

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Summit County declares April Autism Acceptance, Minority Health, Child Abuse Prevention Month

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—On April 3, 2023 County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council passed legislation declaring the month of April Autism Acceptance Month, Child Abuse Prevention Month, and Minority Health Month.

Autism Acceptance Month celebrates the over 5.4 million adults and one in 44 children in the United States with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and acknowledges their contributions to countless communities, including Summit County. This year marks the 5th annual Celebrate Differences campaign by the Autism Society of Greater Akron and the 16th celebration of Autism Awareness Day by the United Nations. Throughout April, residents are encouraged to be inclusive and supportive of their family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors with ASD and to take time to learn about the experiences of autistic people. County Executive Shapiro also encourages residents to participate in the organization’s annual Step Into Autism fundraiser. This year’s event is set for June 10. To learn more, visit the [Autism Society of Greater Akron](#) and the [Autistic Self Advocacy Network](#).

April is also Child Abuse Prevention Month, which recognizes the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse and neglect. [Summit County Children Services](#) (SCCS) has been engaged in preventing child abuse and neglect for over 30 years. Last year alone, SCCS fielded almost 10,000 calls to the 24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline. To help raise awareness about this important issue, residents are encouraged to Wear Blue on Wednesday, April 12.

Minority Health Month is also observed during April. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health has declared this year’s theme to be “[Better Health Through Better Understanding](#),” which aims to highlight the importance of culturally and linguistically appropriate healthcare services and information. This is especially important for immigrant and refugee communities, who may face significant linguistic and cultural barriers to receiving preventative and remedial care. Considering only 14% of Americans are deemed as having “proficient health literacy” and 20% of people in the U.S. speak a language other than English at home, culturally competent health education is of great importance. In honor of Minority Health Month, Summit County Public Health is holding several events throughout April, including two Health and Wellness Fairs.

“Refugee and immigrant communities often face additional barriers to getting the services they need, especially healthcare,” said Executive Shapiro, “I am proud that we have incredible partners in the community who connect our health services to the people that need them, building bridges across cultures and languages in the process.”

Events:

Wear Blue

Wednesday, April 12th

Paint Summit County blue by wearing or posting blue to highlight Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Health & Wellness Fairs

April 10 & April 26

Join Summit County Public Health and partners for two health and wellness fairs with raffles, prizes, vendors, free haircuts, and more.

12th Annual Appreciation Breakfast

Friday, April 28th

Join SCCS at St. George Family Center for breakfast and the presentation of several “Champions for Children” awards.

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