

Harkness Tower will turn blue to raise awareness about autism.

Yale UniversityYale University

Harkness Tower will glow bright blue on the evening of Tuesday, April 2, in honor of World Autism Awareness Day.

The colorful illumination on the campus landmark is part of “Light It Up Blue” by Autism Speaks, a global initiative designed both to kick off the celebration of April as Autism Awareness Month and to raise awareness about autism. Many iconic landmarks, hotels, sporting venues, concert halls, museums, bridges, and retail stores around the globe will also be lit in blue that evening.

“Harkness Tower will illuminate the sky of Yale and New Haven as a beacon of hope and support for those affected by autism,” says Max Rolison '15 of Yale for Autism Awareness (YFAA), an undergraduate organization that works to raise autism awareness on Yale’s campus. A Dwight Hall member group, YFAA focuses on providing Yale students with “active” awareness opportunities that allow students to engage and work with individuals with autism. The group also strives to help improve the lives of those affected by autism.

In addition to illuminating Harkness Tower, YFAA will mark World Autism Awareness Day by disseminating information about autism on Cross Campus, and setting up a display in the Woolsey Hall rotunda of artwork created by Yale students and adults with autism from Chapel Haven, a New Haven-based transition program that serves adults with autism. That day, there will also be a talk by Yale research fellows Laura Anderson and Marika Coffman on the sex differences in autism, including recent findings about the social processing differences between males and females with autism. The lecture will take place at 4:30 p.m. in the Calhoun College fellows lounge

“Currently, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 1 in 88 children is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder,” notes Rolison. “Autism occurs in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups, but is almost five times more common among boys than among girls. More individuals are being diagnosed with autism than ever before, but many fundamental questions remain unanswered, including what causes autism and how do we treat it.”

[Click here for further information about YFAA events marking Autism Awareness Month.](#) [1]

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http://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/autism/339_120550_AAWY_Poster%5B1%5D.pdf