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## Facts About Autism

- Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are a group of developmental disabilities defined by significant impairments in social interaction and communication and the presence of unusual behaviors and interests. – *Center for Disease Control*
- Autism is the most common of the Pervasive Developmental Disorders, affecting an estimated one in 150 American births. Roughly translated, this means as many as 1.5 million Americans today are believed to have some form of autism. – *Autism Society of America*
- For every girl living with autism, there are four boys living with autism. – *Generation Rescue*
- In the U.S. alone, a child is diagnosed with autism every 21 minutes. – *Center for Disease Control*
- For many children, autism symptoms improve with age and proper treatment. Some children with autism grow up to lead normal or near-normal lives. – *Mayo Clinic*
- Based on statistics from the U.S. Department of Education and other governmental agencies, autism is growing at a startling rate of 10-17 percent per year. At this rate, the ASA estimates that the prevalence of autism could reach 4 million Americans in the next decade. – *Autism Society of America*
- The number of students diagnosed with autism has been increasing over time; almost 235,000 students, ages six through 21 nationwide, are identified as having autism, and receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). – *U.S. Department of Education. IDEA Data. (2007)*
- A study by the Special Education Expenditure Project (conducted for the U.S. Department of Education) found that special classes, therapists, aides, transportation, and facilities for a student with autism cost an average of nearly \$19,000 a year, or roughly triple the cost of a typical student. – *Special Education Expenditure Project*
- State and federal education departments in the U.S. spend approximately \$36 billion each year on special programs for individuals with developmental disabilities ages 3 to 21. An estimated \$90 billion is spent on people with autism each year. – *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*
- Ninety percent of costs associated with autism are in adult services. – *Autism Society of America*
- Cost of lifelong care for a person diagnosed with autism can be reduced by two-thirds with early diagnosis, intervention and specialized treatment programs. – *Generation Rescue*