

# Autism Awareness

# THE HEART of acceptance



## Mini Autism Awareness Lesson Plans for Teachers

April is Autism Awareness Month. Here are some mini lessons to help carry an awareness theme throughout the month of April.

### 5 Minute Mini Lessons

#### **Acknowledging Similarities and Differences**

The teacher or a designated student chooses an object (an accessory or certain colored shirt) and sorts the class based on “who has it and who doesn’t.” Between each student sort, the students take a turn guessing what the object is. Close the lesson talking about what makes us different is what makes us unique.

#### **The Brainstorm**

Have students list ways to be a friend to someone different from them and write their responses on chart paper. Some examples are: say hello, invite them to sit at lunch with you, ask them to play a game at recess, speak with them about something that they enjoy.

#### **Kids Activity Booklet**

Ask students to complete an activity from Autism New Jersey’s Kids Booklet. Then follow up with a discussion about autism. Use the “Teachers’ Corner” on page 12 of the *Kids Booklet on Autism* for tips!

### 10 Minute Mini Lesson

#### **Word Find**

Ask students to write “Autism Awareness” and then write down all of the words that can be created using the letters in “Autism Awareness.”

#### **Definition of a Friend**

Have students cut out a large puzzle piece shape and write their definition of a friend on it. Attach the puzzle pieces to a bulletin board in the shape of an awareness ribbon.

#### **Speaking Without Words**

Explain that some children with autism are not able to speak using many words. Whisper a simple sentence to one student, such as “My hand hurts,” “I want a hamburger for lunch,” or “I am allergic to milk.” Ask that student to tell the class the sentence without using words. Afterwards, have a discussion about how difficult and frustrating that would be if you had to communicate that way all the time.

*All of these lessons can be lengthened with the addition of a book about autism.*

Check out the Hub, [www.autismnjambassador.org](http://www.autismnjambassador.org) and click on “In the Schools - Tips and Tools” for a list of recommended kid-friendly books about autism as well as additional lesson plans.