

## West Coast

### United States Google Alerts for April 2021, News for Autism Month.

Researched by Ronda Fletcher Marchant Smart

Sorry, Google didn't send me anything from some news stations, and not everything from the news station that they did send. I just did the Google Alerts that were sent for the month of April 2021.

## Los Angeles.

In Los Angeles Kayla Cromer of *Everything's Gonna Be OK*, a television series, talks on **ABC 7 Localish All Good** about a girl who wrote a friend-making app for her brother, an Oriental young man who plays music, and Alex Mann (a boy with social skills difficulties) talking to seventy police departments including Prospect Park police in Pennsylvania who support people with less social abilities, people who may be seen as noncompliant or resistant. Kayla talks about Sophia, a girl who owns Texas-made soap with her parents, a girl with a YouTube show about toys (a girl who is shy according to her father), and a boy who works with flowers (a parent who had him diagnosed at 18-months old where he was not as fast at talking as others, his mother said). I think this was a good presentation by Hollywood in response to the pressure to move awareness of this using television. (2021, April 7). *"Everything's Gonna Be Okay" Star Kayla Cromer Celebrates Extraordinary Individuals with Autism*. Eyewitness News ABC 7. <https://abc7.com/localish/celebrating-extraordinary-individuals-with-autism/10491994/>

*"Everything's Gonna Be Okay" Star Kayla Cromer says, Hollywood has a long road to disability inclusion. My experience shows it's possible. She talks about the series and her own diagnosis with the category label. She says she was diagnosed with autism, dyslexia and dyscalculia. She talks about "masking" to avoid the labeling and stereotypes growing up, the social rejection. She labels this as a disability where others need to support, love and accept people who are different. The category and label have not been used as a main character of a series, she says.*

I think Kayla is right in saying people with different social skill levels are not supported. It would be nice if we could be accepted although not as socially skilled as others. Cromer, Kayla. (2021, April 29).

*Commentary: Hollywood has a long road to disability inclusion. My experience shows it's possible.* Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/tv/story/2021-04-29/autism-acceptance-month-everythings-gonna-be-okay-kayla-cromer-freeform>

**The LA Times** talks about the PBS Kids new animated character of Temple Grandin for an Autism Month 2021 interview. She talked about making friends difficulties she had in the cartoon from PBS. She talked about being independently minded, not doing what others do, that people do things differently, to support others. Temple Grandin supports PBS in educating small children.

I agree with the idea to teach children to accept differences. Children began to reject kids as broken or defective around the age of 8 who are not doing it right, being the right color, etc. Children learn standards of behavior. The research still hasn't come to a decision about categories, such things as "autism", etc. preferring a more accurate dimensional approach than the old DSM categories, as they still don't have the understanding needed, and symptoms are not accurately described, but accepting others for being different is a good thing. I wonder what kind of cartoon the national research for the United States (NIMH) would support, if this is on target with

them in teaching small children. Carras, Christi. (2021, April 15). *Temple Grandin champions 'different kinds of minds' for Autism Awareness Month on PBS*. Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/tv/story/2021-04-14/temple-grandin-pbs-autism-awareness-month-episodes>

**Eastsider LA** had a fundraiser April 7, 2021, in Atwater, reported on the Eastsider LA News. (2021, April 7). *4th Annual Atwater Cares About Autism Raffle/Fundraiser*. The Eastsider. [https://www.theeastsiderla.com/calendar/4th-annual-atwater-cares-about-autism-raffle-fundraiser/event\\_e5014454-97dd-11eb-92eb-5cb9017befcf.html](https://www.theeastsiderla.com/calendar/4th-annual-atwater-cares-about-autism-raffle-fundraiser/event_e5014454-97dd-11eb-92eb-5cb9017befcf.html)

## Sacramento

Spectrum News wrote on a **University of California**, Davis MIND Institute investigator, Derek Andrews, statement that an “autism-specific form of anxiety also tend to have an unusually small amygdala, a brain region associated with emotion processing and fear”, and social anxiety, for example, involves a fear of rejection or judgment in social situations.

I think this a good idea, to look at the fear center of the brain suggested by this article. I remember learning from the BIG Five Personality study which the United States studied, that certain emotions such as “work” and “aggression” enlarged the volume of a part of the brain. Fear and withdrawing does not enlarge the volume. I saw these as strong emotions, although not saying talents do not come from the opposite, neither that people are defective who have fear and withdrawing. I wonder how their study compares to the regions of the brain studied in the Big Five Personality Study as increasing in volume.

Spectrum also talks about the California group previously finding that young autistic children with behavioral problems tend to have a larger amygdala, so children with what is being called autism, or lacking social skills, tend to have a large part of the brain when small, but then a smaller one, as time goes by.

That is interesting from Spectrum. Dattaro, Laura. (2021, 3 May). *Anxiety specific to autism linked to amygdala differences*. Spectrum. <https://www.spectrumnews.org/news/anxiety-specific-to-autism-linked-to-amygdala-differences/>

## Bakersfield, CA

**ABC 23 News** talked about the Delano Union School District working with the police department to support and educate families. Wendy Terrazas of Special Ed of Delano says each child she sees is unique.

This is according to what the NIHM is talking about, that no two people are alike. I remember talking with a man here in Utah who was 25 years with Special Ed in Arizona and 25 years with the prison system. He said, an elder Richardson, that it isn't anything they might have problems with, so much as the label, that causes more problems to them than anything else. The labeling is the problem.

I love the approach of **Kerns Kindness** @ Kero of ABC 23 News to work with people where individuals are given consideration. Hobmann, Kallyn. (2021, April 10). *Spreading Autism Awareness in Delano*. 23ABC News Bakersfield. <https://www.turnto23.com/news/kerns-kindness/spreading-autism-awareness-in-delano>

## Between Sacramento and San Francisco Bay Area

**NBC Bay** area put out an article on a Vacaville police asking about whether the police went too far with a 17-year-old boy, when responding to a call about an attempted stabbing or assault with a deadly weapon, a young man who got into a scuffle with a 16-year old. The police 911 may need to have more questions categorizing people as being with the label of autism or not (categorizing this as mental illness, where we still don't quite have it all down as that).

The police are being cautious and careful which is always good. I support that 100 percent. **Hurd, Cheryl.** (2021, April 22). *'Sickening': Father Questions Vacaville Officer's Actions While Citing Teen With Autism.* NBC Bay Area. <https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/north-bay/disturbing-and-sickening-vacaville-officers-actions-questioned-during-teen-arrest/2526289/>

## San Diego

**CBS8 in San Diego** reported on a show. The Society of San Diego put on a show at the Dal Mar Fairgrounds April 14, 2021, a virtual show from last year's top contenders with some performing at the Dal Mar Fairgrounds. The money is to support the society. Alicia Cummings of CBS8 talks of the particular difficulty of the people on the show in that they were not that comfortable being in front of people, a problem people with less social skill often have. Some people lack courage who are not out there socially.

It's a dimension of a person. There are degrees. They don't have the same of the dimension, or any talent one has, and another does not. Summers, Alicia. (2021, April 14). *Autism Society of San Diego hosting Autism's Got Talent live on Saturday.* CBS8. <https://www.cbs8.com/article/news/local/autism-society-of-san-diego-hosting-autisms-got-talent-live-on-saturday/509-07834e56-7170-4dc6-bbeb-383a8dec8517>

## Washington State, Seattle

**LA Times AP** article by Lynn Elber of Jimmy Kimmel and YouTube's Mark Rober (former NASA engineer) to host autism benefit. "*Color The Spectrum: A Livestream To Support The Autism Community,*" will be held April 30 (8 p.m. EDT) on Rober's YouTube channel. Maya Rudolph, Adam Sandler, Chris Rock, and Mark Hamill are among the celebrities. Rober has a son labeled in the category. Elber, Lynn. (2021, April 16). *Jimmy Kimmel, YouTube's Mark Rober to host autism benefit.* The Seattle Times. <https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/jimmy-kimmel-youtubes-mark-rober-to-host-autism-benefit/>

**CBS King 5 News** Channel Chris Cashman wrote, "There is a lot of diversity" in Washington State (where they've integrated the cultures by busing in the schools). The teachers have been having trouble, they said. Two Skagit County teachers have done celebrating cultures each month, one of the cultures is the classification of autism as a culture, talking about food, music and art in video. Hispanic, Native American, Black, and Autism, there's division through the diversity. "They don't understand what others are going through", they said. There have been "positive conversations" from the video.

Understanding others to be different is a good thing, not expecting and demanding for others to be the same in everything, including social abilities. This is a good presentation by CBS 5 News. Cashman, Chris. (2021, May 4). *Two Skagit County teachers use video to educate students on cultural diversity*. King 5 CBS. <https://www.king5.com/article/news/education/two-skagit-county-teachers-use-video-to-educate-students-on-cultural-diversity/281-2d6ed2ef-82cc-476a-876a-bc4389df4ec8>

**Fox Q13** of Seattle talked about some families with what is being categorized as autism.

Sometimes a child experiences a situation where he comes to have problems categorized as autism.

Anna Olson talks about her son and the isolation of the pandemic where he has less social contact and began self-harming, saying he was lonely and depressed and missed people, and did he do something wrong.

This is such a good presentation of the problem. LaVoice, Olivia. (2021, April 19 and 20). *Autism acceptance month, and Local families with children on the autism spectrum say people reaching out is more meaningful than ever*. Q13 Fox Seattle. <https://www.q13fox.com/video/923810> <https://www.q13fox.com/news/local-families-with-children-on-the-autism-spectrum-say-people-reaching-out-is-more-meaningful-than-ever>

## **Oregon, Portland**

Tobi Rates, executive director of the Autism Society of Oregon said, there is a move from awareness to acceptance, highlighting strengths and weakness. People are realizing that these people being stated as being in this category don't seem to just have a weak area.

This is true. People have talents and weak areas, people have varying degrees of this dimension. The National Institute of Mental Health is going to a more dimension approach, then this category, people have varying degrees of the dimension.

Karis Stoudamire-Phillips, VP DEI and community initiatives at Moda Health joined. Moda Health is about health.

This is all about health. Accepting is to accept people even though they may not speak as fast as others. (2021, April 30). *Moda Health: World Autism Month*. **KATU 2 ABC**. <https://katu.com/afternoon-live/lifestyle-health/moda-health-world-autism-month-04-30-2021>

## **Nebraska, Lincoln**

Sonic owner had a daughter and mother involved and hired people categorized in this category for the last few years. Rosales, Melissa. (2021, April 14). *Lincoln Sonic Drive-In Hires Employees With Autism*. **Nebraska Public Media PBS**. <https://nebraskapublicmedia.org/en/news/news-articles/lincoln-sonic-drive-in-hires-employees-with-autism>

Staffing Industry Analysts say companies should do more to remove barrier, discrimination barriers in hiring, says Kelly Services, as people who may have weak areas also have strong areas that are valuable to employers. (2021, April 6). *81% in Favor of Removing Employment Barriers: World Autism Awareness Month Survey*. **SIA Staffing Industry Analysts**. <https://www2.staffingindustry.com/Editorial/Daily-News/81-in-favor-of-removing-employment-barriers-World-Autism-Awareness-Month-survey-57246?cookies=disabled>

## Iowa, Mason city

This year was the first time Faith Lau has participated in the walk. Her two sons, Kaiden and Orion, were both given the category. They walk to raise money for the One Vision Children's Autism Center as part of the 8th annual J. Brooks Walk-a-Block Event. Jirgens, Alex. (2021, April 18). *Walking a Block for Autism Awareness*. **KIMT3 News**. <https://www.kimt.com/content/news/Walking-a-block-for-autism-awareness-574233091.html>

## Kansas, Witchita

Dr. Karl shows pictures of places lighting up the blue. He talks about rising autism rates saying it is due to awareness (services, diagnosis, and spectrum). He says one of his daughters has a masters and has specialized in this.

He is very correct in stating that they are changing the rules. People, actually, still don't know about this dimension as the NIMH (National Institute of Mental Health) does not have that understanding, as yet. They are not looking at the spectrum idea, so much as degrees of a dimension, currently. They are choosing to look at more of a norm population, rather than the clinical diagnosis. Thousands are being educated, like his daughter, in the old system, as they don't have the new one. (2021, April 27). *Dr. Karl: Autism Month – LIGHT IT UP BLUE, PART 2*. **KSN Fourstates** homepage.com KODE12. <https://www.fourstateshomepage.com/news/local-news-today/dr-karl-autism-month-light-it-up-blue-part-2/>

## University of Denver, Colorado

**University of Denver** published an article. What is acceptance of Autism? The article talks about the stigma of diagnosis.

This is the real issue the article by the University of Denver brings out. There is a stigma when parents are told their children are being labeled by the school or others. There is a stigma when a child or individual is told he is this label with a negative connotation. We are told there is something wrong with us. There is a stigma. It lasts. This is good the University is talking about this.

This article says that it's about the stigma dissipating by awareness and acceptance of this category.

That didn't seem the case with the mentally retarded classes in school over the years. It was the stigma more than anything wrong with the kids that was the problem harming them. It didn't dissipate.

Are people different?

The article brings out the idea that it is a way of being.

I totally support this idea posted by the University. (2021, April 22). *Observing Autism Acceptance Month*. University of Denver. <https://www.du.edu/equity/news/observing-autism-acceptance-month>

## Colorado, Montrose

Tom Turner, executive director of Community Options Inc. in Montrose, posted an article for the Montrose Press on World Autism Awareness Day. There are no two persons alike, he says. Everyone is unique. Some have differing social ability. Some with differing social ability have differing intellectual ability, this is true. Turner, Tom. (2021, April 10). *COMMUNITY OPTIONS: Celebrating our friends with autism*. **Montrose Press**. [https://www.montrosepress.com/opinion/community-options-celebrating-our-friends-with-autism/article\\_4f439be6-9969-11eb-be61-3718c0a64d34.html](https://www.montrosepress.com/opinion/community-options-celebrating-our-friends-with-autism/article_4f439be6-9969-11eb-be61-3718c0a64d34.html)

## New Mexico, Texas, a city near the border of Texas in New Mexico

Alyssa Meisner on **CBS 4 News** talks about a health network in New Mexico that celebrates the category of Autism. We want to accept and understand others who are different to ourselves.

In school, I remember some kids did not support others who were slow, or others who did not dress well, or others who had glasses, or others who were the wrong color. There was a girl who was totally not quite understanding of what socially people were talking about, she said the wrong things. She was very loud. Her name was Debbie. I think her mind was a little screwy. Everyone put down Debbie. I felt guilty. I was thinking the same way. I always felt guilty looking back of how I was to Debbie. I didn't want her touching me. Rejecting others because they are not what the group, we are with, are doing and thinking and being, social rejecting, is the opposite of accepting.

Sometimes we can see their life differently. We see more of what they are. A lot of school, and communities, are choosing to accept people of different color, and abilities.

I like her article about accepting others. I think it's hard when labeling people with negative connotation. Is it really true about them?

Are they the rejects? We are to accept rejects, as being rejects, and understand how they are rejects (that we are not like them), that they are different. Meisner, Alyssa. (2021, April 12). *Emergence Health Network Celebrates Autism Awareness Month*. CBS4News. <https://cbs4local.com/news/local/autism-awareness-month-04-12-2021>

## Lubbock

The Burkhart Center at **Texas Tech** over this did a walk for community awareness. They are having a virtual walk kit per vehicle, T-shirts, and special guests for this drive through. (2021, April 12). *Burkhart Virtual Walk for 2021 Autism Awareness Texas Tech University*. Everything Lubbock.com. <https://www.everythinglubbock.com/news/local-news/2021-burkhart-walk-for-autism-awareness-goes-virtual/>



## Rio Grande Valley

Brownsville, TX, has a fun run Rudy Mireles talks about for **KRGV News 5**. A nonprofit working with people with lower intellectual ability, Brownsville Heroes has a fund raiser for Laguna Vista Big Heroes, Inc. Mireles, Rudy. (2021, April 18). *Brownsville nonprofit hosts fun run for Autism Awareness Month*. 5KRGV News ABC. <https://www.krgv.com/news/brownsville-nonprofit-hosts-fun-run-for-autism-awareness-month/>

## El Paso

Amber Spertina says, parents should get their children screened because she did. **Ortiz, Tirza**. (2021, April 23). *'Children with autism are still children': Understanding autism spectrum disorder*. 9CBS KTSM.com. <https://www.ktsm.com/community/children-with-autism-are-still-children-autism-awareness-month/>

## Dallas

Sarah Wojcik of C&G Newspapers in Royal Oak talks about the Judson Center Blue Lights, art and family activities showcase.

I like that this agency is working to help people. Hopefully, pointed in the right direction, they can really do some good. Wojcik, Sarah. (2021, April 9). *Light up blue for Autism Awareness Month*. **C&G Newspapers**. <https://www.candgnews.com/news/light-up-blue-for-autism-awareness-month-120321>

## Houston

Laura Aebi of Sugar Land | Missouri City CI News talked about the Fort Bend County nonprofit, Hope for Three, that raises awareness, provides resources, and support to families with children for what is being called Autism. Aebi, Laura. (2021, April 11). *Sugar Land autism nonprofit Hope for Three celebrates 10th anniversary in April*. Newsbreak. **Community Impact Houston, CI**.

## San Antonio

Michelle Ganley of **KSAT in Texas** says some communities have shifted their language because of a message from the Autism Society of America.

The goal is for people with less social ability to live a life the same as others.

She states that the Autism Society is “leading a significant effort” for the federal government to officially designate April as “Autism Acceptance Month.” She references a book by Kim Stagliano mentioned in the Washington Post in 2015 who parented daughters with this labeling. Ganley, Michelle. (2021, April 15). *Is autism ‘awareness’ enough? Some advocate for Autism Acceptance Month*. KSAT.com.

<https://www.ksat.com/features/2021/04/15/is-autism-awareness-enough-some-advocate-for-autism-acceptance-month/>

**KSAT** in San Antonio had an Orlando Florida Newswire, Gretchen Nowroozi, GMSA News Producer, talking about this. Julia Parish-Morris, in psychology/psychiatry in Pennsylvania says there are no medical tests. The CDC is being involved, stating boys are being said to have this dimension more than girls. They don't know what causes this, she says. Is it genetic or environmental?

They haven't decided. There are a lot of guesses, still, at this point, as to what is going on. The federal government has not decided. I was on the news once. He wanted tips for parents of autistic children. Did I have a son who was autistic? No. I was being asked to talk on the news, Channel 4, as an expert on autism. Nowroozi, Gretchen. (2021, April 15). *April is National Autism Awareness Month: How much do you know about autism?* KSAT.com. <https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2021/04/15/april-is-national-autism-awareness-month-how-much-do-you-know-about-autism/>