

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 28, 2019

BE COOL FOR AUTISM

A Provincial Event to Celebrate World Autism Awareness Day

ST. JOHN'S, NL – Autism Society, Newfoundland & Labrador (ASNL), is excited to unveil its new Autism campaign in celebration of World Autism Awareness Day on Tuesday, April 2, 2019. *Be Cool for Autism* is a province-wide event aimed to help raise autism awareness and autism acceptance while raising funds for ASNL.

Be Cool for Autism encourages students, teachers, and workplaces to wear their sunglasses on April 2, 2019. By wearing sunglasses, ASNL hopes to draw attention to the theme, "it's cool to be accepting of everyone".

"World Autism Awareness Day is about sharing the importance of every individual having full and equal opportunity to participate in community. I'm delighted to be kicking off this campaign. The message may be simple, but it is huge; we hope everyone takes a moment to remind themselves just how cool it is to be accepting of everyone." -- Scott Crocker, CEO of Autism Society, NL

Previous World Autism Awareness Day events have had great participation in schools across the province. ASNL is excited and hopeful that this campaign will be the largest yet with early support from both the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

"The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District is pleased to partner on this event. Initiatives that encourage a greater and deeper understanding of Autism stand to help us all. By working together, we can improve our approaches and find appropriate paths forward in understanding the individualized needs of every 'cool' person we encounter throughout our province." --Tony Stack, CEO/Director of Education for the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District

"All students can find success when they receive the needed supports. On World Autism Awareness Day, it is important to acknowledge the importance of those successes and supporting each and every student." --Dean Ingram, President, Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association

We are asking individuals to wear their sunglasses, make a donation and share their best selfie or group photo with us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter by using the hashtag #BeCoolForAutism and tagging us @AutismSocietyNL. Supporters can download colouring sheets, cut out sunglasses and learn more at www.autism.nf.net

Information Bites:

The ASD incidence rate in Newfoundland and Labrador is 1:57, the highest in the country.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong, developmental disability that affects how a person communicates with and relates to other people, and how they experience the world around them. People with autism see, hear and feel the world differently than other people. Differences may be seen in social communication, social interaction, repetitive behavior and routines, and sensory sensitivity.

ASNL is a provincial charitable organization dedicated to fostering the development of individual, lifelong, and community-based supports and services for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), their families, and caregivers. ASNL operates four regional offices around the island in St. John's, Clarenville, Grand Falls-Windsor and Corner Brook.

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