



AUTISM SPEAKS® KIDS & COINS

A Guide for Teachers and Students to
Have a Successful Autism Speaks
Kids and Coins Fundraising Campaign



FUNDRAISING GUIDE

AUTISM SPEAKS® **KIDS & COINS**

Autism is a complex disorder that affects the way a person's brain works. It affects 1 in 59 children and 1 in 37 boys. Boys are nearly five times more likely than girls to have autism.

Even though there are many people with autism, each person is different in terms of his or her challenges, abilities and personality. Some people with autism may require a lot of help, while others need less assistance at home, school and in the community.

Often people with autism have difficulty talking or expressing their thoughts and may also have trouble learning how to play or interact with others. Some people with autism may show unusual behaviors such as making unexpected movements or avoiding eye contact. People with autism may also have strong abilities that may include knowing a lot about a favorite subject or being really good at art, music or math – just like others!

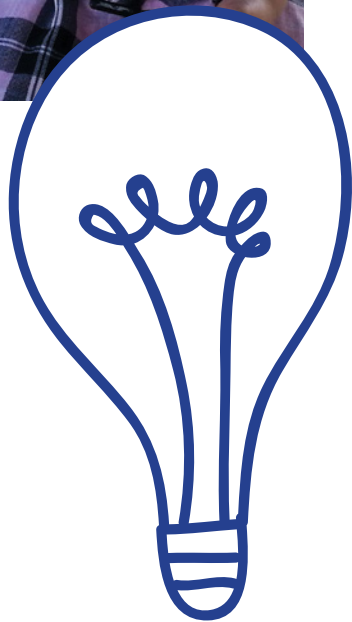
Autism Speaks Kids and Coins is a fundraising campaign to help improve the lives of people with autism. Funds raised help increase understanding and acceptance of people with autism, support safety from wandering, bully awareness, family crisis assistance, job training, housing and research.

By participating in **Autism Speaks Kids and Coins**, students learn that they can make a difference in the lives of others.

Autism Speaks is dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. We do this through advocacy and support; increasing understanding and acceptance of people with autism; and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions.



THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE!



Let's Get Started!

The *Autism Speaks Kids and Coins Guide* may be used with the *Autism Speaks Puzzle Piece Project Tool Kit* (see Additional Resources) to help increase student understanding of autism or as a stand-alone fundraising campaign.

Within this guide is everything you need to help your school have a successful **Autism Speaks Kids and Coins** campaign. The materials provided offer many ideas for fundraising and include:

- **Autism Speaks Kids and Coins Container Sticker Template** – printable labels for your students to decorate during the campaign. Available in 3 sizes.
- **Downloadable Tracking Poster** – track your school's fundraising progress along the way.
- **Customizable Flyer** – promote your coin campaign in your school and community.

Did You know?

- No two people with autism are alike.
- You can't tell if someone has autism just by looking at them.
- People with autism typically have difficulty with social interactions, communication and have intense restricted or repetitive interests.
- Repetition often makes people with autism feel safe/better.
- People with autism may be extremely sensitive to how things feel, taste and sound.
- People with autism like to have friends just like everyone else!
- Autism is not contagious.
- For most, autism is a lifelong condition.



Donations Help:

Increase global understanding and acceptance of people with autism



Advance life-enhancing research breakthroughs



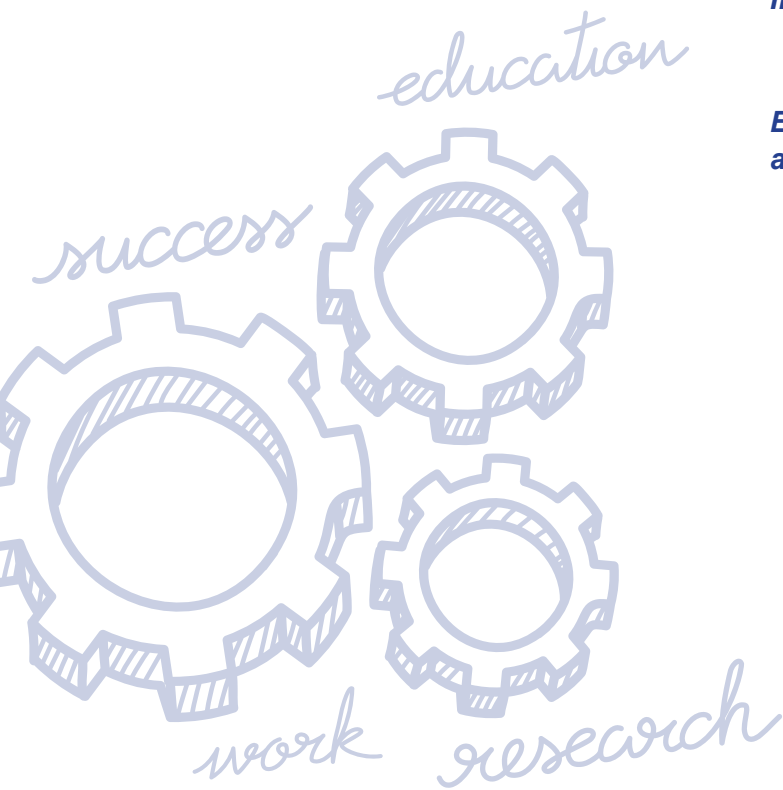
Increase early childhood screening and timely interventions



Improve the transition to adulthood



Ensure access to reliable information and services throughout the life span





Collecting Coins

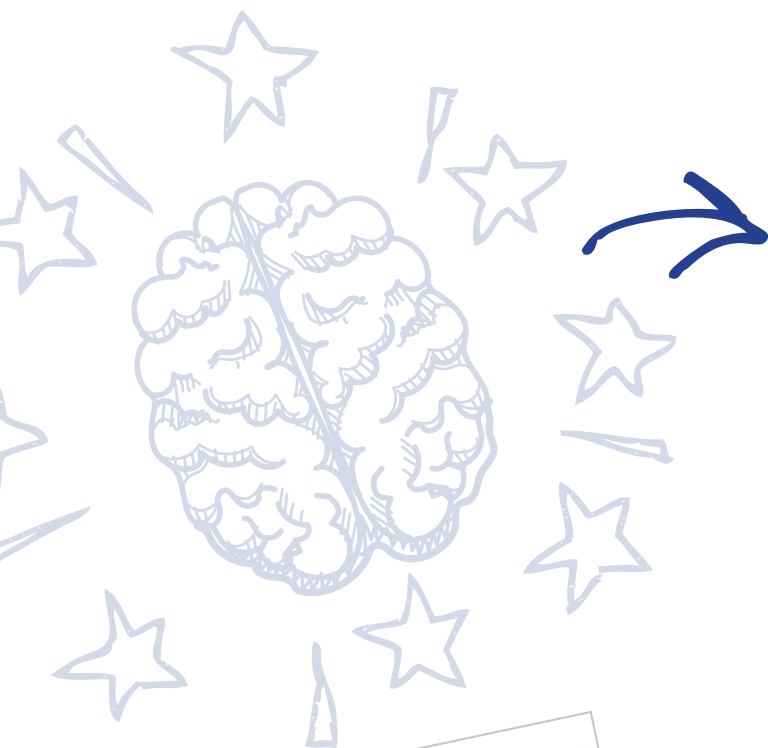
The objective of the **Autism Speaks Kids and Coins** campaign is to inspire your classroom or school to collect as many coins as possible and then donate them to Autism Speaks. Your campaign can range from one day to an entire month depending on what works best for your school. Many schools choose to participate during **World Autism Month** in April, but you can have a campaign any time during the school year!

In the following pages you will find resources to help you host a successful **Autism Speaks Kids and Coins** campaign including fun ways to collect coins in your school, educational materials for teachers and even ideas to get parents involved in your project.

Consider setting a goal of \$1,000 for your school's campaign. Autism Speaks will send a thank you letter to your principal and a certificate to proudly display in your school.

You can make a difference in 5 easy steps:

1. Set a date for your campaign.
2. Choose the best method to collect coins for your classroom or school.
3. Collect coins! Get teachers, staff and parents involved too!
4. Mail your donation to Autism Speaks.
5. Share your photos and fun stories with Autism Speaks!



Creative Campaign Ideas

Fill the box

This is a great activity for K-5 classrooms. Have students decorate containers such as tissue boxes, jars or plastic storage containers. Use our downloadable templates or create your own. Each student collects coins in his/her container for the allotted time period. On the last day, the student who raised the most wins a prize.

Penny Wars

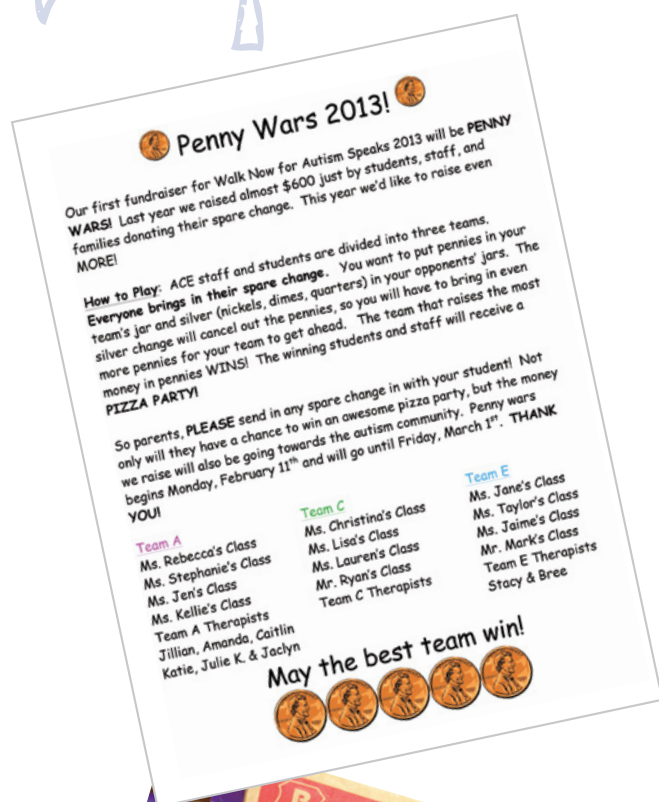
This is a team competition that is great for middle school or high school students. Create your teams and designate a large donation container for each team. Then declare war! Pennies earn positive points. Silver coins and paper bills earn negative points. Teams want to collect pennies in their jars and attack the opposing teams with silver coins and paper bills to deduct from their totals. Have each grade in the school compete and award the winning grade a prize, or ask coaches, teachers, student council officers or athletes to be team mascots and have the losing mascot dye his/her hair blue, sit in a dunk tank, perform a routine at the next pep-rally, etc.

59 Pounds of Change

For the 1 in 59 children with autism, collect 59 pounds of change! Put your collection container on a scale and see how fast your school can collect 59 lbs. of coins. Have a race between grades or classrooms. Can you raise 59 lbs. in 59 hours?

Estimation Competition

Spend a week collecting coins in one large container. At the end of the week, let students pay \$.25 to guess the number of coins that have been collected or the total amount raised. The winner gets a prize and the change gets donated to Autism Speaks.



Trace the Track

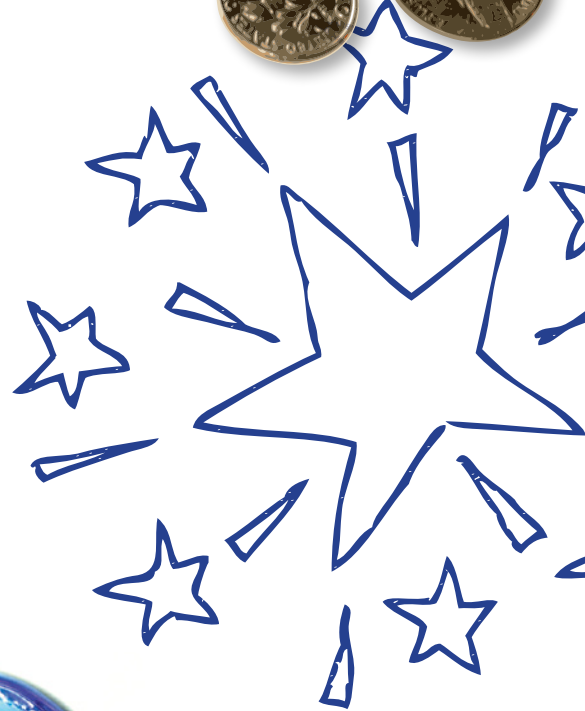
Students collect enough quarters, nickels, dimes and pennies to make a line of each around the school track. How many times can you circle the track? Take a photo and share with Autism Speaks for our website!

Coin Days

Designate certain days of the week to a specific coin. For example: Monday is Penny Day, Tuesday is Nickel Day, Wednesday is Dime Day, Thursday is Quarter Day and Friday is Any Coin Day. Consider assigning a coin to each grade or classroom to see who can raise the most on their day.

Light It Up Blue Classroom Competition

*How blue can you be? Decorate your classroom with blue lights, blue drawings, whatever you can think of to celebrate **World Autism Awareness Day** on April 2. Let students visit each classroom and vote for the best decorations with coins. The winning classroom gets a prize and the coins get donated to Autism Speaks. If you are doing your coin fundraiser in April during **World Autism Month** please visit our website at AutismSpeaks.org/WAM to register and for more resources and information.*





Maximize Your Efforts

Kickoff Assembly

Hold an all-school assembly to kick off the program. Ask Autism Speaks local representatives to attend or host it yourself. Have student leaders explain how the program will run. Provide facts about autism and the importance of understanding what autism is and the value of helping families and children affected by autism.

Puzzle the Principal

Show true blue school support by having the principal in on the game. The class with the highest contribution can puzzle the Principal with a fun request – have him/her sing a song over the loudspeaker, dress up like a clown, or make a donation.

Autism Coin “Stars”

Recognize top students who go above and beyond during the campaign.





AUTISM SPEAKS[®] KIDS & COINS

Summary Report

Please complete this form and send along with your check or money order to the address below.

Representative name: _____

Are you a teacher, student or parent:

School name: _____

School address: _____

Are you registered for an *Autism Speaks Walk* team that you would like this money credited to?

Walk Event city: _____

Walk Team name: _____

Total amount donated: _____

Representative phone: _____

Representative email: _____

Please tell us about how you raised the funds and attach any pictures you would like to share or email your photos and stories to StudentInitiatives@AutismSpeaks.org:

Please mail this form with your donation or receipt to:

Autism Speaks

Attn: Autism Speaks Kids and Coins

1060 State Road, Second Floor

Princeton, NJ 08540

Frequently Asked Questions

How is the money spent?

Program service dollars are spent on helping families and individuals affected by autism through research, family services, community grants, and advocacy. Autism Speaks has provided more than **1 million FREE tool kits** to families, including the *100 Day Tool Kit* developed to assist parents of newly diagnosed children through the first critical few months.

Can we donate more than coins?

Yes! All donations – coin, dollars or checks are welcomed.
Checks should be made payable to “Autism Speaks.”

Can we donate the funds we raise to a specific program or to a local family?

Funds raised on behalf of a national program cannot be designated to a particular family. However, funds are available to families in times of crisis and hardship. If you know a family that is in need of financial support, please have them email FamilyServices@AutismSpeaks.org.

Should we wish to send in a donation, where should we mail it?

Autism Speaks
Attn: Autism Speaks Kids and Coins
1060 State Road, Second Floor
Princeton, NJ 08540

Who do I contact if I have questions?

You may contact us at StudentInitiatives@AutismSpeaks.org.

Additional Resources:

- Puzzle Piece Project Tool Kit
- Factors for Success
- Teachers Teaching from the Heart
- Motivate and Thank our Parents

Make Your Fundraising Campaign Even More Meaningful with The Puzzle Piece Project and Tool Kit

World Autism Month, or any month, is a time to educate your community about the challenges affecting people with autism. Spreading autism awareness in schools is a great way to promote inclusion and acceptance in the classroom and beyond.

The Puzzle Piece Project Tool Kit is a fun and interactive educational tool kit for grade levels K-12 designed to increase students' understanding of autism during *World Autism Month*. Developed by a special education teacher for teachers, the tool kit includes age-appropriate lesson plans, extended activities, materials and relevant internet resources.

The Puzzle Piece Project Tool Kit includes the following materials:

- Grade Level Lesson Plan
- Internet Resource Guide and Book List
- Materials Index
- Puzzle Piece Template
- Discussion Guide for Specific High School Reading Suggestions
- Request Form for Follow Up Lessons/Activities from Your Special Education Team (see Materials Index)
- FAQs Samples of Questions Asked by Kids

Download the Puzzle Piece Project Tool Kit here

AutismSpeaks.org/Tool-Kit/School-Community-Tool-Kit

For more information about supporting students with autism in schools, check out the Autism Speaks School Community Tool Kit!

AutismSpeaks.org/Tool-Kit/School-Community-Tool-Kit



The Principal Factor for Success

Support from the Principal and administrative staff makes a big difference!

Daily Morning Announcements – Keep the enthusiasm going! Here are some suggested morning announcements that can be used each week to energize your campaign each step of the way.

KICK OFF!

Today, we join with schools across the country to begin our “*Autism Speaks Kids and Coins*” campaign. For the next three weeks we will be learning more about autism as well as raising funds to make a difference in the lives of families and individuals affected by autism! Our school goal is to raise \$____. Help us meet that challenge with your own classroom goal!

ONE WEEK LATER

We are excited to share our “*Autism Speaks Kids and Coins*” one-week update. We have raised \$____ towards our \$ ____ goal. Mrs./Mr. ____ classroom has taken the lead with \$____. I hope you are enjoying the many educational activities in each of your classes and learning more about this important cause. Keep up the good work – continue to bring in your coins and watch your class fundraising grow!

TWO WEEKS LATER

Today, marks the end of our second week of “*Autism Speaks Kids and Coins*” campaign. We have raised \$____ toward our \$____ goal. Our classroom leaders this week are ____ with \$____. With only one week to go, let’s break our own record – (set up a new challenge, ex., “the Principal’s office will start off the week with a \$_ donation.”)

THREE WEEKS LATER

Congratulations on a great job with the “*Autism Speaks Kids and Coins*” campaign. Remember to get any last minute donations into your classroom and we will announce the winning classroom as soon as we have the totals. We hope you have enjoyed learning more about autism and feel proud of your efforts to support Autism Speaks. We are certainly proud of you!



Teachers Teaching From the Heart

Teachers, we thank you for joining in this effort to build autism awareness and raise funds in your classroom. You play a critical role in making this initiative a success. We have created the checklist below to assist you in these efforts.

TEACHER CHECK LIST

Download and review the Puzzle Piece Project Tool Kit ahead of time to accompany your Kids and Coins campaign. Plan your activities based on your grade and specific interests.

Create a Materials List based on your specific activities to ensure you have all the materials you need.

Show your True Blue Colors! Using the templates and tracking poster chart provided, create a larger “Class Collection Box” and hang your tracking poster on the wall. Set your sights for donating the largest amount of any classroom!

Involve Parents. Use the sample parent letter or write your own. Have each child create their own collection box to use at home.

Challenge Students Each Day. As part of your educational activities, remind children to bring in their change by asking parents, visitors and siblings to contribute – perhaps donating part of their allowance or doing odd jobs around the house for coins.

(Please note: containers are not meant for door to door solicitation)

Focus on the Mission. Let students know that their donations can make a real difference in the lives of people with autism. Donations are used to create educational tool kits like the one you are using, to increase understanding, provide scholarships and camp opportunities, teach children to swim, help teens get jobs and address housing needs for adults.

Make it Real. We have many stories about real families that you are welcome to talk about. Visit AutismSpeaks.org/Blog to read some of the amazing stories about our community. Use the activities in the *Puzzle Piece Project Tool Kit* or create a “Quiet Zone” to help children better understand.

Track Your Success. Count coins daily and keep a running total. Mark your progress on the tracking poster.

Create excitement. Use the many creative ideas included in this guide to build excitement and friendly competition!

Collecting Coins. Create a “Coin Committee” to count coins and convert to a check or money order.

Wrap Up. Submit donations and your *Summary Form* to **Autism Speaks at Autism Speaks Kids and Coins, 1060 State Road, Second Floor, Princeton, NJ 08540.**

Motivate and Thank Your Parents!

Don't forget to engage parents. Send a message to parents asking them to join in your campaign by supporting their children. Have children create an invitation and invite parents to attend your classroom on a day when you are having an educational autism awareness activity. Here is a sample program announcement letter that you may choose to use.

Dear Parent or Guardian,

In support of **April, World Autism Month**, the children and faculty at our school will engage in an educational and service-oriented activity to better understand and accept people with autism. The Centers for Disease Control reported that **1 in every 59 children in the United States is diagnosed on the autism spectrum**.

To help increase awareness, we will participate in the **Autism Speaks Kids and Coins** program, to gain a better understanding of what autism is and how it affects many of their fellow students and friends. In addition to educational activities, children will have the opportunity to collect spare coins to help those affected by autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

The *Autism Speaks Kids and Coins* initiative is being presented as a nationwide effort and we are thrilled to be a participant. Many of our teachers will use this opportunity to build autism awareness activities into their lesson plans through fun, interactive readings and class exercises. Each child will be asked to create a colorful puzzle container of their very own to fill with spare change around the house. It is our hope that your child will take pride in filling the container and in helping families and individuals affected by autism.

We hope that during *Autism Speaks Kids and Coins*, you will support your child in this activity and speak with them about the value of helping others. Then join in the fun by searching under the couch cushions, in old coat pockets and deep in the car seats for lost coins. Please know that your child's contribution, no matter how large or small makes a big difference in solving the complex puzzle of autism but is not for door-to-door collection.

Should you wish to make a personal donation, you may send a check payable to Autism Speaks and we thank you for your generosity. You may also make an online donation at AutismSpeaks.org/Donate.

Thanking you in advance for your support of this important program!

Regards,

School Representative

P.S. As the program progresses, ask your child what they are learning about autism. We think they will make you proud! Thank you again for joining in this worthwhile cause.



Autism Speaks is dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. We do this through advocacy and support; increasing understanding and acceptance of people with autism; and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions.

To find resources, join a fundraising walk or make a donation, go to AutismSpeaks.org.