



Autism
Society
San Diego



2025 Impact Report

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Message From the President & Executive Director

Celebrating 60 Years of Impact: The Autism Society San Diego

For more than 60 years, Autism Society San Diego has served as a trusted source of support, advocacy, and empowerment for individuals and families on the autism journey. As the longest-standing affiliate of the Autism Society of America, we are deeply committed to building a more inclusive, understanding, and supportive community for all.

Autism Society San Diego works to expand its programs to meet the growing needs of local individuals and families. This includes increasing the number and variety of support groups to better serve different age ranges and stages of the autism journey, as well as growing Camp I Can in East County. Through this expansion, the organization aims to deepen connection, strengthen community, and ensure that no family feels alone in accessing meaningful support.

As we enter 2026, we are focused on building a strong and sustainable foundation for the future—guided by the dedication of our Board of Directors, staff, and valued community partners. Together, we are strengthening the infrastructure, relationships, and resources needed to support long-term growth and lasting impact. We invite you to help lay this foundation with us—whether as a volunteer, Board member, sponsor, or program participant—so that, together, we can expand our reach and deepen our mission for years to come.

Together, we are building something enduring—rooted in support, driven by purpose, and designed to uplift every family we serve.

Kasey Howell
President, Board of Directors

Teresa Contreras
Executive Director

About Autism

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), hereafter referred to as Autism (which includes Asperger's Disorder and Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified [PDD-NOS]), is a complex, lifelong developmental condition that typically appears during early childhood and can impact a person's social skills, communication, relationships, and self-regulation. The Autism experience is different for everyone. It is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is often referred to as a "spectrum condition" that affects people differently and to varying degrees.

While there is currently no known single cause of Autism, early diagnosis helps a person receive resources that can support the choices and opportunities needed to live fully.





We are the voice and resource for the Autism Community in San Diego

Our Mission

We create connections, empowering everyone in the Autism community with the resources needed to live fully.

Our Vision

Creating a world where everyone in the Autism community is connected to the support they need, when they need it.

We strive to improve the lives of people living with autism and their families in San Diego County.

About Us

Autism Society San Diego County originated in 1966 as the National Society of Autistic Children. Today, the Autism Society San Diego serves as the voice and resource of the San Diego autism community.

We promote meaningful participation and self-determination for autistic individuals and their families. We work diligently to ensure we support and amplify the voices of autistic individuals within our organization and throughout our community.



Autism Society San Diego hosted our first ever Friendsgiving Camp for autistic adults at YMCA Camp Marston in November 2025. This fun filled weekend was a chance to create community and connection.



2026 Board of Directors & Staff

2026 Executive Board:

President - Kasey Howell
Vice President - Alyssa Label
Treasurer - Dustin Tracy
Secretary - Allan Kaspar
Past President - Joe Ireland

2026 Board Members:

Gilman Bishop
Christopher Callahan
Chayo Chavez
Jorie Ellazar
Tim Gobran
Shelly Gonchoroff
Edward Huang
Allan Kaspar
Amanda Marsh
Katie Phelps
Marianne Russo

Board Member Emeritus:

Shirley Fett

2026 Staff:

Executive Director - Teresa Contreras
Director of Development - Michael Castro
Operations Manager - Amy Munera
Peer Resource Specialist - Virginia Rivera
Peer Resource Specialist - Michael Suckiel



Our Work

We are the voice and resource for the Autism Community in San Diego

Autism Society San Diego is here to connect members of the Autism community to the support they need when they need it.

We do this by providing:

- Camp programs including Camp I CAN, Surf Camp, AWARE Camp, Family Camp & Friendsgiving Adult Camp
- The Autism Ask Line, for all your autism related questions and referrals
- Educational programs and resources
- Support Groups for parents, caregivers, and autistic adults
- Monthly recreational events including the AWARE Dance Party and Family Pool Parties
- Special events including Lights! Camera! Autism!, Autism Social & Mental Health Conference, Beers & Cheers for Autism, Splash for Cash and educational programs
- Monthly Newsletters and Emails
- Membership Benefits
- Social Media outreach through Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn & Twitter



Our Program Impact

Surf Camp Participants:	110
Camp I CAN Participants:	83
AWARE Summer Program Participants	12
Family Camp Attendees:	512
Friendsgiving Adult Camp Attendees:	96
Support Group Attendees:	940
Pool & Dance Party Attendees:	2000
Lights! Camera! Autism! Attendees:	300
Autistic Artists at Lights! Camera! Autism!:	25
Community Autism Education Programs Provided:	15
Community Members Trained:	1150



Our Program Impact (Continued)

SD Padres Behind the Scenes Attendees:	150
SD Padres Autism Acceptance Night Attendees:	238
Autism Social & Mental Health Conference:	407
Captain Educational Conference:	54
People Who Received Support by Phone/Email:	1600
Resource Fairs Attended:	20
Community Members Reached at Resource Fairs:	2000
Splash for Cash Pool Party Attendees:	200
Beers & Cheers for Autism Attendees:	50
Total Program Impact:	9962



Our Reach

Autism Society San Diego's Online Community



Twitter - 2,200

Meetup - 4,865

Email List - 10,312

Instagram - 10,300

Facebook - 11,981

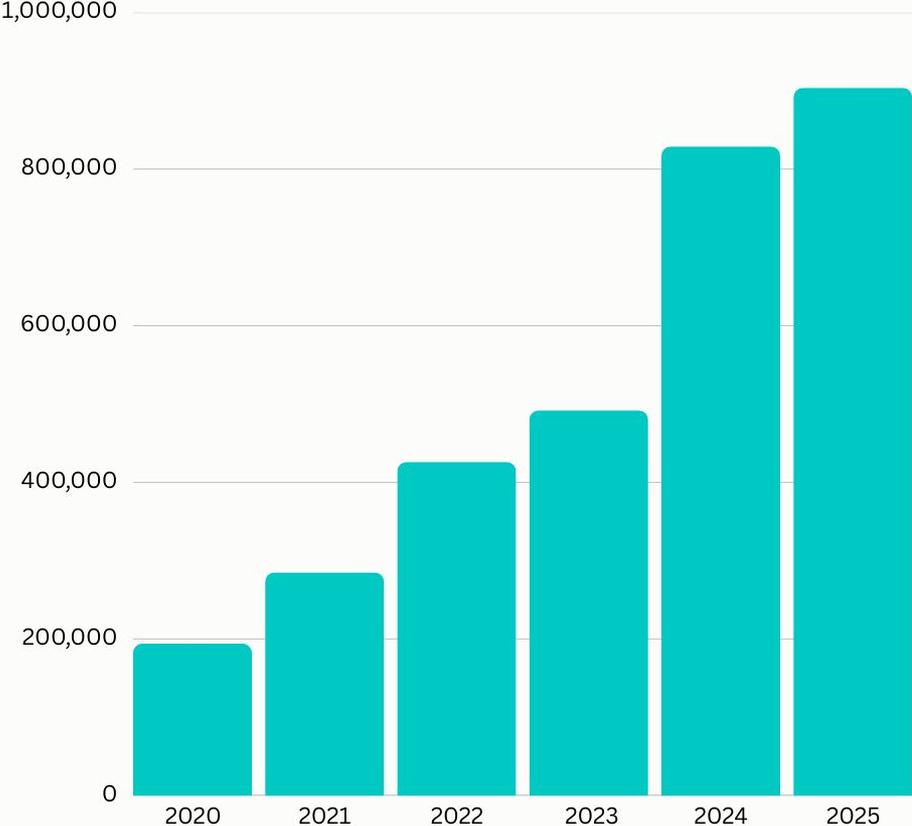
Website - 650,000
(annual views)

Total Online Reach:

689,658



Our Revenue Growth



\$1.4 Million in Reserves

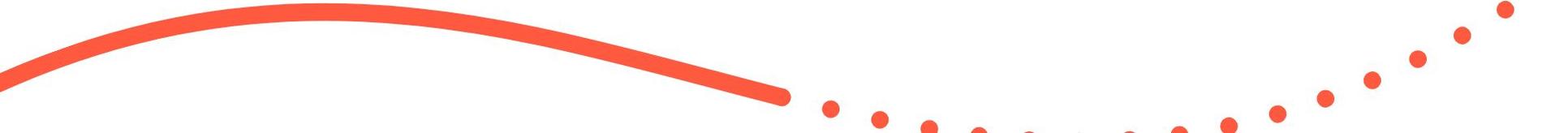
Grant Funding Awarded:

Autism Ask Line	\$18,500
Camp I CAN	\$40,000
Computer Equipment	\$8,660
Development Director - New Staff	\$30,000
Family Camp	\$5,000
Lights! Camera! Autism!	\$5,000
Surf Camp	\$10,725
2025 TOTAL:	\$117,885



Current Grant Applications:

\$312,054



Impact Stories

"Thank you for doing what you do. There are very few places we can bring our son and feel comfortable.

Words cannot express how much that means to parents like us. He never wants to do anything but you guys work miracles.."

Surf Camp Parent



"For our kids, being able to roam around and enjoy different activities, meet people and other kids, experience the night hike, watch the talent show, and even participate is wonderful. For our family as a whole, the bonding time, the opportunity to meet other families, and the feeling of being in a relaxing environment are so nice."

Family Camp Parent

Impact Stories

"The best part was the experience of building memories with others. The camp helpers were great at making sure socialization was an integral component and lots of fun for his summer. Also, gaining skills and generalizing his skills across different environments and people—it is so valuable for us."

Camp I CAN Parent



"The best part of the AWARE Summer was his buddy! He was excellent in making me comfortable with my son being at the camp & my son felt comfortable to participate. It was a "safe place" for my son to socialize."

AWARE Camp Parent

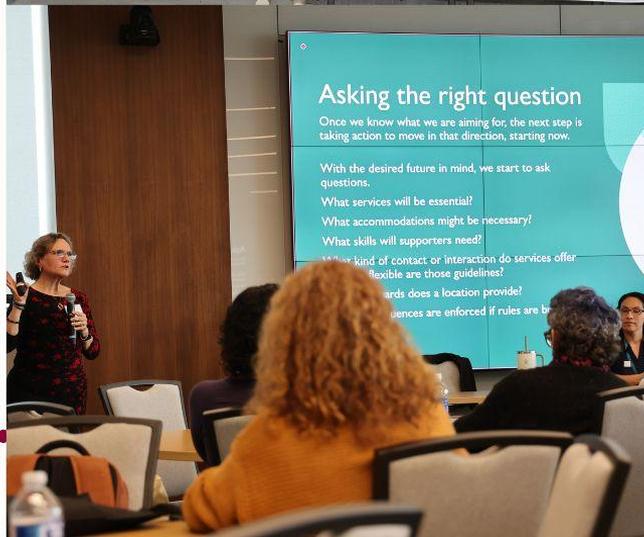


2025 Event Highlight:

Autism Social & Mental Health Conference

Friday, February 7th

- Held our second annual conference focused on the social and mental health needs of people with autism, and added a virtual option to accommodate more community members
- Vended conference with the San Diego Regional Center to allow greater access to community members
- Featured a variety of topics ranging from gender identity to demand avoidance



2025 Event Highlight:

Lights! Camera! Autism!

Saturday, April 26th

This event showcases autistic adults in every aspect of the evening including:

- Musical performance by Jonah Parks, AKA J the King, an award-winning DJ
- Art show with 25 artists in attendance
- Special guests Karlee Lowe and Rob Repass, cast members of the reality TV show, "Lights, Camera, Friendship on the Spectrum," produced by Joey Travolta
- Decor & Swag Bag Items from Non Profits Employing and Training Disabled Adults as well as from Autistic run microbusinesses
- Over 300 attendees



2026 GOALS:

Increase Community Outreach & Awareness

- Provide information sessions focused on autism acceptance and inclusion
- Increase visibility and brand awareness
- Increase social media engagement

Expand Support Programs

- Launch new specialty support groups
- Pilot at least one new recreational or social skills program

Fundraising & Financial Stability

- Stabilize and expand funding sources through diversified fundraising
- Corporate partnerships aligned with inclusion values
- Host 60th anniversary gala

Volunteer & Staff Development

- Hire staff to support growth of our programs and support for families
- Recruit volunteers to support our programs and events





2026 EVENTS

Autism Social & Mental Health Conference - February 20

Spring Family Camp - March 20-22

SD Padres Behind the Scenes - March 14

Celebrate Autism Acceptance with Breakfast & Belonging - April 2

SD Padres Autism Acceptance Night Game - April 16

Splash for Cash - April 19

Camp I CAN - June - July

AWARE Summer Program - July

Surf Camp - July - August

Fall Family Camp - September 18-20

Friendsgiving Adult Camp - November 6-8

Brilliant Together Diamond Anniversary Gala - October 3

Monthly Events:

Family Pool Parties - 2nd Saturday of the Month

AWARE Dance Parties (18 & Over) - 4th Sunday of the Month

Monthly Support Groups - 7 Groups a Month, including Spanish Language and Autistic Adult Support

*** Red = Vendored by SDRC**

Thank you

***To Our Major Donors in 2025!
Your Contributions Make a
Difference in People's Lives!***

Tammy Anderson
Art Pratt Foundation of Old Mission Rotary Club
Beatrix Bartok
Jennifer Bate
Jennifer Beile
Gilman Bishop
Brady Family Foundation
Carol Brzezinski
Catherine Cebulski
Celadon Foundation
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Pledgeling Foundation

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Sean Ruitenberg
Marianne Russo
San Diego Padres
San Marcos Community Foundation
SDG&E
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Kim Sullivan
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Sundt Foundation
Taste of Hunan
The Country Friends
United Way of Northeast Florida
Shelly VanBrabant
Heidi Wagner
Caroline Wickman
Zable Foundation

Thank you

To Our 2025 Sponsors! Your Contributions Are Vital to Our Success!

FDD
Foundation for Developmental Disabilities



Thank you to:

TOM & BARBARA LINCOLN



ERIN & ALLAN KASPAR



SID|R|C
San Diego Regional Center

KAREN FRENCH PHOTOGRAPHY





Autism Society San Diego is so thankful for the support of our community as we strive to provide life-changing services to the San Diego Autism community.



www.autismsocietysandiego.org

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The connection is you.