Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month

Autistic Voices

MATTER

April 2024

What's included in the pack?

- What is monotropism?
- Spoon theory?
- My child has been diagnosed now what??
  - Schooling – what and where?
  - Empowering yourself – helping others? Parent buddy
- Resources on the A;SA website
- How to help Autism South Africa Raise Money
- Where does that money go?
- Autism Word Search
- What is Autism Poster
- Bunting for you to decorate your house, school or office with

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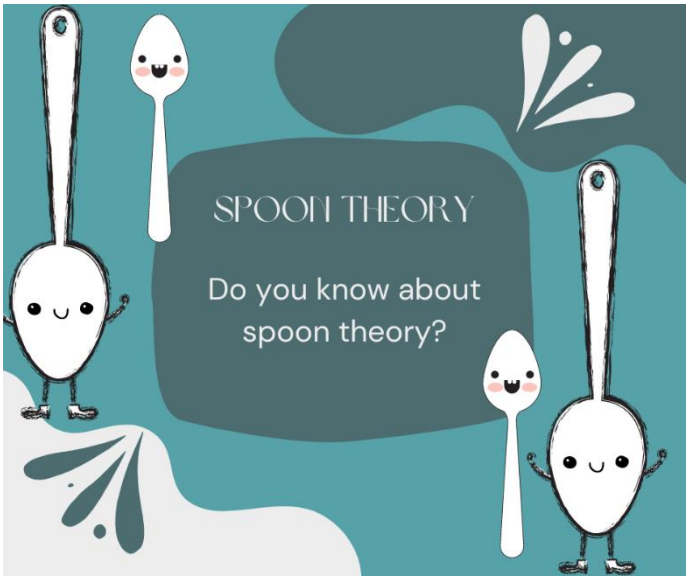
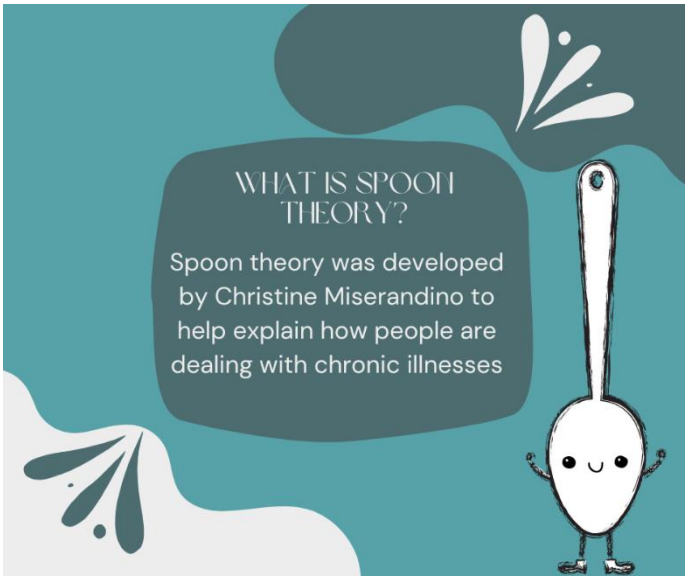
April is commonly known as autism awareness month, but for many autistic people it is a hard month. Autistic people endure hearing myths and misconceptions about autism throughout the month and are often unable to challenge the incorrect stereotypes about autism. It is for this reason, that Autism South Africa prefers to focus on the autistic voice during April. During April we will only focus on sharing ideas, thoughts, and opinions from autistic people.

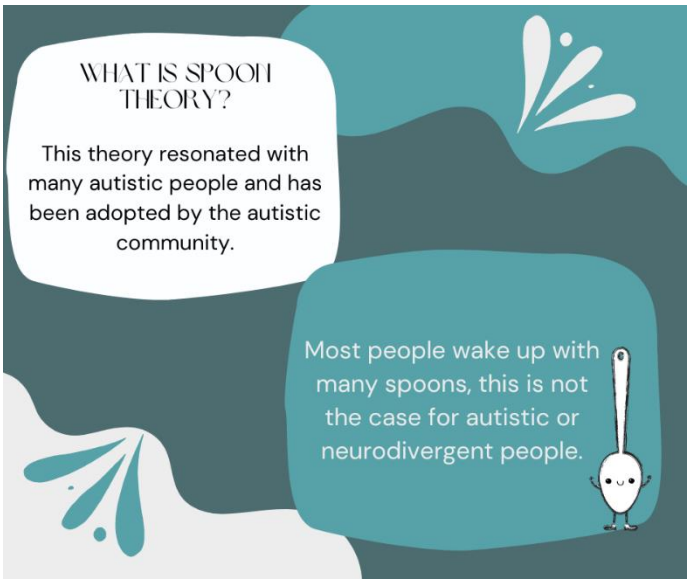
Imagine, hearing and seeing opinions and information being shared about you that are wrong, and yet you are unable to change the information being disseminated. Our challenge to you during April is to find social media pages or information websites that are written or coordinated by autistic people.

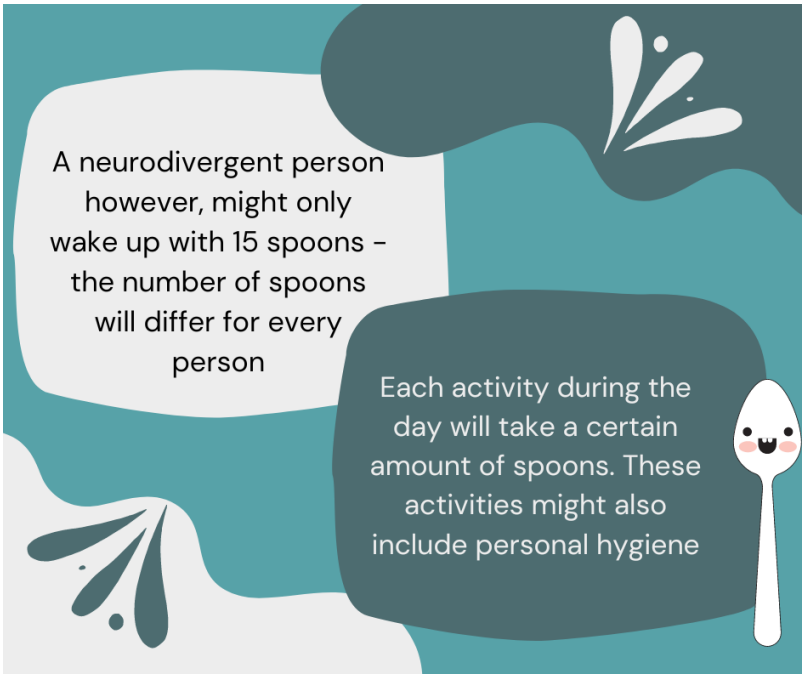
For our 2024 edition of Autistic Voices Matter, we are focussing on two topics that have gained traction in the autistic community – spoon theory and monotropism. We touch very briefly on both of these topics, and we would like to encourage you to explore these topics to help us better understand autistic people from the perspective of autistic people.

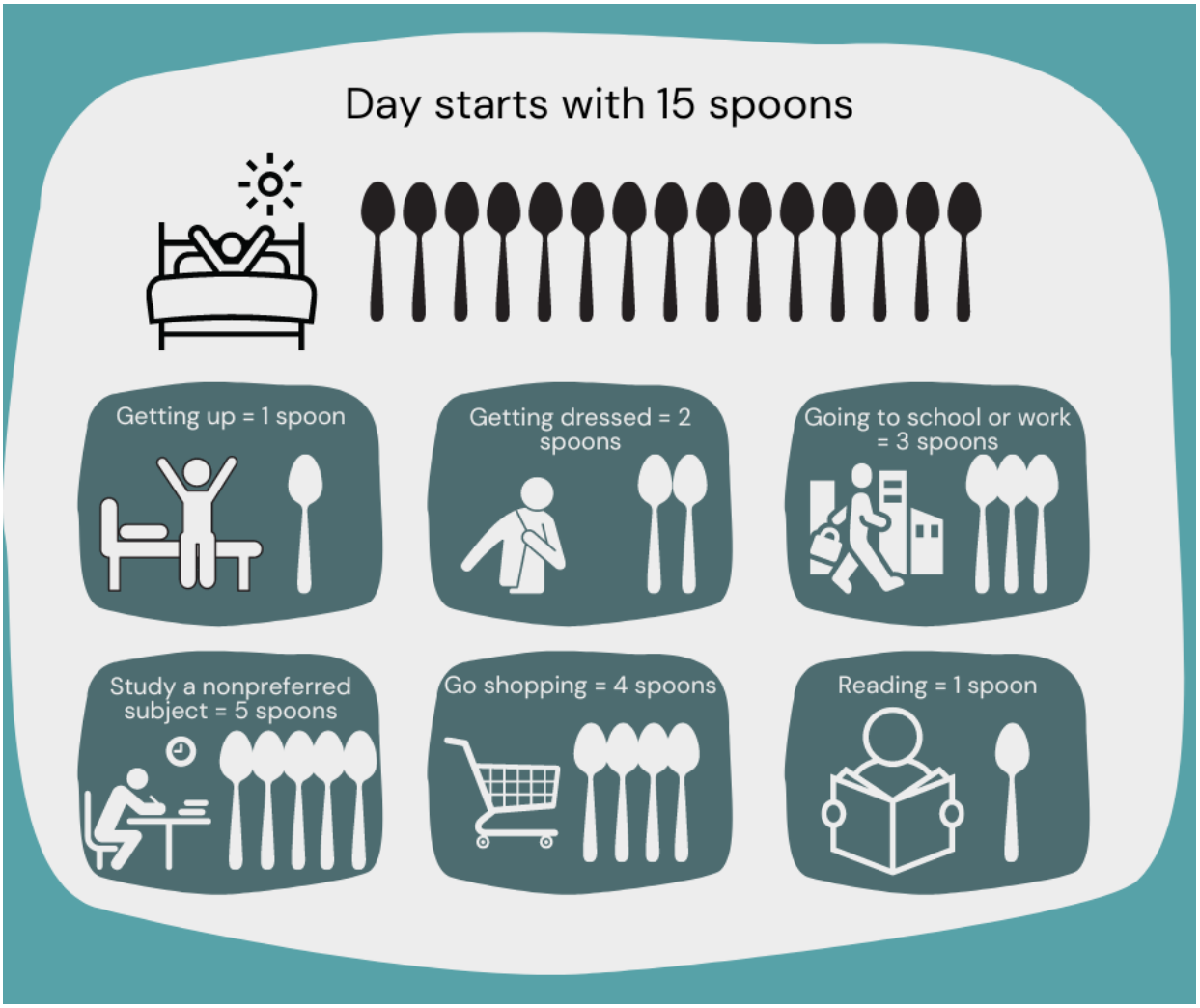
Spoon Theory



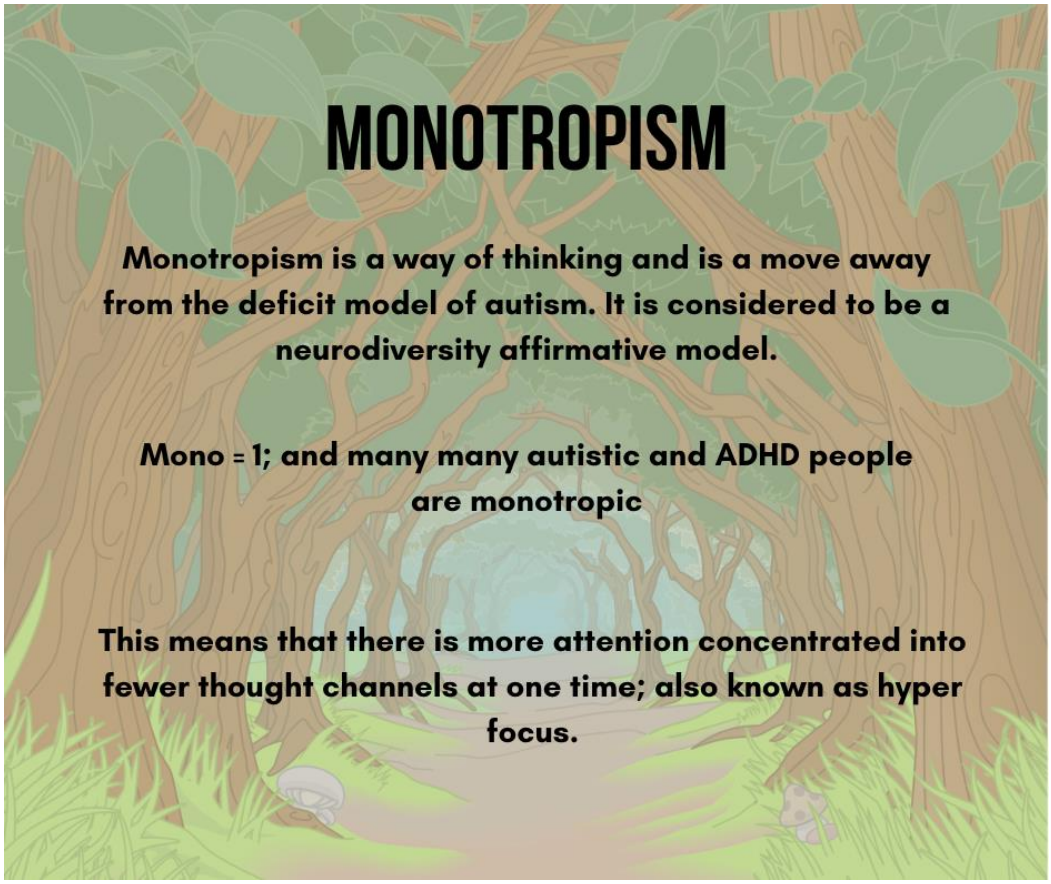


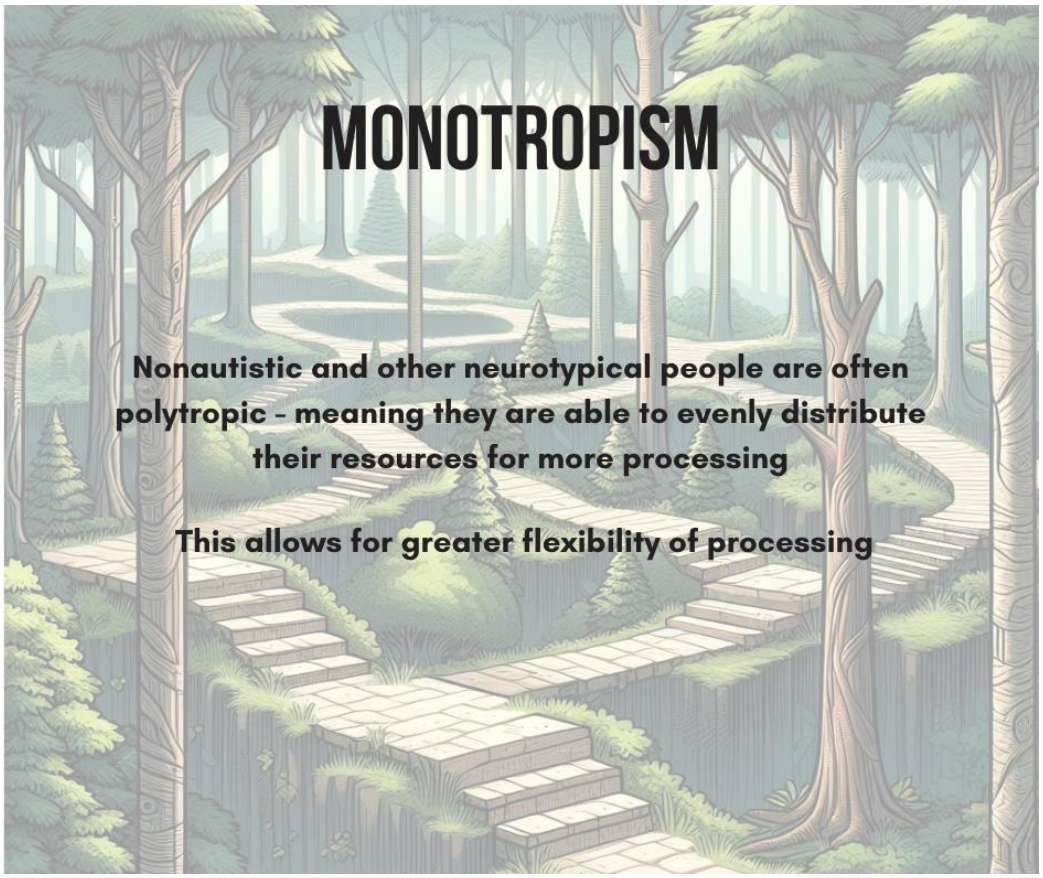



A neurodivergent person however, might only wake up with 15 spoons - the number of spoons will differ for every person
Each activity during the day will take a certain amount of spoons. These activities might also include personal hygiene


Day starts with 15 spoons
Getting up = 1 spoon
Getting dressed = 2 spoons
Going to school or work = 3 spoons
Study a nonpreferred subject = 5 spoons
Go shopping = 4 spoons
Reading = 1 spoon

Monotropism





MONOTROPISM

If you know someone who is a monotropic or if you are a monotropic thinker, keep the below in mind.

Allow for time - it takes time to get into a focussed state. Try project based learning and allow for more flexibility with transitions

Minimise any distractions to allow the single channel to process; distractions can make focus more difficult

Adjust activities - dull, repetitive or activities that are too easy might make it harder to enter a focussed state

Give access to sensory tools and to movement

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My child has been diagnosed, now what?

Diagnosed by a team at the neurodevelopmental clinic or by a specialist peadiatrician

Take your child with the official diagnosis and all other documentation to the closest district of education

The district will conduct their own assessment to determine the best school for your child.

Based on the assessment, your child will be placed in a school. Not all autistic children will require placement in an autism specific school

Autism South Africa Resources:

1. Practical guide

2. Fact sheets – these are available both digitally and via print. Please contact our office or your regional officer for copies.

Autism 101:

What does A;SA do?

What does A;SA do?

Autism South Africa (A;SA) aspires to achieving a society in which autistic people enjoy all the rights and opportunities to meet their needs and fulfil their potentials, throughout their lives, as loved and valued members of their families and communities.

Awareness and acceptance

Achieved through active participation in:

- World Autism Awareness (and Acceptance) Day every year by promoting neurodiversity;
- Introduction to Autism workshops across the country;
- National Disability Rights Awareness Month;
- Contribute to social media across all platforms.

Advocacy

- Autism South Africa is involved in advocating for the rights and best interests of autistic people by engaging with government as well as other stakeholders.
- We actively lobby various government departments for improved and comprehensive service delivery.
- Active participation in national, regional and local forums and associations such as the South African Disability Alliance (SADA) and the Disability Rights Awareness Machinery (DRAM).

Support

Support is offered to autistic people throughout their lifespan ranging from pre-diagnosis to the workplace. This support is offered to adults, families, professionals and any other stakeholders who may require support or information.

Training

We are continuously researching, developing and facilllitating our training, This includes our Hands on Austism Workshop, Parent Workshops as well as customised training.

Build relationships

We continually build relationships with other professional organisations, non- profit organisations, as well as universities to collaborate on research.
We are currently involved in projects with organisations across the world, including the World Health Organisation where we are in the process of rolling out their Caregiver Skills Training programme.

info@autismsouthafrica.org | 011 484 9909
www.aut2know.co.za

Autism South Africa subscribes to the Independent Code of Governance for Non-Profit organisations in South Africa.

Language use at A;SA

Language & terminology use at A;SA

Autism South Africa respects the autistic community.
Respecting a community means listening to their choice of words and language use.

The Colour Spectrum & the Infinity Symbol

- A;SA does not use the puzzle piece.
- There is a long history of negative associations with the puzzle piece for the autistic community.
- Instead, A;SA makes use of the infinity symbol as well as the colour spectrum as depicted in our World Autism Awareness and Acceptance logo.

Support Levels

- Functioning labels, such as high functioning or low functioning, are harmful and should not be used.
- Support levels are a better representation of the needs of autistic people.
- Support levels can include low support needs, moderate support needs or high support needs.
- The support needs labels are not fixed - people can have different support needs depending on the environment as well as their own health and well-being.

Nonspeaking

We do not use the term nonverbal as it means without words (in Latin). Autistic people do have words, and may communicate differently to simply speaking. The preferred terms are nonspeaking, minimaly speaking and nonspeaking.

Identity First Language

We use identity first language: Autistic person.
We do not use person first language, such as: Person with autism; on the spectrum; ASD.
Some autistic people feel that these terms are disrespectful.
We do suggest that you always ask the autistic person how they would like to be addressed.

Build relationships

A;SA wants to build relationships with the autistic community. To this end, we try to listen to autistic people and partner with the community. We do this to make sure that we are sharing supportive and autiistic friendly terminlogy, as well as information that is supportive and not harmful.

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3. Parent cards

Our parent cards are business cards with information about autism on them. These cards are handy for parents to keep on them, and hand them out in tricky situations. If you would like some of these cards, reach out to our office or to your regional officer.

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Autistic Voices Matter

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

Z X T U O N R U B L P Z K R T T L G G C
S G R T S K I L G J Y A U T I S T I C P
S N E U R O D I V E R S I T Y M J S L D
M Q H B B V U P I I F M E Q W Z G H I Z
L W C N R G E I E R R T Q V E X Q O W J
V Z M O N O T R O P I S M J X Q S P P P
J E J V L U E X N I C H G J K W K P N E
X G G U O S S L P S R V N E M P I I N Q
Y Y P D T K B N B H U G Q M B P L N L A
R Q L U E A B W P A I P O W C P L G C Q
G E F M O L U Z A P T R J Z N T S T U M
P M B L N O W I H K P C Q K M I I R G G
O L S T W E S O S V E S I Q A V R E Y K
B K G L E H A S N P V U G D I K X A O A
O X S Y V K O Y H K O C P T E W Y D N W
P X D Q Q E V F K Y I O I K Q R H I L K
S U C O F R E P Y H U E N N D R P N H I
D R R K V M Y G E O S X A S R O H G J W
I I T K H C R I E P C M B D J O L F J C
A Q J L S M A Q F S Z T H E O R Y K F O

Word Bank

1. monotropism
2. activities
3. reading
4. shopping
5. knowledge
6. hyperfocus
7. wakeup
8. skills
9. theory
10. burnout
11. spoons
12. autistic
13. predictable
14. neurodiversity

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Help Us Raise Money

Autistic Voices MATTER

WHY DOES A;SA NEED HELP RAISING FUNDS?

- ✓ Printing our info goodies - the must-have handouts for families and the public, all free of charge!
- ✓ Travel expenses to distant destinations for our dedicated team.
- ✓ Expenses related to data and cellphone services to facilitate communication with our families.
- ✓ Assistance with remuneration for our project managers, training facilitators, and provincial coordinators is needed.

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RAISE MONEY WITH US

DONATE DIRECTLY TO AUTISM SOUTH AFRICA	HOST AN AUTISM AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE DAY TO RAISE MONEY FOR AUTISM SOUTH AFRICA

BANKING DETAILS:
BANKING DETAILS: AUTISM SOUTH AFRICA
STANDARD BANK
SANDTON; BRANCH CODE: 051 001
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 220731233

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Neurodiversity Spirit Week

Magnificent Mind Monday

Autism is a neurological variation, this means that the brains of autistic people work differently to the brains of neurotypical or non-autistic people and that is amazing! Let's celebrate this by wearing a fun hat and/or wild hair!

Neurodiversity Tuesday

To celebrate the beauty in the diverse spectrum of the human mind wear rainbow or tie-dyed clothes to school or work!

What's your passion Wednesday

One characteristic of autism is to show incredibly focused passion for topics of interest. What are you passionate about? Dress to show something you love.

Thursday Autism Acceptance Day

Love and acceptance go a long way. Wear red or gold to show your support and accpetance of autistic individuals.

Sensory Friendly Friday

Autistic people often have a variety of sensory sensitivities. Dress up today in your most comfortable clothes, use as much natural light and/or wear sunglasses

www.aut2know.co.za 011 484 9909 info@autismsouthafricc

WHAT IS AUTISM?
AUTISTIC PEOPLE HAVE DIFFERENT AUTISTIC CHARACTERISTICS
a;sa autism south africa
SOME AUTISTIC PEOPLE MIGHT SPEAK
SOME AUTISTIC PEOPLE MIGHT NOT SPEAK
AUTISTIC PEOPLE ENGAGE IN SELF-STIMULATORY (STIMS) BEHAVIOUR TO HELP THEM STAY REGULATED OR CALM
SOME MIGHT HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH SENSORY INFORMATION SUCH AS LIGHTS, SOUNDS, TEXTURES AND TASTES
AUTISTIC PEOPLE AND CHILDREN MIGHT HAVE MOVEMENT DIFFERENCES
CHILDREN MIGHT PLAY DIFFERENTLY WITH THEIR TOYS
WWW.AUT2KNOW.CO.ZA
011 484 9909
INFO@AUTISMSOUTHAFRICA.ORG

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Bunting Instructions

Print out the page with the bunting triangles – print as many as you would like to create a banner.
Cut each flag out.
Get some string, and lay it onto the top of the triangle. Fold down the top edge of the triangle over the string and glue it down.
Your bunting is ready to hang.

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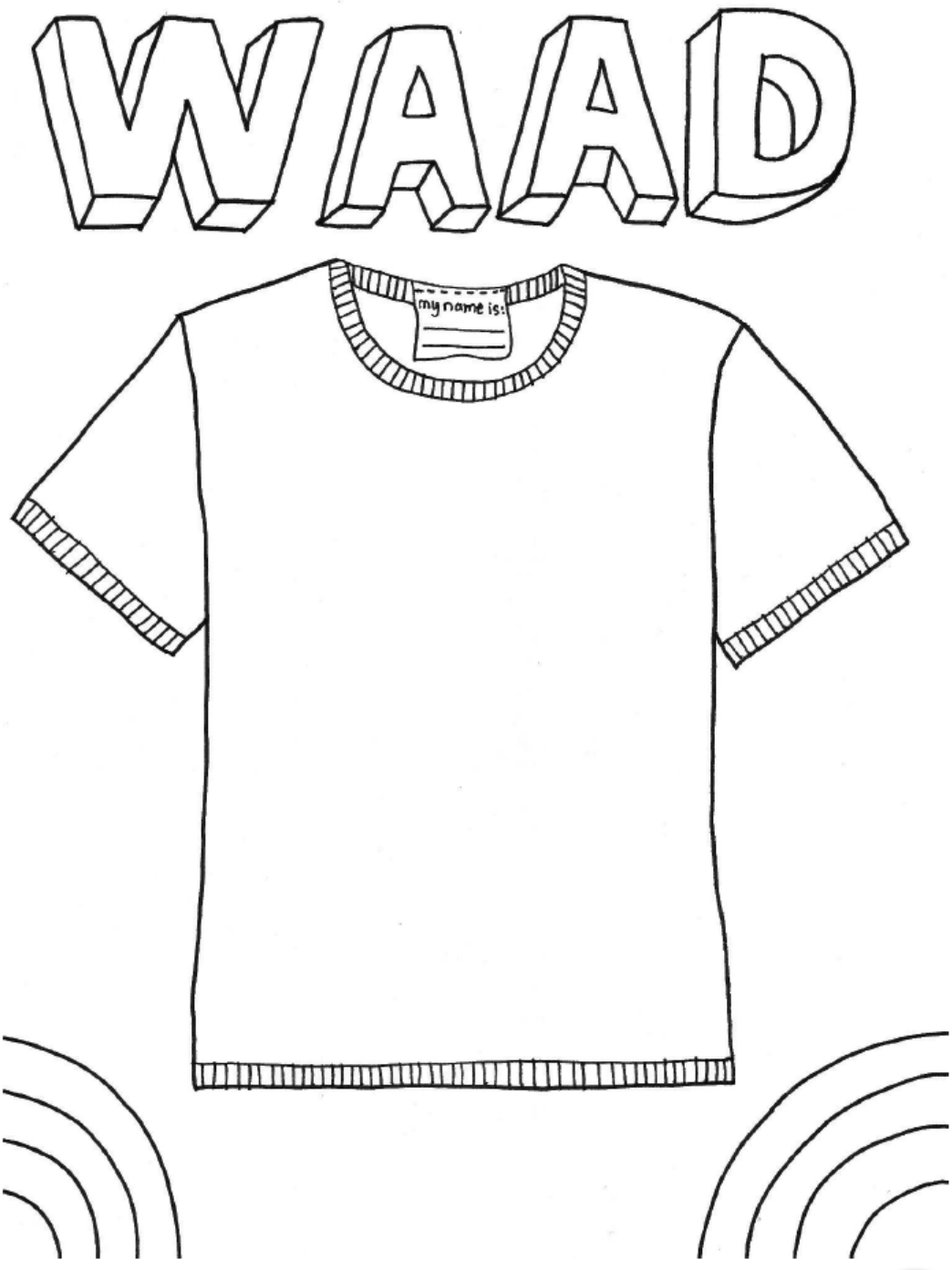
Create your own Autism Awareness and Acceptance T-shirt



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2024 World Autism Awareness and Acceptance Day
T-Shirt and Colouring Book Orders

T-Shirts are R150.00 each.
Colouring books are R60.00 each.

T-shirts and/or colouring books will be delivered via Pudo (through the Courier Guy). Collections from the Autism South Africa office in Johannesburg can also be arranged – at no cost.

Courier costs:

1-5 T-Shirts – R70.00
5-10 T-Shirts – R100.00

1 to 10 colouring books: R70
10 or more colouring books: R100

For more than 10 T-shirts, please contact our offices.

If you buy a T-shirt and a colouring book, you only pay for ONE delivery cost.

Name and surname	
Email Address	
Contact Number	
Organisation / School / Company	
Your physical address – T-Shirts will be delivered through Pudo; Locker to Door. Please ensure your unit number/street number, complex name, street name, suburb, town and postal code are included.	

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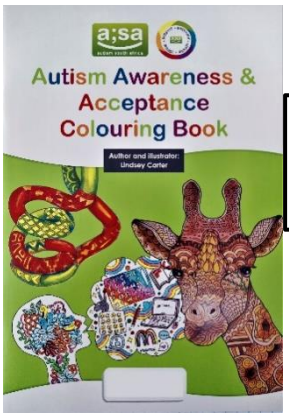
Number of colouring books



Size and number of T-shirts

Small	**Medium**	**Large**
	X Large	**XX Large**
	XXX Large	**XXXX Large**

*We use Pudo services which will deliver to your door.

Total amount to pay: R _____

Please return this form to Buyi – at admin@autismsouthafrica.org together with your proof of payment.

Please use TSHIRT and your name as a reference. E.g. , TSHIRTJULIETCARTER Banking details:

Autism South Africa
Standard Bank Sandton;
051 001
220731233