

Before you donate to Autism Speaks, Consider the facts



Very little money donated to Autism Speaks goes toward helping autistic people and families.

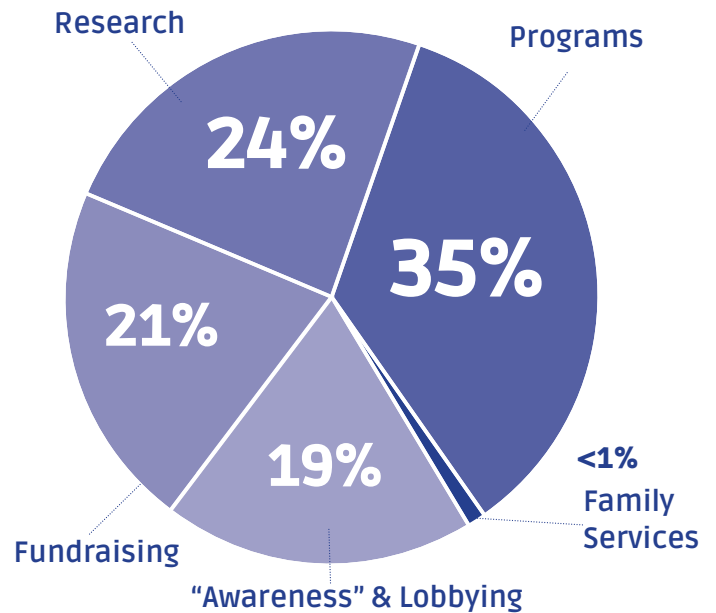
Only 0.16% of Autism Speaks' budget goes towards the "Family Service" grants that are the organization's means of funding services. **Autism Speaks spends 131x as much—21%—on fundraising.** Although Autism Speaks has not prioritized services with a practical impact for families and individuals in its budget, its rates of executive pay are the highest in the autism world: in 2019, between salary and bonuses **Autism Speaks paid their CEO nearly \$1 million.**

Autism Speaks talks about us without us.

Autism Speaks has **only 1 autistic person out of a total of 30 individuals** on its Board of Directors. By contrast, **25 out of 30 board members represent major corporations**, including current and former CEOs and senior executives of PayPal, Goldman Sachs, White Castle, FX Networks, Virgin Mobile, eBay, AMC Networks, L'Oreal, CBS, SiriusXM, American Express, S.C. Johnson, Tommy Hilfiger, and Royal Bank of Scotland.

Autism Speaks' Budget

source: Autism Speaks 990 Non-Profit Tax Exemption Form, 2019*



Autism Speaks' fundraising strategies promote fear, stigma, and prejudice against autistic people.

Autism Speaks uses its platform and advertising budget to portray autism and autistic people as mysterious and frightening. **Their fundraising tactics increase stigma and create barriers** to the inclusion of autistic people in our communities.

* "Awareness & Lobbying" figure derived from reported program service expenses on Part III, section 4b plus reported lobbying expenses; "Family Services" figure derived from reported grant award amounts; "Research" figure derived from reported program service expenses; "Fundraising" figure derived from reported numbers plus "Walk and Team-Up" expenses.

Autism Speaks has not significantly changed, despite claiming otherwise.

Despite some superficial changes, **Autism Speaks has not changed their core beliefs about autism.** They continue to promote harmful policies and “treatments,” including Applied Behavioral Analysis and institutionalization. While they removed the word “cure” from their mission statement, **Autism Speaks continues to fund biomedical research focusing on identifying the causes of autism, rather than quality of life research that aligns with the priorities of the autistic community.** Self-advocates have been explaining what we need for years; Autism Speaks knows, but they aren’t listening.

Increasingly, Autism Speaks uses the autistic community’s language to hide their true intentions. ASAN updates this flyer each year with up-to-date information. Autism Speaks continues to spend only 1% of their budget on services for autistic people and their families. They continue to give their director a salary of over half a million dollars. They continue to have only 1 autistic person on their board, with nearly all leadership and decision-making positions filled by non-autistic people. **They have not changed.**

Autism Speaks wants the autistic community to forget the harmful things they’ve done and still do, but they have never apologized for the harm they have done to our community. Nor have they made meaningful changes to their leadership, advocacy positions, or funding. The fact that Autism Speaks feels pressured to change the language they use is not a sign that Autism Speaks has changed. **It’s a sign that the autistic community is successfully changing the conversation around autism.**

Instead, donate to organizations that help autistic people:

Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)

is a policy advocacy organization run by and for autistic people. We work to create changes that benefit all autistic people, and make tools our community can use to get involved in advocacy.

autisticadvocacy.org

Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network (AWN)

seeks to share information which works to build acceptance and understanding of disability, while dispelling stereotypes and misinformation which perpetuate unnecessary fears surrounding an autism diagnosis.

awnnetwork.org

Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)

works to ensure that people with disabilities are treated as equals and are given the same decisions, choices, rights, responsibilities, and chance to speak up to empower themselves as everyone else.

sabeusa.org

Autistic People of Color Fund provides microgrants to Black, Brown, Native, Asian, and mixed-race people in the autistic community for survival, organizing, leisure, and pleasure.

awnnetwork.org/apoc

CommunicationFIRST works to educate the public, advocate for policy reform, and engage the judicial system to advance the rights, autonomy, opportunity, and dignity of people with speech-related communication disabilities and conditions.

communicationfirst.org