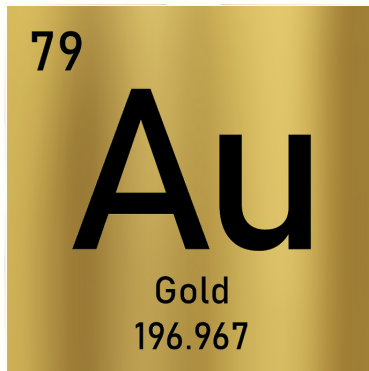


ADVOCACY

People First of Toledo Monthly Newsletter



Autism Acceptance



Autism Acceptance Month

By Quinn Thomas

April is Autism Acceptance Month, also called Autism Awareness Month. But awareness is not enough. People can be aware of autistic people but still not accepting of us. If we want a society built on inclusion, diversity, and equity, then we need autistic people to be accepted and embraced. Being autistic does not make someone any less than an allistic person. We are equal members of society.

The gold infinity sign has become a symbol of autism acceptance recently. This is related to the rainbow infinity sign for neurodiversity, and the atomic symbol for gold: AU. "AU" is also the first two letters of "autism" or "autistic."

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUTISM WALK AND RESOURCE FAIR

April 3rd, 10:00 am, at Franklin Park Mall. All proceeds will go to support and advocacy for autistic people. Hosted by the Autism Society of Northwest Ohio.

AUTISM PROVIDER NETWORK JOB FAIR

April 6th, 2:00-6:00, Toledo Lucas County Public Library. Interviews will be conducted on site.

WEDNESDAY WALKS

Every Wednesday from 5:30-7:00 starting April 6th. The first will be at Side Cut and meet in the Silver Lake parking lot.

SUPER SATURDAY DANCE

April 9th from 7:00-9:00, Five Lakes Church gymnasium. For DD individuals and caregivers.

You may be more familiar with the "light it up blue" campaign or the puzzle piece as a symbol of autism. Both of these things were initiated by Autism Speaks, a single company that does not represent the whole autistic community. Some people have used "red instead" to combat the "light it up blue" thing, but that is still focusing on the Autism Speaks corporation and not autistic people themselves. And so the gold infinity sign was created.

What is neurodiversity?

The word "neurodiversity" was coined in 1998. It was made up by autistic self-advocate and sociologist Judy Singer. Neurodiversity is just like every other type of diversity, but in your brain. There is no "right" or "default" gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation. By the same logic, there is no "correct" type of brain. We are all different and we all think different.

Neurodiversity includes more than just autism. It also means people who are dyslexic, bipolar, schizophrenic, epileptic,

and more. It includes any developmental disability and usually most mental illnesses. ADHD, OCD, Tourette's, and learning disabilities are considered neurodivergent.

Neurodivergent is the opposite of neurotypical, in the same way that allistic is the opposite of autistic.



**People First
of
Toledo**

2022 AWARDS GALA

Our April People First meeting will be the CCS annual awards gala. The gala will recognize advocates in the community on April 22, from 5:30-10:30 at Parkway Place.

Tickets are \$60 but free for People First members-- there is an option to donate a ticket, and people have been doing that. Buy a seat or a table online at ccsohio.org.