

AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS: Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. It is estimated to occur in one out of every 250 individuals and is four times more prevalent in boys than girls but knows no racial, ethnic or social boundaries; and

WHEREAS: Autism affects the normal development of the brain in the areas of reasoning, social interaction and communication skills. Children and adults with autism typically have difficulties in verbal and nonverbal communication, social interaction and leisure activities; and

WHEREAS: During the month of April, autism awareness groups and nonprofit organizations will educate the public about autism to dispel myths and misconceptions about the disorder and inform parents and professionals about available services; and

WHEREAS: Autism has wide-ranging implications for the entire family of the diagnosed individual, and early diagnosis, research, training, education and therapy are vital to reducing the effects of autism; and

WHEREAS: Significant progress has been made in the last 30 years in the areas of research, medication, diagnosis issues and therapies for autism, resulting in an improved quality of life for individuals living with autism and for their families; and

WHEREAS: Autism is a complex disability that requires increased research to find a cure and prevention, as well as increased recognition and understanding to ensure that individuals with autism are accurately diagnosed and appropriately treated throughout their lives; and

WHEREAS: It is in the interest of the state of to recognize the achievements in this field and to continue these efforts by promoting the awareness and fostering the understanding of autism; now

THEREFORE: I, SONNY PERDUE, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim April as AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH in Georgia.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 28th day of March in the year of our Lord two thousand three.