

Volunteer
Handbook



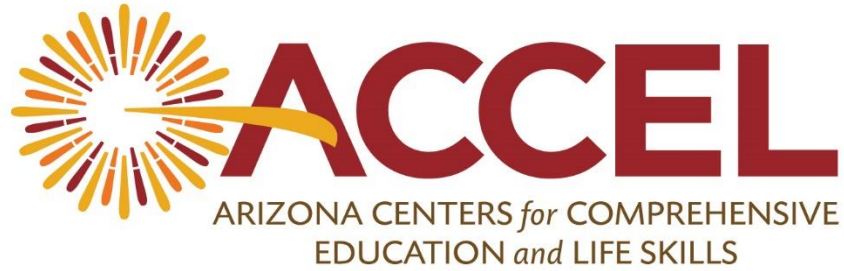


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Vision Statement:

A Life of Dignity and Self-Worth

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to provide exceptional educational, therapeutic, behavioral, and vocational programs to individuals with special needs, to give them the necessary skills to learn, to work, and to live successfully with dignity and independence.

Core Values (IDEAS)

Initiative – We demonstrate leadership and self-direction in accomplishing our goals.

Dignity - We respect the dignity and differences of all individuals and treat everyone with respect under all circumstances.

Excellence – We strive to maintain the highest standards of integrity and performance at all levels within the organization.

Accountability - We are personally accountable and responsible for our behavior and our results.

Service – We are passionate about meeting the needs of our clients, employees, community, and society and are committed to ensuring quality service.



Volunteering at ACCEL

We are delighted and honored that you have decided to volunteer with us! This handbook was put together to provide you with some basic information about our Volunteer Program procedures and what to expect. As our program grows and changes, so will those expectations and procedures! You will be notified when those changes happen, and it will be your responsibility to stay current and informed. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact the Volunteer Program Coordinator.

Again, we are happy to have to as a part of our team and sincerely hope that you enjoy your time volunteering with ACCEL!

About ACCEL

ACCEL (Arizona Centers for Comprehensive Education and Life Skills) serves individuals with special needs, including developmental disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disabilities and behavioral disorders.

Since 1980, ACCEL has given thousands of children and adults with special needs the opportunity to progress and flourish in safe and productive learning and work environments.

Website: www.accel.org for more information.

Our Programs and Services

ACCEL offers three primary programs:

- **Educational Services:** Exceptional educational, behavioral, therapeutic and vocational programs for individuals with special needs ages 5 to 22.
- **Adult Services:** Provides lifelong educational and vocational training to individuals over 18 years of age with developmental disabilities.
- **BISTA Clinic:** Provides ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) services for children 18 months and up with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disabilities.



Welcome and Thank You for Volunteering with ACCEL!

Dear Life Changer,

Welcome to ACCEL! I am grateful that you have chosen to become a Volunteer with our organization. Volunteers play an important role in achieving our vision of “A Life of Dignity and Self Worth” for all the youth and adults that attend our diverse programs.

From our playgrounds to our vocational training rooms – and everything in between - you will be a part of creating a rich and welcoming environment for our students, adults and their families where people reach their full potential and crash through barriers.

Regardless of how big or small the project you volunteer for, we value every moment of time you spend with us and the incredible people we are so lucky to serve.

Again, on behalf of all of us at ACCEL, we welcome you to our Volunteer Program and look forward to working with you!

Raymond Damm
Chief Executive Officer

Volunteer Opportunities

There are a variety of volunteer opportunities to support the programs and services provided to students and adults at ACCEL. Volunteers can work on-site, for a couple of hours or an entire day, as well as an on-going basis. Each individual volunteer or volunteer group will be matched to an assignment based on interest, skills/experience and schedule.

Age Requirements

Volunteers are required to be at least 16 years old and have a Parent/Guardian Waiver signed. Volunteers under 16 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

Programming with Youth

Extra hands for picture day

Field Days stations, face painting, balloon creations, clowning, special guest (Spiderman, etc.)

Assist Adaption Team create materials for students

Programming with Adults

Skill Demonstration

Give a Tour of your business

Assistance with grounds maintenance

Opportunities not involving students or clients

Student Field Day set up/tear down

Gardening assistance

Office work such as filing

Cutting/pasting/laminating, etc. for educational materials

Cleaning (disinfecting) materials and toys

General Office Assistance (filing, data entry, mailings, etc.)

Special projects: Painting, gardening, building raised planters, campus beautification

Events

And much more!!! As the volunteer program grows, more opportunities will be created and available.

Community Outreach Manager Contact Information

Heather Fenech

hfenech@accel.org

call or text: 602-677-0148

Expectations while Volunteering with ACCEL

ACCEL believes strongly that its board, staff and volunteers must uphold the highest standards of ethical, professional behavior. Those standards include the following:

- To hold paramount the safety, health, education and welfare of the public, fellow employees, and the individuals served in the performance of professional duties.
- To act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance personal and professional honor, integrity, and dignity.
- To treat with respect and consideration all persons, regardless of race, religion, gender, abilities, age, or national origin, martial or veteran status.
- To engage in carrying out ACCEL's mission and values in a professional manner.
- To collaborate with and support other professionals in carrying out ACCEL's mission and values.
- To build professional reputations on the merit of services and on the treatment of others with respect, fairness and decency.

Training Process and Procedures

Every Volunteer is entered into our Volunteer Database to keep a record of your volunteer activity (on-going or one-time event) and number of hours you have worked with us. Please let your Community Outreach Manager know of any name, address, email or phone number change so that we may keep accurate and up-to-date records.

Training as a Volunteer will be specific to your chosen role and to the needs of the program if you choose to be an on-going volunteer. Special Projects (fundraising events, for example) will meet least once (or more if needed or requested) before the event to give event specific roles and training.

At the beginning of each Volunteer shift or project, you will be asked to sign-in and when you leave, sign-out. This important process will help us to track your volunteer hours for reporting to our Executive Team, our Board of Directors, funders, grant applications and more importantly, to keep track all the wonderful work you do for ACCEL!

Volunteers are to have an ACCEL Staff member present when Youth or Adult members are present.

Dress Code

When you volunteer, we recommended that you wear the following attire: Closed toe and closed heel flat shoes. Comfortable polo or non-polo full coverage shirts, jeans or slacks. Shorts are permitted and must have a minimum of a 10-inch inseam. The dress code may be adjusted depending on task or event. We want you to be comfortable, safe and enjoy yourself when volunteering!

Volunteer Personal Possessions

It is up to the Volunteer to be responsible for any personal positions brought on-site. Therefore, any personal possessions are the sole responsibility of the volunteer if he/she chooses to bring these articles onto ACCEL property. ACCEL does not assume responsibility for the loss, damage, or theft of these items and will not cover the loss of any personal property belonging to the volunteers.

Absence/Sick/Late Procedure

Life happens and we understand! If you are ever unable to make it to your regular volunteer shift or event, anticipate that you will be more than 15 minutes late or you are ready for well-deserved time off, just email, text or call your Community Outreach Manager. Advanced notice is preferred whenever feasible so that we may make the necessary adjustments or notifications.

DISCRIMINATION AND BULLYING

ACCEL is committed to provide a learning environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and discriminatory harassment. All individuals associated with this school, including but not necessarily limited to, the Board of Directors, the administration, and all other employees, students and members of the public while on campus are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide a working and educational atmosphere free from discrimination, bullying and discriminatory harassment.

It is a violation of this policy to subject an individual to adverse treatment, harassment, or to make job or educational decisions based upon that person's race, religion, religious creed, color, national origin, age, disability, genetic test results, sex, sexual orientation, veteran or marital status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

There are many forms of discrimination, including, but not limited to:

- Verbal: Derogatory comments or jokes, slurs, insults, epithets or threatening words spoken to another person.
- Physical: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking of movements or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.
- Visual: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, emails, calendars, written words, letters, notes, invitations, drawings, gestures or objects.

There are many forms of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Verbal bullying: Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his or her family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- Physical bullying: Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault, damage to a person's work area or property.
- Gesture bullying: Nonverbal threatening gestures; glances that can convey threatening messages.
- Exclusion: Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work related activities

If you believe that you or any other employee, volunteer or student has been subjected to discrimination, bullying or discriminatory harassment in violation of this policy, you are required to make a report to the Community Outreach Manager.

Safety

Your safety is the constant concern of ACCEL. Every precaution has been taken to provide a safe workplace. ACCEL makes regular inspections and holds regular safety committee meetings. Management meets monthly to plan and implement further improvements in our safety program. Common sense and personal interest in safety are still the greatest guarantees of your safety at work, on the road, and at home. We take your safety seriously and any willful or habitual violation of safety rules will be considered cause for immediate dismissal. ACCEL is sincerely concerned for the health and well-being of each member of the team, including its Volunteers.

The cooperation of every employee and volunteer is necessary to make this company a safe place in which to work. Help yourself and others by reporting unsafe conditions or hazards immediately to your supervisor or Community Outreach Manager (who will report to the Safety Committee). Begin right by always thinking of safety as you perform your job, or as you learn a new one.

Accident reporting

Any injury at work—no matter how small—must be reported immediately to your supervisor and the Nursing Department for first aid attention. Serious conditions often arise from small injuries if they are not cared for at once.

Specific safety rules and guidelines

To ensure your safety, and that of your coworkers, please observe and obey the following rules and guidelines:

- Observe and practice the safety procedures established for the job.
- In case of sickness or injury, no matter how slight, report at once to your supervisor. In no case should an employee or volunteer treat his own or someone else's injuries or

attempt to remove foreign particles from the eye.

- In case of injury resulting in possible fracture to legs, back, or neck, or any accident resulting in an unconscious condition, or a severe head injury, the employee or volunteer is not to be moved until medical attention has been given by authorized personnel.
- Do not wear loose clothing or jewelry around machinery. It may catch on moving equipment and cause a serious injury.
- Never distract the attention of another employee or volunteer, as you might cause him or her to be injured. If necessary to get the attention of another employee or volunteer, wait until it can be done safely.
- Where required, you must wear protective equipment, such as goggles, safety glasses, masks, gloves, hair nets, etc.
- Keep your work area clean.
- Horseplay with students, clients, and staff is strictly forbidden.
- Do not climb or stand on chairs, desks, tables, cabinets, or any other item not meant for such purpose. Utilize a step stool or ladder.
- Do not block access to fire extinguishers.
- Do not tamper with electric controls or switches.
- Do not operate machines or equipment until you have been properly instructed and authorized to do so by your supervisor.
- Do not engage in such other practices as may be inconsistent with ordinary and reasonable common-sense safety rules.
- Report any UNSAFE condition or acts to your supervisor.
- Use designated passages when moving from one place to another; never take hazardous shortcuts.
- Lift properly—use your legs, not your back. For heavier loads, ask for assistance.
- Do not throw objects.
- Clean up spilled liquid, oil, or grease immediately.

Smoke Free Environment

By law, there is no smoking or possession of tobacco products allowed on any school campus or property. A.R.S. § 36-798.03.

Tobacco products are prohibited on school grounds, inside school buildings, in school parking lots or playing fields, in school buses or vehicles or at off campus school sponsored events. For purposes of this subsection, "school" means any public, charter or private school where children attend classes in kindergarten programs or grades 1 through 12. This provision of this section does not apply to an adult who employs tobacco products as a necessary component of a school sanctioned tobacco prevention or cessation program established pursuant to A.R.S. § 15 712. A person who violates this policy is guilty of a petty offense.

You MAY NOT smoke anywhere on the ACCEL campuses. You MAY NOT smoke in any area off campus during scheduled work hours as ACCEL is a closed campus. You MAY NOT carry smoking

or tobacco paraphernalia on you or carry in your purse/bag/backpack.

Any employee or volunteer who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. The use of any tobacco product, such as smoking cigars or cigarettes the use of chewing tobacco and/or snuff, use of electronic or smokeless cigarettes, is prohibited in ACCEL owned or rented facilities as well as on ACCEL property.

Confidentiality

All ACCEL employees and volunteers, who represent the school in any professional and/or public context, will follow approved protocol respecting the confidentiality of ACCEL students and their families as well as ACCEL staff. **It is absolutely forbidden and a violation of ACCEL policy and federal law to discuss any ACCEL student, his/her disability, and family while in a public forum.** Volunteers are required to read, sign and return to the Volunteer Coordinator the provided Confidentiality document before their first shift. A copy is included in this handbook.

Physical Interventions

The ability to physically intervene or provide physical assistance to our students is an essential function of many jobs at ACCEL. Employees who must perform physical interventions are trained and certified in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) to ensure that such interventions are performed safely. As a Volunteer, **you are not permitted** to assist, engage or otherwise participate in any physical intervention.

Photography Policy

Pursuant to privacy and confidentiality requirements, ACCEL employees and volunteers are not to publish, post, or otherwise distribute any photograph, video, rendering, or otherwise identifiable information of, or about ACCEL students or clients for personal use.

Resignation/Leaving or Dismissal from Volunteer Program

All good things sometimes find their natural end (though we will be sad to see you go!). Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with ACCEL at any time. We request that if you intend to resign, you provide us with advanced notice.

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of ACCEL or who fail to uphold professional standards during their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property or misuse of agency equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of clients or co-workers and/or failure to abide by agency policies and procedures or breach of confidentiality.

Exit Survey

Volunteers may be requested to participate in an exit survey conducted by the Community Outreach Manager. The interview consists of standard questions in which the answers are used to track positive and/or negative trends within the Volunteer Program. The survey is kept confidential and is in no way reflected on the record of the Volunteer.

Hours of Operation:

7:30 AM – 3:30 PM Monday through Friday (unless otherwise noted)

There may be some Saturday or after-hours projects/events as needed.

Locations

ACCEL Metro Campus

10251 North 35th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85051

ACCEL BISTA Center

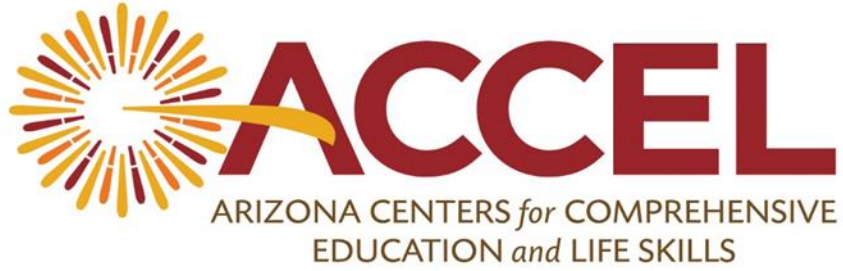
2222 S. Dobson Rd. Building 9
Mesa, AZ 85202

ACCEL Adult Services & Business Office

3310 W. Cheryl Drive
Phoenix, AZ 85051

ACCEL East Campus

1430 E Baseline Road
Tempe, AZ 85283



Volunteer Agreement Form

I, _____, agree to the following while being a Volunteer with ACCEL:

- Honor my commitment to the program
- Cooperate with ACCEL Staff and fellow Volunteers
- Be prompt and reliable
- Notify my Volunteer Coordinator if I am unable to make my shift
- Maintain Confidentiality and other agreements mentioned in the Handbook
- Turn in all necessary paperwork before my first day as a Volunteer
- Be open to learning
- Have FUN!!!

Printed Name of Volunteer

Signature of Volunteer

Date



Volunteer and Youth Parent/Guardian Consent Liability Release Waiver

I will hold harmless and waive any and all claims or causes of actions against ACCEL including, but not limited to, claims arising out of negligent or intentional conduct of ACCEL employees, administration, students, and Board of Directors (including legal and other expenses incurred of any kind, nature and description) that may arise from an injury, illness, or loss while participating as a volunteer for ACCEL. I will use my personal insurance or that provided by my organization, as the primary provider in the event of accident or injury related to my work at an ACCEL volunteer. I will follow all rules and procedures given to me by ACCEL employees or agents, including dress code guidelines. I accept such risks and responsibilities for the losses and /or damages following an injury or other loss.

To attest that I/the minor child am physically fit and prepared to perform the tasks as an ACCEL volunteer, subject to all personal limitations/restrictions as described to ACCEL staff prior to the start of my shift. If at any time I feel unable to perform the work assigned, I will immediately cease working and report to the Volunteer Coordinator or ACCEL staff for re-assignment.

By signing this agreement, the volunteer acknowledges that this agreement shall be binding upon their heirs and or/representatives.

Printed Name of Volunteer

Signature of Volunteer

Date

I hereby give my child/legal dependent permission to volunteer at ACCEL and agree to uphold the above waiver.

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Date



Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

All ACCEL volunteers agree to treat all confidential information in an appropriate and ethical manner and have signed the following agreement annually:

In consideration of my initial or continued volunteer status with ACCEL, I understand and agree to the following:

I understand and agree that in the course of my volunteer activities I may have access to information some or all of which may be confidential whether or not it is labeled or identified as such. I understand and agree that confidential information is considered ACCEL property and may be used or disclosed only with proper authorization and in the exercise of my designated duties.

Types of information considered confidential by ACCEL and covered by this agreement may include but are not limited to:

- Personal information (such as family, health, marital or financial status, home address, phone number, age, social security number, disability) about people associated with ACCEL such as: students, employees, donors, clients and board members.
- Salary or compensation
- Current or projected financial particulars of ACCEL including its schools or programs

I further understand that ACCEL requires me to treat with the same degree of confidentiality, information proprietary to other parties to which I may also have access through my volunteering with ACCEL. Such information includes but is not limited to:

- Employee or student private documents or communications
- Copyright materials such as software, audio recordings, or video recordings
- Vendor proprietary information

I understand and agree that having access to ACCEL or third-party information does not grant me permission to actively seek, examine, use transmit, share, copy or change such information and that I will only actively seek, examine, use, transmit, share, copy or change such information if such permission has been granted either by my Principal or ACCEL Director.

I understand and agree that as an ACCEL volunteer, I am responsible for protecting confidential information to which I have or may gain access. Except as required by my employment activities, or as directed by my immediate supervisor (or his or her designee), I shall never, either during my volunteering with ACCEL or thereafter, directly or indirectly use, publish, disseminate, or otherwise disclose to any third party any confidential information acquired in the course of my volunteer activities without the prior consent of the Chief Executive Officer.

If I am uncertain whether a particular piece of information or data is considered confidential, I understand and agree that I will resolve all uncertainties in favor of preserving the confidentiality of that item, and I will seek clarification from my supervisor before engaging in any conduct that might jeopardize the confidentiality of that item.

I understand and agree that ACCEL shall be considered the author and owner of all rights, including the copyright in the work that I prepare within the scope of my volunteering for the organization.

I understand and agree to abide by all of ACCEL's policies and procedures at all times. I understand that if I violate these confidentiality provisions that I may be asked to discontinue volunteering with the organization.

I understand that compliance with this document includes my responsibilities with respect to the non-disclosure of individually identifiable information protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and the privacy standards associated with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA). I acknowledge that I fully understand that disclosure by me of such information could subject me to criminal and civil penalties imposed by law.

It is important that the entire ACCEL community share a culture of respect for confidential information. To that end, if I observe access to or sharing of confidential information that is or appears to be unauthorized or inappropriate, I will let my supervisor (if applicable) or others in authority at ACCEL know about the issue or possible issue.

By signing and dating this agreement in the spaces provided below, I certify that I have read this agreement; that I understand what I have read and that I will honor the terms of this confidentiality agreement.

Print Name and Sign

Date



Volunteering at ACCEL with Youth and Adults with Special Needs

What are Special Needs?

A child or adult with special needs is basically an individual who, because of his or her unique medical or developmental difficulties, has needs in addition to those of his or her peers. Many are born with their disability such as Autism or Down Syndrome; while others might have developed their disability due to disease or accident. Special needs may range from mild to severe, and the level of impairment may vary from individual to individual even for people with the same type of disability. Most special needs respond well to treatment or special programs and services. Even with their disabilities, these individuals are fully capable of learning, loving and enjoying life as the rest of us.

Types of disabilities:

- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD)
- Cerebral Palsy
- Deafness/Hearing Loss
- Emotional Disturbance
- Epilepsy
- Mental Retardation
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD)
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Spina Bifida
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairments

(reference: <http://www.ciccparenting.org/ChildhoodDisabilities.aspx>)

Different Disabilities

A great deal of information regarding special needs groups, special education, and disabilities can be found on the Internet. A good place to start is the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY). The following information on several common disabilities is found on NICHY website.

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a neurological disorder that affects a child's ability to communicate, understand language, play and relate to others.

The following are common characteristics of this disorder, which can vary from mild to severe:

- Communication problems (e.g. with the use or comprehension of language).
- Difficulty relating to people, things and events.
- Playing with toys and objects in unusual ways.
- Difficulty adjusting to changes in routine or to familiar surroundings.
- Repetitive body movements or behaviors.

These characteristics are typically evident before the age of three.

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder can differ considerably with respect to their abilities, intelligence and behavior. Some children don't talk at all. Others use language where phrases or conversations are repeated. Children with the most advanced language skills tend to talk about a limited range of topics and have a hard time understanding abstract concepts. Repetitive play and limited social skills are also evident. Other common symptoms of a disorder on the autism spectrum can include unusual and sometimes uncontrolled reactions to sensory information – for instance, to loud noises, bright lights and certain textures of food or fabrics.

There are four criteria for diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder to be made:

- A. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction (manifested by all three of the following)
 - i. In social-emotional reciprocity
 - ii. In nonverbal communication
 - iii. In developing and maintaining relationships
- B. Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior or interests (manifested by at least two of the following)
 - i. Stereotyped or repetitive speech, motor movements, use of objects
 - ii. Excessive adherence to routine, rituals
 - iii. Highly restricted, fixated interest
 - iv. Hyper- or hypo- reactivity to sensory input or unusual interest in sensory aspects
- C. Symptoms must be present in early childhood
- D. Symptoms together must limit and impair everyday functioning

What Causes ASD Autism Spectrum Disorder?

There is no one cause of autism just as there is no one type of autism. There are now a number of known single-causes of autism (e.g. in the case of rare genetic disorders); however, this only accounts for a small minority of cases. In most cases, ASD appears to be caused by a complex and variable combination of multiple factors, both genetic and environmental, that influence

early brain development. ASD is not due, however, to psychological factors or, as has been widely reported in the press, to childhood vaccines.

Autism Facts and Stats

- Autism now affects 1 in 50 children (2013)
- Boys are four times more likely to have autism than girls
- About 40% of children with autism do not speak. About 25%-30% of children with autism have some words at 12 to 18 months of age and then lose them. Others might speak, but not until later in childhood
- Autism greatly varies from person to person (no two people with autism are alike)
- The rate of autism has steadily grown over the last twenty years
- Comorbid conditions often associated with autism include Fragile X, allergies, asthma, epilepsy, bowel disease, gastrointestinal/digestive disorders, persistent viral infections, PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections), feeding disorders, anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, ADHD, Tourette Syndrome, OCD, sensory integration dysfunction, sleeping disorders, immune disorders, autoimmune disorders, and neuroinflammation.
- Autism is the fastest growing developmental disorder, yet most underfunded
- A 2008 Danish Study found that the mortality risk among those with autism was nearly twice that of the general population
- Children with autism do progress – early intervention is key. Autism is treatable, not a hopeless condition.

(reference: <http://nationalautismassociation.org/resources/autism-fact-sheet/>)