

APRIL 3RD, 2023

SUPERVISOR'S WEEKLY MESSAGE

Yxstian Gutierrez



District 5

Dear District 5 Residents,

April is recognized as Autism Acceptance Month, providing a special occasion to honor and celebrate the diversity of those on the autism spectrum. This month is about raising awareness, promoting acceptance, and understanding those who are neurodivergent.

According to a recent study by the CDC, it is estimated that 1 in 36 children in the United States is diagnosed with autism. Autism is a neurological condition affecting how a person communicates, interacts with others, and experiences the world around them. It is referred to as a “spectrum” because the symptoms and characteristics of autism can vary significantly from person to person. For example, some people with autism may struggle with social interactions, while others may struggle with sensory processing, language development, or repetitive behaviors.

As a former special education teacher, I witnessed firsthand the brilliant things they can accomplish and wish to advocate for their strengths and abilities. To promote acceptance, we must foster sensitivity and compassion, advocate for their needs and welfare, and celebrate their differences.

If you or someone you know needs assistance, the California Department of Rehabilitation administers vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs. Vocational rehabilitation services are designed to help job seekers with disabilities obtain competitive employment in integrated work settings. Independent living services may include peer support, skill development, systems advocacy, referrals, assistive technology, transition, housing, and personal assistance services.

Let us dedicate this month to learning, growing, and celebrating the diversity of those on the autism spectrum. Together, we can promote understanding, acceptance, and a more inclusive society.

Yxstian Gutierrez
County Supervisor