

PROUD ASPY MOM · OCTOBER 2026

October is Disability Awareness Month



Disability Awareness Month



October is special for several reasons to me. It is the month where I celebrate a milestone with my husband. I simply LOVE Halloween and as an advocate it is Disability Awareness Month. This year the theme is Celebrating Value and Talent. I cannot

think of a better way to describe the disability population. They are truly talented.

Thank you for sharing this important history with your family, friends and network.

LEARN ABOUT NDEAM

Enlightening Conversation.



I met Craig Escudé via email. He reached out after learning about my advocacy and asked me to join him on his podcast to discuss healthcare and autism. It was such an enlightening new space to explore. I often speak on our journey from a parent, educational or service perspective but rarely do I speak from a healthcare perspective.

Many persons with invisible disabilities need support as we help them on their path for self-advocacy and true independence. This advocacy is most important in the health care field.

LISTEN

Data: Who is using it and WHY?!?

Data is probably the most valuable and important commodity we have. In a world where decisions regarding our healthcare, housing, employment and consumer decisions are driven by data it is important to understand who is asking questions, what questions they are asking and why? In sum, we have to ferret out bias.

For persons with disabilities who are integrated in our communities or live with loved ones it is crucial to conduct a needs assessment as a tool to provide guidance for sound public policy. Unfortunately, one of the oldest surveys in the country is changing their questionnaire: changes that may impact how we identify persons with Invisible and/or developmental disabilities.

> *"The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is the oldest ongoing national household health survey in the United States"*
>
> CDC / NCHS | NATIONAL HEALTH INTERVIEW SURVEY ›

Importantly, the removed questions include, date of onset and whether the person with the disability experienced it before reaching the age of 18-22.

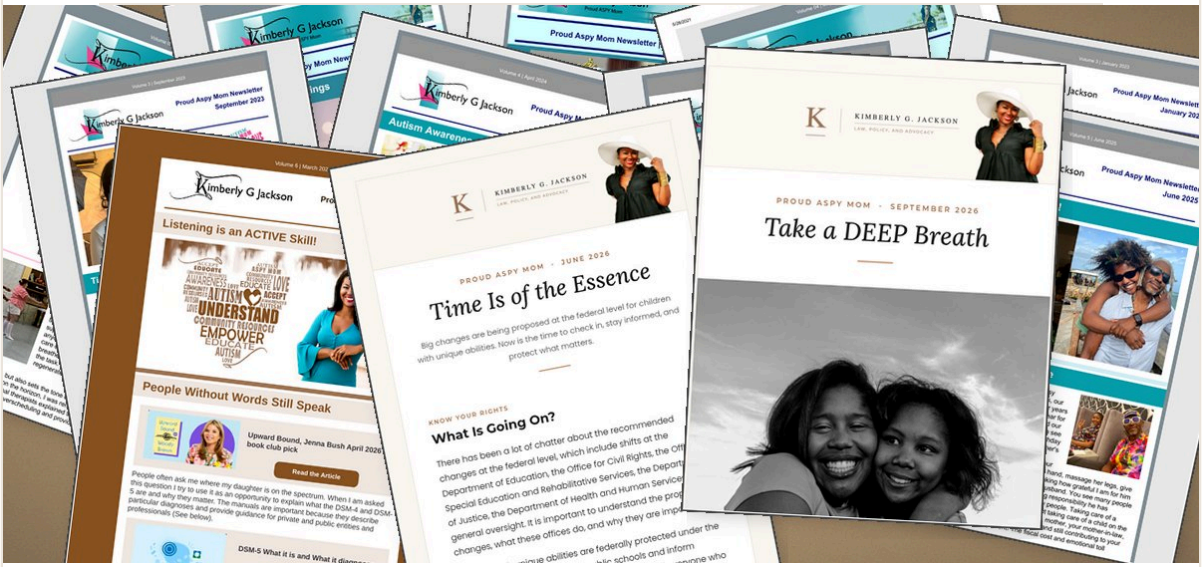
Some may legitimately believe minor changes to the questionnaire have no impact, but as a parent of a loved one on the spectrum I have first hand experience on the importance of asking pointed questions that provide color to how a person with an invisible disability lives, strengths and challenges with activities of daily living, effectiveness of resources that support persons with invisible disabilities and overall access to services.

From the moment you enter into society with a disability you are riddled with paperwork, required to maintain significant documentation and provide updated information when requested to access services.

NHIS is a reliable source that gives providers data that matters as leaders make key decisions. Public comment for these changes is closed at this time but you can always make a difference and make your voice heard.

Email NHIS: nhis@cdc.gov

READ THE ARTICLE | NHIS GUIDANCE (PDF)



A LOOK back!

I started this Newsletter in 2020 as a way to help the community I had been serving in a legal capacity. At the time my daughter with Autism Spectrum Disorder was in middle school and our family was experiencing massive change. I mean we all were, right?

In 2020, COVID dominated our lives.

People were scared and many of us elected to explore new hobbies, passions, professions and redefine quality time. Prior to COVID I supported families with invisible disabilities and could speak with them and HEAR their needs. During COVID I had to refocus all energy on our family.

Looking back, the monthly writing process helped me heal. I hope sharing stories and resources continues to shed light on WHY persons living with disabilities and the many family members and caregivers who support them MATTER!

NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE

Happy Halloween!

My family LOVES Halloween. It is weird not being together now. Our oldest daughter is pursuing her Ph.D in Chicago and our youngest daughter is pursuing acting in Atlanta, but we still manage to remain connected for this super fun day.

I know many people have feelings one way or another for Halloween but for our family it has a different meaning: Progress. Halloween is sensory overload for most people. For people with ASD it can literally be a nightmare.

> *The constant doorbell*
>
> *The costumes, especially the spooky ones*
>
> *The neighborhood decoration*
>
> *The subtle and loud noises*
>
> *Pranks and Parties*

I could go on and on!

Initially enjoying this day was difficult, especially if you LOVE Halloween. Over the years and because of the many occupational and sensory therapists who supported us, our daughter began to not only tolerate Halloween but enjoy it. Sometimes the small wins matter and Halloween is definitely a win.

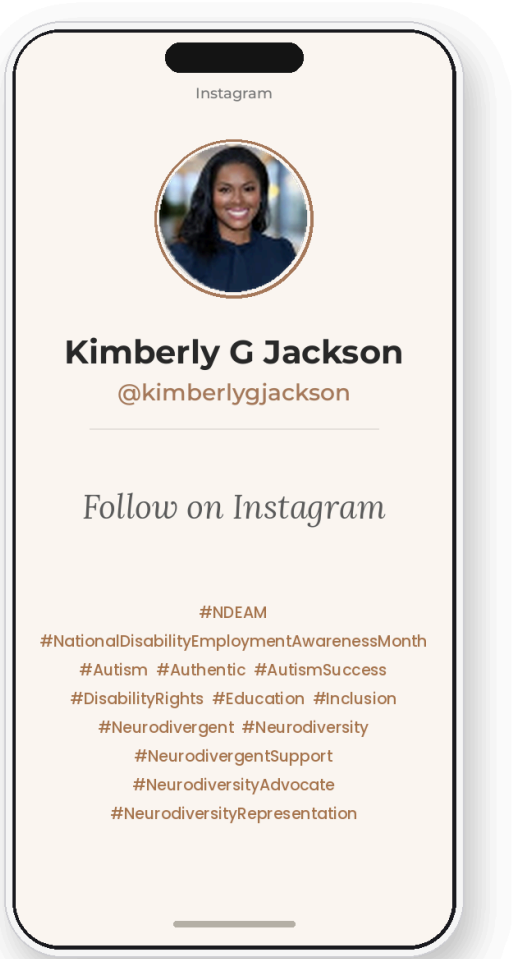





As we enter the season of gratitude, I want to thank the many individuals, neighbors, colleagues, community members and my friends and family for your genuine support. Stepping into your passion is not always easy, but the journey is certainly better when you are not alone.

I welcome your continued support and engagement on LinkedIn and Instagram.

ON INSTAGRAM



FOLLOW ON INSTAGRAM

STAY CONNECTED

Keep up between issues: on the blog, in the archive, and online.

BLOG · NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE · SPEAKING · LINKEDIN · INSTAGRAM

With gratitude,

Kimberly G. Jackson

ATTORNEY · ADVOCATE · SPEAKER

K

kimberlygjackson.com

You are receiving this because you are part of the Proud Aspy Mom community.