



# The Facts About Autism & Vaccines



## What is Autism?

Autism is a lifelong, brain-based developmental disability that **begins in the womb**, and impacts the way the brain processes and uses information. There are many Autistic traits and each individual experiences them differently.



## Why do more people seem to be diagnosed with Autism?

As of 2023, **1 in 36 children in the US are diagnosed with Autism**. Improvements in identification and accessibility of healthcare, along with reduced stigma, have helped Autistic people get an accurate diagnosis sooner and receive the support and services they need to thrive. **Disparities continue to exist in diagnostic rates in marginalized communities** and adults.



## Why are vaccines so important for Autistic people?

Autistic people are more likely to have co-occurring conditions that make them **more vulnerable to infectious diseases**. Also, Autistic people are part of every population and exist in every marginalized community, which also leaves them **more at risk of negative health outcomes**.

## Are vaccines and Autism linked?

Vaccines do not cause Autism. A fraudulent study was published in 1998 claiming that the MMR vaccine caused autism in 8 children. Subsequent **studies on hundreds of thousands of children have found no link between vaccines and Autism**. Other studies have identified genetic factors, nervous system differences, and congenital rubella syndrome (prevented by the MMR vaccine), to be associated with increased likelihood of Autism.



## Vaccine accessibility is important for people of all ages and ability levels.

Vaccines are a critical part of keeping our schools and communities safe and our economies functioning. **It is important to support programs that make vaccines more accessible to all Louisianans.**