

## Back to School Resources: ADA and more



### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Fact Sheet

#### ADA is...

A federal civil rights law passed in 1990. It prohibits disability discrimination by the state and federal government, including in schools. It also applies to private schools and workplaces, and to any space that offers goods and services to the public. ADA covers people of all ages.

#### ADA protects people who...

Have a disability. This means any physical or mental condition that substantially limits a major life activity, which can include reading, learning or concentrating.

#### The law is very broad

- It covers almost all conditions. That includes learning and attention issues like dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and ADHD, and conditions that often co-occur, like anxiety.
- It also covers people who are discriminated against because they're *perceived* to have a disability even if they don't.

#### ADA requires the government, schools, businesses and public spaces to...

Provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities so they can have equal access to these different areas of life. Accommodations can be anything from text in audio format to a wheelchair ramp.

However, an accommodation isn't required if it causes an undue hardship or a fundamental alteration to what a school, program or business is offering.

##### Public K–12 schools

ADA applies to public schools. But the special education law IDEA and the disability law Section 504 may provide more protection for both students and parents.

##### Private schools and colleges

ADA and Section 504 offer similar protections here. But ADA also applies to private schools that don't get federal funding, like trade schools.

##### Workplaces

The law applies to businesses with 15 or more employees. However, it doesn't guarantee a job for people with disabilities. An employee must be qualified for the position.

##### Public spaces

ADA covers any space that offers goods or services to the public, like stores, hotels and museums. That includes websites. It doesn't apply to religious organizations or private clubs.

#### What to do when there's disability discrimination

If someone believes they've been discriminated against because of a disability, they can file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (workplace), the U.S. Department of Education (school) or the U.S. Department of Justice (public space). They also have the option to file a lawsuit in court.



For accurate and reliable information about special education law and advocacy for children with disabilities visit

[www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)



The Office of the Education Ombuds hosts webinars called "Ask an Ombuds" to help families, schools, and community professionals stay up to date on best practices and recent education policy changes. To submit questions to an upcoming webinar or to view past webinars, visit <http://www.oeo.wa.gov/>

Are you interested in learning more about IEPs and special education? See page 4 for information about our **IEP Parent Partner Training** to be held on Saturday, September 15th.



# Washington ABLE Savings Plan

## What's the Washington State ABLE Savings Plan?

The Washington State ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) Savings Plan was established this year as a way to save for qualified disability expenses, invest for the future, and keep the benefits you rely on every day. This unique Federal and State program provides eligible residents and their families a tax advantaged account that they can use to save for the resources, support, and services they need. The goal is to empower everyone with an eligible disability to make decisions with their money, which can positively impact their health, independence, and quality of life, and help them prepare for the future.

## Opening an account

You can open an ABLE account online in as little as 10 minutes. You'll add a goal and allocate money. You can save your money in a cash option and/or invest it into a stocks and bonds option. If you decide to invest it, you'll need to put at least 10% of your monies into an investment option. The choice is up to you. There's a \$25 minimum deposit to start off your account and a \$10 minimum for any contribution or withdrawal after that.

If you're an Authorized Legal Representative (ALR), you can open an account if you are able to demonstrate that you have been designated as the Power of Attorney, Legal Guardian, or Conservator for the beneficiary. If the beneficiary is under the age of 18, the ALR can also be a parent.

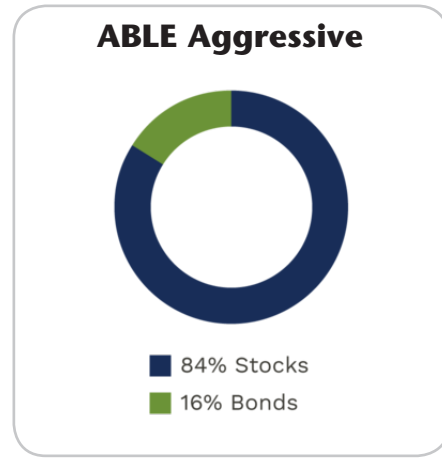
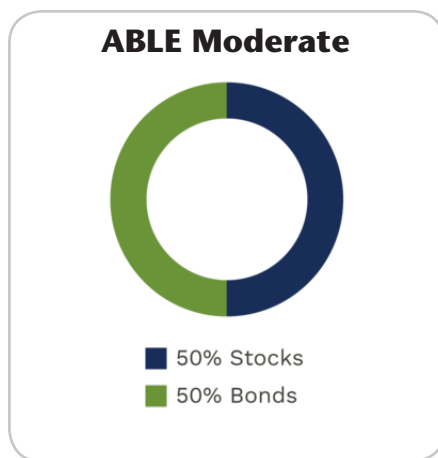
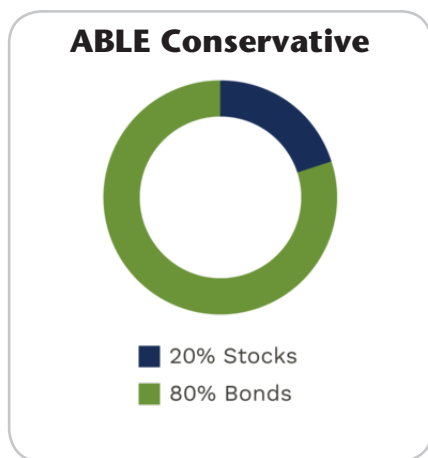
## Who is eligible to open a Washington State ABLE Account?

To be eligible for an ABLE Account you must....

- Have a confirmed disability or blindness that developed before the age of 26 that will last at least a year
- Be a U.S. citizen or legal resident living in the state of Washington

## Picking an investment option

There are three types of financial portfolios to pick from: ABLE Conservative, ABLE Moderate, or ABLE Aggressive. Each investment option has its own benefits and limitations. It's up to you to decide which one is right for you.



## Adding money

Your bank account is securely connected to your ABLE account to protect your information. You can add as little as \$10 at a time whenever you want, or every month with recurring contributions to help you reach the yearly maximum (\$15,000 for 2018, or more if the beneficiary is earning wages from employment). Friends and family can also add to an account by making gift contributions. Best of all, your benefits won't be affected, including your Supplemental Security Income (SSI) as long as the account balance stays below \$100,000.

**How can I get more information about or help with opening a Washington State ABLE Savings Account?** <https://www.washingtonstateable.com> (844) 600-2253 or (844) 888-2253 (TTY)

Open your account: <https://www.washingtonstateable.com/gateway>

ABLE National Resource Center website: <http://www.ablenrc.org/about/what-are-able-accounts>



# Parent to Parent

## Parent Support Meeting

A confidential meeting for parents and caregivers of children with developmental delays, disabilities and ongoing health care needs

### Q & A: Back-to-School

*Tips for Parents of Children with Special Needs*



**7 pm - 8:30 pm Monday, September 10**  
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center  
2602 McLeod Rd. Bellingham

*Free on-site child care is provided to those who contact us by Friday September 7th. For special accommodations and interpreting services, please contact us 3 weeks in advance. Contact us at (360) 715-0170 ext 302 or p2p@arcwhatcom.org*

## Kaleidoscope Play and Learn Groups

Wednesday & Friday  
September 12 – November 16th\*

10:05 – 11:05am

Lecture Room, Bellingham Central Library

\*No class Sept 26th & 28th

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn groups help families prepare their children ages 3 to age 5, who are not in preschool, for success in school and life. This program supports family members at free weekly facilitated playgroups. Siblings welcome!



For more information about Kaleidoscope Play & Learn and locations/dates throughout Whatcom County, please visit

<https://www.ccanorthwest.org/kpl/>

**A fun filled event for brothers and sisters of kids with developmental differences, delays, and ongoing health care needs.**

**Join us for an afternoon of Bowling & Pizza**



**11 - 1:30 pm, Saturday, September 29**  
Mt. Baker Lanes and Coconut Kenny's Pizza  
1788 Labounty Drive, Ferndale

This sibshop is offered for siblings ages 8 -16  
Mentor siblings welcome.

**Limited spots available!** Please RSVP by Monday September 24. If this is your child's first time, please arrive 10 minutes early to fill out our Sibshop Form. Contact us at p2p@arcwhatcom.org or (360)715-0170 ext 302 with any questions or to RSVP for your child.

## Be Your Child's Advocate

It takes a lot of hard work to see that your child gets the services and education he or she needs. No one knows your child better than you do, so when it comes to making decisions regarding their education, it's important to speak up and ensure that their needs are being met. Remember, your child has a right to participate and be included like any other student. Would they benefit from an inclusive classroom? Do they need a full time aide parts of the day or only during certain times of the day?

Organizations such as Parent to Parent, Parent Coalition, and Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment (wapave.org) will help you learn how to advocate. In addition, the Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO) resolves complaints, disputes, and problems between families and public schools. 1-866-297-2597; oeo.wa.gov.

*Excerpted from Informing Families Spring 2018 Newsletter, <http://www.informingfamilies.org>*

# Community Events

## **Advanced Helping Parent Training: IEP Parent Partners Program**

*Hosted by:*  
*Parent Coalition and Parent to Parent*  
**10am-2pm, Saturday, September 15**  
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center  
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham



- Do you want to learn more about IEPs and special education?
- Are you interested in helping other families prepare for and navigate the IEP process?
- The IEP Parent Partners Program is a program that trains and matches an IEP Parent Partner with a parent wanting support at their child's IEP meeting.

*RSVP at (360) 715-0170 ext 303 or [parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org)*

## **Parent Coalition Workshop**

### **Topic: Housing**

**6-8pm, Tuesday, October 16**  
The Arc's Dan Godwin  
Community Center  
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham



Learn about housing options and resources from a knowledgeable panel of adults with developmental disabilities, families, and professionals.

*Questions? Contact us at (360) 715-0170 ext 303 or [parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org)*

## **Square Pegs Adult Autistic Meetup Group**

**11 - 2pm, Sunday, September 23**  
**11 - 2pm, Sunday, October 28**  
Community Food Co-op Connections Building  
405 E Holly St, Bellingham

Square Pegs is a peer-support and social group for adults (18+) who identify as being on the autism spectrum or as having Asperger's syndrome.

*Questions? Contact Kenn at [kenn.jones1@gmail.com](mailto:kenn.jones1@gmail.com) Visit <https://www.meetup.com/Squarepegs/> and look for "Bellingham Meeting"*

## **Autism 200 Series**

### **7-8:30pm, Thursday, September 20** **Autism 208: Hiding in Plain Sight: Girls With Autism Spectrum Disorder**

ASD is disproportionately diagnosed in males over females, possibly because of genetic and neurological protective effects but also because of biases in the way in which clinicians and the community view autism as a "male" disorder. In this presentation, we will review the recent research on females with ASD and focus on females with ASD from a cultural, clinical and neurological perspective. We will discuss how ASD may present differently in females compared to males, identify the challenges detecting ASD in females and identify the unique strengths and supports for females with ASD.

### **7-8:30pm, Thursday, October 18** **Autism 209: Let's Talk About AAC and Autism Spectrum Disorder**

Many children with ASD face challenges communicating. Luckily, communication is more than the words we speak. The goal of alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) is to provide alternatives to talking out loud or provide tools to verbal communication to help a child find the power of their voice. This presentation will focus on current trends in AAC technology as well as tools, goals and teaching techniques that are available for different types of communicators.

*Autism 200 is a series of classes for those who wish to better understand autism spectrum disorder. View the livestream at <http://www.seattlechildrens.org/classes-community/current-class-offerings/autism-200-series/>*



**Seattle Children's**  
HOSPITAL • RESEARCH • FOUNDATION



## Buddy Walk Planning Committee Meeting

**5-6:30pm, Wednesday, September 5**  
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center  
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham

We would love your input and support as we work to make this year's Buddy Walk better than ever! This is the final meeting before the Buddy Walk in October. *For more info, call (360) 715-0170, ext. 200, or [BuddyWalk@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:BuddyWalk@arcwhatcom.org).*

## Adaptive Aquatics

Arne Hanna Aquatic Center  
1114 Potter Street, Bellingham

### Session 1

Tuesdays, Oct 9-30  
Wednesdays, Oct 10-31  
Thursdays, Oct 11-Nov 1

### Session 2

Tuesdays, Nov 6-Dec 4  
Wednesdays, Nov 7-Dec 5  
Thursdays, Nov 8-Dec 6

**Time: 5:15-6:00pm (No classes November 20-22)**

A time for individuals, 3 years or older, with special needs to get in the water and work one-on-one with a volunteer for 45 minutes followed by 15 minutes in the hydrotherapy pool. Participants will be working toward meeting the goals including increasing swim skills, flexibility, exercising and having fun. *Call (360) 778-7665 for additional information.*



## My Way Matinee: Sensory-Friendly Films

These shows will be presented with the lights turned up and the sound turned down to accommodate those guests who may need a less intense viewing experience and are specifically for those guests who may need more freedom of movement or expression when enjoying a film.

**Films are at 10:30am on one Saturday per month.**  
<https://www.regmovies.com/promotions/my-way-matinee>

Barkley Village Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX  
3005 Cinema Place, Bellingham, (360) 527-1320



## S.P.I.N. Dance

**6 - 8pm, Monday, Sept. 17 Theme: Sports Night**  
**6 - 8pm, Monday, Oct. 15 Theme: Halloween Costume**  
Bellingham Senior Center, 315 Halleck St.

At the SPIN Dances, you can always count on lively music provided by local bands or DJ's, a healthy snack at intermission, and FANTASTIC company!

Call Amanda: (360) 778-7000 or visit <http://www.maxhigbee.org/spin-dances.html>



## Ferndale Toddler Time Starts September 26

Wednesdays, 10am – 11:30am\*  
Ferndale American Legion Hall  
5534 2nd Avenue, Ferndale

\*Closed the 2nd Wednesday of the month

This is a busy drop-in play and socialization opportunity. Families who come can expect to have activities that excite and challenge all areas of development. Parental supervision is required. Donations of \$2 per child or \$5 per family requested to cover our program costs.

For more information, please call Sue at (360) 671-3660.

<http://www.wcel.net/ferndale-toddler-time/>



Whatcom Center  
for Early Learning

## Self - Advocacy Group Meeting

**4:30-6:30pm, Thursday, September 6**  
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center  
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham

**Topic: Nutrition and Healthy Food Options**

Our Self-Advocacy group focuses on various aspects of self-advocacy through group meetings, individual skill building, involvement in legislative advocacy, and providing outreach and awareness in our community. Self-advocates are able to practice their skills and abilities to speak up for themselves and others who may need support. *Visit <http://arcwhatcom.org/wp/programs/self-advocacy/>, call 360-715-0170 or email [selfadvocacy@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:selfadvocacy@arcwhatcom.org)*

# Max Higbee After-School Program

## Program Overview:

This inclusive after-school program runs the length of the Bellingham School District school year, Monday-Friday 3:30pm-5:30pm. Activities include visiting parks, participating in sports, learning new skills and connecting with peers in our Community Access Program, as well as a number of in-house activities. It serves as an opportunity for participants to unwind and connect with friends through a variety of fun experiences. Parents and guardians can finish their workdays with the peace of mind, knowing participants are in a safe and stimulating environment.

## Getting Started:

Want to join programs and start engaging in fun, community-based activities with friends? Here is how:

1. Fill out a Member Profile Form which you can find on [maxhigbee.org](http://maxhigbee.org) by clicking "Getting Started" under the "Members" tab. If you need a paper version of the form, call Jordan at (360) 306-1977.
2. Complete a 30-45 minute orientation with Jordan. Schedule with her by calling (360) 306-1977 or emailing [Jordan.maxhigbee@gmail.com](mailto:Jordan.maxhigbee@gmail.com)
3. Start coming to programs to meet friends and have fun in the community!

## Program Cost & Financial Aid:

At the Max Higbee Center, you only pay for the programs you attend. Each program has an associated fee. After School Program, for example, costs \$5 per day. Staff will keep attendance throughout the month and will send you a bill via mail or email at the end of the month according to attendance. We want all people to have access to quality recreational programming! If you qualify for respite hours through the Developmental Disability Administration, we can send the bill to DDA to pay for Max Higbee Center programs. Additionally, we provide partial or full financial aid to all individuals who need financial assistance to attend programs. No paperwork, proof of disability, or proof of income is required. Simply call 360-733-1828 or email [maxhigbee@gmail.com](mailto:maxhigbee@gmail.com) to set up financial aid.

## Transportation:

Members of the Max Higbee Center are required to provide their own transportation to and from programs. If specialized school bus transportation is a part of the student's IEP, contact the student's school counselor or teacher to set Max Higbee Center as the drop-off location. As a student can only have one drop-off location, guardians will have to arrange other transportation for days that members do not plan to attend After School Program. Call Bellingham School District Transportation at (360) 676-6546 for more information.

***"It's good. We do art. I got to lead a kickball day. Are we doing that today? I want to do that again!" - Kodie***

***"It's a fun program, because I get to hang out with my friends. We go listen to live music at Out of the Ashes and go to the dollar store together." - Phin***



# Buddy Walk



## Buddy Walk Celebrates 15 years!

Noon-3pm, Sunday, October 7th  
Depot Market Square, Bellingham

Visit [www.arcwhatcom.org](http://www.arcwhatcom.org) for details

Register by Sept. 14th to guarantee your 2018

Buddy Walk T-Shirt!\*

Registrations received and paid in full by **September 14th** are guaranteed a T-shirt, a lower registration price, and are eligible for early T-shirt pick up between October 3 - 5 (10am - 2pm). **If you come pick up your shirt early, you do not need to check in at the event.**

Register and start your fundraising page for the 2018 Buddy Walk:

<https://give.classy.org/2018whatcomcountybuddywalk>

*Please note:* Scholarships are available to cover the cost of registration. If you would like to apply for a scholarship, please visit [www.arcwhatcom.org](http://www.arcwhatcom.org) and print off a paper copy of the registration form, or pick one up from our office. To receive a scholarship, you must apply by **September 14th**. Please fill out the registration form with all of your team member and participant information. Scholarship requests will be reviewed and you will be notified by the end of September.

### Ways you can continue to help....

1. Become a sponsor or connect with businesses for sponsorship opportunities.
2. Make a cash donation to Down syndrome Outreach:
  - <https://give.classy.org/2018whatcomcountybuddywalk>
  - Donate through The Arc's website at [arcwhatcom.org](http://arcwhatcom.org). Note on your donation that the funds are in support of Buddy Walk.
3. Join our Planning Committee: September 5, 5:30 - 7pm  
Meetings located at Arc of Whatcom County, 2602 McLeod Rd.
4. Volunteers are needed on the day of the event to help set up, give directions, hand out info, and more. Email [buddywalk@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:buddywalk@arcwhatcom.org).

Down syndrome Outreach is a program of The Arc of Whatcom County a 501(c)3 Organization (Federal Tax ID #311579359).

*For more information about registration, volunteering, or sponsorship, contact 360-715-0170 ext 200 or [buddywalk@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:buddywalk@arcwhatcom.org). This event is being held in an accessible location and sign language interpretation is provided.*



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](http://www.arcwhatcom.org)

#### OFFICE HOURS:

10am-1pm Monday - Friday

#### Newsletter Production Staff:

Melissa Abraham, Karlene Umbaugh,  
Monica Burke, Mt. Baker High School students  
and volunteers

Executive Director: Beverly Porter

Program Director: Monica Burke

Care & Resource Coordinator:

Mary Jo Durborrow

DSO & Self Advocacy: Jessika Houston

P2P Coordinator: Karlene Umbaugh

P2P Parent Assistant: Melissa Abraham

Padres a Padres: Marta Mejia

#### Board of Directors

Emily Shiels, President;

Susan Larson, Vice President;

Dale Whipple, Secretary; Michelle

Karaffa, Barbara Roxas, Luke Phifer

### Stay Connected

#### Online Community Calendar:

Visit The Arc's website at [www.arcwhatcom.org](http://www.arcwhatcom.org) and click on Events.

**Facebook:** Visit our FB page: [www.facebook.com/ArcWhatcom](http://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](http://www.arcwhatcom.org) or email [monicab@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:monicab@arcwhatcom.org).



PARTNER AGENCY

*The Parent Coalition is funded by grants from the  
Developmental Disabilities Program of Whatcom County,  
the United Way and your generous donations.*





Make a Difference!

**DONATE**

Support The Arc of Whatcom County by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards card to our organization by visiting <https://www.fredmeyer.com>. Make sure to update your non profit selection each July.



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you! Visit <https://smile.amazon.com/>



Jessika Houston, our Self Advocacy and Down syndrome Outreach Coordinator will be on extended family leave beginning in August. Please see below for how to contact each program.

#### Self Advocacy

[selfadvocacy@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:selfadvocacy@arcwhatcom.org)  
(360) 715-0170

#### Down syndrome Outreach:

[DsO@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:DsO@arcwhatcom.org)  
(360) 715-0170 ext 304

#### 2018 Buddy Walk

[buddywalk@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:buddywalk@arcwhatcom.org)  
(360) 715-0170 ext 200

# Event Calendar

## September

**5 Wednesday, 5:30 - 7pm**  
**Buddy Walk Planning Committee**

*see page 7 for more details*

**6 Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30pm**  
**Self Advocacy Meeting**  
**Topic: Nutrition and Healthy Food Choices**

*see page 5 for more details*

**9 Sunday 10am - noon**  
**Bellingham Independents**  
**Special Olympics Bowling Starts**  
**20th Century Bowl**

*contact LaVonne: (360) 441-2624*

**10 Monday, 7 - 8:30pm**  
**Parent Support Meeting**

*see page 3 for more details*

**14 Friday**  
**Pre-Registration for**  
**Buddy Walk Ends**

*see page 7 for more details*

**15 Saturday, 10am - 2pm**  
**IEP Parent Partner Workshop**

*see page 4 for more details*

**17 Monday, 6 - 8pm**  
**SPIN DANCE**

**Theme: Sports Night**

*see page 5 for more details*

**18 Tuesday 3:30 - 5pm**  
**ICC At-Large Meeting**

*contact Melissa:*

[melissaa@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:melissaa@arcwhatcom.org)

**20 Thursday, 7 - 8:30pm**  
**Autism 200 Series**

*see page 4 for more details*

**26 Wednesday 5:30 - 6:30pm**  
**Arc of Whatcom County**  
**Board Meeting**

*contact Beverly:*

[beverlyp@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:beverlyp@arcwhatcom.org)

**29 Saturday 11am - 1:30pm**  
**Sibshop!**

*see page 3 for more details*

## October

**4 Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30pm**  
**Self Advocacy Meeting**

**7 Sunday, 12 - 3pm**

**Buddy Walk**

**Depot Market Square**

*see page 7 for more details*

**8 Monday, 7-8:30pm**  
**Parent Support Meeting**

*see page 3 for more details*

**15 Monday, 6 - 8pm**

**SPIN DANCE**

**Theme: Halloween Costume**

*see page 5 for more details*

**16 Tuesday, 6:30 - 8:30pm**  
**Parent Coalition Workshop**  
**"Ask the Advocate"**

**Topic: Housing**

*see page 4 for more details*

**18 Thursday, 7 - 8:30pm**  
**Autism 200 Series**

*see page 4 for more details*

**24 Wednesday 5:30 - 6:30pm**  
**Arc of Whatcom County**  
**Board Meeting**

*contact Beverly at*

[beverlyp@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:beverlyp@arcwhatcom.org)

**27 Friday, 8am - 4 pm**  
**Fragile X & Down syndrome**  
**Live Tele-conference**

**Hillcrest Chapel Community**  
**Room, 1400 Larrabee Ave**

*Register at: <https://give.fragilex.org/educatewashington2018>*

Our full community events calendar can be found  
at [arcwhatcom.org/wp/events/](https://arcwhatcom.org/wp/events/)