

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

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Hanukkah 2020 begins the evening of Thursday, Dec. 10th, and continues for 8 days, ending Friday, Dec. 18th. The [Jewish Arts Collaborative](#) is putting on *Brighter Connected*, which will be bringing the light of Hanukkah to 8 Boston-area neighborhoods this year through works of art in windows. The art installations were specifically created and installed for socially-distanced viewing. Click [here](#) to view the map of these beautiful bright installations through the Jewish Arts Collaborative!



ACTIVITY

Looking for a fun holiday activity that doubles as a gift? Look no further than these adorable salt dough crafts! To make this easy craft, sift 2 cups of flour with 1 cup of salt. Next, slowly pour in 3/4 cup of warm water. Mix and knead your dough until it's soft and pliable. Roll out your dough and press your child's hand print into it. Cut around the handprint with a knife and bake on a cookie sheet for 1 hour on 300 degrees. *If you're planning on making yours an ornament, make sure to poke a hole in the dough with a straw prior to baking. After your handprint has cooked leave it out to cool and have fun painting!

RESOURCE

In case you missed it! The Special Needs Advocacy Network ([SPANMASS](#)) and the Federation for Children with Special Needs ([FCSN](#)) offered a free webinar titled, "*Special Education Now: Showing Up for Ourselves and Others in Pandemic Times*". Senior Associate Commissioner and State Director of Special Education, Russell Johnston, provided a discussion on finding support in stressful times and an update on the special education supports DESE has put in place this year. Click [here](#) to check it out!



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

DBP WEEKLY NEWS

HELP FOR

THE HOLIDAYS

2020 has certainly been a challenge for all. We've rounded up a few resources to help with food, heat, and holiday gifts for this time of year. It's OK to ask for help and our team is here for you if you have any questions or are in need of any assistance!



HEAT



As the weather gets colder, families may be worrying about rising heating and energy costs. Fortunately there are many programs open to Massachusetts residents to help cover these costs. It is important to note that the gas and electric utilities will not shut off or terminate ANY household's service during the MA State of Emergency. For Boston: ABCD Fuel Assistance 24/7 emergency line: 617.348.6599.



GIFTS



This holiday season can be financially challenging for families. If you are needing support getting gifts to help make the holidays brighter for your children, you may be eligible to receive support from your local department of transitional assistance office. Call (877) 382-2363 or click [here](#) for more information.

The Action for Boston Community Development Winter Fund supports families by providing holiday meals, winter gear like coats and hats, as well as toys and basic necessity items to families in need. If you are not yet connected with ABCD but would like to learn more about the support they can provide, please call 617.348.6559 or click [here](#).



FOOD



Project Bread "connects people and communities in Massachusetts to reliable sources of food while advocating for policies that make food more accessible—so that no one goes hungry." For anyone in Massachusetts who needs food assistance, start by calling the FoodSource Hotline. The Hotline is your one-stop-shop to learn about all the resources available to help you. Use the FoodSource Hotline to find accessible and affordable food for yourself and your loved ones.



Want to give back this holiday season? There are lots of ways to support families in your local community, such as making holiday cards for senior citizens at a local care facility, donating coats and hats that your family has outgrown, or packing holiday meal bags at your local food pantry. Every little act helps in making this holiday season special.



DBP WEEKLY NEWS

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 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.

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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!



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