

# What is AuSM Celebrates Interdependence 2021?

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In the world of disability, we often talk about whether or not someone is independent. We ask if someone lives independently, if they can hold down employment independently, if they can accomplish daily living independently.

What we sometimes don't recognize is that no one lives entirely independently. Every human relies on others – farmers who grow our food, the workers who pave our roads, the electricity company that keeps our lights on – the list is virtually endless.

This is interdependence. The simplest definition of the word is “the fact of depending on each other.” It refers to the ways that humans build relationships and communities, contributing in different ways and receiving in different ways. It helps us remember that we survive as humans because we are in community.

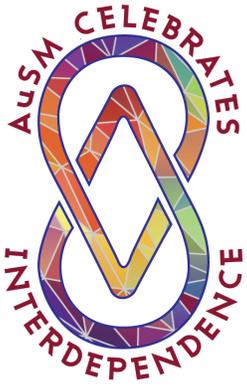
As we begin our 50th year of service to the local community, we are pleased to announce our new informational initiative, “AuSM Celebrates Interdependence.” To carry out this initiative, AuSM will share new, original resources with information about relationships, families, environment, and community; we will host educational opportunities connected to interdependence; and we'll seek your questions and concerns to tailor our information to your needs.

AuSM Celebrates Interdependence will look at disability from a new viewpoint that will allow us to celebrate neurodiversity and highlight the amazing ways that our autistic community members participate in their communities, families, relationships, workplaces, and other spaces.

In 2021, we'll cover four areas of interdependence:

1. Healthy Relationships
2. Building Strong Families
3. Connected Communities
4. Intersection of Independence and Interdependence

**Learn more about AuSM Celebrates Interdependence 2021 at [www.ausm.org](http://www.ausm.org).**



# AuSM Introduces New Community Engagement Manager

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AuSM is pleased to announce that Zephyr James, who has worked in AuSM's Marketing and Communications department for nearly six years, has taken the new position of Community Engagement Manager. As Community Engagement Manager, James will be looking for ways to connect with those we serve in the local autism community. She plans to interact with surveys, focus groups, and discussions aimed at learning more about the needs of our community and how we can meet them. As an autistic adult,

James is committed to seeking out the perspectives of community members and incorporating them into AuSM's work.

If you are interested in sharing feedback about the AuSM Celebrates Interdependence initiative, have topics you'd like to suggest, or want to get involved, James can be reached at [zjames@ausm.org](mailto:zjames@ausm.org).

**Learn more about AuSM Celebrates Interdependence 2021 at [www.ausm.org](http://www.ausm.org).**