

DEVELOPMENTAL  
& BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

# NEWSLETTER

BOSTON  
MEDICAL  
CENTER

The Autism Program

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

## Goodbye 2023, Hello 2024!

### Happy New Year from BMC DBP!

We wish everyone a happy new year full of many opportunities, adventures, and excitement. To officially kick off 2024, we wanted to refresh your memory with some helpful support systems and events available for your family. **As always, please make sure to click on each resource title if you are looking for more information!**

### Now Recruiting Study Participants!

BMC is currently looking for autistic youth and their parents to participate in a research study on **supporting the transition-to-adulthood**.

You are eligible if you are a parent of a child with autism who is:

- Between age 14 and 21
- Currently enrolled in school
- Living at home with you

Participating families will receive a referral to **work with a BMC transition specialist** OR participate in a multi-family group education & support program called **Transitioning Together**, while your child partakes in a social group. Compensation ranges from up to \$100 to \$300. Please contact Mei Elansary, MD at [mei.elansary@bmc.org](mailto:mei.elansary@bmc.org) for more info!

### Upcoming Events



1/11

#### Clinical Care of Autistic Adults

Webinar with Dr. Chris McDougle, Director of MGH Lurie Center for Autism

1/13

#### Community Game Day - Wellesley

Free social/game group for neurodivergent tweens and teens (9-17) looking to meet new friends

1/17

#### Derechos básicos: Evaluación y admisibilidad

Free Spanish webinar on special education by FCSN (part 1 of 3)

1/23

#### AAC: Supporting Communication

Webinar with SLP Megan Romanczk, for families who want to learn more about using AAC

1/24

#### Estrategias para la reunión del PEI

Free Spanish webinar on IEP meeting preparation by FCSN (part 2 of 3)

\*Click on each event title for more information!

# Go into the New Year with Support

Entering the new year can often be a stressful endeavor for many, but we are here to remind you that you are not alone! Here are some steps to find support in your community and beyond.

## Connect with your local Autism Support Center:

**Autism Support Centers** act as a hub of information and guidance to community services that are available to your family. From support groups, recreational events, to educational workshops, they can be your first stop to look for resources in your area. Find the closest center near you by clicking [here!](#)

## Connect with DDS:

**DDS** is a Massachusetts state agency that provides a wide range of supportive services including financial assistance for your child with autism. For more information on their services and application process, click [here!](#)

## If you're already connected:

It's important to make sure that your family's needs are communicated as clearly as possible. If you have any concerns regarding your DDS services, a DDS service provider or coordinator, experiencing a delay or disruption in services, or have any concerns, contact the **DDS Office of the Ombudsperson** for support. They exist to offer a space for families to express their issues and address all concerns!

- [DDSOmbuds@mass.gov](mailto:DDSOmbuds@mass.gov)
- **(617) 821-1677**

## Connect with Advocates

There are many types of advocates out there to help you navigate many types of complex situations. Here are some great advocacy organizations in Massachusetts - **please make sure to click on each organization's title to find more info!**

### Mass Advocates for Children (MAC)

Special Education/ Pro Bono legal assistance  
(617) 357-8431 **ext. 3224** (English) or **3237** (Español)

### Federation for Children with Special Needs

Special Education, 1-1 support in various areas  
(transition to adulthood, health care, early intervention)

Special Ed: (617) 236-7210 or [info@fcsn.org](mailto:info@fcsn.org)  
For all other services, please visit website.

### Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS)

Legal consultation and representation  
(617) 371-1234 (can provide support in all languages)

### Health Law Advocates

Pro Bono legal representation in health care, coverage, and medical debt for low-income families

**General health care:** (617) 338-5241  
**Specialized health care:** (617) 275-2919

**Don't hesitate to reach out to your child's PCP or DBP clinicians with concerns...**

We are here to help!

**The Autism Program** is committed to assisting and empowering all families to meet their goals through.

If you are in need of further support or advocacy, [check out our website](#) for additional resources and/or feel free to contact us at [autismprogram@bmc.org](mailto:autismprogram@bmc.org)!

# January Resources

## QR codes: How-To

Open the camera app on your phone and scan each QR code to visit the resource website!

### Upcoming Events



Clinical Care for Autistic Adults



Community Game Day in Wellesley



Derechos básicos: Evaluación y admisibilidad



AAC: Supporting Communication



Estrategias para la reunión del PEI

### Go into the New Year with Support



Find an Autism Support Center



DDS (Department of Developmental Services)



DDS Office of the Ombudsperson



Autism Program Resources



Mass Advocates for Children



Federation for Children with Special Needs



Greater Boston Legal Services



Health Law Advocates

## 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](mailto: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

Arathi Reddy, DO

Rachel Amgott, NP

Christina Lazdowsky, NP

Mei Elensary, MD

Audrey Christiansen, MD

Sarah Canale, MD

Britany Weissman, MD

Mary Ellen Killion, NP

Arielle Spellun, MD


Bridget Poznanski, PhD

Rachel Vuolo, 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! **To unsubscribe, please reply by email with the word "stop!"**

 [BMC.org/autism](https://www.bmc.org/autism)  
[Autismprogram@bmc.org](mailto:Autismprogram@bmc.org)

 The Autism Program at Boston Medical Center

 @BMCAutismProgram