



Case for Support

The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic

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LETTER FROM OUR *Executive Director*

To our community supporters,

At 18 months old, my son, Griffin, stopped talking and looking at us. He was still a lovable little toddler, but there was something different. We started searching for answers and stumbled across the Autism Treatment Center of America. With our training, we built a team of volunteers and watched as our son grew and began talking and interacting with us. Through friends and volunteers, the story of Griffin quickly spread as more families needed information on autism therapies. We spent countless hours talking to parents and caregivers. We knew there was more that we could do for our community and felt it was time for our team to take it to the next level. With our training, experience, and education, our charity opened The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic. Our mission is to help other families and offer them guidance and HOPE for their journey!

Sincerely,
Lori Beth Frederick

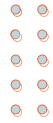
**"We [this clinic] are a
promise to Griffin
that we will continue
to give others what we
started with him."**

-Griffin's original volunteers

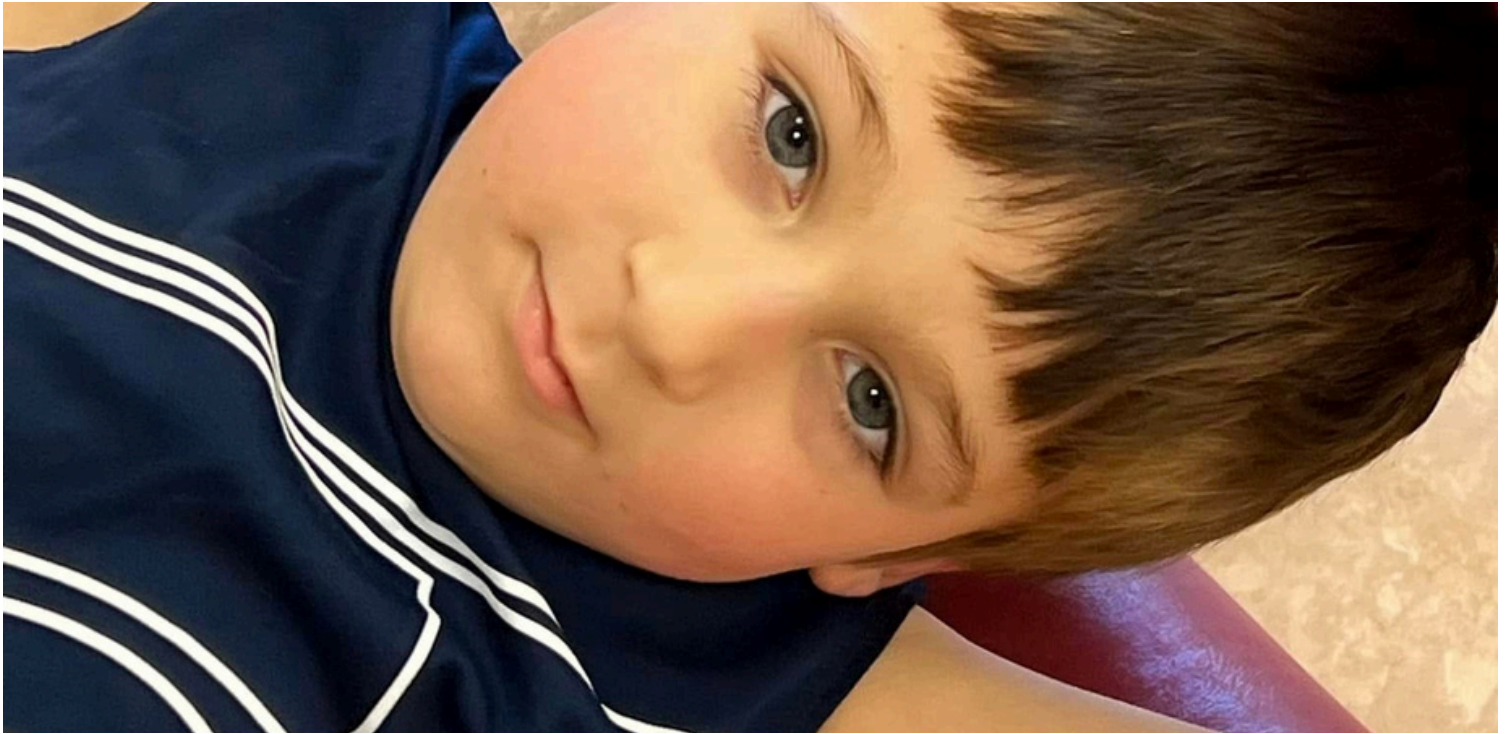


Who we are

The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to helping individuals who are affected by developmental delays and autism. Our mission is to provide HOPE to individuals with social developmental disorders and their caregivers through therapy, training, summer camps, and community outreach. We believe in taking action with urgency in order to raise public awareness about autism and help our community become more inclusive.



ABOUT US



History & Background

The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to helping individuals who are affected by developmental delays and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The clinic was founded in 2014 in response to the overwhelming requests for a facility to serve the community with therapy, evaluations, and training. Being the only combined therapy and training center in the area, the clinic immediately began to see growth and popularity. By focusing on the social relationship versus the basics of language or physical abilities, the clinic helps individuals better understand how to engage with others.

Their relationship based approach helps the families, educators, and others involved in the child's life to better meet their needs and increase their prognosis for a more independent and social future. There is a pressing need for these services to enhance the quality of life for people living with autism and their families. Therapies and supports can impact the factors contributing to increased independence and economical growth of our communities. Since opening, the clinic has also established a satellite office in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Core Values

- **Collaboration** with the client's caregivers, educators, and other team members to enhance their success.
- **Communication** merges our commitment to training and education with our dedication to continuous growth as individuals and as an organization.
- **Respect** to one another and to the individuals we serve to create a positive environment for all.



What does spelling
mean to you?

“Indescribable
freedom.”

- Cameron, speller

The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic's mission is to provide HOPE and resources to individuals with autism and their caregivers. The Clinic uses a child's motivation to build a friendship first. The organization, its leadership, and staff believe behaviors have a purpose, and by “listening” to those behaviors, the all-important therapeutic and working relationship is established.

Relationship-first therapies are used at The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic, which specializes in autism and only autism. It is unique in this regard. All staff members are trained and certified with specializations in their respective fields; occupational therapy, speech therapy, feeding therapy, and play therapy. The staff have over thirty years of combined experience and frequently provide training to other professionals. Plus, key members have personal experiences to draw upon in empathizing with those they serve.

What began as a few therapists in a small office is now a dedicated team in an ever-growing clinic serving more than 300 families weekly. Families travel nationwide to The Griffin Promise in Broken Arrow for training, testing, and assessment.



AUTISM DEFINED

According to the National Institutes of Health, ASD involves:

- Ongoing social delays that include difficulty communicating and interacting with others
- Repetitive behaviors, as well as limited interests or activities
- Symptoms that typically are recognized in the first two years of life
- Symptoms that limit the individual's ability to function socially, at school or work, or in other areas of life

Oklahoma

In 2017, 6,647 children with autism aged 3-21 were identified by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. This number does not include children with autism who are served under another category, children who are not receiving special education services through the local public school, or those under age three or over age 21. The rate of autism continues to surge from 0.65% in 2000 to 2.8% in 2020, stressing the need for increased awareness and support (as reported by the CDC in March 2023).

IN
2023

THE CDC STATED...

MORE THAN

5.4M

INDIVIDUALS LIVING
WITH ASD

THAT IS A

178%

INCREASE SINCE
2000



Project Overview



Autism is the most diagnosed childhood disorder in the US.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), current treatments for ASD are meant to reduce symptoms that interfere with daily functioning and quality of life. Because ASD affects each person differently, therapies and supports usually involve multiple professionals and are catered toward each individual. As people with autism graduate from high school and grow into adulthood, additional services can help improve health, daily functioning, and facilitate social and community engagement. Some may need support to continue their education, complete job training, find employment, and secure housing and transportation.

The rise in ASD diagnoses requires community support.

- In 2023, the CDC reported that approximately 1 in 36 children in the U.S. is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, according to 2020 data.
- An estimated 25-30% of people with autism are non-speaking or minimally speaking. Thirty-one percent of children with ASD have been diagnosed with an intellectual deficit. Often these individuals experience dysregulation, which can lead to self-injurious behaviors. Head banging, arm biting, and skin scratching are among the most common.
- Over the next decade, 707,000 to 1,116,000 teens will enter adulthood & age out of school-based services. Many young adults with autism do not receive healthcare for years after they stop seeing a pediatrician. Of the nearly 18,000 people with autism who used state-funded vocational rehabilitation programs in 2014, only 60% left the program with a job. Of these, 80% worked part-time at a median weekly rate of \$160, putting them well below the poverty level. Nearly half of 25-year-olds with autism have never held a paying job. 57% percent of parents of children with autism have had to reduce employment to meet caregiving demands, incurring additional healthcare costs & productivity losses.

Evidence and Supporting Data

- Autism is the #1 diagnosis in children today. About 1 in 36 children (2.8%), or 1,725,297 children ages three through seventeen in the U.S., are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). There are 21,091 currently diagnosed children in Oklahoma.
- The cost of caring for Americans with autism reached \$268 billion in 2015 and is estimated to rise to \$461 billion by 2025 in the absence of more-effective interventions and support across the lifespan.
- On average, autism costs families an estimated \$60,000 per year through childhood.
- Mothers of children with autism are less likely to work outside the home. On average, they work fewer hours per week and earn 56% less than mothers of children with no health limitations.
- Over half of the young adults with autism remain unemployed and unenrolled in higher education two years after high school.
- Nearly two-thirds of children with autism between the ages of 6 and 15 have experienced bullying.
- Early intervention affords the best opportunity to support healthy development and deliver benefits across the lifespan.
- For individuals with autism, the average life expectancy ranges from 39.5 years to 58 years.



Programs



Diagnostic Testing

Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule: The Griffin Promise Speech-Language Pathologists, who have completed extensive training in order to give the ADOS evaluation, utilize this test to help in diagnosing autism and ASD. The schedule, administered by a trained specialist in autism and communication disorders, is the #1 rated evaluation for determining autism spectrum diagnoses.

Speech-Language Evaluation: These are completed by one of the clinic's licensed speech pathologists, who are trained to work with developmental delays, autism, and other social disorders. This evaluation is the first step in starting therapy with the clinic.

Feeding Evaluation: If a child is a picky eater, has meltdowns at dinner time, or will not touch food, they may have sensory issues, food aversion, or even stress caused by food phobias. Play and relationship building are used as interventions to make food less overwhelming.

Behavioral Health Counseling Assessment: For patients who are receiving other services, licensed counselors are part of a team-based approach to helping clients and families. When clinically indicated, play therapy can be added to the therapy and support plan.

Occupational Therapy Evaluation: For patients who are receiving other services, occupational therapy is part of the team-based approach to help meet sensory needs.

Spelling to Communicate Assessment: This assessment is for clients with motor planning, Apraxia, and other conditions that result in non-speaking, minimally speaking, or unreliable speaking individuals. The S2C assessment helps focus on motor control to use alternate means of communication to allow clients the ability to function at a truer capacity.

Programs



Therapy

It takes a team to help children with ASD to move along their journeys. Because autism and other social disorders vary from person to person, research has shown that the more time a person can engage in one-on-one therapeutic interaction, the more improvements are shown. The Clinic believes that clients require a team of caregivers, therapists, teachers, volunteers, and more so that each client is given the best opportunity for growth. **Speech, occupational, and play** therapies are offered in a multi-disciplinary team approach designed especially for each child.

Spelling to Communicate (S2C): Spelling to Communicate is a form of Assistive Technology that supports individuals who are non-speaking or unreliably speaking. S2C teaches purposeful motor skills to point to letters to spell as a reliable form of communication. The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic is proud to have the first practitioners for S2C in Oklahoma as part of their team.

“ *HAVING SOMEONE FINALLY RECOGNIZE THAT MY INABILITY TO SPEAK WAS BECAUSE OF MOTOR DIFFERENCES AND NOT DUE TO AN ABSENCE OF LANGUAGE WAS MY LIFELONG DREAM COME TRUE! IT TOOK SOMEONE TAKING THE TIME TO REALLY BREAK DOWN THE MOTOR TO ALLOW ME TO BE ABLE TO PROVE MY INTELLIGENCE AND THAT I HAD ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD EVERYTHING!* ”

Ian, speller

Training

The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic provides a range of training programs for parents, educators, volunteers, and other professionals. Lives are enhanced by spreading specialized knowledge and experience gained over many years of practice in this complicated field. The courses are tailored to fit the need of the profession or setting. The goal of training is to bridge the gap between the neurodivergent population, and all they have to offer, and our surrounding communities.



Founded by the International Association for Spelling to Communicate, I-ASC, the spelling to communicate (S2C) program has given a voice to the non-speaking community. The Griffin Promise was the first location in Oklahoma and first practitioner to assist a speller taking the ACT in the state.

“

Ignore my body. My body and my brain do not match. You cannot judge a book by its cover. What's under my cover is an intelligent guy whose dream is to attend the University of Oklahoma and be treated like every other student while I'm studying to be a neuropsychologist.

— Jake, speller



Photo: Jake Wright, the first open speller at The Griffin Promise, is often asked to give insight for news reports, podcasts, and other events. Here, he is shown spelling using a clear laminate with his practitioner, Torrie Moreton.

Jake, who is 20, communicates through a spell board. Three years ago, he was in a public school, still doing second-grade work. Jake's parents had no idea what his intellectual capabilities were. There is no standardized test for people with autism that can truly measure what they are able to do. His mom heard about Spelling to Communicate and planned to go to Virginia to learn how to do it, but then she heard about The Griffin Promise.

Jake completed the American College Testing (ACT) test in April 2022, as the first person in Oklahoma to take the test using a spell board. Jake is currently attending college and plans to pursue a degree in neuropsychology. This endeavor will require his college institution to support his communication needs. Jake is a trailblazer for the non speaking community.



Community Outreach



Summer Camp

Everyone dreams of the chance to go to summer camp. A traditional program can be overstimulating for children with social delays. The Griffin Promise Summer Camp program accommodates youth on the spectrum who need more guidance and support in their experience. This program allows children to engage in the activities of camp but for whom the structure of a typical setting would create more obstacles and challenges.

The Griffin Promise provides a half-day camp program during the summer designed for children with autism. The schedule is flexible and tailored to the needs of each participant. Each week has its own motivation-based theme. While the Griffin Promise has planned age-appropriate activities for campers each day, children can choose what they want to participate in.

Each child is linked with volunteers for the week and receives one-on-one interaction and help throughout the day. The camp is held at the Broken Arrow Community Center, which donates the use of the facility for the program. Scholarships are funded by individual donors.

Outreach

The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic provides in-home and at-school functional assessments, social intervention, and training. The team of professionals can travel to meet with parents, teachers, and treatment providers to tailor programming to fit the needs of individual children and their families based on field observation, intervention, and team training.

This program has traveled to Connecticut, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New York, and Texas to name a few, and is available nationwide for in-person or virtual coaching.

Organization Impact

Through the generosity of supporters, we instill the belief that every individual deserves the right to communicate without limits.

Public Support

Donors are the clinic's largest form of public support to date. Through fundraising events and monthly donations, the clinic is able to offer programs that are not covered by insurance plans.



24K
2024 Donations



59K
2024 Events Income

2024 data is to date as of 10/21/2024

OUR SUCCESS STORY

Families come to The Griffin Promise after hearing the success of Griffin, and others like him. Griffin recently received the Governor's award for exceptional work under the Oklahomans with Disabilities Initiative. Griffin's journey continues to inspire the clinic to build community business partnerships so that they can meet individuals where they are and support them along the way.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The Griffin Promise has received the Best of Broken Arrow award for therapy and training for the past 8 years. Lori Frederick, Executive Director, received the citizen of the year award in 2019 for her community work from Civitan International. The clinic has been recognized by many businesses for their impact in community supports.

12K

Client sessions in
2024

112

New Clients
in 2024

37

Children with ASD
attended 2024
Summer Camp via
scholarship

TESTIMONIALS

1

"The incredible culture cultivated by Torrie, Lori, and the dedicated faculty and families is unparalleled. The clinic's family atmosphere and daily demonstrations of love and support create a nurturing environment where clients thrive. Their commitment to presuming competence in every client results in remarkable outcomes." - Nancy, intern

2

"The GPAC team made the process from diagnosis to therapy so much easier for our family. We were given so much hope in what was an uncertain time. So grateful for this amazing staff." - Makayla, parent

Financial Impact

HOW FUNDING SUPPORTS THE MISSION

Operating Budget

1.38M

2023

Clients Served

1,390

Grants Received

\$11,000

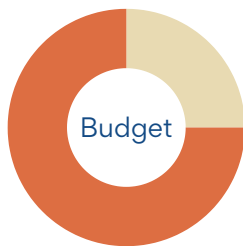
23-24

States Impacted

9

Interns Trained

13



Organic View

23%

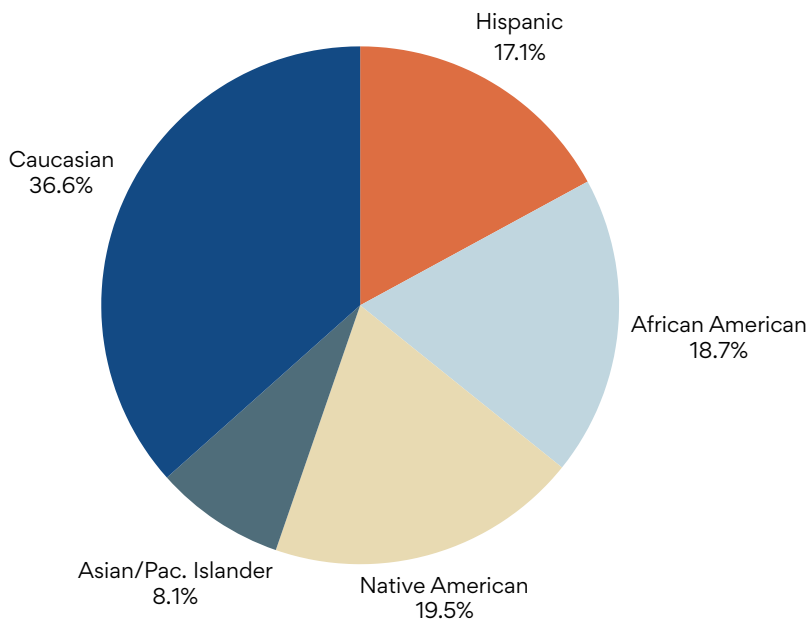
Paid View

77%

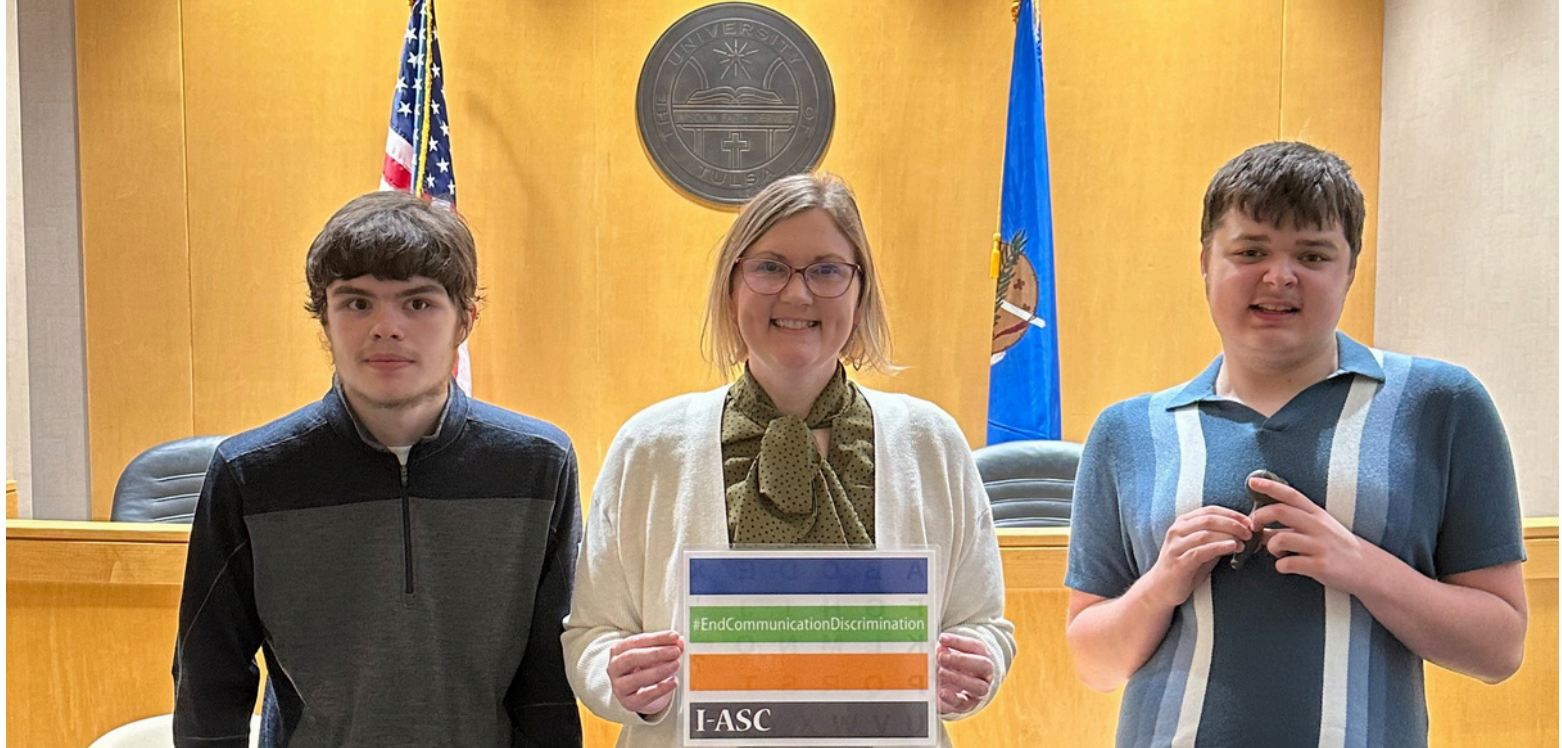
Money matters.

77% of the clinic's expenses are program related. Only 23% of the organizational budget is used for administrative expenses, which is an excellent benchmark in the nonprofit world.

Demographic Impact



The Griffin Promise is dedicated to supporting neurodivergent individuals, irrespective of race, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation. Clients can access programs funded through their insurance, scholarships from donations, or a reduced cash payment option. The clinic aims to serve all families in need of its services.



Call to Action

Why Support is Crucial

Autism is the #1 diagnosis in children today. Without proper therapies and supports, society will soon see many adults unable to work and function in the community. The Griffin Promise Autism Clinic hopes to change that outcome. The need for support is more significant than ever as the clinic hopes to never turn away a family for the inability to pay. Your gift today will help individuals living with autism to live and thrive.

In addition to funding the general operations of The Griffin Promise, several special initiatives are underway.

- Scholarships for therapy or training that is not covered by insurance. This allows for caregivers, educators, or clients to obtain access to needed programs offered through the clinic.
- Specialized Equipment Initiative to cover the cost of needed medical and sensory products that provide clients with autism access to vestibular and motor based therapy.
- Social Groups are the most requested program by caregivers and educators for children and teens on the spectrum. With grant funding, the clinic is able to host social groups for individuals to have activities with other like minded peers which increases social engagement and acceptance within the community.

Community Partners



BROKEN ARROW



building the future

Key Personnel



Lori Frederick
Executive Director



Torrie Moreton
Clinic Director



Lauryn Yager
Grant Coordinator



Mickey Uphold
Board President



THANK YOU

Contact Us :



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