

Celebrating 5 Years of SPARK

SPARK is the largest research study of autism ever. By studying genetic, behavioral, and medical information from hundreds of thousands of people, SPARK is accelerating autism research. SPARK Research Match connects thousands of study participants with autism researchers around the world.

Building Our Research Community

31
CLINICAL
SITES



The SPARK clinical site network includes **31 top research centers** and **academic institutions** across the country.

250,000
PARTICIPANTS
JOINED



Since launching in 2016, over **a quarter of a million people**, including **100,000 people with autism**, have joined.



50,000
PARTICIPANTS' DNA
SEQUENCED

DNA from 50,000 participants, including **23,000 people with autism** has been **sequenced** and made available to qualified researchers.

Giving Back



70,000 REPORTS
RETURNED

Just under **70,000 families** have received **reports** from four different screening tools used in SPARK, reflecting their individual behavior and development.



50 WEBINARS

11,749 people, including parents, autistic adults, researchers and service providers **tuned into 50 webinars**.



500 AUTISTIC PEOPLE
WITH GENETIC
FINDINGS

SPARK has notified more than **500 families and autistic people** about a **genetic cause for autism**.

150 ORIGINAL
STORIES 

SPARK has written more than **150 original stories** on **participants, treatments and therapies**, and other topics important to the community. The most popular are about girls, special interests, and LGBTQ identity.

Accelerating Research

100 RESEARCH MATCH STUDIES 

33,676 families have been part of nearly **100 studies** through SPARK Research Match, ranging from the study of the neurobiology of atypical language development, to a clinical trial for a specific genetic cause of autism, to repetitive thinking patterns in autistic adults.

179 SCIENTISTS USED SPARK DATA 

179 scientists have used **SPARK data** to further autism research.

32 SCIENTIFIC PAPERS 

There have been **32 scientific papers published using SPARK data**, covering a range of topics from motor impairments, to mental health, to rare genetic risk variants.

150 GENES 

SPARK data has helped researchers discover new autism risk genes. **There are now more than 150 genes known to play a role in autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions.** Dozens of these genes have been discovered in the past 5 years.

There have been **three scientific papers** published using SPARK data on **common and rare genetic variants** associated with autism.

 **3** GENETIC PAPERS

10 RESEARCH MATCH PAPERS 

There have been **10 scientific papers published using SPARK Research Match** on topics from special interests, to depression in autistic adults, to the impact of COVID-19 on the autism community.

Thank You!



Due to the participation of hundreds of thousands of families, SPARK is transforming the way autism research is done. SPARK will continue for decades to come and learn from participants as they grow and develop.

"I can't imagine a reason not to participate in the SPARK study. There's so much to be learned and nothing at all to lose."

Lynn - SPARK PARTICIPANT FROM WASHINGTON

"We do it because it's so important to contribute to the understanding of autism. Even if we're not going to benefit from it, it's really important for other families in the future, for diagnosis or treatment. We've benefited from knowledge that was gained in the past, which other families contributed to. So this is what we have to do, for the future."

Jennifer - SPARK PARTICIPANT FROM NEW YORK CITY

"It was amazing to see that so many people with autism are joining this study and possibly finding out why they have autism."

Adam - SPARK PARTICIPANT FROM TEXAS

"One day, we will learn the results of the SPARK study, though it will take time for the full impact of these results to unfold. I am hopeful that the picture these results paint will show that autism is not a puzzle to be solved but a story to be told."

Amy - SPARK PARTICIPANT FROM NEW JERSEY