

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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## Autism Awareness Month Celebrated Through April Walk

March 26, 2019—Saturday, April 27 at 9:00 a.m., the Autism Society of the Quad Cities will celebrate Autism Awareness month with a free walk on at the Pepsico Center, 1025 30<sup>th</sup> Street at Augustana College in Rock Island. Doors open at 8:30 am. Please register so we can ensure the amount of refreshments needed at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/autism-society-of-the-gc-local-autism-awareness-walk-tickets-55219317465>

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that is caused by differences in how the brain functions. People with ASD may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in different ways.

Persons with autism, their family members and friends, and members of the community can enjoy this free event. It will include the walk indoors at the Pepsico Center track, activities for children, a sensory friendly disc jockey, refreshments, and more! Cost for ‘See the Able Not the Label’ T-shirts are \$16 & sweatshirts are \$26 with additional costs for larger sizes of either. You must pre-order at <https://quadcitiesautismsociety.itemorder.com/>.

“Autism is getting more common—1 in 59 children have it. Help us shed light on the autism community in the Quad Cities by walking with us. We are strong together and this event gets the word out about autism’s challenges and successes,” said Gary Rowe, president of the Quad Cities organization.

The Autism Society of the Quad Cities provides information, education, support, and advocacy in the Quad Cities and surrounding area to maximize the potential of persons with autism and those affected by autism. For more information call (563) 343-1057 or [www.autismqc.org](http://www.autismqc.org). The walk is listed under the “get involved” tab.

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What are the signs of autism?

The timing and severity of autism's early signs vary widely. Some infants show hints in their first months. In others, symptoms become obvious as late as age 2 or 3. Not all children with autism show all the signs. Many children who don't have autism show a few. That's why professional evaluation is crucial.

The following "red flags" may indicate your child is at risk for an autism spectrum disorder. If your child exhibits any of the following, please don't delay in asking your pediatrician or family doctor for an evaluation:

By 6 months

- Few or no big smiles or other warm, joyful and engaging expressions.
- Limited or no eye contact.

By 9 months

Little or no back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles or other facial expressions

By 12 months

- Little or no babbling
- Little or no back-and-forth gestures such as pointing, showing, reaching or waving
- Little or no response to name.

By 16 months

Very few or no words.

By 24 months

Very few or no meaningful, two-word phrases (not including imitating or repeating)

At any age

- Loss of previously acquired speech, babbling or social skills
- Avoidance of eye contact
- Persistent preference for solitude
- Difficulty understanding other people's feelings
- Delayed language development
- Persistent repetition of words or phrases (echolalia)
- Resistance to minor changes in routine or surroundings
- Restricted interests
- Repetitive behaviors (flapping, rocking, spinning, etc.)
- Unusual and intense reactions to sounds, smells, tastes, textures, lights and/or color
- Very few or no words.

Resources:

QC Autism Society [www.autismqc.org](http://www.autismqc.org)

Autism Speaks [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)