

DEVELOPMENTAL
& BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

NEWSLETTER

BOSTON
MEDICAL
CENTER

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

What's Happening?

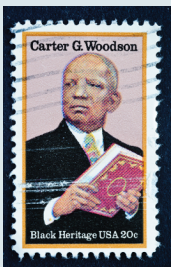


Black History Month

The month of February is Black History Month! During this time and year-round, we encourage you and your family to learn more about Black history and celebrate the extensive accomplishments of Black leaders worldwide and within your own communities. Click [here](#) to learn more about Black History Month events around the Boston area!



Why is February Black History Month?



Carter G. Woodson, a pioneer of African American studies, declared that one week in February should be dedicated to celebrating two public figures who significantly influenced Black history. This week included the birthdays of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln, born

February 12th, and African-American abolitionist Frederick Douglass, born February 14th. As the Civil Rights Movement began to advance, many Black communities around the US turned that one week in February into a month of celebration and remembrance. Eventually, in 1976, U.S. President Gerald Ford officially recognized February as Black History Month, a month of acknowledgment and appreciation of Black culture, history, and success. To read more about Carter G. Woodson and the origins of Black History Month, click [here](#).



Vaccination Events

VaxAbilities is a Massachusetts-based organization with the goal to support individuals with sensory or other accommodations to have a comfortable and enjoyable vaccination experience. Given the recent uptick in COVID infections, VaxAbilities will be hosting a series of disability-friendly vaccination sites across the state. Visit their website to reserve an appointment. Additionally, VaxAbilities welcomes more information about any specific support individuals may need.

Be sure to check out the [website](#) to see upcoming vaccination events!

IRS Raises Limit for ABLER Account

The IRS (Internal Revenue Service) recently announced that contributions to ABLER accounts are raised from \$15,000 to \$16,000 annually. ABLER accounts allow individuals with disabilities to save up to \$100,000 without risking eligibility for Social Security and other government benefits. The interest earned on the ABLER accounts is exempted from taxes, and the money saved can be used to pay for qualified disability expenses. In addition, people with disabilities who are employed can save money in the ABLER account beyond the gift tax amount for up to an additional \$12,880 this year. For more information regarding the ABLER accounts, feel free to visit the ABLER National Resource Center [here](#).



Valentine's & Presidents' Day

Monday, February 14th is Valentine's Day and is the perfect holiday to let the people in your life know that you're thinking of them! Aside from the classic activities such as card writing to a loved one, also check out some sensory-friendly activities [here](#)!



Monday, February 21st is Presidents' Day! Presidents' Day occurs annually on the third Monday of February to honor all persons who served in the office of president of the United States. To celebrate the leaders of American democracy, you can engage in educational activities such as learning about how the American presidents came to be or writing letters to the current president, Joe Biden, at the White House!

Lunar New Year!

Lunar New Year starts on Tuesday, February 1st this year, and ends on February 15th with the Lantern Festival. Chinese, Korean, Tibetan, and Vietnamese New Year all fall within the period, with a wide array of festivities such as fireworks, giving pocket money, and reunion meals with family members. 2022 is the year of the tiger, so expect to see images containing the beast! The mascot for the year is determined by an ancient Chinese legend, who invited twelve animals to participate in a race, which determines the chronology in which the years are assigned animals. You can read more about the Holiday [here](#). For events in the Boston area, check out the Boston Discovery Guide [here](#). During this period, we encourage you to learn more about the holiday, along with the rest of East Asian culture. You can find a list of suggested reading for children [here](#). Find out more about how you can learn more about and participate in Boston Asian culture [here](#)!

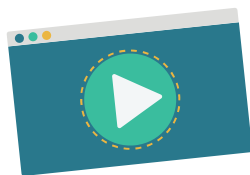
Resources



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
 with suggestions.

For past recordings of our webinar series: Caring for Kids with Autism and Developmental Differences, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCifYfJKUuSa8XzytUcn-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.


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
 Brittany 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!

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 The Autism Program at Boston Medical Center

 @BMCAutismProgram