



Firefly Autism

July Newsletter

2025

Welcome to the July Newsletter!

We're thrilled to bring you the latest from Firefly Autism! This month's newsletter is packed with exciting milestones, inspiring stories, and upcoming events that showcase the powerful impact of our community. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey and for championing the individuals and families we're proud to serve.





Breaking Barriers, Investing in Care

Autism rates continue to rise, now affecting **1 in 31** children in the U.S. annually. While increased awareness and diagnostic improvements contribute to this growth, autism remains highly heritable with complex genetic and environmental interactions.

Autistic individuals of all abilities face lifetime barriers to access appropriate diagnosis, therapy, education, medical care, and employment. These barriers are not one-size-fits-all. Just like the autism spectrum, they are wide-ranging from financial and geographical barriers to persistent inability to access appropriate care. Misunderstandings about autism across systems compound these challenges.

Recent research highlights that access barriers are a key predictor of poor quality of life outcomes. Those with greater support needs or fewer local services face deeper, more complex obstacles. Firefly Autism exists to meet these exact challenges. We serve individuals who often have nowhere else to go; children with intensive needs, medically fragile learners, teens and adults, and families facing systemic gaps. Some of our learners travel up to 2 hours round trip daily because no other local provider can meet their needs. Understanding these access barriers is key - Now we must act.

We are delighted to share that we have just completed a five-year strategic plan that reaffirms our commitment to our autism community. Sustainable, high-quality care remains a constant challenge, but it is a challenge we are always ready to face. Firefly is focused on being a resource and a lifeline. Together with our supporters, we are building a future where every learner has the opportunity to thrive, no matter the barriers they face.



Dr. Amanda Kelly
President & CEO of Firefly Autism

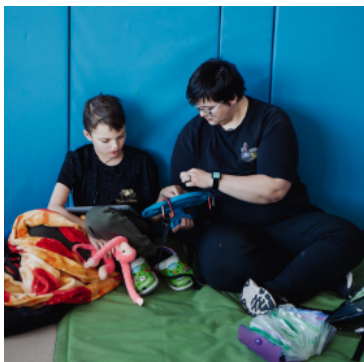
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda D. Kelly".

Firefly Success Stories



One of Firefly's learners has made remarkable progress and now joins weekly grocery store trips—something that once seemed out of reach due to past challenges with aggression and elopement. These outings have also helped the learner feel more at ease eating at the center. Today, they follow a shopping list, take direction well, and even volunteer at the local library. Their journey shows the power of patience, support, and consistency.

The family of a 15-year-old learner, who receives services through Firefly's partnership with the Chickasaw Nation, recently shared that they were amazed when the learner approached his dad and asked to join a trip to the grocery store so that he could practice his social skills. The family expressed how meaningful this moment was and how grateful they are for the journey they're on together.



Lifetime Home Remodeling's 3rd Annual Lifetime Golf Classic

A Remarkable Day on the Greens

On Monday, July 28th, Lifetime Home Remodeling hosted the 3rd Annual Lifetime Golf Classic, once again choosing Firefly Autism as the event's beneficiary. Thanks to their generosity, along with the incredible support of sponsors, golfers, and donors, an outstanding **\$162,637** was raised to support Firefly's mission.

We are incredibly grateful to Lifetime Home Remodeling for their continued commitment to our work and to everyone who came out to make the day such a success. Your support helps us provide life-changing services to the individuals and families we serve every day.



"To all the generous donors, dedicated players, and incredible supporters who joined us for the Lifetime Classic Golf Tournament, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for making the day a hole-in-one! Your presence on the course helped drive meaningful changes for the children, teens, adults and families we serve at Firefly Autism. Because of you, learners on the autism spectrum will continue to access life-changing therapy, education, and connection. Your generosity is more than a donation, it's a direct investment in their confidence, growth, and future. Together, we are building brighter paths, and we're deeply grateful to have you as part of our Firefly community."

-Craig Baldwin, Director of Development

Upcoming Events



Firefly Autism's 3rd Annual Summer Garden Party

Mark your calendars for Firefly Autism's 3rd Annual Earl Lee Evans Sensory & Community Garden Summer Party on September 3rd at 5:30pm! Join us in our beautiful garden for an evening of live music, delicious food and drinks, yard games, and community connection.

This event is free and open to all, and optional donations are welcome in place of a ticket. Every contribution directly supports the programs and services that empower our learners and their families. We can't wait to celebrate with you!



JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THE THE
JOURNEY, COMMUNITY, AND IMPACT
OF FIREFLY AUTISM.

September 3rd, 5:00-7:30 at Firefly Autism

2001 Hoyt St. Lakewood, CO 80215

Use the QR code to register now!



[Register HERE!](#)

Donor of the Month



Steve & Elizabeth Kris



Firefly Autism is proud to highlight Steve and Elizabeth Kris in this month's newsletter for their continued involvement and support.

Elizabeth's career began in the securities industry before she launched her own investment firm, TI Inc. In 2000, she shifted her focus to family and community service, volunteering extensively, including over a decade with the National Charity League alongside her daughters. Steve is the principal of Conundrum Capital LLC and has founded and co-founded several investment ventures. He has served on the National Jewish Health Board of Directors since 2008, including as Chair from 2020 to 2023, and holds board positions with Rose Community Foundation and Children's Hospital Colorado.

Elizabeth and Steve were named the 2024 Beaux Arts Ball Grand Marshals in recognition of their leadership and support of National Jewish Health and the community. Elizabeth and Steve's daughters, Kaley and Allison, continue the family's tradition of community involvement.

"We were first introduced to Firefly Autism by our dear friends, Larry and Marykay Mueller, and attended the Laugh Yourself Blue event as their guests. Not long after, we turned to Firefly for support in seeking an autism evaluation for our daughter as a young adult. The guidance and care we received from Firefly Autism and Dr. Amanda Kelly, was truly invaluable to our family.

As we've continued to learn more about Firefly's mission and impact, our appreciation has only grown. We've increased our support over time because we deeply value the work being done and recognize how essential it is to the community."

Company of the Month



COLORADO
Behavioral Health
Administration

Firefly Autism proudly honors the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) as our July Company of the Month for their commitment to expanding equitable access to behavioral health services across Colorado.

Through initiatives like the Career Pipeline ARPA funding, BHA supports workforce development and training programs—empowering organizations like Firefly to build a stronger, more inclusive system for all.



A Heartfelt Thank You to Morning Story Restaurants

At Firefly Autism, partnerships are the foundation of the work we do—and this spring, Morning Story Restaurants showed us just how impactful a community partnership can be.

In May, Morning Story teamed up with our Adult Groups to support Firefly Autism's Laugh Yourself Blue Gala. Two of our incredible adult group participants, Daniel and Adrian, had the exciting opportunity to visit Morning Story and create their very own Laugh Yourself Blue menu items. These special creations were featured at Morning Story Restaurants, with proceeds directly benefiting Firefly's Adult Group program.

We are beyond grateful for this generous and thoughtful collaboration. A huge thank you to Jim Gregory, Jessen and Randy Perko, and the entire Morning Story staff for your kindness, creativity, and commitment to making a difference.

Because of partners like you, our adults have meaningful opportunities to shine—and our community grows stronger together.

Together, we're creating lasting, meaningful change. ❤️



Get Involved

Every person deserves the chance to thrive—and at Firefly, we're committed to making that possible through donor support. Many of our learners face up to a \$2,000 monthly gap between the cost of care and what insurance covers. Thanks to generous donors, children who arrived nonverbal and overwhelmed are now communicating, regulating emotions, and engaging with the world.

Monthly gifts of \$50, \$100, or \$250 help us continue delivering this life-changing care, regardless of a family's financial situation. Your support powers programs like Transition to Work, our sensory garden, and community-based adult services.

Join our monthly giving community and help turn barriers into breakthroughs—one Firefly at a time.

Donate to Firefly today by following the link below.



[Donate HERE!](#)



[MAKE A WISH COME TRUE!](#)

You can support Firefly Autism by helping to provide our center with niche items our regular funding does not provide. Curious about what we need? Check out or newly

curated wish list.

[WISHLIST](#)

HAVE A GREAT MONTH!

Thanks for being part of our community. We truly value our supporters, our readers, our staff, and our community.

We hope you have a great month and we will check in again with you in August.

As always, you can make a one-time or recurring donation to Firefly through our giving partner, **ColoradoGives**, anytime. Thanks for everything!

[DONATE](#)

Firefly Autism | 2001 Hoyt Street | Lakewood, CO 80215 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!