

The connection is you.™

2023 Annual Report



**Autism
Society**
Northwestern
Pennsylvania



Better Together

For over 25 years, Autism Society NWPA has been a leading provider of comprehensive support and advocacy for individuals living with Autism. What began with just eight committed parents has evolved into a widely recognized nonprofit in our community.

Throughout our journey, we have consistently prioritized recognizing and respecting the diverse needs and experiences of individuals with Autism. We understand that each person with Autism has unique goals, desires, and support requirements. Therefore, we are dedicated to providing personalized services tailored to individual needs.

As we continue to grow, we are proud of our positive impact on the lives of countless individuals with Autism and their families. Looking ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission to empower and enrich the lives of individuals with Autism. We are committed to adapting and evolving to meet the ever-changing needs of our community.



MISSION

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

VISION

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



OVER 210
Households receiving membership benefits



OVER 400
referral & resource calls helped in 2023!



- 13 - Family Sensory & Social Outings
- 10 - Therapeutic Programs
- 18 - Autism 101 Trainings
- 4 - Family Support Programs



Tish Bartlett, Autism Certified Executive Director
tbartlett@autismnwpa.org

Allyson Grossman, Certified Recreational Therapist Program Director
agrossman@autismnwpa.org



Wendy Zukowski
Office Manager
wzukowski@autismnwpa.org

Autism Society NWPA was selected as the 2023 Affiliate of the Year by Autism Society of America amongst ~70 affiliates.

2023
**AFFILIATE
OF THE YEAR**

Autism Society
Northwestern
Pennsylvania

*“Leading
through
Connection”*



Highlights from 2023!

Feel the Beat (ages 3 to 5): "Feel the Beat" is our dynamic preschool program designed to provide a supportive and enriching environment for children with Autism. Our 3-week program was facilitated in collaboration with Mercyhurst Music Therapy students to provide an opportunity to explore music. Music therapy is beneficial for individuals with Autism as it can improve communication skills and facilitate social interactions. Additionally, it helps regulate emotions and enhances sensory processing.

Autism101 Embracing Neurodiversity in the Workplace: Unlock the potential of neurodiversity in your workplace through this comprehensive training: "Autism 101: Embracing Neurodiversity in the Workplace." Discover the invaluable benefits of integrating individuals living with Autism into your team. The session provides insights into Autism spectrum traits, fostering an inclusive environment, and unleashing untapped talent. Equip your organization with the tools to foster an environment where every individual's potential is valued. Embrace neurodiversity and witness the positive transformation it brings to your workplace.

Skills to Pay the Bills | Cooking Module: Our Cooking session was a four-week program where participants learned about nutrition, allergies, reading labels, kitchen safety, went on a grocery store tour, and prepared meals for themselves. Teaching cooking skills and grocery navigation to individuals with Autism is crucial for fostering independence and improving daily living skills. These skills enhance their ability to make healthy food choices, promote self-sufficiency, and build confidence in managing everyday tasks.

22nd Annual Walk for Autism: The 2023 Walk for Autism was a tremendous success! This signature event played a vital role in supporting our operations and program budget, which rely entirely on fundraising dollars. Thanks to the incredible support from our community, we raised awareness and crucial funds to support individuals living with Autism. The participation of our families and community had a significant impact, and we are deeply grateful for the unwavering support. Together, we are making a difference!



Being a part of this organization has given us this community we wouldn't have otherwise, and we will continue to tell new parents we meet to "get involved with the Autism Society, it'll be a game changer."

Colleen and Mike Parsons with children Mikey, Matty, and Jordyn, 2023 Walk Chair Family



Celebrate the Differences

At Autism Society NWPA, we are dedicated to empowering individuals and families affected by Autism, offering lifelong support tailored to their specific needs. We celebrate the uniqueness of each individual, recognizing their distinct talents and requirements.

Our organization is committed to developing comprehensive evidence-based programs that cater to individual needs, fostering growth, independence, and a sense of belonging for all.

Together, we are building a more inclusive and compassionate community.

Autism Society NWPA offers therapeutic programming throughout the lifespan, equipping individuals with essential life skills.

Our programs focus on developing essential life skills including executive functioning, practical living, personal care, job skills, personal safety, people skills, and communication ensuring comprehensive support and development for all.

The programs are open to all individuals with Autism and adapted towards their developmental needs, promoting their success and well-being from age 3 through adulthood.

We are proud to be professional stewards of your donations, ensuring they are utilized effectively for the betterment of individuals and families affected by Autism.



"One thing I wish people knew about Autism is Autism does not debilitate potential for independence and I should know because I have been going to cop college for the past year"
- Kevin Coleman



"With the Autism disability, I feel people with Autism getting lost in the words they just don't know what to say and sometimes they don't understand those things and that does not mean they have social anxiety and they also don't mean to be lonely and they don't mean they can't learn we can socialize we can practice and learn. What I would tell the person with Autism - there is nothing wrong with that. You can learn differently and it will take longer and you can succeed, but it takes practice to learn and you can do it."
- Ryan Hewitt

"The Autism Society NWPA truly embodies who we are, connecting people to the resources they need through education, advocacy, support, information and referral, and community programming." said Christopher Banks, President & CEO of the Autism Society of America
"Through the leadership of Tish Barlett, the Autism Society NWPA has made great strides in working to further inclusion and accessibility for local members of their community."



Ways to Be Involved

WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Make a lasting impact by supporting the Autism Society NWPA through your time, talents, and treasures. With autism affecting 1 in 36 individuals and being the fastest-growing developmental disability, your financial contribution can transform lives.

Together, we can empower our loved ones with the tools they need to live independently, leading to a measurably improved quality of life.

We rely entirely on fundraising dollars to sustain our work. Your financial contributions play a vital role in enabling us to continue our support of individuals living with Autism and their families. Every dollar donated directly impacts the programs and services we provide. Your support ensures that we can create a positive and lasting impact in the lives of those affected by autism. Please consider making a donation today to help us continue our important work.

- Become a sustaining monthly donor at bit.ly/AutismSocietyNWPADonation
- You can also review all giving options on our website at www.autismnwpa.org/ways-to-give
- Become a Champion, sponsor an event, or attend a fundraiser.
- Planned Giving through outright gifts including Charitable IRA Rollovers or Transferring Securities or through your trust or estate. Gifts such as stocks, bonds, life insurance policies, annuities, or retirement plan assets and/or IRAs.
- Host an Event or Fundraiser



We value all of YOU!

We deeply appreciate our donors, sponsors, families, community members, and volunteers' generous support. Whether financial or volunteering, your contributions have been invaluable in establishing and maintaining our Family Center. Dedicated to serving individuals on the autism spectrum throughout their lives, this center provides essential support and resources. Together, we are making a profound difference in the lives of those we serve.



Donate by mail or online:

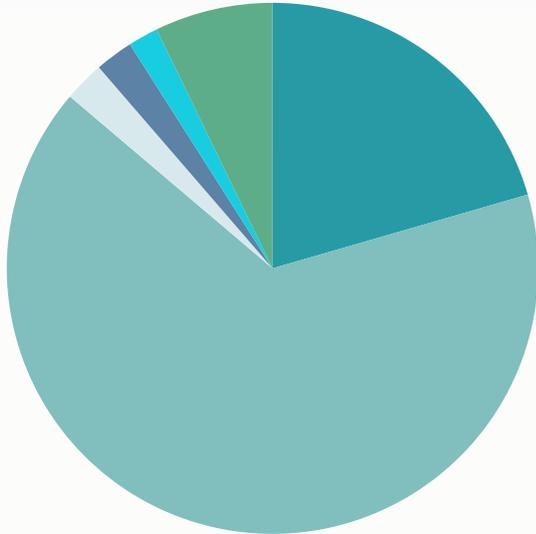
Autism Society NWPA
3308 State Street
Erie, PA 16508



Legal Name: **Autism Society
Northwestern Pennsylvania**
Federal Tax ID# 46-1124803

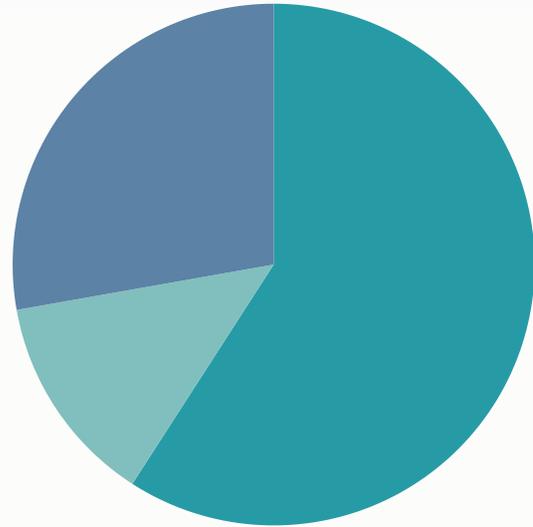
Financial Data

2023 Revenue \$404,558



- Contributions (33%)
- Fundraising (56%)
- Merchandise Sales (2%)
- Program & Recreation Fees (1%)
- Memberships (~1%)
- Grant Income (8%)

2023 Expenses \$338,673



- Program & Recreation Fees (55%)
- Fundraising (30%)
- Management & General (15%)

Revenue

Contributions *	\$84,921
Fundraising	\$259,040
Merchandise Sales	\$9,725
Program & Recreation Fees	\$9,133
Memberships	\$7,251
Grant Income *	\$28,324

\$404,558

Expenses

Program & Recreation Fees	\$200,283
Management & General	\$44,427
Fundraising	\$94,143

\$338,673

Change in net Assets: \$65,885

* Donor restricted funds: \$14,241 Contributions



The brand logo symbolizes community, strength, equity, diversity, pathways, and connection. Each thread represents individuality and unique experiences woven into the larger community.

The mark speaks to the interdependence and interconnectedness of the Autism community through the threads "woven" together.

Our brand's strength is amplified by our network and the dedicated individuals working alongside the Autism community daily.

Autism Society NWP is part of the Autism Society affiliate network, the nation's foremost grassroots organization. While we share the name and brand, we are legally and financially independent, having received our 501(c)3 status in 2012.

Everyone's story is different.

The experience of Autism is not one thing. It is many things. It's dreams, talents, relationships, victories, hurdles, and everything in between. The connection between those experiences is you.

You break the mold. No matter who you are, the person you are is infinite—and you are the only you there is.

Board of Directors

Autism Society NWP desires individuals who reflect diversity including, but not limited to, age, gender, sexual orientation, geography, economic status, disability, and ethnicity.

Serving on the board is a rewarding experience and an opportunity for personal and professional growth.



Our Dedicated Board Members

Jay Spaeder, Board President

Heather Evans, Vice President

Ryan Bergquist, Treasurer

Sam Lopez, Secretary

Natalie Braddock

Stella LaPaglia

Brandy Brine

Doug Massey

Christine Carrucci

John Nygaard

Kieran Dhillon

Nathan Venesky

Justin Herring

Jennifer Williams

Jack Hewitt

Israel Wodarski

"I view Autism acceptance as beyond the word acceptance. I believe acceptance should lead toward inclusion and belonging. It would be great to live in a world that doesn't require masking because masking causes a lot of neurodivergent people to feel overwhelmed and overstimulated eventually leading to burnout so it would be nice to find a place of acceptance and inclusion and belonging."



Jennifer Williams
Autistic
Board Member



The connection is you.™

Thanks to you, our work thrives. We've built a nurturing, inclusive environment fostering growth, independence, and well-being for those living with Autism. Your belief in our community transforms lives, instilling hope and resilience.

Your dedication demonstrates compassion and commitment to positive change. We're deeply grateful for your generosity, enabling us to broaden our reach, improve our programs, and create lasting change.

Together, we empower individuals with Autism to thrive and support families along their journey, helping them find strength and support.

Leading Through Connections.



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