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When we found out we were expecting another baby, we waved the white flag and decided to move back home to Northwest Arkansas after a year away. There's nothing like moving to a new place to make you realize how supportive NWA really is.

We immediately went back to Cassady Children's Center for therapy and were welcomed with open arms. They worked hard to catch Luke up and to help him through the transition of moving again. We signed him back up to play baseball for the Yankees on his Miracle League team. (If you ever need a reason to smile, I highly recommend coming to a game!)

He was placed in a self-contained classroom at a public school in Springdale that has bent over backward to individualize his instruction and love him through his hardest days. Our church started an "Incredible Kids" program so kids with special needs can learn and play in a safe environment just for them.

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When we decided to get our service dog, Bailey, three Springdale Schools came together to raise money to help us pay for her and AIM provided a grant that also went toward bringing her home. She goes to school with Luke everyday to help keep him safe and calm and has been welcomed into his school with open arms.



Although our expectations of what Luke's life would be like have taken a completely different direction, we are so grateful for the opportunity to raise our family here and know without a doubt this is where we are supposed to be. The community of Northwest Arkansas truly makes us feel like we aren't alone in this journey and for that, we plan to continue to raise our family here, give back, and help other families like ours know they are not alone in this journey.

-Robyn Hubbard  
Lukes Mom

You can hear more from Robyn by listening to her Podcasts on KLRC's The Brave Place  
<http://klrc.com/podcasts/the-brave-place>

# April Is Autism Awareness Month

#aimeveryday

## Statistics/Facts

- 1 in 54 has a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- There is no scientific reason for what causes autism.
- There is no cure for autism.
- It is estimated that one-third of individuals with autism are also nonverbal.
- Nearly half of those with autism tend to wander or bolt from safety
- Depression affects an estimated 7% of children and 26% of adults with autism

## Red Flags

- Lack of eye contact
- Delayed speech or babbling
- Restrictive or repetitive behaviors
- Easily overwhelmed by large crowds
- Inability to cope with over stimulation
- Not responding to their name
- Prefer to play alone rather than with peers
- Do not mimic behaviors
- Display a lack of emotion

## Ways to show kindness to someone with autism

- Include them in events and activities
- Don't stare when they are having a hard time, instead ask if they need help
- Focus on their abilities not their disabilities
- When speaking address them not just their caregiver
- Don't give up on interacting with them if they do not respond to you the first attempt

## Ideas to Help Spread Awareness

- Light It Up Blue- Use blue light bulbs on your porch for the month of April
- Share an uplifting story about your child or someone you know, who has autism, on your social media pages
- Put autism awareness cookies in the break-room at work with a note for your co-workers to enjoy
- Wear an autism ribbon or pin on your shirt during April

# State Resources

There are several State Resources available to a child on the autism spectrum.

## TEFRA

TEFRA is an insurance program, within Medicaid, that will cover most medical expenses not covered by your commercial insurance policy.

- The child applying for TEFRA must meet federal guidelines for disability determination
- Determination is established by a Medical Review Team
- Children can be covered by TEFRA until their 19th birthday
- The CHILD'S resources cannot exceed \$2000
- Parent income is NOT considered for eligibility and there is NOT an income cap for eligibility

## Waiver

Waiver is a service and support program, through a network of community provider, that is designed to assist a person with developmental disabilities, to live, work, and recreate in their home community and/or community of choice.

- It's purpose is to help de-institutionalize individuals or prevent institutionalization of individuals who can live at home or in the community
- It offers greater freedom, choice & opportunities for families
- It is a voluntary program and there are only a certain number of people who can be served annually based on funding to support services

## AR Hipp

The Arkansas HIPP program is designed to save money for families with high healthcare cost by reimbursing members for the cost of group health insurance provided by an employer or through COBRA.

- In some cases, members can receive reimbursement for the premium cost of a family health insurance policy
- The program also eliminates some out-of-pocket medical expenses for qualifying Medicaid clients
- You or a member of your family MUST receive Medicaid Benefits
- You or a member of your family MUST have access to a health insurance plan through an employer or COBRA

For more information about these programs or to obtain an application, please contact the AIM office



**208 N Walton Blvd**

**Suite 9**

**Bentonville, AR 72712**

**[www.aimnwa.org](http://www.aimnwa.org)**

**479-381-5570**

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[www.facebook.com/AIMEVERYDAY](http://www.facebook.com/AIMEVERYDAY)

## AIM Community Partners

### Kitchens Counseling

34 N Colt Square Suite 3  
Fayetteville, AR 72703

479-200-0965

[www.kitchenscounselingservices.com](http://www.kitchenscounselingservices.com)

### The Counseling Affect

4241 Gabel Dr 2B  
Fayetteville, AR 72703

479-430-2323

[www.counselingaffect.com](http://www.counselingaffect.com)

### Kids SPOT, LLC

105 S. Blair St  
Springdale, AR 72764

479-259-2339

[www.kidsspotllc.com](http://www.kidsspotllc.com)

### PlayStrong Pediatric Therapy

3625 W, Chestnut  
Rogers, AR 72756

479-246-0101

[www.playstrongtherapy.com](http://www.playstrongtherapy.com)

### BlueSprig Pediatrics

2601 N Walton Blvd Suite 1  
Bentonville, AR 72712

479-802-4798

3155 N College Ave, Ste 108  
Fayetteville, AR 72703

479-957-9121

[www.bluesprigautism.com](http://www.bluesprigautism.com)

If you are interested in becoming an AIM Community Partner  
contact us at [Paula.George@aimnwa.org](mailto:Paula.George@aimnwa.org)