

DEVELOPMENTAL & BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

NEWSLETTER



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

Pride Month

It's PRIDE MONTH! In honor of Pride Month, we have rounded up several books to read with your child to cultivate awareness and acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community.

- Love is Love by Michael Genhart
- Sparkle Boy by Leslea Newman
- Annie's Plaid Shirt by Stacy B. Davids
- Love Makes a Family by Sophie Beer
- Stella Brings the Family by Miriam B. Schiffer
- Peanut Goes for the Gold by Jonathan Van Ness

Reminder: if you are a Massachusetts resident, you are eligible for a free Boston Public Library card or e-card!

The following is an excerpt from the Asperger and Autism Network (AANE) regarding the intersection of gender identity, sexual orientation, and neurodivergence. We have also added links to the AANE and Massachusetts LGBTQ Resource page for you and your child to look through.

"Because someone is diagnosed with ASD does not mean that person is less capable of determining their own sexual orientation or gender identity. It is more likely that family members or professionals will question their identification with these non-mainstream identities [...] out of concern that their loved one will be part of yet another marginalized, vulnerable group. Someone perceived as autistic may be questioned more by professionals or family members [...]. For some individuals, autistic and not, sexual orientation and gender identity and expression may fluctuate over the course of one's lifetime. They may be more flexible or fluid. This fluidity, particularly in these areas, is often difficult for others to accept and may again be ascribed to the autism and may lead to an individual not being believed." -AANE

AANE Website [HERE!](#)

Mass LGBTQ Resource [HERE!](#)

Juneteenth

Juneteenth, also known as "Juneteenth Independence Day," "Freedom Day," or "Emancipation day," is an annual holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the US. It has been celebrated by African-Americans since June 19, 1865, the day in which enslaved African-Americans in Texas were informed of their freedom and the end of the Civil War. Juneteenth was signed into law as a national holiday in June of 2021. Learn more about Juneteenth events in Boston [HERE](#) and ways to support your local Black owned businesses [HERE](#).

"There is something in us that refuses to be regarded as less than human. We are created for freedom." -Desmond Tutu

Adaptive Footwear

Reebok has partnered with Zappos Adaptive to create an adaptive shoe line called Reebok Fit to Fit. The line includes shoes with zippers, heel pull tabs, extra wide options, removable sock liners, and low-cut designs. The adult unisex line is available through Reebok and Zappos. Reebok is the latest shoe line to offer adaptive shoe options. Other companies who have adaptive shoe options available include: Nike, Ugg, Steve Madden, and Stride Rite. Many adaptive shoes and accessories can be found on the Zappos Adaptive website that you can access [HERE!](#)



Love on the Spectrum

Love on the Spectrum - US edition recently premiered on Netflix. The 6 episode season follows adults with Autism as they navigate the dating world, featuring individuals from California, North Carolina, and Massachusetts. The series follows a similar set up to the Australian version, showing family members and experts offering advice and guidance along their journeys. More information on the series can be found [HERE!](#)



Community Autism Research Program

Family Voices is excited to partner with self-advocates and families to present the Community Autism Research Ambassador Program. This virtual program empowers African American Families and self-advocates to be more involved in autism research. The goal of the Community Autism Research Ambassador Program is to help eliminate disparities for African American children and youth diagnosed with autism. Learn more and apply today [HERE!](#)



Self Directed Services

The Autism Program recently hosted members from DDS who lead an information session on Self Directed Services. Self-Directed Services is a support option available to young adults once they transition out of their school or post program at the age of 22. Self-Directed Services is a flexible and individualized alternative to a traditional day program. The program allows for the individual and their family/support system to choose who provides services, what the individual wants to work on, where the goals will be worked on, when the individual will be receiving services, and how services will be delivered. The video from the information session will be available on our website soon but families looking for additional information are encouraged to attend one of the upcoming interactive discussions on June 8 or June 20. It is never too early to start looking into adult service options! More information can be found [HERE!](#)

Resource: 4th of July Social Story

With all of the 4th of July festivities around the corner, we thought it would be helpful to highlight a social story for Fireworks. Although fireworks may delight some, they can be tough for others. The loud noises, unpredictability and flashes may cause some anxiety, we hope this social story helps your family prepare for a fun night! You can find noise canceling headphones and ear plugs **HERE!**

Fireworks



Across the world, people use fireworks to celebrate important events in history. Here in America, we use them to celebrate the Fourth of July!



Fireworks are small rockets that get lit on fire and sent up into the sky at night. Once they get up high enough, they explode and make exciting colors and sound for all the people below to enjoy.



Some people like fireworks and some people do not. Some people like the bright flashes that fireworks make and some do not. Some people like the loud noises fireworks make and some do not. All of this is Ok. Fireworks can be loud and frightening when you hear the sudden bang of one exploding. It is important that you feel calm and safe. Telling a parent or adult how you feel about fireworks can help.



Most people enjoy seeing and hearing the fireworks but not everyone. If I am feeling frightened by the fireworks I can stay indoors. Closing the curtains and the blinds may help with the bright flashes of light that fireworks give off. Even when I am inside I still might hear the fireworks. If I am feeling anxious putting on headphones, listening to music, or watching TV can help me stay calm. relaxed.

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
 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
 Jodi Santosuosso, NP
 Rachel Amgott, NP
 Christina Lazdowsky, NP
 Mei Elensary, MD
 Alyssa King, PhD
 Christine McGivney, DO
 Jocelyn Kuhn PhD
 Audrey Christiansen, MD
 Sarah Canale, MD
 Brittany 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!

 BMC.org/autism
Autismprogram@bmc.org

 The Autism Program at Boston Medical Center

 @BMCAutismProgram