

## Autism Fact Sheet - Middle & High School

**“If you’ve met one person with autism, you’ve met one person with autism.”**

– Dr. Stephen Shore, professor and self-advocate

- Autistic individuals have unique ways of communicating, interpreting language, and interacting with others.
- Every person with autism is different in what they like, what they are good at, how they learn, and the things that might be hard for them.
- The most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) indicates that 1 in 36 children in the United States are identified as being on the spectrum.
- Autism is seen in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Autism can look different across genders.
- The primary characteristics associated with autism include:
  - differences in social communication and interaction
  - restricted and/or repetitive patterns in behavior and interests
- The autism spectrum is not linear; an individual's support needs can occur in any combination and range in severity.
- Some people with autism use verbal language to communicate, and others do not.
- Just because someone uses alternative ways of communicating, doesn't mean they don't have things to say or share.
- Autistic people like to have friends and desire social interaction, they just may show that interest in a way that is different than their neurotypical peers.
- Things like bright lights and noises bother some kids with autism because their bodies and brains are more sensitive to processing sensory information.
- It is really important to celebrate and embrace neurodiversity - how can you help do this in the communities you interact and engage with?