

DEVELOPMENTAL
& BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

NEWSLETTER

BOSTON
MEDICAL
CENTER

The Autism Program

A monthly newsletter for families of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics (DBP) at Boston Medical Center



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month!

As the Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics here at BMC, some might say that every month of the year is a developmental disabilities awareness month. And I'm sure a lot of our friends and families would also agree! So, for us, March can be a very special month that reminds us to take care of ourselves and share with others all the heart & hard work that is behind our caring efforts. With the theme of this year's DDAM being "**A World of Opportunities**", let's remember everyday to celebrate our differences while uniting to remove obstacles!

Bearing that in mind, we wanted to bring your attention this month to some great organizations and resources that exist to uplift & support families and individuals with developmental disabilities. As always, please click the resource title for more information and **Happy Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month!**

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHTS

BAC's One Night Out

This program by The Boston Ability Center (BAC) offers free monthly babysitting events for children with special needs & their siblings living in or near Natick, MA. Have the evening to yourselves while ONO hosts hours of fun for your children! Register for the April event by sending ONO an e-mail at onenightout@bostonabilitycenter.com!

PPAL's School Problem Solving Clinic

This is a **free & confidential clinic for caregivers who need direct support navigating various school problems for your child**. Get 1-to-1 support for a wide range of issues including bullying and brainstorming solutions for your child requiring assistance (CRA). This clinic is appointment based and is available by Zoom/phone call every Monday from 1 to 3 pm! Click **here** to make an appointment.

Free Sunday Entry to 6 Boston Museums for All BPS Families

From now until August, all BPS students can use their student ID to bring up to 3 family members for free entry in 6 museums across Boston! Click **here** to register & for a list of participating museums.

DBP Spotlight!

Did you know that we have a **Feeding Clinic** here at BMC?

Feeding Clinic is for any child being seen at BMC who is experiencing feeding-related difficulties. This can include sensory issues around feeding, Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID), difficulties with chewing and swallowing, and challenges with trying new food.

If this sounds like your child, ask your BMC clinician for a "GI Feeding referral"!

The Feeding Team

Pediatric GI Doctor
Maggie Tang, MD, MPH

Speech & Language Pathologists
Kerry Pearl, MS, CCC-SLP, CLC

Kimberly Boscodoss, MS, CCC-SLP, CLC

Registered Dietitian
Alyssa Serafini, RD, LDN

Autism Resource Specialist
Maddy Goskoski, MPH

Upcoming Events

All events and programs listed below are either free or at low-cost. If you would like to attend but are in need of financial assistance, please ask the organization directly!

Social & Recreational Events

3/12 Especially for Me by the Discovery Museum

1:30 - 4:30pm Acton MA Enjoy a dedicated, autism-friendly afternoon in a museum! Come play and explore the Discovery Museum & Woods during this special, free afternoon for visitors who would benefit from a more sensory-friendly atmosphere.

Register for this event here!

3/16 Beyond the Spectrum for Teens (13-18) by Museum of Fine Arts

10:30am - 12pm Boston MA \$9 for MFA members and \$11 for nonmembers
Magnificent Metals: Embark on a captivating journey of metal embossing through MFA's remarkable metal collection. After a gallery tour, explore metal embossing yourself through guided instructions. Unleash your creativity and transform flat metal sheets into 3-dimensional masterpieces!

Register for this event here!

3/16 Most Special Adaptive Carnival by StoryHeights Church

9:30am - 12:30pm Newton MA This annual and free carnival is for everyone with special needs! Enjoy the Easter bunny, egg hunt, and all new booths of carnival fun that is catered to your child. There will be games, arts and crafts, food, prizes, as well as a quiet room!

Register for this event here!

3/20 Easter Bunny's Spring Bash by Bierman Autism Centers

5 - 7pm Needham MA This is a free and sensory-friendly Spring event for families! Enjoy an egg-ceptional egg hunt, a coloring wonderland, some hugs and selfies with the Easter Bunny, many egg-themed sensory bins and your very own flowerpot garden!

Register for this event here!



Virtual Learning Opportunities

3/12 Turning 3 Essentials

6 - 7pm Hosted by Federation Children with Special Needs

During this workshop with Karen Lopez, FCSN's Early Childhood Information Specialist, you will have the opportunity to learn all about the differences between your child's Early intervention and Special Education journey. Also discussed will be the special education procedures that can occur, including referral, evaluation, Team meeting, eligibility determination, services, placement, IEP response options and much more!

Register for this event here!

3/26 Strategies and Supports for Caregivers of Autistic Children and Teens

8 - 9:30pm Hosted by Association for Autism and Neurodiversity (AANE)

This 90 minute workshop will go over practical ways caregivers of autistic children and teens can find the support that they need. Discuss how to what your family needs and brainstorm together some practical ideas on how to meet those needs through support services and strategies! This is a great place to get ideas.

Register for this event here!

Support Groups

3/7 VIRTUAL Grupo de Apoyo en Línea para Padres de Personas Autistas por AANE

6:30 - 8pm Este grupo de apoyo permite a los padres establecer conexiones y compartir experiencias, aprender estrategias y nuevas herramientas que les hagan sentirse capacitados y acompañados en la consecución de objetivos con sus hijos. Es necesario inscribirse con antelación. Envíe un correo electrónico a yesica.hickey@aane.org para recibir la información sobre Zoom.

3/8 IN-PERSON Support Group for Lynn Families by Parent/Professional Advocacy League

6:30 - 8pm This group is for parents & children and dinner will be served! Please email Dalene at ptahsw@verizon.net to get more information and RSVP. **Additional March meeting: 3/22**

3/9 VIRTUAL Support Group for Autistic Teens (15-19) by AANE

11am - 12:30pm This group meets on the second Saturday of every month and serves as a safe space where autistic teens can find connection and community by sharing similar thoughts, issues, concerns, and/or success!

Register for this group by clicking here!

3/11 VIRTUAL Grupo de Apoyo Hispano por PPAL

10am - 12pm Todos los lunes. Únase a nosotros para conectarse, aprender y apoyar a otros padres que crían niños con necesidades sociales, emocionales o de salud mental. ¡Únase a nosotros en su teléfono, computadora o tableta desde la comodidad de su hogar para una conversación confidencial.

Encuentre información sobre la reunión haciendo clic aquí.

3/11 VIRTUAL Parents Raising LGBTQIA+ Children by PPAL

6 - 8pm Held every Monday. Join for connection and support from other families!

Find meeting information by clicking here!





Support Groups continued...

3/14 VIRTUAL Support Group for Parents of Transition-age Youth (18-22) by AANE
7:30 - 9pm \$10 fee. Connect and share experiences, celebrations, information and support!
Register for this meeting by clicking here!

3/14 VIRTUAL Community Connection for Parents of Individuals with Autism by AANE
7 - 8:30pm If you're unsure how to provide structure with kids out of school, need some self-care, or feeling isolated from other adults & the community, drop into this community support session to connect with other parents via Zoom! Sessions will be facilitated by AANE's Individual and Family Services Staff.
Register for this meeting by clicking here!

3/21 VIRTUAL Let's Build a Village: Support Group for Autism Moms by Autism Alliance
12 - 1pm This virtual, monthly program is for MetroWest moms of Massachusetts who would like to grow their "village" by connecting with other moms. Moms, this is just for you!
Register for this meeting by clicking here!

3/25 VIRTUAL Grupo de Suporte para Famílias de Língua Portuguesa por Autism Alliance
6:30 - 8:30pm Todos são bem vindos ao nosso grupo, nosso encontro é virtual e acontece uma vez por mês. O grupo é organizado e moderado por nossos Especialistas em Autismo. Este grupo tem como objetivo ajudar as famílias que falam português e são responsáveis pelo cuidado de crianças com Transtorno do Espectro Autista.
Encontre informações sobre reuniões clicando aqui!

3/26 VIRTUAL Support Group for Parents of Children w. Autism & Mental Health Conditions
6:30pm By Northeast Arc. This group is for caregivers of middle or high-school aged children experiencing autism and additional mental health conditions.
Register for this meeting by clicking here!

NEURODIVERSITY CELEBRATION WEEK **MARCH 18TH TO 24TH**

In honor of Neurodiversity Celebration Week, various professionals and self-advocates have come together to create a week packed with great panel discussions! The discussions will all be focusing on key neurodiversity topics and aim to educate, while inspiring conversations about neurodiversity. All events are free of charge and open to all so sign up to as many as you find interesting!

Topics include: Neurodiversity in Higher & Further Education & Workplace, Experiences of Neurodivergent Women & Girls, Global perspectives around Neurodiversity, Self-Empowerment Tips, Neurodiversity for Caregivers, and SO MUCH MORE!

Click here to see & register for all events!

Resources



The Autism Program is continuing to support families in many ways both inside and outside of Boston Medical Center. Check out our website to learn more about the services, supports and programs we offer including our Autism Friendly Hospital Initiative, Teens Engaged as Mentors (TEAM) program, and our training offerings. We also have a huge resource library where you can access free information on a variety of topics such as safety, behavioral support, transition to adulthood, insurance and more!

<https://www.bmc.org/pediatrics-autism-program>

Do you have an idea for a future newsletter? Email us at.

autismprogram@bmc.org

with suggestions.

Clinic

Our clinicians are available for developmental evaluations, assessments and follow up. To connect with the clinical team, please call 617-414-4841 and follow the prompts for Developmental Pediatrics.



Our Clinicians

Marilyn Augustyn, MD

Arathi Reddy, DO

Rachel Amgott, NP

Christina Lazdowsky, NP

Mei Elensary, MD

Audrey Christiansen, MD

Sarah Canale, MD

Britany Weissman, MD

Mary Ellen Killion, NP

Arielle Spellun, MD

Bridget Poznanski, PhD

Rachel Vuolo, MD

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is brought to you by the Autism Program at Boston Medical Center, a family support program of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics. We are committed to supporting any family of DBP during this time, regardless of diagnosis. Please don't hesitate to reach out, and follow us on social media for more tips and information! **To unsubscribe, please reply by email with the word "stop!"**



[BMC.org/autism](https://www.bmc.org/autism)
Autismprogram@bmc.org



The Autism Program at Boston Medical Center



@BMCAutismProgram