

DEVELOPMENTAL
& BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

NEWSLETTER



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

What's Happening?

Legislation Updates!

Former Governor Charlie Baker signed Nicky's Law, also known as the Abuse Registry Bill, into law and was officially implemented on 1/31/2021. Before this bill passed, there were no systems to track individuals who had engaged in acts of abuse against individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This bill not only protects against abuse and neglect, it restricts those who have exhibited abusive behavior from working with vulnerable individuals. Click here to learn more! <https://thearcofmass.org/abuseregistry>



*Did you know that BMC has a **rooftop farm** that provides fresh produce to patients, the cafeteria, demonstration kitchen and preventative food pantry?*

Learn more here:

www.bmc.org/nourishing-our-community/rooftop-farm

Upcoming Events

Earth Day is on April 22nd 2021. Since its conception in 1970, Earth Day has become a global movement uniting over 190 countries. It is an environmental movement to address pollution, public health, conserving land, preventing the extinction of species, recycling resources, creating clean energy, and enacting environmental laws.

What can you do at home? Recycle, monitor water use, and maybe plant a tree or garden. Need ideas? Search "vegetables you can grow from scraps" and plant some seeds or partial vegetable you already have around the house like a clove of garlic or the bottom roots of romaine lettuce or celery. Learn more at <https://www.earthday.org/>



Words From Our PLAN Parents

Last week we hosted our virtual Autism Acceptance Day and it was a huge success, thanks to our dedicated community partners and our inspiring parent panel from our PLAN program. The words spoken were powerful and brought so many heartfelt sentiments. One of the panelists shared her son's thoughts on having autism as, "having autism is like being in a movie without a script." We would be remiss to not include some other impactful words from the rest of our parent panel.

"The way you feel on the day you get the diagnosis is not how you're going to feel next year, or in 5 years or in the future."

"You as a parent are the expert of your child, at an IEP meeting, at a doctor's appointment, it doesn't matter. You have to remember you are the expert of your child. Stand up and say, I am the expert of my child."

"Surround yourself with people that know and are willing to understand."

Representation Matters! Autism in the Media

*While representations of ASD in the media have not always been the most accurate, some recent shows and films have begun to portray more of ASD's diversity and are being more well received by the community. What are your favorite books, TV shows or movies that feature autistic individuals? **Tell us on Facebook or Instagram!***

Recently, PBS Kids added Max, a Black autistic boy, to **Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood**. Max's voice actor is 13-year-old Israel Thomas-Bruce, who was diagnosed with ASD when he was 4. The show's writers worked with several consultants with autism to ensure that Max's character represented the ASD community well., and supervising producer Chris Loggins stated "it's also important for young viewers to understand that some friends have different needs and may learn, play and communicate in their own ways."



The Freeform show **Everything's Gonna Be Okay** transcends typical media boundaries by featuring a queer female lead with autism, Matilda, played by autistic actress, Kayla Cromer. Further the show features siblings caring for one another after the death of a parent. This show is one of the first to include these multidimensional representations in media...in a fun and entertaining way! When sharing about the role, Kayla said "Actors who play autistic characters, they haven't walked in our shoes because they don't have it themselves. So by incorporating parts of myself into the role, it just makes it more authentic."



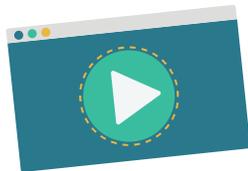
Resources



Boston Medical Center is here to support you during this difficult time. Check out our new resource spreadsheet, which has links to virtual learning, social stories, music/animal/fitness programs, live on line 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
 Ana Carolina Sanchez, MD
 Jodi Santosuosso, NP
 Rachel Amgott, NP
 Christina Lazdowsky, NP
 Mei Elansary, MD
 Alyssa King, PhD
 Ana Treadaway, MD
 Mediatix Mbamalu, MD
 Christine McGivney, DO
 Jocelyn Kuhn PhD
 Audrey Christiansen, 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