

21 April 2020

Hoodie Up for autism

# Retailer Fundraising Information Kit



# Thank you!

**Thank you for being part of World Autism Acceptance Month on Tuesday 21 April 2020 and showing your understanding and support of autistic Victorians. With your help we can raise vital funds and shape a brighter future for autism.**

Between 11am and 12pm on Hoodie Up Day (21 April 2020), join hundreds of businesses across in making small but powerful changes to their environments to show understanding, acceptance and support for autistic people.

More than 85% of Australians have a personal connection to an autistic person, and 1 in 100 Australians is autistic. Nearly every customer who walks through your doors either knows an autistic person, or may be autistic themselves.

You can start to make your space more welcoming and inclusive for autistic people and their families simply by dimming lighting and lowering music – small changes can make a big difference. Join this inclusive movement and show your community that you're committed to diversity and access for all.

Why hoodies? Some autistic people experience sensory sensitivities and can become overloaded by stimuli in their environment; wearing their hoodie up means they can block out bright lights and busy environments which helps calm them. I hope that, along with making changes to your environment, you'll put your #HoodieUp!

Funds raised through Hoodie Up will help deliver vital support to autistic people and their families, including Amaze's Autism Advisor service, which offers evidence-based information, practical advice and an understanding space for autistic people and their families navigating their individual autism journey.

You're also supporting Amaze's work to create a more autism-friendly Victoria: we advocate

to ensure the autism community's voices and needs are recognised in government policy and the media, break down stigma in the wider community through public education campaigns, and up-skill the wider world in how to support autistic people so they can fully participate in, and contribute to, our society.

In this kit, you'll find practical tips for creating a more autism-inclusive space, information about fundraising to support autistic people, and a poster (page 8) you can display to promote your participation in World Autism Acceptance Month.

If you have any questions or would like more information about World Autism Acceptance Month, please contact Amaze's Fundraising Manager on (03) 9657 1673 or email us at [waad@amaze.org.au](mailto:waad@amaze.org.au).

We look forward to celebrating with you on Tuesday 21 April 2020.

Thank you,

*Fiona Sharkie*

Fiona Sharkie  
Amaze CEO



# 4 Things Retailers Can Do

**Autism is a neurodevelopmental disability that affects the way people communicate and interact with the world. Autistic people may have challenges with social communication, social interaction, repetitive behaviour, interests and activities. Here are some ways to help autistic people in your retail outlet.**

## Being sensory sensitive

Autistic people can be acutely sensitive and aware of light, sound, odours, tastes, touch and textures. If so, autistic people will avoid sensory stimulus that they find difficult. They may need to wear hoodies up, sunglasses or hats to reduce light; may wear headphones to avoid noise; find fragrances or odours very unpleasant; be unable to eat certain foods that are too spicy or crunchy; and be unable to wear certain fabrics (scratchy or itchy). Overexposure may lead to becoming overwhelmed and result in a meltdown.

### 3 things you can do:

- Lower the lights, or turn some lights off (where possible to do safely)
- Turn in-store music down or off, and don't make in-store announcements
- Understand that some autistic people will need to wear glasses, hats, headphones to manage their sensory sensitivity



## Creating space

Autistic people often feel judged in public spaces – simply giving them space and being respectful can make a huge difference in an autistic person's experience of your environment.

“Stimming” is short for *self-stimulatory behaviour*, which many autistic people use to calm, comfort and regulate themselves when they are becoming overwhelmed. Some of the ways autistic people ‘stim’ is by rocking back and forth, twirling, twiddling, spinning or talking and repeating words. Stimming serves an important purpose for autistic individuals.

A stimulation overload, as commonly experienced in a shopping centre or busy train station, can overwhelm an autistic person and trigger a ‘meltdown’. Giving someone in meltdown space, and not judging them, are simple things you can do to help.

### 3 things you can do:

- Support a person who is stimming in your store by giving them and space to self-regulate
- Give them physical space if they're experiencing a meltdown
- Don't judge or ridicule autistic people or their families





# 4 Things Retailers Can Do

## Personal communication

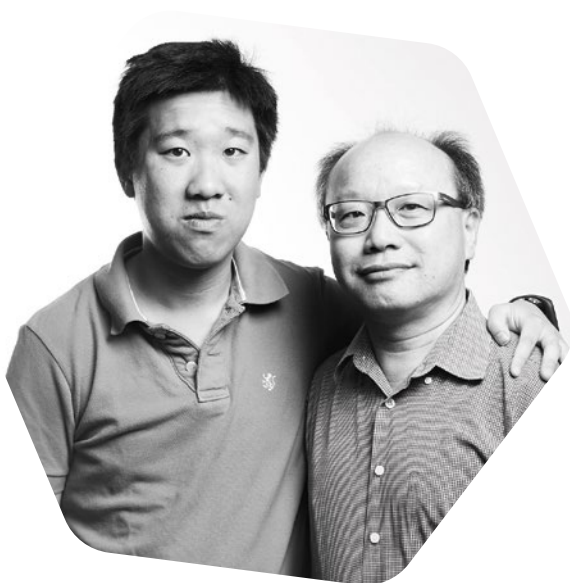
Autistic people can find social situations challenging, because non-autistic people often communicate in ways that can be difficult for them to process.

Expressions and sayings – like sarcasm, or idioms like “it’s raining cats and dogs” – can create confusion due to the literal way autistic people process language.

Trying to understand what is really being said can be exhausting and may mean autistic people can’t join in and become anxious. Some autistic people are non-speaking and use other ways – such as sign language, assisted technology devices or pictures – to communicate.

### 3 things you can do:

- Use simple, direct language, and be clear when you’re asking a question.
- Check with the autistic person if they have understood or need you to explain again or in a different way.
- Don’t be offended if autistic people don’t embrace social norms such as shaking hands, eye contact or small talk.



## Planning visits

Change and unexpected demands can be distressing and create anxiety in autistic people. New places, like shopping centres or stores, can be especially challenging, with uncertainty around things like noise, lighting, smells, store layout, crowds and toilet access.

### 3 things you can do:

- Make sure your Google Maps listing and Facebook page feature up-to-date images of your store
- Post any changes to your regular opening hours – for example, on public holidays – to your social media profiles and website
- If you’re hosting a special event, be clear in promotions about possible changes to store layout, waiting times, or stock etc.



# How to join Hoodie Up Day and raise funds

## 1. Register online

Head to [www.amaze.org.au/hoodie-up](http://www.amaze.org.au/hoodie-up) and fill in the registration form to get signed up and start working on your personalised team fundraising page.

## 2. Choose a date

Hoodie Up officially takes place on 21 April and we hope you can join in then. If for some reason you can't, you can host a Hoodie Up event on any other day in April to show your support.

## 3. Spread the word and raise funds!

Download posters from our website – [www.amaze.org.au/hoodie-up](http://www.amaze.org.au/hoodie-up) – and put them up around your workplace and wider community. Email your team a few weeks before the event.

You can add photos and updates to your fundraising page. Send your personalised fundraising webpage out to your community and ask them to donate online to save time later.

Receipts are automatically generated for online donations. Direct donations over \$2

### Getting cash donations?

Collect donations online when you can, to save administration time for yourself later, however for gold coin donations received on the day we recommend using a lockable cash box or similar container to keep your donations secure!

## 4. Hoodie Up at 11am

Get everyone together at 11am to put their hoods up and show that they support autistic people. Take photos and post them on social media with the hashtag #HoodieUp

## 5. Create your autism-friendly space

From 11am-12pm (or however long you choose), make your space as autism-friendly as possible. Turn down lighting and music, offer sensory toys to customers, create a quiet space if possible, try new wayfinding and signage to help people navigate your space... the possibilities are endless!

## 6. Donate your funds

Login into your fundraising dashboard and post an update to thank everyone involved and let everyone know how much you raised.

For cash donations you may have on hand, you can deposit the money into our bank account using the instructions provided on page 4.

# How to bank your funds

If you have collected cash donations on the day, you can send them to us in two ways:

## Bank transfer

1. Deposit the funds into your bank account
2. Make a bank transfer to Amaze, using the details on this page
3. Email [waad@amaze.org.au](mailto:waad@amaze.org.au) so we know it's coming

## Your fundraising page

Alternatively you can process a donation on your fundraising page with a debit or credit card. These funds are automatically transferred to Amaze.

## Amaze bank details

**Account Name:** Amaze General Account

**BSB:** 063-113

**Acc No:** 00904093

**Payment Reference:** Please put "Hoodie Up" and your organisation or school name as reference.

Once we have received your funds we'll send you a receipt and a certificate of participation.

# Amaze: shaping the future for autism

**Amaze aims to create an inclusive society that offers every autistic person the opportunity to meaningfully participate and contribute. We do this by building understanding and acceptance among educators, the government and the wider community.**

98% of Australians have heard of autism, and 85% of Australians have personal contact with an autistic person, yet only 29% of Australians agree that they have a good understanding of how to support autistic people and only 4% of autistic people thought Australians knew how to support them. With your help Amaze can change this.

Formed in 1967 by a group of parents struggling to find resources to support their children, Amaze has grown to become the peak body for autism in Victoria.

Today we work to:

- Increase understanding, engagement and acceptance of autism by the wider community
- Influence positive systemic change through Governments and the media to improve attitudes and behaviours towards autistic people and their families
- Build the skills of private, public and community organisations to create more autism-friendly environments and build the capacity of autistic people and their families to advocate for their needs

We're making great progress and change in the community, but we need your support to continue to shape the future for autism. Hosting a Hoodie Up event is a fantastic way to start a conversation about autism in your school, show understanding of autistic people and raise vital funds to help build a more autism-friendly world.



Find out more about Amaze's work and how you can get involved at [www.amaze.org.au](http://www.amaze.org.au) We are already making great progress and change in the community but need your support to continue to shape the future for autism.

Your donation will support autistic people and their families through our Autism Advisor Information Phone Service and deliver much needed information to parents, families and professionals via forums, workshops and online as well as inform government and educational policy and ensure an ongoing growth of understanding, engagement and acceptance of autism through sharing stories of autistic peoples individual lived experiences.



Get ready to  
**#HoodieUp**  
for autism  
**21 April 2020**



**Donate a  
gold coin to  
show your  
support**

Some autistic people wear their hoodies up so they can block out bright lights and busy environments.

On Tuesday 21 April, our store is putting our #HoodieUp to show that we understand and support autistic people.



Shaping the future  
for Autism.

To find out more, go to  
[amaze.org.au/hoodie-up](https://amaze.org.au/hoodie-up)





## Contact Amaze

**Phone** (03) 9657 1600

**Email** [waad@amaze.org.au](mailto:waad@amaze.org.au)

**Website** [www.amaze.org.au/hoodie-up](http://www.amaze.org.au/hoodie-up)

**Address** 24 Drummond Street  
Carlton VIC 3161

