



Student Initiatives for Autism Speaks

We are thrilled to announce the Student Initiatives for Autism Speaks program and website.

Autism Speaks is dedicated to impacting the lives of those affected by autism through research, advocacy, family services and awareness efforts. These efforts are fueled by the passion of our volunteers, dedicated to making a difference in the lives of those affected by autism.

Most volunteers are parents, grandparents, or autism professionals. But there is a growing number of remarkable students that are driven to make a change for their peers. Few are more inspiring than the students who have started buddy programs in their communities or raised thousands of dollars during and after school. We know that you have been doing some amazing things in your community and we hope to provide you with even more educational and fundraising tools to continue your success.

This year we will be greatly expanding the number of tools available for students such as presentations that can be used as assemblies, classroom lessons, or community speeches as well as lesson plans, social networking tools and more. Visit autismspeaks.org/studentclubs for information on these and other programs.

We have rebranded our Student Clubs website into an overall umbrella program called Student Initiatives for Autism Speaks. This is designed to identify, support and highlight the various efforts of student age groups around the country which include:

- Local Youth Leadership Committee
- Student Clubs for Autism Speaks
- College Initiatives
- Health Occupational Students of America (HOSA)
- National Student Initiatives Council

Local Youth Leadership Committee

Started in Long Island, NY, the Local Youth Leadership Council is an informal group of students within each school district, usually with one or two representatives in each school. The Local Youth Leadership Council meets at the beginning of the year to kick off walk efforts and share success stories.

Acting as ambassadors, Youth Leaders spread autism awareness within their school and are the team captains for their local Walk Now for Autism event. Youth Leaders benefit from accruing community service hours and are provided with college recommendation letters.

Student Clubs for Autism Speaks

Our Student Clubs program is designed to provide autism education, leadership development, acceptance and recognition. Included in the Student Clubs program are several opportunities for educating student peers and the local community.

We have developed education modules that you can use in your meetings to educate new members about autism. There are lessons ranging from *What is Autism* to *Treatment Options* and *Autism in the News*.

College Initiatives

Autism SpeaksU is an initiative of Autism Speaks focused on engaging youth on college and university campuses and connecting them with the autism community. The team at Autism SpeaksU guides college students through the process of organizing and coordinating fundraising events on their campus to benefit Autism Speaks. By engaging college communities into a single, powerful voice for the autism community, we can continue to build awareness about autism and raise critical funds in the fight against this complex disorder.

Health Occupation Students of America

HOSA is a student organization whose mission is to promote career opportunities in health care and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people. We are thrilled to that Autism Speaks has once again been chosen as the HOSA National Service project. HOSA groups have raised over \$150,000 in two years and we look forward to another great two years!

National Student Initiatives Council

No one knows students better than their peers. That is why we are giving students the opportunity to drive the Student Initiatives at a national level. Through quarterly meetings and regular contact, students are encouraged to envision and create new programs and tools to be implemented around the country. At the end of the school year (June & July) we accept self nominations for the following year through the essay "Why I want to be part of the National Student Initiatives Council." The National Council is announced in mid-August.

Please contact us if there is anything that we can do to help you succeed in your community. I look forward to working with you.

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