

DEVELOPMENTAL
& BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

NEWSLETTER

BOSTON
MEDICAL
CENTER

The Autism Program

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

Happy November!

With the warm autumn sun, as well as the beautiful foliage that has already begun to fall, it is colorfully clear that we are now moving into the tail end of 2024!

For this edition of our newsletter, we wanted to highlight resources and events that can help you wrap up your year with support. This includes events for **caregiver support/education, sensory-friendly holiday events, food assistance programs** and ways to receive **holiday gifts for your family!** We will also introduce a new resource created by The Autism Program - **Reaching Out to Your Police Guide**. Read on to see and as always, don't hesitate to reach out to us with questions!



Chris Walsh Center has a lot of recordings of past webinars for caregivers, such as strategies & information on autism, social-emotional learning, sibling support, transition to college and much more. Click [here](#) to watch the recordings!

Upcoming Events for Caregivers

Strategies & Supports for Caregivers of Autistic Children/Teens by AANE Thursday, 11/14 from 8 to 9:30pm

- This 90 min virtual workshop will go through practical ways caregivers of autistic children & teens can find the support that they need. Discuss how to determine what your family needs and practical ideas on how to meet those needs. This will include possible service providers and how to find them, as well as some strategies that might work in your home.
- There is a **\$25 registration fee which can be waived by AANE** if needed. Send an e-mail to events@aane.org to request financial assistance.
- **Register for this workshop here!**

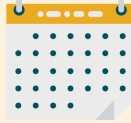
Caregiver Support Group for Children with Unmet Needs by Chris Walsh Center Every Other Thursday from 11/21 to 12/1

- Come join this 4-week virtual group to connect and share your journey with other caregivers of children with unmet needs! Learn communication techniques to manage daily transitions/ activities/ screen time with more confidence, practice mindful compassion, share challenges and ideas about advocating for your family.
- **Register for this group here!**

Cont. Upcoming Events for Caregivers

Chaos to Calm: Family Mental Health Workshop by PPAL

Tuesday, 11/19 from 5 to 7pm



- Are you a caregiver struggling to navigate mental health and other medical or school services for your child? Are you stressed, angry, appalled at how hard it is to access and manage different services or support? At PPAL, we know how you feel: often it's really complicated! Join us to breathe and share strategies to help you stay upright and move yourself, your family, and your child forward.
- **Register for this workshop here!**

Picky Eating in Individuals with Autism by The Lurie Center for Autism

Wednesday, 11/20 from 6:30 to 7:30pm

- The Lurie Center for Autism invites you to join Sarah Kadzielski, MD and Briana Brukilacchio, PhD for a presentation about picky eating in individuals with autism. We will discuss potential underlying factors of selective eating, different behavioral profiles of selective eaters with autism, and practical strategies families and caregivers can use at home. The presentation will conclude with a Q&A session.
- **Register for this webinar here!**

Sensory-Friendly Holiday Events

The Nutcracker in Weston, MA

Friday, 11/29 at 1pm

This sensory & family-friendly performance at the Elenor Welch Casey Theater will be available at a reduced price and as a shortened version. Check out their **social story** as well! Click **here** to purchase tickets.

A Christmas Carol in Providence, RI

Saturday, 11/30 at 12pm

This sensory & family-friendly performance allows guests to move around during the show, "meet their seat" before the show, and more. Click **here** to purchase tickets.



Safety Guide: How to connect with your police

Caring for an individual with autism can often accompany certain safety concerns. We created this guide to assist caregivers through every step of connecting with their police & First Responders to share information about their child, which can be beneficial in cases of any future emergency. Check out the attached guide for **step-by-step instructions**, **letter template** that caregivers can fill out and send, **sample letter** for reference, and **additional safety resources**.



Reaching Out to Your Police Department

Guide with Instructions, Letter template, Sample Writing & Additional Safety Resources



Food Assistance

Project Bread Project Bread connects people & communities to reliable sources of food so that no one goes hungry. For anyone in Massachusetts who needs food assistance, start by calling the FoodSource Hotline at **1-800-645-8333!** Available in 180 languages, consider this hotline as your one-stop-shop to learn about all the resources available to help you or your family.



BMC Food Pantry Did you know BMC has a Preventive Food Pantry? Families can visit the pantry every two weeks (maximum twice per month) and receive three to four days' worth of food for their family each time. Please note that patients need a BMC Primary Care Provider to be eligible. To access the pantry, reach out to your PCP and ask for a referral!



Look for a Local Food Pantry

There are helpful online maps that you can use to search for food pantries and/or meal programs near you. Click your region below and search your zip code to see what's available!

- Greater Boston
- Central MA
- Northeast MA
- Western Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- Rhode Island



NOTE:

Each program has their own process, so make sure to call ahead of your request and confirm availability!

Gift Assistance

ABCD Toy Drive Fill out **this form** to check eligibility for ABCD programs and services (including holiday gift assistance). Click **here** to find an ABCD location near you and their contact information!

Globe Santa Globe Santa provides holiday gifts to children and families in need throughout the Greater Boston area! Families can request toys for children 12 or younger. Scroll to **"How to Apply"** for details.

Salvation Army To be eligible for holiday gift assistance, families must provide proof of ID, financial need, residence, along with the birth certificate of each child under the age of 16 in their household. Find a Salvation Army near you by clicking **here!**

My Brother's Keeper This Christmas Assistance program serves families all over eastern Massachusetts (from Boston to Cape Cod area)! To request a gift, call (508) 238-2562.



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

Mary Ellen Killion, NP

Arielle Spellun, MD

Bridget Poznanski, PhD

Rachel Vuolo, MD

Selcen YarogluKazanci, 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