

DEVELOPMENTAL & BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

NEWSLETTER



The Autism Program

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

Hello, Beautiful May!

Named after the Greek Goddess of growth *Maia*, May is full of warmth and excitement. There are many ways to enjoy all the fresh beginnings of summer — one of them being with your local community!

For this edition, we want to highlight our amazing community: awesome events and activities, ASD resources, and last but not least, some very important safety tips to keep in mind while exploring the community with your child!



Community Events and Activities

Sunday, May 7th

Sensory-Friendly Petting Zoo

Time: 11 AM - 1 PM

Where: Bierman Autism Center in Bedford - 23 Crosby Dr Suite #300, Bedford MA 01730

[Click here for registration and more info!](#)

Friday, May 12th

Lego "Brick Club" Social Group

Time: 4 - 5:30 PM

Where: The Millicent Library - 45 Center St, Fairhaven MA 02719

**This event is for both ND & NT children.*

[Click here for registration and more info!](#)

Monday, May 8th

18th Annual Autism Advocacy Day

Time: 10 - 11 AM

Where: Massachusetts State House, The Great Hall - 24 Beacon St, Boston MA 02108

[Click here for registration and more info!](#)

Gnome Surf

Gnome Surf is a non-profit Surf Therapy organization providing surf, art, and yoga therapy to children and families with ASD! They provide children with opportunities to learn surfing while addressing their individual well-being. For more information, check out their website and Instagram!

Community Resource: AANE



AANE (Asperger/Autism Network) is a local organization based in Watertown that is committed to helping autistic and neurodivergent individuals build meaningful, connected lives through its support services, advocacy, social opportunities, and information on how to access local, state, and federal resources. Additionally, many of its employees either identify themselves as being autistic or have an autistic child. Therefore services offered happen in an inclusive atmosphere of validation and respect! AANE offers direct service programming to autistic adults, autistic teens, families, and professionals, with both remote and in-person options. Among its offerings include:

Individualized Services

- ▶ **Free Information and Resource Consultation**
- ▶ **Parent Coaching**
- ▶ **LifeMAP Coaching:** an intensive, practical, individualized life coaching program for autistic adults and teens

Some AANE Events Running This Month:

Click event title for more information!

[Boston Symphony Orchestra Concert](#)

When: Sunday, May 7th | 2 - 3:30 PM

Where: Symphony Hall, Kenmore

Advance registration is required, and registration closes 24 hours prior to the event.

This free event is for adults only.

[Online Community Connection Session](#)

When: Thursday, May 18th | 7 - 8:30 PM

Advance registration is required, and registration closes 24 hours prior to the event.

This free event is for parents of children, teens, young adults with ASD through age 22.

Group Support Events

- ▶ In-person and online **support groups** for **autistic adults, autistic teens, parents, grandparents, couples, and partners**, providing a space where individuals can find community and connect over shared experiences.
- ▶ **Interest-based social activities for autistic adults**, including game night, movie night, book club, outdoors enthusiasts club, creative writers' workshop, improv lessons, women's social events, and more!

[Webinar: Financial Planning](#)

When: Tuesday, May 23rd | 6:30 - 8 PM

Advance registration is required, and registration closes 24 hours prior to the event.

Admission cost is \$25— Discounted Admissions (\$15 ~ \$0) are available here. **This webinar is for autistic individuals and families, and will be recorded and e-mailed for registrants.**

[Online Workshop: Asperger's/ Autism 101 for adults](#)

When: Thursday, May 25th | 1 - 2:30 PM

Advance registration is required for this free event, and registration closes 24 hours prior.

Check out the AANE website and calendar for much more!



Safety Tip: Community Helpers



Community Helpers are diverse range of professionals integrated within our community to protect, serve, or guide the well being of all of us and our united values. Community Helpers are everywhere and we rely on them every day! They help us constantly from our daily routines to unforeseen circumstances — therefore, it is very important for children to know **what kinds of Community Helpers exist in their own communities** and **how to easily identify them**, and to get plenty of practice in advance on **how they can appropriately interact with Community Helpers** during different situations of need.

Here are some **helpful tips** and **resources** we found for you to get the conversation started with!



Who Are Our Community Helpers?

- ▶ **Article:** *How to Teach Children with Autism About Community Helpers*
- ▶ **Article:** *Introducing Your Child to Community Helpers*
- ▶ **Video:** *Community Helpers with BrainPOP Jr.*
- ▶ **Handout:** *Community Helpers Exercise Ideas (Spanish version)*

How Do We Interact with Community Helpers?

- ▶ **Social Story:** *Talking with Community Helpers*

Boston-Specific Resources:

Sensory-Friendly Touch-A-Truck at The Park in Burlington Mall

Saturday, May 13th | Sensory-friendly hours: 9 - 10 AM

Bring your child and explore various Community Helper vehicles like a fire truck, police car, ambulance, and school bus in a fun setting! Special Hours will be reserved from 9 - 10 AM for a sensory-friendly experience. The event will also be accompanied by some delicious food trucks!

For more information, contact REC at (978)-717-5062.

Children with ASD have a higher tendency to wander for many different reasons. Because wandering can be a tremendously stressful and potentially dangerous situation for both parents and children, it is crucial for us to do everything we can to prepare in advance!

This is where the **Boston Police Department's North Star Personal Alert Program** comes in! This initiative allows caretakers to advocate for their child's specific needs and create a personal profile of the child in the case of wandering. In many cases, the child may not be fully capable of communicating with First Responders. So, any information that could help First Responders better understand and guide the child back to safety can be registered into the profile! This includes, but are not limited to: photo of the child, their communication methods, sensory needs, pertinent contact information.

**To register or for more information,
please visit BPD's North Star Program website!**

Learn more: Wandering

- **Safety Resource Guide** by BMC Autism Program: This extensive guide includes an entire section dedicated to Safety Outside of the Home, filled with informational outlines on wandering behaviors, resources such as tracking devices, IDs, social stories, as well as step-by-step guides to various community safety for your child!
- **Big Red Safety Toolkit** by National Autism Association: This resource goes over everything from potential wandering root causes to strategies, Family Wandering Emergency Plans, personalized social story templates and sample IEP letters you can use at your convenience. Check out this link for more information and the Spanish-translated version!

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

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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! **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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