



## Illinois Association of Junior High Student Councils



Dear IAJHSC Member Schools,

Recently, at the IAJHSC Executive Board Meeting, the Autism Society of Illinois was chosen to be the state-wide-service project. Here is some information about this organization.

Every day, sixty children across Illinois are diagnosed with autism. The Autism Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to these children. Autism is a developmental disorder that causes challenges in non-verbal communication, social interactions, and leisure or play activities. This is why educational advocacy is crucial for children with autism. The Autism Society provides this advocacy so that every child can receive a proper education.

Autism is not just a challenge for the individual; it is a challenge for the whole family. The Autism Society brings families affected by autism together through free, hosted events, in a safe environment. By these events, the Autism Society is providing positive experiences for children and families affected by autism. The Autism Society also offers support groups for siblings with an autistic brother or sister. These groups help siblings cope with the many responsibilities of having someone with autism in the family.

The Autism Society also brings our communities together. They are offering to set up support groups at any IAJHSC school. If you are interested, please contact Ms. Mary Kay Betz, the Executive Director of the Organization, at [betzm@autismillinois.org](mailto:betzm@autismillinois.org).

Our fundraising goal is to raise at least \$1 per student that each council represents. I highly encourage you to participate in this year's state-wide-service project. It gives every school a great opportunity. I encourage you to take this opportunity to change children's' lives and run with it.

The Autism Society of Illinois really needs your help. Every day, sixty more children in Illinois are diagnosed with autism. They would appreciate any donation you have to offer to go directly to the children who need us the most. If you want more information about the Autism Society of Illinois, don't hesitate to contact either of us. Our contact information is listed below. You can also visit their website at [www.autismillinois.org](http://www.autismillinois.org).

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