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Raising Autism Awareness at Charlotte Middle School



During the month of April, Charlotte Middle School participated in several Autism Awareness activities. April is National Autism Awareness Month and CMS wanted to honor it by informing students about Autism Spectrum Disorder. Charlotte Middle School kicked off this awareness event by holding a school wide assembly on April 21st. At the assembly, 7th and 8th grade students got to hear about what autism is, how to create friendships with peers with autism, and why a person with autism may act differently or need additional support. After a quick overview of autism, the members from Charlotte High School's LINKS program took the floor to talk about their experiences in the program. The CHS LINKS program uses a peer-to-peer support model for students with autism. The LINKS presented on the benefits of working with their peers with autism. They specifically mentioned how enjoyable it has been to go on community outings (i.e., going to the movie theatre) with them. Overall, this presentation was successful in providing important information to the future freshmen and getting them excited about the possibility of enrolling in the LINKS program once they become CHS students.

As a follow up to the autism awareness assembly, during Enrichment classes, lessons about autism awareness were delivered to middle school students. In these lessons they learned about sensory overload and the different severities of autism. This is crucial information that allows students to have a better understanding of autism. At the end of the week each student at Charlotte Middle School got their chance to color a blank puzzle piece in a way that describes who they are. Each puzzle piece symbolizes that each student is different and has unique abilities, but we all fit and work together, like a puzzle. These puzzle pieces are now displayed throughout CMS. The most prominent display is in the main entrance way. Each day when students arrive to school they see their puzzle piece displayed among everyone's and they are reminded that the community at Charlotte Middle School is an inclusive, welcoming one for all. A big thanks to Ms. Carolyn Capozzo for coordinating these important events for Charlotte Middle School.