

DEVELOPMENTAL
& BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS

NEWSLETTER

BOSTON
MEDICAL
CENTER

The Autism Program

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



Happy June & Happy Pride!



We want to wish everyone a wonderful month of celebrating **LGBTQ+ Pride!** Did you know that according to research, autistic people identify with a wider range of sexual orientations than neurotypical people? This is also true regarding gender diversity! In fact, many autistic individuals have shared firsthand accounts of how their gender & sexual diversity has been intertwined with being neurodiverse!

At Boston Medical Center, we are dedicated to providing meaningful healthcare that affirms and celebrates everyone's unique experiences and identities. This also means listening to and supporting the many LGBTQ+ organizations that already exist in our communities! Continue reading to find out about how you can receive quality LGBTQ+ support in & outside of BMC.

Within BMC

- ▶ **GenderCare Center**
Provides accessible, individualized, and comprehensive gender-affirming care (both surgical and non-surgical), as well as education & advocacy!
- ▶ **CATCH** (Child and Adolescent Transgender Center for health)
Provides education, family support, therapeutic and medical services, community connections, and more!

Support Groups

- ▶ **Dis-Queer:** A Disability LGBTIA+ group
- ▶ **Fireweed Collective Groups** for queer, POC, neurodivergent, disabled folks
- ▶ **Greater Boston PFLAG Groups** for parents & caregivers, grandparents, tweens, transfem/nonbinary folks, etc

Emergency Help

- ▶ **The Trevor Project**

This organization provides 24/7 crisis support for LGBTQ+ youth (13 to 24) by chat. If you are struggling, reach out to a Trevor counselor by calling (866) 488-7386 or texting 678-678!

- ▶ **Trans Lifeline**

This is a hotline run entirely by trans people, for trans people! Reach out by calling (877) 565-8860 or filling out [this online contact form](#) to receive anonymous and community-oriented support.

They also have an amazing [resource library](#) full of helpful information in English and Spanish, such as [this guide of tips & advice for autistic trans people looking for doctors!](#)

Click
title for
more
info!

LGBTQ+ Resources cont.



Community Organizations

- ▶ **Autism Women & Nonbinary Network (AWN)**
This is an awesome non-profit organization that provides community support and resources for Autistic women, girls, trans people of of genders and more. Their work is certainly vast and includes empowerment, solitary aid (for meals, groceries, rent, healthcare, etc), community building, and social/networking meetups! Check out their [resources](#) and don't hesitate to connect with them if you are looking for a queer & autistic community!
- ▶ **BAGLY (Boston Alliance of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Youth)**
This is a youth-led, adult-supported organization providing support programs and services for the LGBTQ+ youth community. This includes many weekly social support groups, a drop-in community center, healthcare clinic, educational workshops and much more to help LGBTQ+ youth in & around Boston thrive! They also provide drop-in therapy sessions, short-term therapy, and narrative art therapy without checking insurance or identification.
- ▶ **GLASS (GLBTQ+ Adolescent Social Services) by JRI (Justice Research Institute)**
This is an amazing organization for LGBTQ+ youth of color! They have two drop-in centers in Boston and Framingham that host many support groups, educational workshops, social events, and can provide free access to computers/internet, food, toiletries, clothes, and so much more! In-home and drop-in therapy by culturally diverse counselors is also available, as well as free and confidential testing services for HIV, Hepatitis C, and STIs with no appointment necessary. For a complete list of their services, please see [this pamphlet!](#)
- ▶ **Human Rights Campaign**
This organization is dedicated to advocating for the liberation of all LGBTQ+ people. Not only do they drive political campaigns and demand equity-based legislation, but also share tons of amazing resources! For starters, check out their [Glossary of Terms](#) and various search engines to identify LGBTQ+ friendly [healthcare](#), [communities](#), and [employers](#).

Additional Readings

- ▶ [Celebrating Autism Acceptance As a Part of the LGBTQ+ Community](#)
- ▶ [Resources for Trans People on the Spectrum](#)
- ▶ [Neurodivergence in the LGBTQ+ Community](#)
- ▶ [Neurodiversity & Gender-diverse Youth: An Affirming Approach to Care](#)
- ▶ [Working with LGBTQ Youth with ASD and Developmental Disabilities](#)

Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Autism

For this month only, [AANE](#) is offering a free webinar by queer autistic advocates Eva Mendes, Meredith Maroney & Kendrick Cronin, sharing unique personal experiences & discussing emerging research. Use the promo code **JUNE2024!**

Where to Find Gender-Affirming Products

- ▶ **G.E.A.R. (Gender Euphoria and Affirmation Resources)**
This program provides trans and non-binary folks living in Massachusetts with access to products, garments, and resources that affirm who they are at no cost! You can pick up your product at their office in Downtown Boston or have it shipped. They can also help you find the right size garment to ensure safety, comfort, and joy!

Upcoming Events



The following community events are all free! However, you may need to register in advance to participate. Please click the event title to visit the organization's website!

Disability Rights in Employment Series by MA Office on Disability

This virtual workshop series is for employees and jobseekers with disabilities and their advocates!

Deciding to Disclose

Learn about the advantages and disadvantages of disclosing your disability at different stages of the employment process.

June 12th | 9:30-10:30am

August 27th | 5:30-6:30pm

November 13th | 9:30-10:30am

Reasonable Accommodations

Learn about the advantages and disadvantages of disclosing your disability at different stages of the employment process.

June 12th | 11am-12:30pm

August 28th | 5:30-7pm

November 13th | 11am-12:30pm

Disability Discrimination

Using real world examples, learn how to identify and address disability discrimination in the workplace.

June 12th | 2:30-4pm

August 29th | 5:30-7pm

November 13th | 2:30-4pm

Click date to register!

Adaptive Recreation Fair by MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

Join the DCR's Universal Access Program (UAP) for a free, fun-filled day celebrating accessible outdoor recreation in Herter Park! Enjoy family-friendly and inclusive activities like adaptive cycling, pickleball, face painting, kite decorating, drawing on sidewalks with colorful chalks, blowing bubbles, games, music, and much more! You will also have the chance to learn about various adaptive summer programs across the state!

Date & Time: June 8th, 10am to 3pm (Rain or shine!)

Location: Artesani Playground in Herter Park (1255 Soldiers Field Road, Brighton)

How to pre-register: Fill out [this online form](#) OR call Teri at (413) 461-7126

Family Fun Fair by Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC)

Join BCNC Quincy in celebrating their 10th Anniversary of amazing work, continuously strengthening Asian and new immigrant families in the South Shore! You're invited for a summer day of community fun - enjoy free activities like face painting, arts and crafts, a watermelon eating contest, food trucks, cultural performances, a DJ, and much more!

Date & Time: June 22nd, 10am to 2pm

Location: Joseph W. Koch Field (200 Newbury Avenue, Quincy)

For more information about this event: Contact events@bcnc.net

Upcoming Events cont.

AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication): Related Care and Coordination by The Lurie Center

Are you interested in high tech AAC for a student, patient, or loved one? The Lurie Center for Autism invites you to join Nicole Williams, M.S. CCC-SLP, and AAC specialist for an online presentation and discussion about collaborating with multidisciplinary teams for successful AAC implementation. If you recently received a recommendation for an AAC device or have a device and wonder how to work together with your team to best support your communicator, this presentation will offer helpful advice! Time will also be left at the end for a Q&A, so come with questions!

Date & Time: June 12th, 6:30 to 7:30pm

Location: Virtual on Zoom

How to pre-register: Fill out **this online form** and the virtual meeting link will be sent to you one day prior to the event

Employee Spotlight

The Autism Program has a new team member - we are so happy to welcome **Katherine (Katie) Shields** to our program & community! Katie became a part of our team just last month as the new **Adult Autism Resource Specialist** at Boston Medical Center. She will be providing a much needed range of support for our adult autistic patients here at BMC. Please join us in welcoming Katie to the team!



Tell us about yourself!

Hi! I graduated from Providence College in 2018 with a B.A. in Sociology, Special Education, and Elementary Education. Since then, I've spent the past six years as a school teacher for students with ASD. I have also been providing home-based therapy for those with special needs!

What drew you to BMC?

I love working with this incredible team to help serve incredible patients - BMC is filled with amazing staff who are happy to provide exceptional care to all patients!

What do you like to do in your free time?

You can find me making a mess in my apartment by cheffing up something new in the kitchen, or crafting a new arts & crafts project!

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

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
Autismprogram@bmc.org

 The Autism Program at Boston Medical Center

 @BMCAutismProgram