



## **BEST PRACTICES FOR WAAD PROCLAMATIONS**

### ***What is a proclamation?***

A proclamation is a formal way to make a public announcement. Mayors, council members, or local government administrators write proclamations to commend people or to announce upcoming events. In celebration of World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD), please ask the Mayor's office of your local city to help Autism Speaks in getting the message of awareness out by signing and presenting a proclamation declaring April 2<sup>nd</sup> as WAAD.

### ***Why should you have one?***

1. It's a great way to have WAAD publicly announced and acknowledged locally by the Mayor of your city, creating recognition and possible media opportunities.
  - a. While proclamations are normally presented at the Mayor's office or at City Council meetings, you should always request that it be presented at an AS event, leveraging the Mayor's presence as publicity for your community.
  - b. If you are not having a specific WAAD event, think about the timing of your walk and whether that would be a good venue, or kick-off, etc.
  - c. If not, the signing at the Mayor's office can be an event in and of itself. Be sure to use the photographic opportunity to publicize to your local media outlets.
2. The document itself is a great memento that can be used at a later date.

### ***How do you go about getting one?***

1. Contact your mayor's office to request the procedures in procuring a proclamation.
2. They will use their own language and format but will need as much information as possible. Make it easy for them by supplying the attached samples with your request (letter, email, however they prefer).
3. Make an appointment to meet with the mayor for the signing of the proclamation, again, suggesting an AS event as a means to publicize his support of the cause, etc.
4. Request and note details on timing with the Mayor's office, following up as necessary.

### ***How do you publicize?***

1. Ask the Mayor's office to put your proclamation presentation event on their calendar (and your walk).
2. In the best case scenario, the Mayor's office will write a press release of their own, distributing to their usual outlets. Ask if this is done and if you could help facilitate that process.
3. If not, use the templated version provided by Field Services.
4. Do a follow up press release, with photographs of the presentation, purpose being to get articles in your local papers.
5. If a template is not available, all press releases should be submitted for approval to Audra Platz.



## **Sample Proclamation Language (To be put on Official Letterhead)**

- Whereas autism affects all persons regardless of race, religion, socio-economic status or geography;
- Whereas the incidence of autism in the United States is 1 in 150 and 1 in 94 boys, with rates appearing to have increased similarly around the globe;
- Whereas a child is diagnosed with autism every 20 minutes,
- Whereas based on data collected from North America, Western Europe and Japan, it is conservatively estimated that 35 million people worldwide have autism;
- Whereas on December 18, 2007 the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 62/139 World Autism Awareness Day by unanimous consent, encouraging UN Member States to take measures to raise awareness about autism throughout society and to promote early diagnosis and early behavioral intervention;
- Whereas the resolution designates World Autism Awareness Day as a United Nations Day to be observed every year starting in 2008 to raise global awareness of autism;
- Whereas the aims for World Autism Awareness Day are to inform the general public about the global health crisis of autism, stress the importance of early diagnosis and early intervention, and to celebrate the unique talents and qualities of individuals with autism,
- Whereas autism is a lifelong condition in which the bulk of cost calls in adulthood, creating an enormous economic impact,
- Whereas the consequent development challenges of autism threaten to undermine the achievement of the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals;

Now, therefore, let it be resolved that the City of \_\_\_\_\_ implements the ideals of World Autism Awareness day in the United States on April 2<sup>nd</sup> in perpetuity until the cure for autism is found.