

Autism Awareness



versus

Autism Acceptance

Awareness focuses on acknowledging the existence of autism. Acceptance is actively fostering inclusion, respect, and support for autistic individuals, rather than trying to change or "fix" them. We should always provide opportunities to learn about autism, but it's even more important for people to put what they know into action. Celebrating "Autism Acceptance Month" leads to a better quality of life for people on the spectrum and a more inclusive world.



Awareness is...

- knowing that you have a classmate with a disability.
- simply realizing that someone has a challenge.
- seeing someone with autism do something that you didn't expect from them.
- appreciating the gifts and challenges of those with different abilities.
- agreeing with these statements and then doing nothing.



Acceptance is...

- ✓ inviting a classmate with a disability to hang out with you.
- ✓ engaging in a real conversation with someone who has a challenge.
- ✓ telling someone with autism that they are awesome or cheering them on.
- ✓ volunteering your time to help support people with different abilities.
- ✓ sharing this information and taking action.



Imagery

- * Puzzle piece imagery is now seen as infantilizing, representing a missing piece, and fixing a "problem".
- * General awareness campaigns often used the color blue emphasizing "calm", which goes against the promotion of action and advocacy.
- ✓ Use the gold or rainbow infinity symbol to represent the infinite possibilities and diversity within the spectrum.
- ✓ Red as a color is often supported by the autistic community to "reclaim" the narrative, focusing on acceptance and passion. #redinstead