



# Building a Better Future: Comprehensive Support and Advocacy for the Autism Community



**Autism Society**  
Inland Empire

Your local Autism connection



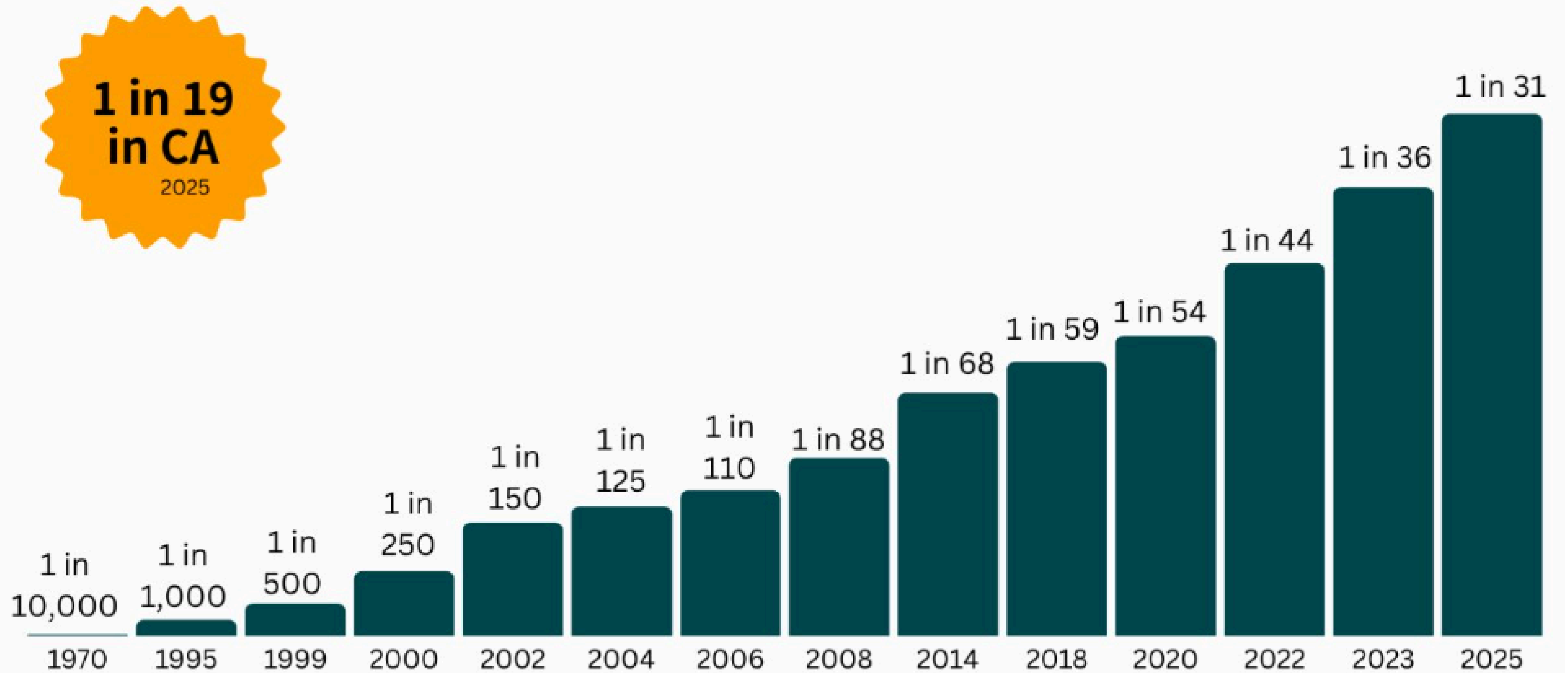
# What is Autism?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), commonly known as Autism:

- A lifelong developmental condition that is usually evident in early childhood.
- It often affects individuals' social skills, communication, relationships, and self-regulation.
- A spectrum condition impacts people in diverse ways and to varying extents.



# Prevalance of Autism in the US



# Our Mission

For nearly 40 years, we have been dedicated to creating connections, empowering everyone in our local Autism community with the resources needed to live fully.

Data Helps Guide Us

We just don't  
collect the data.  
**WE ACT  
ON IT**



Person Centered Outcomes





# System Navigation Services

**5,854 individuals**  
assisted in 2024

Our Resource Specialists provide individual support to help families prioritize and learn how to navigate these systems, ensuring that individuals with Autism and their families receive the support needed to thrive.

## Regional Center Services

### Education System

- Special Education
- 504s
- College Student Services

### Financial

- Disability @ Social Security
- In-Home Supportive Services
- Housing issues
- Basic Needs

## Healthcare

- Finding doctors, dentists, & mental health services
- Behavioral Therapies
- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Feeding Therapy
- Sex and Relationship Education
- Aggressive behavior in the home
- Medical Insurance



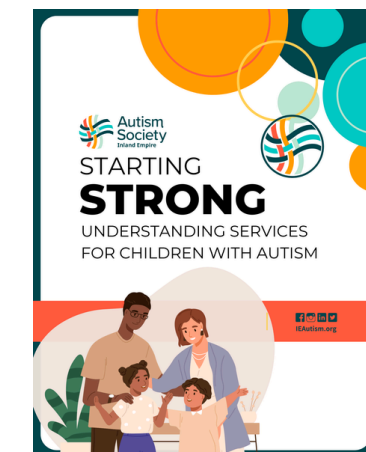




# Education and Outreach

**In 2024:**  
**Education** - served 2,233 individuals  
**Outreach** - served 8,467 individuals

The Autism Society Inland Empire offers educational events, including webinars, in-person conferences, and workshops. These events feature expert speakers, interactive sessions, and the latest research and strategies in Autism care and education. They always have a Spanish interpreter available. They are designed to help individuals with Autism and their family members expand their knowledge, connect with the community, and find practical solutions.



We provided free Workshops in rural, underserved communities.

FREE Downloadable Toolkits available in English & Spanish



# Support Groups

**4x**

Autistic people are up to four times more likely to experience loneliness than non-autistic people.

The Autism Society Inland Empire realizes that support groups can be an essential resource for adults with Autism and family members. These groups provide Emotional Support, a place to share information and practical advice and foster friendships and a strong support network.

**2024:**

- Formal Support Groups served 476 individuals
- Our Private Facebook Group served 6,664 individuals





Low Cost &  
No Cost **FUN** Virtual &  
in-person programs



# Recreation Programs

**46%**

Less than half of the families participating in our 2024 survey felt connected and supported by their city and community.

2024 was another record year in attendance.

We served 11,783 individuals and hosted over 200 virtual and in-person events.





# Public Policy Initiatives



**Our public policy focus is on advocating person-centered outcomes in their futures, inclusion, and services and supports that promote people's abilities to contribute to their families, communities, and society.**

**Our current agenda includes work in:**

- Disparities
- Employment
- Safety
- Belonging
- Unmet needs and Access
  - Healthcare
  - Emergency Room
  - Crisis response



# Employment

**89%**

**Unemployment rate for  
Inland Regional Center  
clients as of 2023.**

DDS Employment Dashboard

With an 89% unemployment rate for the 19,000 Inland Regional Center clients, the Autism Society Inland Empire is committed to improving employment outcomes for individuals with Autism and other developmental disabilities.

**We offer paid and unpaid opportunities for adults with Autism and developmental disabilities to explore different types of employment.**

**These include:**

- **Future Pathways Employment Training** - A newly vendorized Remote Employment Program through Regional Centers. We have partnered with Daivergent to offer 130 hours of training, job exploration, job matching, and support. This program has an 83% success rate in helping individuals become employed, attend college or vocational programs, or find internships.
- **Paid speaking opportunities** through our speakers' bureau and focus groups.
- **Volunteer opportunities** at our largest events.
- **Our Marketplace** provides free space at our Walks and Holiday parties for those interested in self-employment and entrepreneurship.





# Safety

**7x**

Individuals with Autism are seven times more likely to have encounters with law enforcement compared to those without Autism.

Since 2020, the Autism Society Inland Empire has developed comprehensive training programs for law enforcement, fire, and emergency personnel, offering four- and two-hour courses. These trainings, delivered by experienced law enforcement officers, include valuable Q&A sessions with a panel of adults with developmental disabilities.

- **Created and presented two and 4-hour First Responder training for over 720 professionals since 2021.**
- **Created new ER Training**
- **Distributed over 1,500 Sensory Kits to First Responders and hospitals.**
- **Safety Fairs for families**
- **Collaboration on the Blue Envelope Community Safety Program in San Bernardino County, Ontario, Fontana, and Chino.**





# Unmet Needs: Transforming Crisis Response



**6,000+**

teens and adults in Inland Regional Center have challenging behaviors and few resources.

After the tragic shooting of Ryan Gainer, a 15-year-old boy with Autism in Apple Valley, the Autism Society Inland Empire formed a multidisciplinary "Tiger Team" to address systemic gaps in services and crisis response for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

In Jan 2025, we released a plan for improving safety net systems with 17 goals, including:

- Creating Autism/IDD Complex Care Clinic
- Continue to advocate for a new Regional Center mobile crisis team in both counties.
- Create a training for families to enhance crisis intervention strategies.





# Grassroots Advocacy

Grassroots advocacy is vital to the Autism Society because it empowers individuals with Autism and their families by giving them a voice in decision-making processes. It raises awareness, reduces stigma, and fosters community support. By influencing policies and creating sustainable change, grassroots efforts ensure that the needs of the Autism community are met effectively and inclusively.



## State Task Forces Autism Society Inland Empire Participates In:

- DDS Latino Focus Group
- DDS Master Plan
- DDS Quality Incentives Program (QIP) Workgroup
- DDS Employment Workgroup
- DDS Regional Center Performance Measures
- DLAC Housing subcommittee
- SB882 Advisory Council on Improving Interactions between People with Intellectual and Development Disabilities, Mental Health, and Law Enforcement







**Autism  
Society**  
Inland Empire



**IEAutism.org**

**Your local Autism connection**

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