

Spectrum Strong Autism Parent Network, Inc. Charter



Purpose Statement

This corporation is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The specific purposes of the corporation are to support and strengthen a supportive community of parents and caregivers of children on the autism spectrum by connecting, empowering, and uplifting families through the sharing of lived experiences, the provision of educational resources, and the promotion of acceptance and inclusion of individuals with autism.

In furtherance of these purposes, the corporation may conduct workshops, educational programs, family events, and community gatherings; provide information, referrals, and resources to children, adults, parents, caregivers, and families affected by autism; and engage in other charitable and educational activities consistent with its mission throughout the State of Wisconsin.

1. Objectives

- Provide emotional and peer support to parents and caregivers of children with autism.
- Share resources, strategies, and services that benefit families.
- Advocate for greater understanding, inclusion, and acceptance within the community and educational settings.
- Organize regular meetings, workshops, and events that foster connection and learning.
- Collaborate with schools, professionals, community and organizations to support our children's growth and success.

2. Goals

- **Invite:** Engage families by fostering a community rooted in support, advocacy, learning, and the celebration of autism.
- **Community:** Establish a safe, resource-rich environment for families seeking connection, information, or participation in group activities.
- **Education:** Provide meaningful learning opportunities focused on autism. Educational sessions will include relevant topics and age-appropriate resources that support children across the entire spectrum.
- **Celebrate:** Celebrate neurodiversity by creating inclusive spaces, both within our group and the broader community. We uplift differences and promote acceptance and visibility.

3. Membership

The Corporation shall not have members. All corporate authority shall be exercised by the Board of Directors.

4. Leadership and Structure

Authority and Responsibilities

The Board of Directors ("Board") shall have full power to govern and manage the affairs, property, and mission of the Corporation, consistent with the Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, and applicable law.

Number and Qualification

The Corporation shall have not fewer than three (3) directors. Directors must be individuals committed to the mission of the Corporation. Directors need not be residents of Wisconsin.

Terms

Officers shall serve two-year terms and may be re-elected. Terms may be staggered to ensure continuity.

Election

Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of Spectrum Strong Autism Parent Network Participants.

Resignation and Removal

An officer or board of director may resign at any time by written notice. An officer or board of director may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Board for cause or failure to fulfill duties.

Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining directors.

Parent-Led Governance

The Corporation shall be governed by a parent-led Board of Directors. A majority of the directors and officers shall be parents or primary caregivers of children on the autism spectrum whenever reasonably practical.

Directors or officers who are not parents or caregivers may serve as allies and bring professional, community, or subject-matter expertise that supports the Corporation's mission. All directors or officers, regardless of background or lived experience, shall have equal voting rights and owe the same fiduciary duties of care, loyalty, and obedience to the Corporations.

Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to invalidate actions of the Board if, due to temporary vacancies or transitions, a majority of directors are not parents or caregivers, provided the Board continues to act in furtherance of the Corporation's charitable purpose.

Board of Directors: A volunteer group of parents/partners will guide the direction of the group, plan events, and facilitate meetings. The current Board of Directors/officers include:

- President: Rebecca Okonek
- Vice President: Tracy Metz
- Treasurer: Lauren Bock
- Secretary: Rebecca Okonek
- Director of Digital Engagement: Kathryn Lallier
- Director of Development and Community Engagement: Tracy Metz

Board of Directors/Officers' Responsibilities:

- Organizing and facilitating group meetings and special events
- Coordinating communication among members
- Planning educational sessions and gathering resources
- Promoting inclusion and visibility across schools and in the broader community
- Managing membership outreach and engagement
- Maintaining the integrity and values of the group charter
- Reviewing feedback from members to guide future growth

Board of Directors/Officers Roles and Responsibilities

- **President:**
 - Leads the committee/group
 - Oversees meetings and strategic direction
 - Acts as the primary spokesperson for the group
 - Implements policies and strategic plans
- **Vice President:**
 - Supports the president/chair
 - Steps in when the president is unavailable
 - May lead specific sub-committees or projects
- **Treasurer:**
 - Manages financial oversight
 - Prepares budgets and financial reports
 - Works with accountants and auditors
- **Secretary:**
 - Maintains records, minutes, and official documents
 - Ensures compliance with bylaws and filing requirements (saving and sharing all meeting minutes and records)
- **Director of Digital Engagement:**
 - Manages website and group branding
 - Handles newsletters and flyers
 - Manages email correspondence in partnership of committee
- **Director of Development and Community Engagement:**
 - Oversees community engagement and volunteer outreach
 - Builds partnerships with schools, faith groups, or local organizations
 - Oversees all strategies related to growth of our group
 - Leads fundraising efforts and donor relations
 - Coordinates grant writing and campaigns

Election and Term

Officers shall be elected every two years by the Board and may serve consecutive terms.

5. Meetings

- The Spectrum Strong Autism Parent Network will meet on a **quarterly basis**, starting in **Quarter 3 of 2025**.

- Additional meetings or special events (e.g., guest speakers, social events, workshops) may be scheduled based on member interest and availability.
- Agendas will be sent prior to every meeting via email
- Meeting notes and action items will be sent after each meeting via email
- Special meetings may be called by the President or by a majority of the directors

Notice

At least seven (7) days' notice shall be given for meetings unless waived.

Quorum and Voting

A majority of directors shall constitute a quorum. Actions require a majority vote of directors present unless otherwise stated.

Electronic Participation

Directors may participate via telephone or electronic means as permitted by Wisconsin law.

6. Values and Principles

- **Respect:** Every family's journey is unique. We honor and respect diverse perspectives and experiences. We may not all agree on all things, but we must show respect to all.
- **Confidentiality:** What is shared in the group stays in the group. This is a safe place to share our stories and experiences and information.
 - **Pictures:** We will be creating a photo disclosure form for picture sharing. Until this is created, use your best judgment on sharing pictures of our kids and families outside of this group.
- **Decision Making:** In all decision-making processes, we will thoughtfully consider the perspectives, beliefs, and values of the entire group. While individual ideas or initiatives may be strongly advocated, any action or decision will be guided by a commitment to inclusivity and the collective interest of the group as a whole.
- **Support:** We are here to uplift, not judge.
- **Inclusion:** All voices matter—our group is open to all cultural backgrounds, family structures, and lived experiences.
- **Empowerment:** We believe in each other's strength and potential as advocates for our children.
- **Time:** We respect your time and will be sure to follow the times established and communicated for each meeting and outside activity or event.

7. Communication

- **Channels:** Information will be shared via email, social media pages and newsletters.
- **Privacy:** All communications will respect members' privacy. Personal information will never be shared without consent.

8. Events and Initiatives

- Family-friendly outings, parent workshops, sensory-friendly events, and autism awareness campaigns and fundraisers.
- Collaboration with local organizations and therapy providers.
- Volunteer opportunities for parents who wish to get more involved.

9. Review and Amendments

- This charter will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors. Suggestions from community are always welcome and can be submitted via email: spectrumstronghudson@gmail.com
- Spectrum Strong Autism Parent Network Board of Directors has the right to remove participants of this group for the following reasons:
 - Participant is not complying with our groups Values and Principals
 - Participant is demonstrating direct or malicious intent
 - Participant is trying to sell or profit from the group and its members
- In the event any of these events occur, the Spectrum Strong Board of Directors will discuss and vote for any action to remove participant from the group.

BYLAWS

OF

Spectrum Strong Autism Parent Network, INC.

ARTICLE I – NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1. Name

The name of the corporation is Spectrum Strong Autism Parent Network, Inc. ("the Corporation").

Section 2. Purpose

The specific purposes of the corporation are to support and strengthen a supportive community of parents and caregivers of children on the autism spectrum by connecting, empowering, and uplifting families through the sharing of lived experiences, the provision of educational resources, and the promotion of acceptance and inclusion of individuals with autism.

In furtherance of these purposes, the corporation may conduct workshops, educational programs, family events, and community gatherings; provide information, referrals, and resources to children, adults, parents, caregivers, and families affected by autism; and engage in other charitable and educational activities consistent with its mission throughout the State of Wisconsin.

ARTICLE II – OFFICES

The principal office of the Corporation shall be located in the State of Wisconsin at such place as the Board of Directors may determine.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERS

The Corporation shall not have members. All corporate authority shall be exercised by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IV – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Authority and Responsibilities

The Board of Directors ("Board") shall have full power to govern and manage the affairs, property, and mission of the Corporation, consistent with these Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, and applicable law.

Section 2. Number and Qualification

The Corporation shall have not fewer than three (3) directors. Directors must be individuals committed to the mission of the Corporation. Directors need not be residents of Wisconsin.

Section 3. Terms

Directors shall serve two-year terms and may be re-elected. Terms may be staggered to ensure continuity.

Section 4. Election

Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the Board.

Section 5. Resignation and Removal

An officer may resign at any time by written notice. A director may be removed by a two-thirds vote of Spectrum Strong Autism Network participants.

Section 6. Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining directors.

Section 7. Parent-Led Governance

The Corporation shall be governed by a parent-led Board of Directors. A majority of the directors and officers shall be parents or primary caregivers of children on the autism spectrum whenever reasonably practical.

Directors or officers who are not parents or caregivers may serve as allies and bring professional, community, or subject-matter expertise that supports the Corporation's mission. All directors or officers, regardless of background or lived experience, shall have equal voting rights and owe the same fiduciary duties of care, loyalty, and obedience to the Corporation.

Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to invalidate actions of the Board if, due to temporary vacancies or transitions, a majority of directors are not parents or caregivers, provided the Board continues to act in furtherance of the Corporation's charitable purpose.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Board shall meet at least annually, at a time and place determined by the Board.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the President or by a majority of the directors.

Section 3. Notice

At least seven (7) days' notice shall be given for meetings unless waived.

Section 4. Quorum and Voting

A majority of directors shall constitute a quorum. Actions require a majority vote of directors present unless otherwise stated.

Section 5. Electronic Participation

Directors may participate via telephone or electronic means as permitted by Wisconsin law.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers

The officers of the Corporation shall include a President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and any other officers the Board deems necessary.

Section 2. Duties

- President: Oversees operations, presides at meetings, represents the Corporation.
- Secretary: Maintains records, minutes, and official documents.
- Treasurer: Oversees finances, prepares financial reports, ensures compliance.

Section 3. Election and Term

Officers shall be elected annually by the Board and may serve consecutive terms.

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

The Board may establish committees as needed to support the mission, including program, fundraising, or advisory committees. Committees serve at the discretion of the Board.

ARTICLE VIII – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Corporation shall maintain a Conflict of Interest Policy consistent with IRS requirements. Directors and officers must disclose any potential conflicts and recuse themselves from related decisions.

ARTICLE IX – FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be determined by the Board.

Section 2. Use of Funds

All funds shall be used exclusively to further the charitable purposes of the Corporation. No part of the net earnings shall insure to the benefit of any private individual.

Section 3. Compensation

The Corporation may pay reasonable compensation for services rendered in accordance with applicable law.

ARTICLE X – NONDISCRIMINATION

The Corporation shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, or national origin in its programs or activities.

ARTICLE XI – DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution, the assets of the Corporation shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors, provided notice of the proposed amendment is given in advance.

CERTIFICATION

These Bylaws were adopted by the Board of Directors of Spectrum Strong Autism Parent Network, Inc. on this 27th day of December, 2025.
