



State of North Carolina

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

WORLD AUTISM MONTH

2024

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurological and developmental disorder that begins early in childhood and consists of a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech, and nonverbal communication; and

WHEREAS, ASD affects at least 1 in 36 children and an unknown number of adults in the United States of all genders, races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds; individuals with ASD should have access to the care, services, and opportunities they need to be happy and to achieve their greatest potential; and

WHEREAS, early, accurate diagnosis and appropriate education, intervention, and therapy are vital to the well-being of those with ASD; according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports, a significant gap exists in identifying ASD in Black and Hispanic children; socioeconomic barriers, stigma, and lack of healthcare make it more difficult for Black and Hispanic communities to receive crucial services necessary for identifying and treating ASD; and

WHEREAS, the number of 18-year-olds with ASD transitioning to adulthood is expected to increase from 1 in 150 young adults in 2012 to 1 in 36 in 2030, based on CDC prevalence estimates in 8-year-olds; and

WHEREAS, individuals with ASD face challenges entering the workforce but also have much to offer; they deserve opportunities for employment and advancement, such as through the LiNC-IT (Linking North Carolina with Innovative Talent) employment program, NC CARES (Career Advancement Resources for Employees on the Spectrum), and North Carolina's Employment First Executive Order, which established meaningful work as the preferred choice for all North Carolinians with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina is a model employer of autistic individuals through the LiNC-IT employment program, which connects people with ASD with employment opportunities, and the CARES career advancement support program, which provides career coaching for state employees with ASD; we encourage other employers to restructure the hiring process to make it accessible to North Carolinians with ASD; and

WHEREAS, to better serve North Carolinians who are on the autism spectrum, the NC Department of Public Safety is providing innovative training to first responders; HEART (Helping Enhance Autism Response Training) helps public safety officials, first responders, and law enforcement and corrections officers understand ASD and how to assist these individuals during emergency situations; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina joins in recognizing and raising awareness of the need for more research, better understanding, and acceptance of ASD, and to commend those working to support autistic individuals and their families;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROY COOPER, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim April, 2024, as "WORLD AUTISM MONTH" in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.



Roy Cooper
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this tenth day of April in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-four and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-eighth.