

APRIL

WORLD AUTISM MONTH

APRIL IS [WORLD AUTISM MONTH](#), and April 2 is World Autism Awareness Day.

Having autism, or autism spectrum disorder, means a person's brain processes information, including information about their environment, differently than the brain of a person without autism. An autistic person's brain has physically developed differently than that of a neurotypical person's brain, which can lead to strengths and challenges. Autism is considered an example of neurodiversity.

Each autistic person is an individual, and their autism gives that person characteristics and qualities that are unique to them. A person's autism shapes their experiences of life and the world. Autism is lifelong and exists on a spectrum over time. A person with autism may require more or less support in specific areas at different times throughout their life.

Connection to Doctors Nova Scotia's work:

We can all work to unlearn ableism. Ableism is discrimination in favour of people who are able-bodied and/or neurotypical. Unlearning ableism is essential for treating autistic people with respect.

Ways to unlearn ableism:

- Remember that people usually refer to themselves using the same language they wish others to use. A person's identity should always be respected, not corrected.
- Always ask about accessibility needs when planning an event, meeting or outing.
- Eliminate ableist micro-aggressions from your vocabulary. Phrases like "the blind leading the blind" or "fell on deaf ears" imply that disability is a problem to be fixed, rather than a normal part of the human experience.

Resources:

- [Autism Nova Scotia](#)
- [Tips for Doctors: How to Connect Better with Your Autistic Patients \(aidecanada.ca\)](#)
- [How to be an Ally of Autistic People | The Art of Autism \(the-art-of-autism.com\)](#)
- [AIDE Canada | Resources for Autism & Intellectual Disability](#)



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Find more EDIA resources, videos and tools in the DNS SharePoint EDIA Hub.