

Empover A newsletter by The Arc's Parent Coalition of Whatcom County February 2015

For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Applying for DDA: What You Need to Know

Why apply to DDA?

- DDA Eligibility is based ONLY on disability, NOT on income. This can help families who can't afford the care their kids need, but are over income limits for other help.
- Services include: Personal Care; Individual & Family Services (IFS), which gives families money to spend on supporting their child; and Home & Community Based Waiver Services, which include respite, behavior supports, residential and employment services.
- Even though there can be wait lits, some individuals do get DDA services right away.
- Becoming a client as a child helps ensure that services are available as an adult.
- Being a DDA client is required to get help from some other programs.
- DDA clients who don't get paid services do get useful information and updates.
- In a crisis, an individual can get help more quickly if s/he is a DDA client.
- DDA clients are in line for services when funding becomes available.
- It's important that the government know how many individuals need and should be getting help but can't, due to lack of funds.



STEP ONE:

Call the Bellingham DDA office at 360-714-5000 and ask to apply for DDA for your child. DDA will mail you an application packet. (Or you can go to their office and pick it up.)

STEP TWO:

- Fill out all parts of the DDA application.
- Be sure to fill out and sign consent forms.
- Gather evaluation and diagnostic reports (e.g. special education records, diagnostic medical records, psychological evaluations, etc.) and include them with the application. If you don't know how to get these records, ask DDA for help.
- Always keep copies of all of your child's diagnostic information and special education records (especially three-year evaluation reports).
- Schools destroy records after seven years, so when your child leaves school, be sure to ask for his or her special education records. Having these records can be critical to be eligible to receive adult services later in life!
- Mail all parts of the application to DDA or drop it off at the DDA office at 119 N. Commercial St., Suite 700, Bellingham, WA 98225.
- DDA will send you a letter saying whether or not your child is eligible for DDA.
- It can take up to 90 days to hear if your child is eligible.
- If your child is eligible, the letter will say s/he is a DDA client with "No Paid Services" (NPS), and it will include the NPS phone number.
- Make sure to call the number and request services (see right).



- Call the NPS phone line, 1-800-567-5582, to request services. Your child may be eligible for Individual and Family Services Program, or for DDA "waiver" services.
- DDA will not call you unless you call them first!
- Tell DDA what you need, e.g. help paying for behavior therapy, respite services, help taking care of him/her in your home, funding for summer camp, etc.
- If your child is on WA Apple Health for Kids (Medicaid), ask to set up an assessment to see if your child can get Medicaid Personal Care services.





News and Views

What's Happening in Olympia that Impacts You?

Budget Steps:

The state budget process takes place each year. Every oddnumbered year the biennial (two-year) budget is created. In evennumbered years a supplemental budget makes fixes needed for unanticipated issues in the budget.

Each Spring, the Governor directs all state agencies to put together decision packages, based on his requests for budget cuts and/or increases.

State agencies work during the Summer to deliver their decision packages to the Governor by Fall. This gives him some basis for making his budget proposals.

The Governor decides in the Fall how he wants to spend or save money, based on the information state agencies provide. He sends his budget recommendations to the Legislature in time for legislative session (usually toward the end of December; see below).

In the Winter, the Legislature develops budget proposals in response to the Governor's budget. They have to agree before it can pass and go to the Governor for his signature.

Source: http://arcwa.org/resources/Hot_Tips_2015.pdf

The Biennial Budget So Far:

The Governor's proposed budget came out in December and includes:

- \$4 million dollars in new funds to support early intervention services for young children with developmental disabilities and delays.
- Additional funds for care and residential providers in a variety of settings.
- Enhanced respite for the Community Crisis Stabilization Services program.
- Five-year pilot program for meaningful home-based activities in adult family homes.

But the proposed budget also:

- Reduces the number of new Basic Waiver slots from 1,000 to 500.
- Reduces the number of new Individual and Family Services slots from 4,000 to 2,000.
- Does not provide new waiver slots for graduating high school students transitioning to adulthood.
- Eliminates the state funded Employment/Day program (400 people).

Now it is up to the House and the Senate to come up with their budget proposals.

Bills of Interest:

Now that the legislative session has begun, bills are being proposed that impact individuals with disabilities and their families. Some bills of interest that are currently under consideration include:

HB 1240 ENDING UNNECESSARY RESTRAINT AND ISOLATION

This bill seeks to better protect the safety of staff and students by allowing restraint and isolation only when a student poses a serious danger to a person or property, and by shifting attention to positive intervention strategies that will help children with disabilities improve their coping and communication skills.

HB 1365 & SB 5317 BRIGHT FUTURES: DEVELOPMENTAL AND AUTISM SCREENING

Requires Medicaid to pay for universal screening for autism and developmental delays as recommended by the Bright Futures guidelines. These guidelines include universal standardized developmental screening at 9, 18, and 24/30 months, and autism screening at 18 and 24 months.

To keep up to date on the budget process and other legislation, visit: http://arcwa.org/takeaction.

Do you want to send a message to your Senator or Representative?



635-9993). Callers to the Hotline can leave a brief message for their district legislators or for the Governor or Lt. Governor on issues of concern or on questions they may have about bills or laws. These messages are forwarded electronically to the appropriate individuals. When leaving a message with the Hotline, please be prepared to give your name and street address. Interpreter services are offered for non-English speaking callers.

During the Legislative session, the Hotline is open from 8am to 8pm, Monday through Friday.

When the Legislature is not in session the Hotline is open from 8am to noon and from 1pm to 4:30pm Monday through Friday.



Forms, Forms, Forms...

With so much paperwork to fill out and records to keep track of, it is hard to know how to stay organized. Here are some tips to make sure you have the information you need and can find it easily when you need it.

School Records

- Keep copies of annual IEPs and interim progress reports, so you can track the progress your son or daughter is making over time. These can be valuable documentation when you feel that something is not working at school and need evidence to back it up
- Any evaluations (e.g., standardized tests of cognitive and adaptive skills) are critical for eligibility for services (see page 1). Usually the school does an evaluation every three years. Make sure you keep a copy of the full evaluation results and any interim evaluations.



- Keep copies of initial and annual evaluations performed by medical and therapy providers. Records of particular diagnoses can be essential to eligibility for certain services and therapies. Ask your doctor to send you a copy of the visit notes for key visits.
- Utilize record keeping systems that already exist. If your doctor's office has an electronic medical record ask how you can get access to it. Most major pharmacies have electronic accounts for prescriptions. Not only can you get refill reminders and order prescriptions, but you also then have an easily accessible record with dates and dosages of medications prescribed. Most pharmacies have apps for your phone too!

Financial Records

- There are three main categories of expenses that are important to record for those under guardianship or on Social Security: housing & food, medical expenses, and personal funds. Have funds deposited into a separate account and make separate withdrawals for each of these categories. Put the category name in the memo on the check or funds transfer, so you will have a record with the bank.
- Most banks and credit cards have the ability to get an electronic summary of transactions divided into different categories. There are also free apps that can help with tracking categories of expenses.

Advocacy Days 2015

Advocacy Day offers a way for you to learn about the legislative process in person. It's a hands-on tool kit for learning how to make a difference! For information and/or to register, call: 1-888-754-8798, ext. 105, email: bean@arcwa.org, or visit <a href="http://arcwa.org/takeaction/washingtonstate/advocacy_day.

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Climb on Board!

Opportunity to visit Olympia and meet with your legislators!

The Arc of Whatcom County will be chartering a bus from Bellingham to

Olympia to participate in the Supporting Families Legislative Advocacy Day on *Wednesday, March 18th*. The bus will leave at approximately 7am for a full day in Olympia. Parents, self-advocates and care providers are welcome to come at no cost to you. We will provide information and materials to help you understand the issues and share your story. If you are interested in joining us, please email Monica at monicab@arcwhatcom.org or call (360) 715-0170, ext. 303, to reserve your seat today!

Advocacy Day Schedule Dates & Highlighted Topics

February 4 Budget Overview

February 11 Promoting Independence

February 18 Medicaid Services

February 25 Supported Living Rally

March 4 Education
March 11 Civil Rights

March 18 Supporting Families (see left)

March 25 Employment Supports
April 1 Autism Awareness Rally

April 27 (Last Day of Session)

All Advocacy Days are held at United Churches (110 - 11th Avenue SE, Olympia, WA) unless otherwise noted.

Community Events

Special Needs Trusts & The New ABLE Act 6-8pm, Tuesday, February 17

The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center 2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham



Presented by Barry Meyers from the Elder Law Offices of Barry M. Meyers

A Special Needs Trust can allow individuals to enhance their quality of life through trust assets while retaining government benefits. There are several different Special Needs Trusts which can be created depending on the origin of the assets that may be used to fund the trust. Please join us for this informative workshop to learn more.

Please RSVP: 360-715-0170 ext. 303, monicab@ arcwhatcom.org. Supervised care for family members is available if you RSVP by February 12th.



Autism 200 Series

Autism 200 is a series of free classes for parents and caregivers of children with autism sponsored by Seattle Children's Autism Center. <u>You must RSVP in advance</u>. Contact Jessica: jessicaburchiel@gmail.com.

Autism 202: Medication Management and ASD

7:00pm-8:30pm, Thursday, February 19 Instructor: A.A. Golombek, M.D.

Western Washington University Speech-Language Clinic AIC Building, 516 High Street, Bellingham

www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics-programs/autism-center/resources



11am-7pm, Thursday, February 12 The FIRS Conference Center 4605 Cable Street, Bellingham

Join WWU Recreation students for a Valentine-themed day chock full of activities (and great company!), including karaoke, arts and crafts, games, sports, and surprises galore! This event includes one-on-one partnering with a WWU student, a tasty noon snack, a late afternoon hot meal, and a wild and crazy time! (Cost: \$5. Ages 14 & older.)

Please note: Participants must be available to stay for the entire event. You must provide your own transportation. Personal care assistants are welcome at no cost, but must register to ensure a meal.

For more information, contact Amanda: 778-7000.

Autism Support Group Meeting

Friday, February 13 12 - 1:30pm The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center 2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham

For more information, contact Monica: monicab@arcwhatcom.org, call 360-715-0170, ext 303.

P2P Support Meeting Travels to Lynden!

7-8:30pm, Monday, February 9Fisher Elementary School
501 N. 14th Street, Lynden

Learn about the Developmental Disabilities Administration services and the changes ahead with guests: Leslie Terpstra, Case Resource Manager/Eligibility Review from DDA; and parent, Monica Burke. Find out about DDA eligibility, how to apply, Individual & Family Services, waivers, and other supports. Free on-site child care is available if you RSVP by February 6. To RSVP or for more info, contact Karlene at (360) 255-2056 ext. 3 or karlene@p2pwhatcom.org.



Spin Dance

6-8pm, Monday, February 16Bellingham Senior Center
315 Halleck Street, Bellingham

Bellingham Parks and Recreation, The Max Higbee Center and Whatcom County Parks sponsor monthly dances for individuals with disabilities. All persons age 14 and over are invited for music, dancing and fun! For information, call Amanda: 778-7000.

Lynden Road Show

5:30pm, Tuesday, February 10 Lynden High School 1201 Bradley Road, Lynden

What is the Road Show about?

The Road Show is about providing information on the Adult Service System for individuals with developmental

disabilities, their families and educators. The adult service system can be a challenging place to navigate, and we would like to give parents and families a chance to ask questions about services and the road ahead. Our plan is that families will have an increased understanding and access to the developmental disability service system and improvements in transition to adulthood.

Some topics we touch on:

Important dates and Tips for Transition into adult services, navigating the service system, eligibility and services provided through the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), short and long term employment supports through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Whatcom County Developmental Disabilities Program, "building a life" for your son or daughter after they leave school.

For more info, call Beverly at (360) 715-0170, ext. 306, or email beverlyp@arcwhatcom.org.

Embracing Technology in the 21st Century

Wednesday, February 18, 6-8:30pm

St. Luke's Community Health Education Center 3333 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham

For some of us, utilizing technology comes with more questions than answers. This Parent Workshop is designed to help lessen the concern you may have about your child accessing technology. In addition, you will see a handson sampling of technology assisting our students today. Presented by WWU faculty, Paula Dagnon, Linda Schleef with grad student, Brian Pahl.

Topics include: Technology as a scaffold rather than a crutch, keeping your kids safe online, affordable and intuitive emerging technology, screen time as active versus passive, and technology in the classroom.

For information and to RSVP contact Parent to Parent: (360) 255-2056, ext. 1 or christine@p2pwhatcom.org. For accommodations, please contact Christine by Feb 5th.



Emergency Planning for People of All Abilities

Tuesday, February 24, 9am - 4pm Best Western Plus Convention Center 2300 Market Street, Mount Vernon

Any individual, agency or business that is interested in disaster planning for the area's vulnerable populations is invited to come:

- Hear and learn from "boots on the ground" experiences in community disaster situations.
- Learn about new recommended Disaster Core Competencies for Social/Human Service agencies and their staff.
- Understand what transportation issues occur during emergencies.
- Contribute to the timely notification and warning of nontraditional populations.

This is a free event. Lunch will be provided. Please register at www.eventbrite.com.

For more info, call (800) 724-8172 ext. 4. For accommodations, call Brooke at (360) 725-3692.

WA Statewide Transition Conference

Friday, March 20 Yakima Convention Center 10 North 8th Street, Yakima

Calling all educators, agencies and anyone interested in learning about assisting with a successful transition for students from school to adult life! Registration is now open for the WA Statewide Transition Conference in Yakima, WA. This is an opportunity to learn and connect with others working toward a successful transition from school to adult life.

Cost: \$100.00, includes meals, handouts, exhibits, and a full day of training, information sharing, and networking!

Please register by March 6th.

For more info, please contact Jaimie Laitinen at jaimie@gowise.org or (206) 343-0881. Event sponsored by DDA and DVR.

Autism Outreach Project

Upcoming workshops offered in Bellingham via teleconference:

February 5th: Building Executive Functioning Skills in Students with Autism. Julie George, M.Ed., BCBA **February 24th:** Transition Planning for Students on the Autism Spectrum. Crystal Gray, Ph.D.

Single-day courses are \$90 for professionals and \$30 for parents of children with autism spectrum disorder.

For more information or to register visit: https://www.nwesd.org/aop/training

Programs & People

Max Higbee Center Offers Day Time Programming!

You heard it right, Max Higbee Center (MHC) offers day time programming five days a week! After learning that families were struggling to find valuable and enriching programs for their loved ones to attend in the morning, Max Higbee Center worked to build two new programs to fit their needs. Now in addition to their Community Access Program (Monday-Friday, 2:30-5:30) and Weekend Drop-in Center (Fridays & Saturdays, 5:00-9:30), they also offer 365 Fitness and a DayTime Drop-in Program during those crucial morning hours!

For those of you that don't know, Max Higbee Center is a local nonprofit that provides teens and adults, 14 years and older, with recreation opportunities that promote social, physical and emotional growth in their members. Located right in the heart of downtown on Bay Street, much of MHC's programs are spent exploring the downtown community and working with other amazing local businesses and nonprofits to provide exceptionally meaningful activities for their members.

Max Higbee Center's new DayTime Drop-in program operates Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:00am-2:30pm and offers both in-house and community-based activities. Every morning you'll find members waking up with adaptive yoga, practicing their breathing and poses, and easing into the fun that awaits them throughout the day. Staff lead a variety of activities during this program including, arts and crafts, fitness programs, life-skill workshops, gardening projects, music activities, and much much more! Because this is a drop-in program, participants can come at any point and stay for however long they want, and we promise to always have an engaging and interactive activity waiting! The cost of this program is \$10 per day.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, MHC offers their unique 365 Fitness Program for those who are looking to add a bit of fitness into their day. Each day, members come in, and MHC staff assist them in setting realistic fitness goals that they can work towards achieving. On a daily basis, you can find members using resistance bands, free weights, practicing their "high five" sit-ups, and being excited about living a healthy lifestyle. Some of the planned fitness activities include rock wall climbing at the YMCA, trail hiking, practicing Yoga with our friends at 3 Ohms Yoga, and much much more! If your schedule doesn't work with the morning program, but you are still interested in this program, we have personal coaching available on a sign-up basis. Just call our Program Manager Rylee, and set up a time that works best for you. She will help you set and achieve your goals on a one-on-one basis! The cost of our 365 Fitness program is \$10 per day, or \$15 per hour of personal coaching.

If you're interested in learning more information about Max Higbee Center and their programs, please visit their website at Maxhigbee.org. Here you will find their monthly calendars, program descriptions and more photos! To sign up, please call Hallie Hemmingsen at (360) 733-1828.



Shae tests her egg drop contraption during a science experiment at DayTime Drop-in.



MHC members created a melted crayon masterpiece during arts and crafts at DayTime Drop-in.





Hilary and Levin enjoy rock wall climbing and spin class during 365 Fitness.

MEET ARC BOARD MEMBER JENNY MARTIN

Board Member Jenny Martin has Lived in Bellingham since 2009. Her first job here was at Max Higbee Center, and she quickly fell in love with the job--so much so that she hasn't been able to leave! Jenny has worked at Max Higbee as a Recreation Leader, co-interim Executive Director with Hallie and now Event Planner for three years. Jenny has also been a live-in caregiver for one of the members for two years. The center has become a part of her Bellingham family, and she continues to work with the members to create community and fundraising events that incorporate the wishes of the people the events benefit! The new 365 Fitness program was created with the intention of an annual race that members could use as a target fitness goal, and it has been such a delight to watch members train for and conquer our annual 5K race (February 15th, see below)!

Jenny's community involvement has led her to collaborate and work with numerous other non-profits around town, including Marianne's House, Kulshan Community Land Trust, Bellingham Parks & Recreation, RE Sources, the Volunteer Center of Whatcom County, Whatcom Horticultural Society and more. In Jenny's own words "Bellingham is such an amazing place to be if you are a nonprofit--it is such a joy to watch how so many agencies and local businesses in one small community can work together towards a common good."



Jenny (left) with Hallie Hemmingsen, Executive Director of Max Higbee Center

Jenny has served on The Arc's Board of Directors for almost two years now. "Being on the Board has helped me put roots down in Whatcom County. It's great to be involved in an organization that makes such a positive impact in our community," she says.

Jenny's next personal goal is to "create a summer cycling club with my friends with physical and developmental disabilities. How fun would it be to meet once a month to discover new trails that accommodate adaptive cycles?!"

If you or someone you know is interested in joining The Arc's Board of Directors, please contact Beverly Porter at beverlyp@arcwhatcom.org or (360) 715-0170, ext. 306. We are looking for other passionate people, like Jenny, who want to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities.

"Zombies Have Hearts, Too" 5K RUN, WALK & ROLL To benefit Max Highee Center

Sunday, February 15th @ Bloedel Donovan Park 2214 Electric Ave, Bellingham Registration and face painting opens at 8am. Walkers and runners start at 10am.

For more info, email Jenny at mhc.eventplanner@gmail.com or call 360-333-4285. Or visit www.maxhigbee.org/zombies-have-hearts-too-5k-runwalk.html.





For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

The Parent Coalition

The Arc of Whatcom County provides leadership support for individuals with developmental disabilities and their parents/guardians. The goal of the Parent Coalition is to enable persons with developmental disabilities and their parents/guardians to become effective and involved in accessing services.

The Parent Coalition newsletter is published monthly by:

The Arc of Whatcom County
Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road
Bellingham, WA 98225
(360) 715-0170
www.arcwhatcom.org
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Stay Connected

Online Community Calendar: Visit The Arc's online calendar at www.arcwhatcom.org/events.html.

Facebook: Visit our FB page: www. facebook.com/ArcWhatcom for the latest information and events.

E-alerts: The Parent Coalition emails updates on legislation, workshops and upcoming activities. To sign up, visit www.arcwhatcom.org or email monicab@arcwhatcom.org.



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DID YOU KNOW?

Schools destroy records after 7 years, so when your child leaves school, be sure to ask for his or her special education records. Having these records can be critical to be eligible to receive adult services later in life!





The Arc of Whatcom County Dan Godwin Community Center 2602 McLeod Road Bellingham, WA 98225 Nonprofit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Bellingham, WA Permit No. 124

Event Calendar

February 2015

9 Monday, 7-8:30pm Parent to Parent Support Meeting

Fisher Elementary School 501 N. 14th Street, Lynden Contact Christine: 255-2056, ext 1

12 Thursday, 11am-7pm I Heart Camp TEAM (see page 4 for details)

13 Friday, 12-1:30pm Autism Support Group

The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center 2602 McLeod Road Contact Monica: 715-0170, ext 303

15 Sunday, 8am Zombies Have Hearts, Too 5K (see page 7 for details)

16 Monday, 6-8pm Spin Dance

Senior Center, 315 Halleck Street Contact Amanda: 778-7000

17 Tuesday, 6–8pm PC Workshop: Special Needs Trusts The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center 2602 McLeod Road Contact Monica: 715-0170, ext 303 18 Wednesday, 6–8:30pm P2P: Embracing Technology Workshop (see page 5 for details)

19 Thursday, 11:30am-1pm SEPAC Meeting

Bellingham Public Schools District Office 1306 Dupont Street, Room 212 Contact the District Office: 360-676-6400

19 Thursday, 7-8:30pm Autism 202: Medication Management (see page 4 for details)

21 Saturday, 6–7pm People First Meeting 114 W Magnolia, Suite 106 Contact Susan: 738-2060

25 Wednesday, 5:30-6:30pm The Arc's Board of Directors Meeting The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center 2602 McLeod Road Contact Beverly: 715-0170, ext 306

NOTE: All listed events are in Bellingham unless otherwise noted. More events are listed on The Arc's community calendar: www.arcwhatcom.org/events.html.

Save the Date: Whatcom County Transition Fair

Wednesday, March 25, 9am - 12:30pm St. Luke's Health Education Center 3333 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham



The Transition Fair is for students with disabilities, families, educators and interested community members. Middle and high school aged students and their families are encouraged to attend. Come and learn about housing options, recreation, advocacy, employment and vocational supports, guardianship, community/tech Colleges, Social Security, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) and more!

For more info, contact: Whatcom County DD Program: 360-676-6724 ext. #32014.