

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?

First Day of Spring!

March is often considered a month of new beginnings. For one, it's finally the beginning of spring—officially starting on **March 20th!** From trees and animals waking up from their winter slumber to all the new green seedlings sprouting from the ground, the natural world around us is preparing for some sweet spring action! Here are some fun and easy ways that children and families can explore the natural world this special month.

[For a fun afternoon idea,](#)

[At-home DIY Activities:](#)

Make your Own Bird Seek Cake

Support the birds into the coming spring while also having some fun!

Go on a Nature Scavenger Hunt

All you need is a pen, paper, and the neighborhood. Let's go out and see what we can find!

[Want some more nature?](#)

[Check out the free local activities for children and families on the next page!](#)



Women's Month!

More boys than girls are diagnosed with ASD each year with a 4:1 ratio. Are boys more likely to be autistic than girls? Previous research finds that this imbalance may partially have to do with our social and cultural bias in gender and behavior.

This Women's Month, participate in our efforts to recognizing this gender bias by learning more about it and uplifting the stories of autistic girls and women! Learn more here:

Autistic Women and Girls
Women with ASD and Masking
Changing the Face of Autism
Invisible Diversity

Upcoming Events Cont.

Autism Friendly Evening at Discovery Museum
Saturday March 18th, 2023 | 5:00 PM~ 8:00 PM
Discovery Woods during this special evening! Your family can explore together while they are closed to the general public. Dinner, including a gluten free option, will be provided! Get your tickets here.

Sensory Friendly Afternoon at Discovery Museum
Tuesday March 7th, 2023 | 1:30 PM ~ 4:30 PM
Get your tickets here.

Free First Thursdays at Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
Thursday March 2nd, 2023 | 3:00 PM ~ 8:00 PM
Get your tickets here.

Curious about animals like ponies, potbellied pigs, llamas, or chickens?

Take a day trip to **Weir River Farm** during their **ASD-Friendly Open Barnyard!**

Saturday March 25th, 2023 | 1:00 PM ~ 2:00 PM
\$10 per person registration fee
Free admission for children 2 and under
Social story guides and sensory kits are provided!



Staff Spotlight: Katie!

Q. How long have you worked at BMC?

A. I joined BMC in September 2022 as the Program Coordinator for TEAM in the Autism Program. In January 2023, I took on the role of Referral Coordinator/Autism Resource Specialist in the Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics Department.

Q. Where did you attend school?

A. I graduated from Tufts University in 2022 with a Masters in Child Study and Human Development and a concentration in Clinical-Developmental Health and Psychology. I graduated from Queen Mary University of London in 2017 with a 1st Class Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Chemistry.

Q. What do you enjoy most about working with the Autism Program?

A. The opportunity to provide meaningful support to families within a team that has created a strong sense of community, provides individualized care to patients, and is committed to improving patient care and supports for the pediatric population. In the Autism Program, each day is different and each week brings new projects and opportunities to contribute towards; it never falls short of being an exciting and fulfilling department to work in.

Q. What is a fun fact about you?

A. In my spare time, I enjoy rock climbing, swimming and painting/drawing!

Safety TIP: MBTA

Public transportation is a great way for you and your children to get around — and it can be better for the environment than using a personal vehicle! However, taking a ride on public transportation also comes with its risks. In order to help keep your children safe, here are some MBTA tips to get you started!

You can also check out the MBTA Safety Tips as well as the MBTA Trip Planner to help prepare you for future trips!

- + Have your child carry their items in a backpack so that they don't get dropped or lost. Also limit loose drawstrings to avoid getting caught in doors/on handles, and use handrails whenever possible.
- + Arrive on time to stops and avoid running to catch transportation.
- + Prepare your child in advance by describing all the structural details of the trip such as: the important T stops, specific duration between those trips. Using a map to illustrate the course of the trip beforehand may also help your child feel less overwhelmed.
- + Discuss "Stranger Danger" with your child and make sure they know if something does not feel right or is bothering you, report it and seek out help.
- + Make sure your child can identify community helpers and knows the answers to basic identification question (child's name, parent's name, phone number, address, etc).
- + Teach your child to practice safe pedestrian behavior, respect and responsibility to keep everyone safe. Remind your child to be alert: don't stand too close to the curb or train platform, don't engage in horseplay, etc.

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
- Naomi Steiner, MD
- Arathi Reddy, DO
- Rachel Amgott, NP
- Christina Lazdowsky, NP
- Mei Elensary, MD
- Alyssa King, PhD
- Jocelyn Kuhn PhD
- Audrey Christiansen, MD
- Sarah Canale, MD
- Britany Weissman, MD
- Mary Ellen Killion, NP

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)
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The Autism Program at Boston Medical Center



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