

DEVELOPMENTAL  
& BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

# NEWSLETTER



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



## Fill Your Plate This Holiday Season

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 or your family."

Do you know about the Preventative Food Pantry at Boston Medical Center? Created in 2001, the Food Pantry works to address nutrition-related illness and under-nutrition for our patients. Families can visit the Food Pantry every two weeks (maximum twice per month) and receive three to four days worth of food for their household each time. The Food Pantry is open Monday to Friday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. It is managed by four staff members and many volunteers. Patients need to be screened and referred to the Food Pantry by their Primary Care Provider. Talk with your PCP today if you think your family may be eligible or call 617.414.3834 for more information

## PICA Box

Does your child attempt to eat or mouth inedible objects? While this may be an age-appropriate behavior for children under 24 months, it can be very concerning when a child is chewing on or swallowing unsafe items such as chalk, crayons, coins, marbles and more. Some individuals may meet criteria for the eating disorder PICA, which is when someone consumes inedible items which may lead to medical concerns, ranging from mild to life-threatening (i.e. choking, constipation, poisoning, blockage of intestines etc).

Rachel Meek, an occupational therapist at Together Trust in England, created the DIY PICA box seen in the picture below to support her students who attempted to eat inedible objects. This PICA box contains edible food items that imitate the texture of common inedible items such as crunchy chips instead of dry leaves, celery and veggie sticks instead of twigs, and more! This box is a great idea to provide your child with edible alternatives to their inedible favorites.



## Business Spotlight: Google

Google announced a new initiative, the Autism Career Program, which is dedicated to the hiring of more autistic people. Through a collaboration with the Stanford Neurodiversity Project, the initiative will train hiring managers to be more effective and empathetic when interacting with autistic candidates and adjust the way the company approaches the interview process to accommodate neurodivergent applicants, including providing interview questions in advance, offering written interviews, or giving extra time interview time. Congrats Google in taking this step in the right direction for a more inclusive and better workforce



## School is in Full Swing!

The US Department of Education just released a document titled: Return to School Roadmap: Development and Implementation of Individualized Education Programs in the Least Restrictive Environment Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This document includes “new guidance interpreting requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in light of many challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.” As children on IEP’s return to the school both virtually and in person, this document can provide clarity on timelines, evaluations, compensatory services, etc. The document can be found [HERE](#)

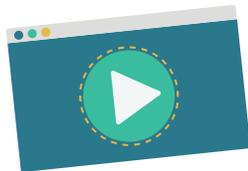
## Resources



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](mailto: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](https://zoom.us/signup).



## Our Clinicians

Marilyn Augustyn, MD

Naomi Steiner, MD

Arathi Reddy, DO

Jodi Santosuosso, NP

Rachel Amgott, NP

Christina Lazdowsky, NP

Mei Elansary, MD

Alyssa King, PhD

Christine McGivney, DO

Jocelyn Kuhn PhD

Audrey Christiansen, MD

Sarah Canale, MD

Britany 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



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