

DEVELOPMENTAL  
& BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

# NEWSLETTER



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

## New Year's Resolutions!

The start of a new year is a great time to reflect on the goals you want to set for yourself, any changes you want to make in your life, or the things you want to accomplish. It



may come as no surprise that there is strength in numbers, and setting New Year's resolutions as a family can lead to more joy for everyone in your home for months to come. Whether you want spend more time outdoors, call relatives who live far away more often, or start a game night routine, new year's resolutions may just be what your family is need to start 2022 off right. Consider some below to get you started!

- Start a family tradition (maybe it's a once-a-month movie night, a volunteer project in your neighborhood, or cooking a meal together)
- Make memories (take record of your happy moments by writing in a notebook or journal, encourage your children to draw pictures to add to your stories)
- Unplug (choose non-technology activities like games, books or crafts you want to try as a family, and make a plan for being "unplugged" every so often)

For more great ideas check this [out!](#)



### A note from our Division Director; Dr. Marilyn Augustyn

On behalf of the entire Division of DBP at BMC we want to wish all our patients and families a happy and healthy 2022! At core of all that we do is our commitment to helping our patients and families develop together stronger and we recommit ourselves to reaching that goal together in the New Year!



### Sensory Friendly Winter Fun!

Looking for a fun sensory friendly family activity? Check out the sensory friendly swimming and skating opportunities available through [Brookline Recreation!](#)

# Heating Resource

As the cold weather approaches, we want all of our families to be aware of available heating assistance programs. The Massachusetts Association for Community Action (MASSCAP) offers heating assistance through their Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Eligibility is based off of household size and gross annual income of every household member cannot exceed 60% of the estimated State Median Income. Further eligibility information and the online application can be found [HERE](https://www.masscap.org/heatinghelpma/) <https://www.masscap.org/heatinghelpma/>.

## Make your own snow!

While we're waiting for our first big snowfall, you and your child can make "snow" at home. You will need equal parts shaving cream (foam, not gel) and cornstarch. Mix the 2 ingredients together to make a dense foamy snow that is easy to mold into a fun snowman!



## Federation for Children with Special Needs

The Federation for Children with Special Needs is offering the following training opportunities in January:

Tuesday January 11 7pm-9pm: Basic Rights: Evaluation and Eligibility . Learn about your child's rights to special education. Follow this [LINK](#).

Saturday January 15 9am-3pm: Hybrid Portuguese training on building a relationship with providers, early intervention, IEP, and advocacy. Follow this [LINK](#). \*This event is sponsored by the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA)

## DDS/DESE Information

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is a state run agency that provides person centered supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to increase and assist in opportunities to become fully engaged members of their community. DDS works with adults with IDD and ASD to connect with employment, day program, community, and residential supports. DDS works with children with IDD and ASD to connect families with support programs/centers, supplemental educations services, and other specialized programs.

A component of DDS available for children is a grant funded program called the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) program. DESE strives to assure that all citizens have access to high-quality public education. Requirements of the DESE program include: active family involvement, students must be between 6-17 years of age at the time of enrollment, students must be DDS eligible, and it's important to note that the program ends at age 22, or when the student leaves the school system. Members of the DESE program may receive access to family service navigation, professional staffing, and ancillary goods and services (flexible funding). In the Spring of 2022, the DESE program will have an open enrollment period where families can enter into a lottery to receive services from the DESE program. We will provide more information on this open enrollment period as soon as it is announced.



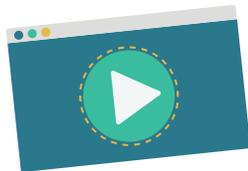
## Resources



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. Know of something to add?

Email us at  
[autismprogram@bmc.org](mailto:autismprogram@bmc.org)  
 with suggestions.

For past recordings of our webinar series: Caring for Kids with Autism and Developmental Differences, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCifYfJKUuSa8XztUcn-Anw>



## 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

Marilyn Augustyn, MD  
 Naomi Steiner, MD  
 Arathi Reddy, DO  
 Jodi Santosuosso, NP  
 Rachel Amgott, NP  
 Christina Lazdowsky, NP  
 Mei Elensary, MD  
 Alyssa King, PhD  
 Christine McGivney, DO  
 Jocelyn Kuhn PhD  
 Audrey Christiansen, MD  
 Sarah Canale, MD  
 Britany Weissman, 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!



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



The Autism Program at Boston Medical Center



@BMCAutismProgram