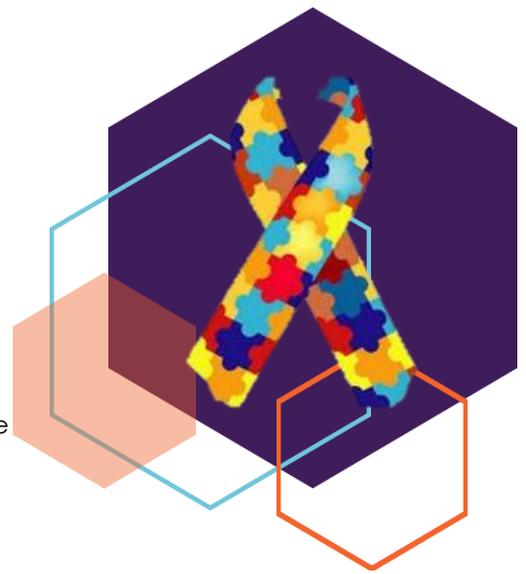


# April 2018

## National Volunteer Month Autism Awareness Month



Harry L. Berry  
County Judge/Executive



NOBODY CARES HOW MUCH YOU KNOW,  
UNTIL THEY KNOW HOW MUCH YOU CARE.

Theodore Roosevelt

### National Volunteer Month

Many of you are aware that February was Black History Month or March was Tornado Awareness Month. Did you know April is National Volunteer Month?

The time we spent reflecting in February and March was of crucial importance, but it is also important to honor the people who dedicate themselves to our community by taking action and solving problems.

There are so many ways to volunteer in Hardin County, such as helping out at church, coaching your child's sports team, serving at a local non-profit organization, serving on your rural fire department or on a government board or a committee.

We have volunteer opportunities at our County Animal Shelter for dog walkers, adoption councilors, children's educational assistants, and cat custodians. We provide training and mentoring for our volunteers. You can pick your hours from Noon to 4 pm Monday through Saturday. Call Sharon Gregory at 270-769-3428 or e-mail her at [sgregory@hcky.org](mailto:sgregory@hcky.org).

Volunteers come in all shapes and sizes. They pick a cause and make a difference in someone's life. Sometimes the difference is small while other times it can produce a major impact on the lives of many individuals.

Hardin County Government salutes the volunteers throughout our community who contribute their time and talents to help our community thrive.

### National Autism Awareness Month

April is a time to think about those among us who must live with autism. Today, about one in 68 children is diagnosed with autism, a sharp increase from the autism rate just ten years ago. It is the fastest growing developmental disorder. Some predict half of children born in 2025 will be autistic.

Autism is a spectrum condition. It is a complex developmental disability affecting a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. There is no known single cause of autism, but increased awareness and early diagnosis and intervention with access to appropriate services lead to significantly improved outcomes.

The autistic community needs advocates to secure the critical help required for an autistic person to survive. Autistic adolescents and especially adults often have difficulty finding services and understanding.

Autism is treatable, but children do not outgrow it and intervention is essential for improvement. Early warning signs include: lack of or delay in spoken language, repetitive use of language and/or motor mannerisms, little or no eye contact, lack of interest in peer relationships, lack of spontaneous or make-believe play, and persistent fixation on parts of objects.

Being a part of a community and feeling included is extremely important in people's lives. The autistic individual needs to be participating and accepted by the community. It is rewarding and life altering for them.