



Helping People and Families Affected by Autism

www.delautism.org

March 12, 2020

Dear Autism Delaware Families and Friends,

You may be receiving this information more than once, as we are sending it to all of our constituents and many of these groups overlap. We have important information to share about the Corona (COVID-19) virus and want to reach as many people as we can about two areas of Autism Delaware that may be most affected by the virus.

1. **Events:** Rest assured that your safety is our first priority. We will be cancelling all March Social Recreation activities including Smart Cookie Day! The situation with this virus is very fluid and you should be prepared for cancellations on relatively short notice by Autism Delaware and other providers of services. We will keep you apprised of developments by way of e-mails and social media posts. If you have purchased tickets for the Bunny Train or any other recreational event, you will be refunded through Eventbrite. Refunds may take one to two days to process. Thank you for your understanding.

Unfortunately, we are also cancelling the Walk for Autism this year as we know it. However, we are excited to announce we will promote a Virtual Walk for Autism to take place throughout the month of April. The Walk for Autism is our biggest community gathering and celebration each year and helps to raise funds to support our services throughout the state. We do not want to miss out on celebrating our loved ones affected by autism or the generosity of our community. We hope you will all consider joining us for the Virtual Walk for Autism. Everyone, be on the lookout for those exciting details in the coming days.

Please note that Autism Delaware has no control over cancellation of events in which we are participating but are not sponsoring, such as Jersey Mike's Day of Giving (March 25) and DelAWAREness dance competition (April 3 and 4).

2. **Services:** Autism Delaware services are being impacted as this virus spreads but we will do whatever we can to continue to support families and our adult vocational program. We are a community-based agency that closely partners with organizations of all kinds and we cannot control or predict decisions by these groups, such as businesses that employ POW&R participants, schools and service providers, and others. Nor can we know what the impact of the virus will be on our family support and direct service staff, and parents and caregivers may have to get more involved to fill in some of the gaps. Please know that Autism Delaware will support you as we can through this crisis. We are family, and that's what families do during challenging times.



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As the COVID-19 situation unfolds, we encourage you to be informed and follow the CDC guidelines to stay home if you are not feeling well. You can learn more about the Corona virus in Delaware at this link on the state's Department of Health and Social Service website:

<https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/epi/2019novelcoronavirus.html>

Our website will post ongoing updates about response to the virus, including changes in the event schedule. The address is www.autismdelaware.org.

Thank you for your partnership and ongoing support of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Hall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Brian Hall, MSW
Executive Director, Autism Delaware