



Media guidelines for stories involving autistic children or adults

respect, privacy, and dignity

Do not reveal any identifying information about an autistic child or adult without their consent. As children are not able to consent, protect their privacy by not revealing names, locations or images that may identify them. Privacy must also be upheld where the person being interviewed is the parent or family member of the autistic person.

Do not include any details of behaviours by autistic people that they would not likely choose to disclose themselves. This includes, but is not limited to, information relating to a person's hygiene, toileting, eating and sleeping. As children cannot consent to disclose, do not share behaviours of autistic children that present them in a negative or challenging way. This must also be upheld where the person describing such behaviours is a parent or family member of the autistic person.

consider impact

Consider the impact of your story on autistic people themselves, and consider that the autistic person in your story may one day access a copy of the story and be traumatized by what people have said or shared about them.

use of language

The majority of autistic adults prefer Identity First language ("autistic person" rather than "person with autism"). Do not use "Functioning Labels" ("high," "low," "severe") as these are offensive to autistic people. For more information, please read:

<http://www.identityfirstautistic.org/#!important/c15rq>

<http://musingsofanaspie.com/2013/06/26/decoding-the-high-functioning-label>

liaise with autistic adults

Invite the opinions of autistic adults for inclusion in your article. There are many autistic adults who have large public blogs, as well as autistic-run organizations who may be willing to be interviewed or comment on your article.

for media inquiries, please contact AFI
hello@autisticfamilies.org