

**COUNTY OF OTTAWA
STATE OF MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION**

At a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Ottawa, Michigan, held at the Fillmore Street Complex in the Township of Olive, Michigan on the 23rd day of April, 2024 at 6:30 PM local time.

PRESENT: Commissioners: Roger Bergman, Doug Zylstra, Roger Belknap, Gretchen Cosby, Rebekah Curran, Lucy Ebel, Sylvia Rhodea, Allison Miedema, Kendra Wenzel, Joe Moss.

ABSENT: Commissioners: Jacob Bonnema.

It was moved by Commissioner Sylvia Rhodea and supported by Commissioner Rebekah Curran that the following Resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, April is recognized across the United States and international community as being Autism Awareness Month ; and

WHEREAS, the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners (“Board”) recognizes that Autism Awareness includes not only acceptance of those affected, but increased awareness to healing treatments and root causes of Autism ; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network reported that roughly 1 in 36 eight-year-old children were identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and the percentage of affected individuals (both adults and children) with ASD has increased over four times since the year 2000; and

WHEREAS, the increasing rate of children with ASD is reflected in an increase in the number of children obtaining care for ASD in Ottawa County. The increased number of children impacted with ASD necessitates development of long-term strategies for family and community resources, particularly as children and parents age over time; and

WHEREAS, a well-supported family in an informed and equipped community gives a child with autism the best chance of success and development with hope for the future; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes a variation in symptoms and severity exists in youth and adults diagnosed with ASD, with a corresponding range of challenges and impact for individuals and families ; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes the hardships that parents and families may face in dealing with ASD diagnosis and the importance of diagnosis and community resources ; and

WHEREAS, the Board is committed to supporting children and adults diagnosed with ASD, as well as the families of those affected with ASD, by providing education and resources. We stand with families in asking for continued research that will provide additional answers and solutions for impacted families; and

WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that there are early warning signs for ASD in young children including but not limited to: delayed speech, poor fine motor skills, poor gross motor skills, repetitive behaviors, sensory issues, lack of eye contact, and/or anti-social behaviors; and

WHEREAS, early intervention results in improved outcomes. Further, the group Early On provides in-home evaluations of children under the age of three (3) to detect developmental delays (including ASD) and provides families with in-home therapies and solutions if significant delays are found; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes the compassionate commitment of families, schools, teachers, therapists, and medical professionals to provide care for children and adults with ASD, as well as, the work of churches and businesses to provide sensory areas; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes the work of Community Mental Health and the Sheriff's Department in providing and utilizing Carter Kits for children with ASD in crisis situations, as well as, the Children's Mobile Crisis team; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board is committed to bringing awareness to the treatments and resources available for families affected by ASD, and to continue to support families and resources for children and adults diagnosed with ASD; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board encourages continued investigation into the cause of the increase in ASD diagnosis in children, as well as continued research and development of prevention and treatment strategies for children and individuals with ASD; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board declares April 2024 to be Autism Awareness Month in Ottawa County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be sent to Michigan Senators Mark Huizenga, Roger Victory, and Rick Outman, Michigan Representatives Nancy DeBoer, Luke Meerman, Brad Slagh, Rachelle Smit, and Greg VanWoerkom, to the Clerk of each county in the State of Michigan, and all Ottawa County department directors.

YEAS: Commissioners: Roger Bergman, Doug Zylstra, Roger Belknap, Gretchen Cosby, Rebekah Curran, Lucy Ebel, Sylvia Rhodea, Allison Miedema, Kendra Wenzel, Joe Moss.

NAYS: Commissioners: None.

ABSTENTIONS: Commissioners: None.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED:



Joe Moss, Chairperson, Ottawa County
Board of Commissioners



Justin F. Roebuck
Ottawa County Clerk/Register