



# DBP WEEKLY NEWS

*A weekly newsletter for families of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics (DBP) at Boston Medical Center during COVID-19 Social Distancing*



## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

*Governor Baker announced that in Massachusetts, the "stay-at-home" order has been extended until May 4 and schools will remain closed. Individual districts are working to put plans in place for students to continue learning during this time, including students receiving special education services. For ideas of activities for kids to do during the day, check out our resource database - the link is on page 3 of this newsletter!*

## ACTIVITY

*Looking for an activity to keep your child's fingers & imagination moving? Try homemade play dough, (bonus: you can work on measuring too)! Check out this recipe, a favorite of our staff:*

[wellesley.edu/csc/pages/playdough](https://wellesley.edu/csc/pages/playdough)

*Supplies: flour, salt, cream of tartar, water, vegetable oil, food color (optional), pot, spoon*



@pastelsandmacarons



## PARENT RESOURCE

*Massachusetts Advocates for Children (MAC) is available to support parents during this time. Questions about special education services? Call the MAC Helpline at **617-357-8431 x3224**. You can also visit their COVID-19 webpage for tips & resources: [massadvocates.org/covid19](https://massadvocates.org/covid19).*

**HELPLINE:**  
More than a listening ear



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*During social distancing, many therapists and clinicians are providing services through telehealth (phone and video), which is still covered by insurance. These services include ABA, in-home therapy (IHT), in-home behavioral services (IHBS), early intervention (EI), and speech and language therapy. In some cases, the service may look more like parent training; however, your child may be able to work directly with their clinician if they are able to sit and engage. Reach out to your provider to see if they are providing services through telehealth.*

## THERAPY UPDATES



## ASK AN EXPERT

*Tim Sullivan, M.Ed., BCBA, LABA, Executive Director of New England ABA, shares some advice for parents at home with their children during social-distancing.*

*During this unprecedented time, many parents have suddenly been given new jobs: teacher, counselor, therapist, social worker, and more. I want to first say that you should NOT feel pressure to become an expert right away in any of these fields, in the same way that you would not expect to become a skilled plumber if your toilet overflowed and the plumber couldn't come for two hours. Instead, I would recommend setting realistic expectations for what can be accomplished during this extended school closure to help reduce stress at all levels.*

*Many organizations, including New England ABA, have published resources, handouts, trainings, webinars and other materials in an effort to help parents acclimate to this new reality. Most of these resources are general in nature and provide widely used best practices for all children, such as how to set a home-based schedule, establishing a morning and evening routine and promoting self-help independence. I would encourage you to try using these strategies as a first step; however, if your child is not responding well to these general strategies, you may need to seek professional support to tailor them to your child appropriately.*

*In closing, do NOT feel the pressure to become a skilled clinician or educator. Set some very realistic and achievable goals for this school closure, find resources to help you move toward those goals, and always seek support when needed to help you navigate through these uncharted waters.*

*To access a free online parent training from New England ABA, visit [academy.ne-aba.com](https://academy.ne-aba.com) and create an account using the code **COVID-19**.*

## DBP TIPS FOR PARENTS

1. Create a visual and/or written schedule/routine when possible.
2. Try to spend time outside, even just on your stairs, every day.
3. Try to socialize from a distance- FaceTime, Zoom, House Party, and Google Hangouts are all good ways to stay connected!
4. Communicate with your healthcare & educational teams; it's OK to ask for support.
5. Most importantly give yourself a ton of grace - every day will not go smoothly, but focus on the little moments that do.

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## RESOURCES

*Boston Medical Center is here to support you during this difficult time.*

*Check out our new resource spreadsheet, which has links to online learning, social stories, music/animal/fitness programs, live online classes and more. See the second tab for free meals and financial services throughout Massachusetts. This spreadsheet is available in multiple languages and will be continuously updated as new resources become available.*

**[tinyurl.com/CoronaResourcesBMC](https://tinyurl.com/CoronaResourcesBMC)**

*Know of something to add? Email [autismprogram@bmc.org](mailto:autismprogram@bmc.org) with suggestions.*



## CLINIC

*Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics clinicians are available by phone/Zoom for telehealth visits and consultations. Please call us at **617-414-4841** if you have any questions or are in need of support. To create a free Zoom account, visit [zoom.us/signup](https://zoom.us/signup).*

### OUR CLINICIANS

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## 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!*



BMC.org/autism  
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