

# Raising Orchid Kids Condemns Secretary Kennedy's Harmful Comments on Autistic Kids, Adults and Families

*D.C. area coaches dedicated to supporting families of neurodivergent children speak out against RFK's inaccurate, misleading and harmful comments about autism.*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, April 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Raising Orchid Kids](#), a company dedicated to supporting families of neurodivergent children, many of whom are autistic, strongly condemns comments made by the current Secretary of Health and Human Services, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., in which he described autism as a "disease destroying families" during a public address earlier this week.



With a combined 40+ years of experience in helping families navigate the upbringing of unique children (unique like orchid flowers), Raising Orchid Kids' co-founders Gabriele Nicolet and Jen Dryer know first-hand that autistic children can and do thrive. In the wake of Secretary Kennedy's remarks, the company speaks out from first-hand experience and earned wisdom.

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Secretary Kennedy's words about high needs autistic kids are dehumanizing and are frighteningly reminiscent of the language of eugenics.”

*Jen Dryer, co-founder*

Secretary Kennedy's remarks are not only scientifically inaccurate, they are deeply harmful to millions of autistic individuals and their families. Autism is not a 'disease'—it is a neurodevelopmental difference. To portray children as a

threat to their own families is both dehumanizing and dangerous. While there are certainly challenges embedded in raising autistic kids, this portrayal of the autistic community as a symbol of tragedy and a drain on society undermines decades of research and work to build inclusion, understanding and respect for neurodivergent people.

Delivered during a policy summit on public health priorities, the Secretary's speech has sparked outrage across the disability rights and neurodiversity communities. In his address, Kennedy mentioned rising autism diagnoses as "a national tragedy tearing families apart" and linked autism to environmental toxins, a long-debunked theory rooted in anti-vaccine misinformation. There is a great deal of research linking hereditary and epigenetic factors to autism, caused in utero rather than postnatally. Promoting theories about autism that have been disproven while describing this neurodevelopmental difference as an epidemic serves only to further stigmatize autistic individuals and their families.

"As the parent of an autistic child with more moderate support needs, I believe Secretary Kennedy's characterization of autism as 'ruining families' does not describe my experience parenting an autistic child in any way," says Raising Orchid Kids co-founder Jen Dryer. "Whether someone will be a taxpayer or not, they are human and worthy of love and support."

Raising Orchid Kids greatly supports neuro-inclusivity and a neurodiversity-affirming stance toward supporting the autism community both in the US and globally.

#### About Raising Orchid Kids

Raising Orchid Kids supports parents and caregivers of neurodivergent children and teens through online parenting classes, support groups, workshops and individual coaching to help parents identify strategies to set their neurodivergent child up to thrive and succeed. We strongly believe in a future where all minds are valued, supported, and celebrated. To learn more, visit [www.raisingorchidkids.com](http://www.raisingorchidkids.com).

#### About the Co-Founders

##### Gabriele Nicolet

Gabriele Nicolet, MA, CCC-SLP, is a toddler whisperer, developmental speech therapist, parent coach and host of the Complicated Kids Podcast. As a co-founder of Raising Orchid Kids, Gabriele is passionate about showing families how to help their Orchid Kids thrive and not just survive.

##### Jen Dryer

Jen Dryer, MA, is a parent coach, advocate and educational consultant who supports families and teachers of neuro-different children. Jen has more than 20 years of experience working with children, families, and teachers in both NYC and DC as a public school teacher, staff developer, and parent advocate. Her younger son is autistic and has ADHD, and her older son has ADHD.

Available for interviews.

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