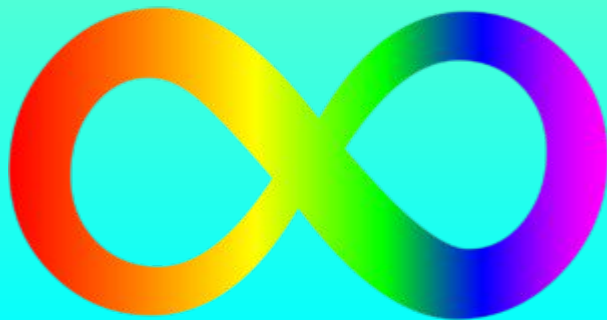# Autism Acceptance Month

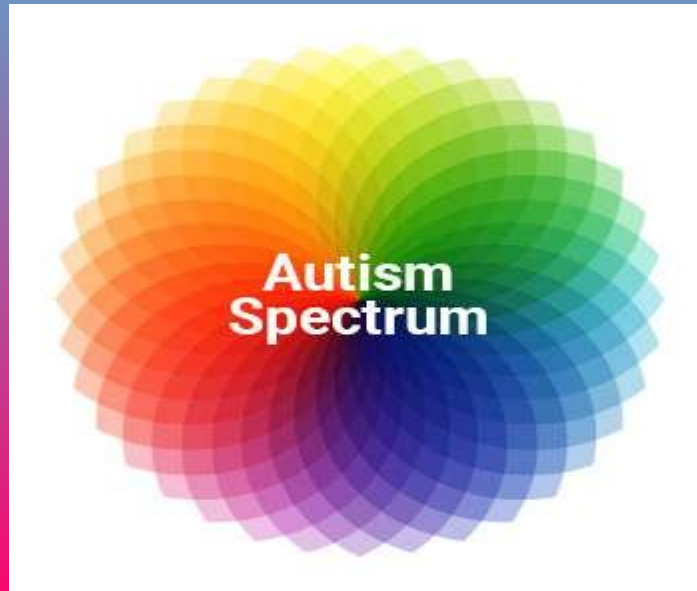By: Nicholas Rodriguez, Veronica Isky and Ms. Gaffney

Infinity Symbol

The Infinity Symbol represents the idea that autism is a vast and complex spectrum that includes individuals with a wide range of strengths and challenges.

Autism Acceptance Month

Why *Autism Acceptance*?

- In 2011, advocates prompted "Autism Acceptance" rather than "Autism Awareness" to correct the negative ideas associated with "Autism Awareness"
  - Think about it… would you want your co-workers to be aware of you or accept you….

Autism Acceptance Benefits:

- Autism Acceptance benefits people with autism because
  - **Enhanced self-esteem:** Acceptance empowers people with autism to embrace their uniqueness, which boosts their self-esteem and helps reduce the stigma associated with this condition.
  - **Promotes Inclusivity:** Acceptance encourages inclusivity in schools, workplaces, and communities, which creates a more diverse society.
  - **Improves mental health:** Feeling accepted improves mental well-being and reduces anxiety and depression.
  - **Promotes positive change:** Autism acceptance encourages society to celebrate the diversity of human experiences.

New Terms:

- **Non-speaking**
  - When describing a person who uses limited speech in communication using non-verbal is no longer appropriate, because a lack of speech does not mean a lack of words, awareness, or intelligence. Using non-verbal suggests that person does not understand or use language which is not true.

- **Less supported and More Supported**
  - Rather than using low-functioning and high functioning, using less/more supported is much nicer. No one wants to be described as "low-functioning"

Autistic Person or a Person with Autism?

- Many Autistic adults prefer using identity first language (e.g., the autistic women) because it is part of a person's identity and it is not a negative thing!
- Academia still normally uses person first language (e.g., the women with autism)
  - Professionals started to use "person first language" with good intentions, to not offend anyone
- So what should I use???
  - Since there is no "real" answer, the best thing to do is ask the person or the parent if you are ever unsure!