

Autism Society Inland Empire



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Message from the Executive Director

2020 was an intense year of change, to say the least. We are so grateful to the staff, volunteers, and board members who moved quickly into action. Within weeks we had reimagined our programs and services to provide essential services during a time that was and continues to be very challenging for us all.

The Inland Empire has a mini-city within our community of those impacted by Autism. Over 16,000 individuals in our community are living with Autism and 65,000 family members. While all families were impacted by COVID, for families living with autism the challenges have been intensely magnified. Our children and adults function best in a routine and structured lifestyle which has been shattered. Education and medical services were canceled or changed to telehealth causing families to deal with intense and sometimes injurious/aggressive behaviors to themselves or family members. Many families not only found themselves unable to purchase groceries but because of their child's behavior or medical needs, they were unable to visit food banks or use the food from school lunches.

We conducted monthly surveys from March to September to ensure we were staying on top of the needs of our community and utilizing our resources effectively. As you see in the following pages, the power of generous donors and the passionate people who live and breathe our mission and vision every day allowed us to triple the number of monthly event engagements, continue our work on equity, expand our community reach and provide essential food and mask for our community.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for all of your support in 2020. We look forward to 2021.

Beth Burt
Executive Director
Autism Society Inland Empire

We Are on a Mission

The mission of the Autism Society Inland Empire is to improve the lives of all affected by autism in the Inland Empire. First established in 1986, we provide critical programs and services for children and adults with autism and their family members to empower, support, and help them be fully included in the community.

We believe in an Inland Empire where children and adults with autism are respected, are safe, are included in the community, and feel empowered to achieve their aspirations.

We are deeply connected to the Inland Empire autism community because we are the autism community. Our staff is comprised of parents with children and adults with autism as well as adults on the spectrum.



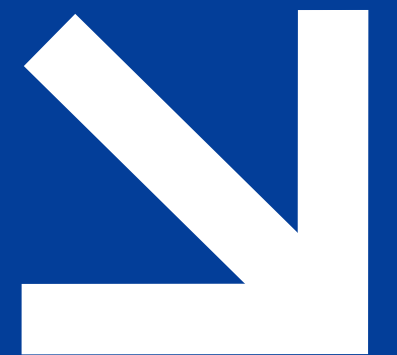
About Autism

Autism, a group of developmental disorders that can create social, communication, and behavioral difficulties, affects one in 54 children in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control (2020). ASD is reported to occur in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. While a diagnosis can be made as early as age 2, most aren't diagnosed until after age 4, and even later for children of color or girls. Autism comes with a variety of other health complications as well, such as ADHD, anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, gastrointestinal and feeding issues, schizophrenia, and seizures. It is a genetic disorder.

Out of those diagnosed, a third of them may be nonverbal, and two-thirds require constant supervision. It is estimated to cost at least \$17,000 - \$21,000 more per year to care for a child with ASD compared to a child without ASD. Costs include health care, education, ASD-related therapy, family-coordinated services, and caregiver time (CDC 2015).

Once they reach adulthood, it is often harder for them to receive healthcare or find a paying job. In California, adults with autism have a 96% unemployment rate.

There are over 17,000 individuals with autism and 68,000 family members living in the Inland Empire.



Top Problems Our Autism Community Faced in 2020

Because of the lack of access to adequate special education, government and medical services, individuals and families faced regression and intense and sometimes injurious/aggressive behaviors to themselves or family members.

People with Autism/IDD are 4x more like to contract COVID and 2.5 times more likely to die of COVID. Families had a harder time accessing generic resources like food banks and school lunch and an increase need for PPE.

Social isolation and depression. A 2008 study found 40% of young adults on the autism spectrum never see friends, and half don't get invited to activities or otherwise have people they know reach out to see how they're doing.

Disparity. Research shows racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities in autism diagnosis, less access to acute care, specialized services, educational services, and community services compared with higher-income and white families.

Adult issues: Some of the issues adults with autism faced in 2020 included a 96% unemployment rate, issues around letting caregivers into the hospital to assist, parents focused on what would happen if they died, lack of service providers willing to come into the house.

Safety in the community. Individuals with autism are seven times more likely to encounter police than “neurotypical” individuals.



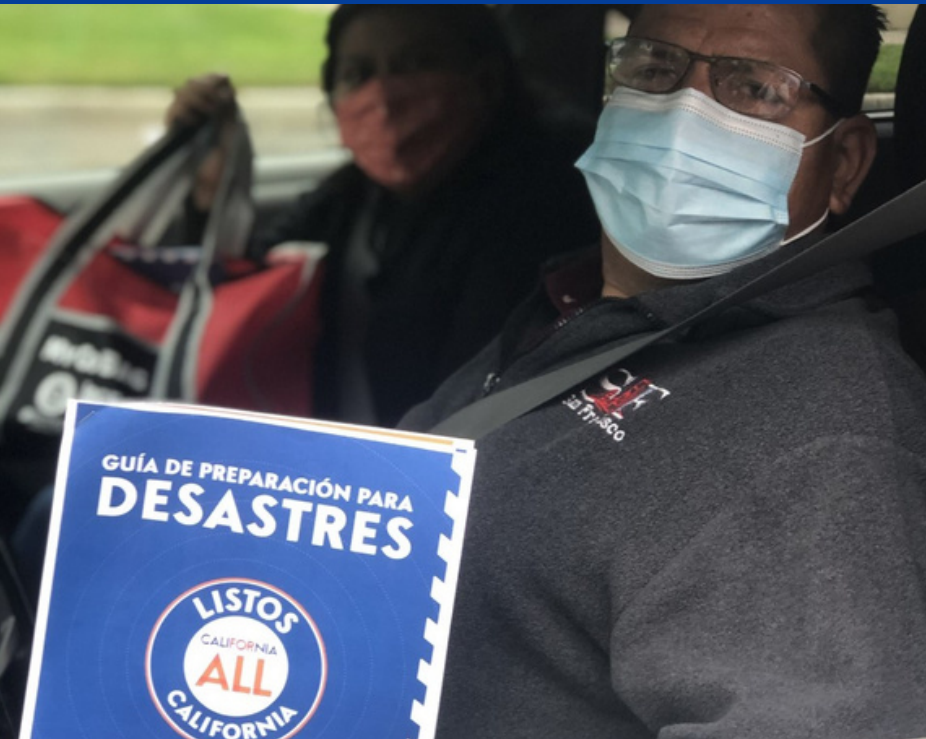
OUR WORK

As our entire world was being impacted by layoffs and reduced hours, many families with a loved one with autism found themselves in a constant state of meltdowns and anxiety because of the lack of routine. For these families accessing food banks and school lunches was impossible. With the help of generous donors, the Autism Society Inland Empire was able to donate over \$53,000 in gift cards to grocery delivery services and provide over 225,000 masks to members of our community.



Reliable Information

Families and professionals who work with our vulnerable population wanted reliable information. We produced over 20 COVID related webinars that over 12,000 people viewed. We also coordinated resource and information drive-thru events and distributed masks and LISTOS California safety material to another 10,000 individuals. We participated in the Masks are Medicine and Census campaigns. The Autism Society Inland Empire was awarded a grant and is in the process of developing a curriculum for Police Officers to work with individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities.



Employment for Adults with Autism

Even during COVID, we continued to focus on remote job exploration opportunities for adults in graphic arts, training and presenting. These were part-time, short-term jobs. This year we were able to expand and help 15 adults, triple the number for 2019. In all of these opportunities, the adults were paid at least minimum wage and often higher.





Social and Emotional Wellbeing

In the past, we held large events where families could gather. Within two weeks we were able to convert programs to online and eventually tripled the number of monthly events we offered from 9 to 32. These online social opportunities are for children, teens, adults, and family members and include art classes, anime clubs, exercise classes, and social groups.

Advocacy and Equity

We continued our work on Disparity issues within the Latino community with the CLASE Community of Practice. The Community of Practice expanded to 43 members. We provided a psychologist to discuss with the leaders how to recognize and cope with burnout, training on stakeholder advocacy, and Person Centered Thinking.



Resource Specialists

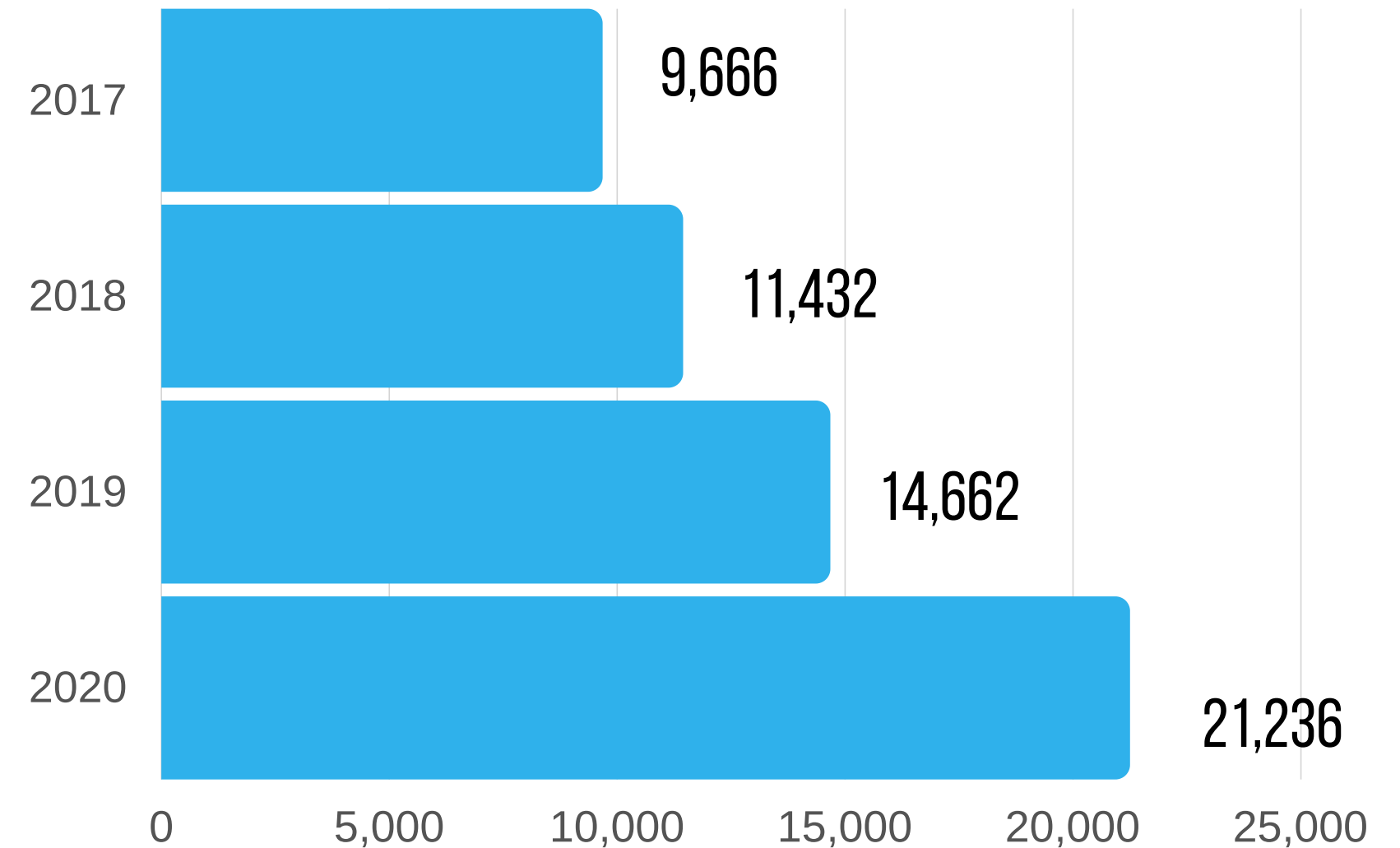
We help individuals on the spectrum, family members, and professionals navigate school, regional center, medical insurance, social security, IHSS, and the Department of Rehabilitation systems. We have bilingual specialists who answer questions via phone, email, and social media. Knowledgeable and experienced parents who can help newly diagnosed families or families with adults are here to help.

OUR IMPACT

	2020	2019
# beneficiaries trained	22,000	2,885
# individuals supported social-emotional programs	3,182	6,559
# individuals who received Navigation services	4,223	2,483
# meals provided	4,600	0
# masks distributed	225,000	n/a
# job opportunities for adults on the spectrum	16	5
Volunteer Hours	2,203	1,315

Social Media

Autism Society Inland Empire Social Media Community



includes Facebook page, Facebook group, Linked In, Twitter, Instagram and email list



2020 FACEBOOK REACH - 776,000



2020 INSTAGRAM REACH - 476,000

Stories of Us

Every number points to a person. Every person has a story. Every story is significant.

Camila, 6

"I would like to thank you for the \$175.00 dollar gift card we received for groceries. Few minutes before your call, I was trying to figure out if should I pay for car repairs, utilities or buy food. Thanks to your generosity I was able to provide nutritious and delicious food for my 6-year-old daughter Camila."



"I wear mine and today I was exposed to Covid but I know my mask is protecting me thanks to u all."

Shyanne



Itzel, 13

"Music makes me feel happy. I enjoy listening to Ms. Amanda to sing and play the guitar. It was a lot of fun."

Connor, 25

"Adult Group is a fun organization, and it's helped me keep in touch with many of my friends via Zoom during COVID-19. It's also helped me keep a sense of responsibility in my own way, like staying on track for certain events."



FY20 FINANCIALS

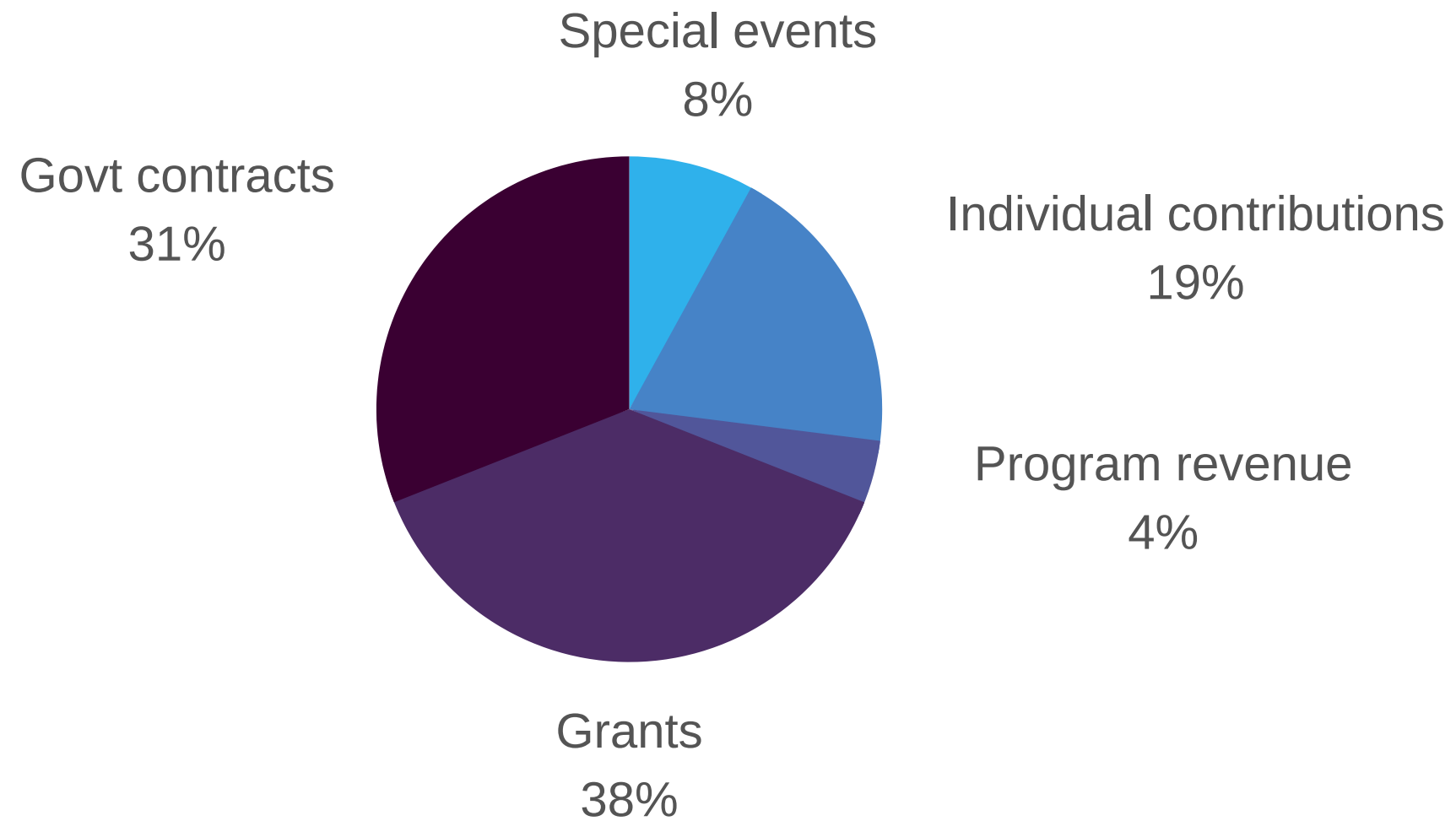
6 staff members, 22 community partners
and 31 volunteers.

89%

of expenses **went to programs**



Revenue: \$413k



Expenses: \$329k



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

As COVID continues, we will continue to focus on food and safety issues, physical and emotional well-being, and providing reliable, relevant information to our community. This will require us to look for new funding streams and staying connected with the ever-changing needs of our community

Expand in the Coachella Valley

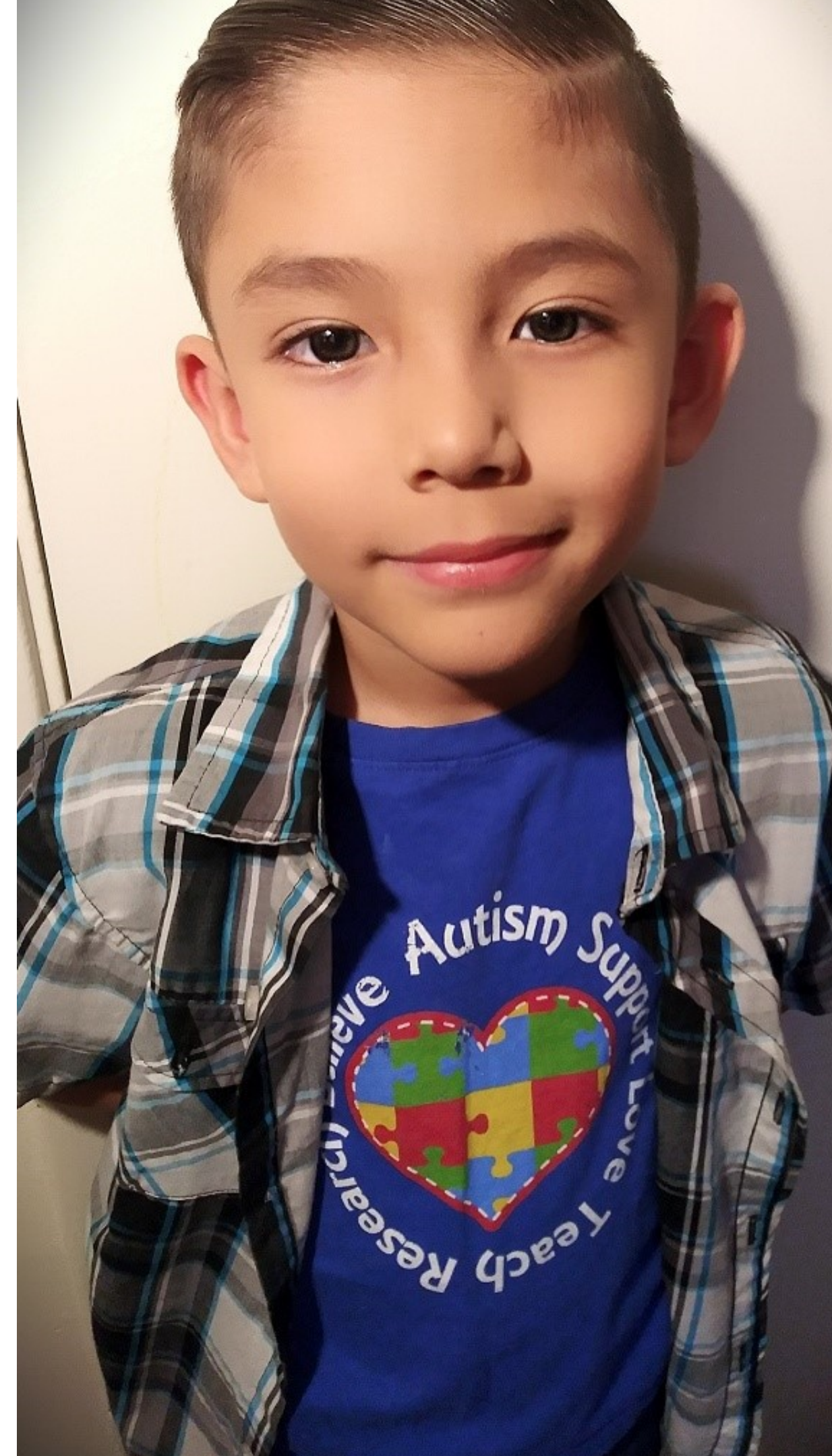
Roughly 450k live in this underserved and under-resourced area of Riverside County. This area is remote and the need for bilingual services during nontraditional hours is high.

Remote Work for Adults on the Spectrum Pilot

With a 96% unemployment rate and with many adults with autism considered high risk, there is a need for employment that matches the skills and talents of adults with a work environment that allows their strengths to shine

Equity

In addition to our work with the Disparity in the Latino community, we will be looking at Disparity issues in the Asian communities.



OUR PARTNERS IN 2020

We could not have done it without you!





HOW YOU CAN HELP

Help us turn our 2020 vision into reality. Here are ways you can lend a hand:

Donate

Make a financial contribution either one-time or recurring at ieautism.org

Volunteer

Volunteer at ieautism.org/volunteer

Sponsor

Sponsor a program or educational event at ieautism.org/sponsor

Girl Scout Troop 4924 donated 100 Sensory Kits to the Rancho Cucamonga Police Department to give officers calming tools to help someone with autism in need and \$200 to the Autism Society Inland Empire.



Thank you!

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