

# AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS: Autism is a complex, lifelong developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. It is estimated to occur in one out of every 150 individuals and is four times more prevalent in boys than girls; however, it knows no racial, ethnic or social boundaries. Approximately 1.5 million individuals in the United States have autism; 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: Autism has wide-ranging implications for the entire family of the diagnosed individual. Early diagnosis, research, training, education and therapy are vital to reducing the negative effects of autism; and

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

WHEREAS: Autism is a complex disability that requires research to find a cure and prevention. Increased recognition and understanding of autism are necessary to ensure that individuals are accurately diagnosed and appropriately treated throughout their lives; and

WHEREAS: It is in the interest of the state to recognize 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 2009 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 2<sup>nd</sup> day of April in the year of our Lord two thousand nine.