



Dear Teacher,

Thank you for supporting our Change Champions Making Change For Autism Campaign in your classroom!

Use this campaign to talk about Autism with your students:

Autism is a disability that affects how children relate to other people, communicate and learn. Some students with Autism need a lot of special help and some do well with only a little help.

Sometimes bright lights, loud noises and crowds make it harder for students with Autism to do well. Autism United of Wisconsin provides activities that are sensory friendly. This means we modify the environment so children with Autism can enjoy these activities too.

Children with autism love to participate in some of the same activities we all enjoy such as water parks, laser tag and even riding a bike. With your help, children with Autism can take part in these activities in a modified, less-stimulating environment.

Hang the poster featured on the back of this letter in your classroom near your donation jar.

Hand out the Autism Fact Cards to each student to take home.

Teacher Tips for interacting with your students with Autism:

- Post a schedule for the day on the board. Consider adding pictures to it.
- Increase visual supports wherever possible. Offer directions both verbally and in writing.
- Give warnings when possible before transitioning to a new activity.
- Tell the individual what to do rather than what not to do. Example: NOT “stop picking at your fingers” but rather “put your hands on your desk”
- Provide routine and structure.
- People with Autism are often very literal thinkers. Choose your words carefully. If you ask your class, “would you all like to come over and sit on the carpet”? You may hear, “no” from the child on the Spectrum. They are responding literally to the question that you asked.
- Avoid idioms and sarcasm. People on the Spectrum are often very literal thinkers.
- Use simple, concrete language.
- Allow for extra processing time.
- Distinguish willful non-compliance from lack of skills.
- Use the individuals’ special interest when possible. They may be very happy to write a two-page paper on trains.
- Preparation for special activities will reduce anxiety and improve chances of success.
- Consider incorporating breaks within the school day. This can mean a trip to the sensory room or a walk to get a drink of water. This should not be earned or taken away but rather built into the schedule.
- People with Autism often have outstanding pattern recognition.
- Assume competence.
- Figure out what purpose a disruptive behavior serves and teach the student an appropriate way to get that need met.



Our class is participating in the **Change Champions Coin Drive** the week of: _____

Autism is a disorder that is based in the brain. It affects behavior as well as how someone relates and communicates with other people.

Autism is a spectrum disorder which means some people have their brain affected by Autism just a little and other people have their brain affected by it a lot (and everywhere in between).

Children with Autism love to participate in some of the same activities we all enjoy such as water parks, laser tag and even riding a bike. With your help, children with Autism can take part in these activities in a modified, less stimulating environment.

Please bring in your change/cash and donate to Change Champions to help kids with Autism enjoy the same activities we all love!



Where do the donations go?

These are just some of the fun programs that your money will help fund:



The Kids in Motion event allows Autistic children to experience imaginative play in an environment that is not over-stimulating.



The iCan Bike program gives children and adults with disabilities the opportunity to learn how to ride a two-wheel bike in a safe and encouraging environment.



Everyone loves laser tag but it is especially nice when it is modified for children with Autism.



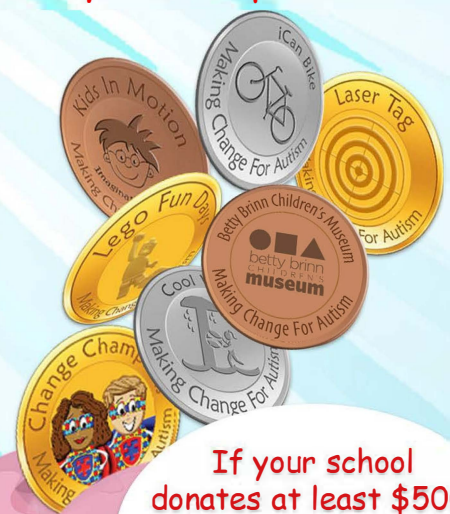
The Betty Brinn Children's Museum offers countless opportunities for children to learn about and explore their world through play.



Water parks can be extra noisy, have long lines and be very crowded. Autism United of Wisconsin and Cool Waters modifies the environment to make it fun for children with Autism.



Lego Fun Days allow children with Autism to build cool kits like Star Wars, Minecraft and Superheroes to improve fine motor skills while having fun.



If your school donates at least \$500, the class that donates the most money wins a pizza party!



For more information: autism-united.org/changechampions