

DEVELOPMENTAL & BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

NEWSLETTER



The Autism Program

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

Back to School Supplies

It's almost time to go back to school! Any families looking for back to school supplies are encouraged to look into the following organizations:

- Somerville Hispanic SDA Church: 59 Cross St Somerville (617) 776-7515
- Hope Fellowship Church: 16 Beech Street Cambridge (617) 868-3261
- Natick Service Council: 2 Webster Street Natick (508)-655-1791
- ICNA Relief Massachusetts: 100 Malcolm X Blvd Boston (347)-754-1067
- ABCD North End West End: Michelangelo St. Boston (617) 523-8125
- Massachusetts School on Wheels: 100 Laurel Street East Bridgewater (508)-587-9091
- United Way of Tri County: 46 Park Street Framingham (877)-211-6277
- Arlington Street Church 351 Boylston St Boston (617) 536-7050
- Kids in Need 59 Cross Street Somerville (617) 776-7515
- Beverly Bootstraps-Youth & Family Services: 35 Park Street Beverly (978)-927-1561

All About Me!

Going back to school can mean your child will be working with new teachers/aids/professionals. For this upcoming school year, consider creating an "All About Me" profile for your child to highlight important information including strengths, interests, learning style, coping skills, safety skills, etc. Feel free to follow the sample included with this email or create your own individualized to your child!

Educational Advocates

As your child returns to school, you may be thinking about how their special education services should be changed, expanded on, and implemented to address any new concerns or skill regression that you may be seeing. It is a great idea to have a conversation with your child's doctor, teacher, and/or individualized education plan (IEP) team chair to discuss goals and service needs. It may also be helpful to have an educational consultant or advocate help you navigate this. Check out the organizations below for additional support!

- **Mass Advocates for Children:**
<https://www.massadvocates.org/>
- **Volunteer Lawyers Project:**
<https://vlpnet.org/>
- **Greater Boston Legal Services:**
<https://www.gbls.org/>

August Adventures

Highland Street Foundation has released a list of free activities available every day during the month of August as a part of their Free August Adventures program (formally Free Fun Fridays). Check out the full calendar [HERE](#) for the events taking place across the state and be sure to reach out to the Highland Street Foundation with any questions!



Summer Sports

Looking for some fun summer activities? Check out Volo Sports located in Boston. They have some super fun leagues including: soccer, basketball, flag football, dodge ball, and volleyball. Check out their website [HERE](#) for more

Safety Tip of the Month: Wandering/Bolting Resources

According to the National Autism Association, roughly 50% of children with autism have a tendency to wander or bolt from a safe setting. More than one third of these children are unable to communicate their name, address, or home number. Wandering can lead to the child being put in dangerous situations including: potentially drowning, traffic related accidents, dehydration, heat stroke, hypothermia, physical restraint, encounters with strangers, etc. Remaining vigilant in supervising your child is one of the main ways to prevent wandering into unsafe situations. Securing your home with locks, window guards, and alarms can also help prevent your child from being able to wander away. Other supports that can be put in place include:

- **Handicapped Placard:** Children with an autism diagnosis are eligible for a handicapped placard allowing you to park closer to entrances – decreasing the opportunities for your child to bolt. You can read more about handicapped placards [HERE](#).
- **Identification Card/Bracelet:** Consider purchasing a medical ID bracelet for your child. You can find links to a few different medical ID bracelets in our safety guide. If your child is at least 14 years old, consider getting them a state ID. More information on obtaining a state ID can be found [HERE](#).
- **GPS:** A GPS can be placed on your child's shoe, clothing, wrist, backpack, etc. to help you keep track of where they are. There are a variety of GPS trackers available and some offer financial assistance. An Apple Air tag can be an affordable alternative to a GPS tracker.
- **Traction Rope:** A traction rope, harness, or backpack with a tether might be a good option for younger children. There are a variety of options available online depending on your child's strength and sensory needs.
- **Police:** Connect with your local police department and inform them you have a child with autism who has a tendency to wander. For families living in the Boston area, check out the BPD North Star Program.

If you are concerned about your child wandering or bolting, please be sure to connect with your child's medical provider to discuss some options to ensure their safety. For more information on safety items please check out our Safety Guide which can be found [HERE](#)!

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

Mei Elensary, MD

Alyssa King, PhD

Jocelyn Kuhn PhD

Audrey Christiansen, MD


Sarah Canale, MD

Britany Weissman, MD

Mary Ellen Killion, NP

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)
Autismprogram@bmc.org

 The Autism Program at Boston Medical Center

 @BMCAutismProgram