What we have achieved

★ Settlements over Implementation of Mental Health Parity, brings access to evidence based treatments for Autism to 12,000 children statewide.
★ Developed Best Practice Education Guidelines and passage of bill requiring training and awareness for Educators of Students with Autism.
★ Children’s Intensive In-home Behavior Supports Medicaid Waiver
★ Autism Amendments in the Federal Healthcare Reform Act (Affordable Care Act)

OUR MISSION IS TO DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE ACCESS TO AUTISM INSURANCE BENEFITS AND EFFECTIVE SERVICES IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES REGARDLESS OF PERSONAL FINANCIAL BACKGROUND.

Founded in 2007, Washington Autism Alliance & Advocacy (WAAA) exists to remove barriers to timely access to evidence based treatment, effective education programs, sustainable community based services, and supports for children and adults statewide in a timely way.

Where are my financial contributions spent?

★ All donations to Washington Autism Alliance & Advocacy go directly to support our local autism communities.
★ WAAA’s fundraising and marketing services are the result of volunteer efforts and donated resources.

Where can I find more information?

WASHINGTON AUTISM ALLIANCE & ADVOCACY
16225 NE 87th St. Suite A-2
Redmond, WA 98052
T: 425.836.6513
Info@WashingtonAutismAdvocacy.org
Tax ID 35–2440624

washingtonautismadvocacy.org
**Find an Advocate to help you successfully navigate the ASD Maze**

Early intervention for a child with ASD can have a profound impact on modifying behavior and improving the child’s social, communication, and learning skills. However, finding the services to provide this much needed intervention can be a long and costly process.

Our advocacy team is here to help you untangle the details. Our advocates come from a variety of educational backgrounds and have deep roots in Washington’s autism community. They have traveled this road many times and know some of the most efficient routes to help you access the benefits and social services your child needs to thrive.

Whether you’re trying to identify insurance benefits, write letters, appeal insurance rulings, or any number of other related tasks, our advocates can guide you through the process. We can also connect you with a low-cost or pro-bono attorney at WAAA if the appeals process has been exhausted.

Our programs work to ensure that those with ASD have every opportunity to thrive and be productive. Through workshops, social and recreational activities, and support and respite care, parents, teachers and other caregivers can learn how best to help those with ASD realize their full potential.

**Resources**

- Provider / Resource Directory
- Self-Help Tools
- Help with IEP & 504 Plans
- Insurance Help

**Programs & Services**

**Training Workshops - Autism and the Law Series**: Navigating the hundreds of pages of legalese that mandate education and health-care benefits for children with ASD can be overwhelming. These sessions simplify that process. They cover the legal rights and options that parents, advocates, and medical and therapy providers must know to ensure that children with ASD receive the benefits they deserve. Presented by experts in special education and health law, these series provide information on state and federal laws regulating private insurance, Medicaid, special education, and more. **Blueprints to Special Education and Autism & Insurance** – Maximizing Benefits are open to parents, medical and therapy providers, educators, and other advocates, and are presented regularly throughout Washington. Scholarships are available to WAAA members based on need.

**Understanding Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) workshops**: Parents of children newly diagnosed with ASD can be frustrated by the wait to get treatment. During this critical period, they want to know what they can do to help their child. These free workshops, presented by WAAA and area Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA) bridge that gap. They teach parents some of the basic Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) principles to help them work with their child while they wait to secure ABA services.

**Gift of Time - Spectrum Recreation and Respite**: Every parent needs a break now and then. For parents of children with autism, that need is multiplied. Finding the right person to take care of your child while you take a much needed break can be difficult. Through the support of our volunteer network, WAAA created the Gift of Time program to provide parents with two options for respite care, and at the same time provide your child with a supervised opportunity for meaningful social interaction. You can choose a Gift of Time group event at a community location or an individualized in-home session.

**Aspire Girls of Puget Sound**: Girls with ASD need to socialize with girls their own age so they can learn to interact positively and relate through play, exploring common interests and just being girls. This monthly social group provides a safe place to spread their wings for girls who are eight to 16 years old and have ASD. Participants get the chance to enjoy all kinds of activities from sharing their special interests with others to dancing to their favorite music. Each child must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver, which gives you a chance to connect with other parents at the same time. The group meets on the third Wednesday of each month in Redmond. It is facilitated by Jaymi Shull, BCBA and coordinated by WAAA staff.

**Friendship Matters!**: Friendship is important for all of us. But for kids and young adults with ASD, making friends can be challenging. Autism often interferes with their ability to engage socially and sustain relationships with others. That ability can improve through socially significant interaction. Friendship Matters! provides an avenue for making friends through community-based, indoor and outdoor recreational activities supported by professionals with experience in social communication. Through activities such as visiting teen centers, shopping malls, and parks; racing go-karts; seeing movies; and going to restaurants — all under the guidance of dynamic social skills coaches — participants can improve their social skills, develop lasting friendships, and enjoy a crucial sense of normalcy. The group is open to WAAA members in two age groups: adolescents (13-17 years old) and young adults (18-21).

**Supporting Parents of Autism (SPA)**: Parents who have children on the Autism Spectrum join us in Redmond on the First Monday of each month, for support, resources, and community. SPA is facilitated by Dr. Kaelyn Langer-Mendona, Ph.D. Kaelyn has over ten years involvement working in mental health, including residential treatment, psychiatric inpatient, community mental health, university counseling center, and private practice experience. She works primarily from a psychodynamic perspective, using supportive, client-centered therapy coupled with mindfulness and spiritual psychology. SPA is Co-Facilitated by WAAA staff.