4

5 WHEREAS, autism involves delays in and problems with social
6 interactions, language, and a range of emotional, cognitive,
7 motor, and sensory abilities that vary according to where the
8 individual falls on the spectrum ranging from mild impairments
9 to severe disabilities; and
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11 WHEREAS, the diagnosis of autism in an individual
12 transcends all social, religious, socio-economic, and geographic
13 boundaries; and
14

15 WHEREAS, based on statistics reported by the United States
16 Department of Education and other governmental agencies, autism
17 is growing at a startling rate of ten to seventeen percent per
18 year; and
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20 WHEREAS, the United States Centers for Disease Control and
21 Prevention estimate that autism affects as many as one in every
22 one hundred and ten children, and studies show that over the
23 last twelve years, the prevalence of autism has dramatically
24 increased by 289.5 percent; and
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26 WHEREAS, at the rate autism is growing, the Autism Society
27 of America estimates that the prevalence of autism could reach
28 four million Americans in the next decade; and
29

30 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Department of Education's Special
31 Education Section offers educational services to students with
32 autism and works with families and students to develop an
33 individualized education plan; and
34

35 WHEREAS, in 1994, the Department of Education had seventy-
36 one children, ages six to twenty-one years, with autism who were



1 eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act,
2 and that number increased to 1,064 by 2010; and
3

4 WHEREAS, in 2010, the Department of Education served an
5 additional two hundred thirty-four eligible, school-aged
6 children with autism, ages three to five, through the
7 Department's preschool special education programs; and
8

9 WHEREAS, the Department of Health provided intensive
10 behavioral support services to one hundred sixty-five children
11 with autism spectrum disorders, ages zero to three years,
12 through its Early Intervention Services Section; and
13

14 WHEREAS, while there is no cure for autism, early
15 identification of developmental concerns allows parents to seek
16 intervention during the crucial period of early development; and
17

18 WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics - Hawaii
19 Chapter released a position paper stating that there should be
20 specific screening for autism spectrum disorders at eighteen,
21 twenty-four, and thirty-six months of age and recommends that
22 the screening be done through the use of the Modified Checklist
23 for Autism in Toddlers; and
24

25 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's
26 Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities launched
27 a public awareness campaign called "Learn the Signs. Act
28 Early.", which aims to educate parents about childhood
29 development, including early warning signs of autism and other
30 developmental disabilities, and encourages developmental
31 screening and intervention; and
32

33 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Maternal Child Health Leadership
34 Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities program
35 and autism groups in Hawaii are supporting and undertaking the
36 "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign; and
37

38 WHEREAS, providing widespread information is necessary to
39 educate parents, professionals, and the general public about
40 autism, its effects, and the critical importance of early
41 developmental screening and intervention; now, therefore,
42

43 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
44 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session



