



Tips for Being a Friend to Someone with Autism Celebrating National Autism Awareness Month

Understanding autism starts at a young age, and there is no greater place than the classroom to start. Understanding autism and how to interact with people with autism comes from being exposed to them, and being taught how to treat and talk to someone with autism. Children naturally want to be helpful. Give them that opportunity by encouraging them to be a buddy to someone with autism. It is up to teachers and parents to teach children about differences, acceptance, and understanding. Here are some ideas on how to get started.

- People are born with autism and while they look just like you and me, autism changes the way their brain works.
- Some people with autism talk and others do not. Just because they cannot talk doesn't mean they don't have anything to say.
- Nobody knows what causes autism, but we do know that a person with autism will always have autism.
- Kids with autism are the same as other kids in a lot of ways. They like birthdays, swimming, and having friends.
- Being kind and compassionate is one of the best things you can do to help someone with autism.
- Here are a few ways to be a friend:
 - Playing games they like to play.
 - Talking to them like you would any other kid.
 - Giving them a high five when you're having fun!
 - Sitting next to them in the lunchroom.
 - Visiting them at their house.
 - Inviting them to your house.
 - Show them what to do so they can imitate you.
 - Being a buddy to them on the playground.
 - Walking with them to the next class.
 - Supporting them with kindness and understanding.