

Assisting Voters with Disabilities: What You Should Know

Voting is a fundamental right. Voters with disabilities have the right to assistance in voting and are entitled to receive any assistance they need to cast their ballots. Only a Superior Court can declare a person unable to vote due to mental incompetency and therefore unable to vote. Do not assume that a person under guardianship due to their mental capacity is ineligible to vote. A guardian may not vote on behalf of a person under guardianship, and power of attorney does not extend to voting.

Who may assist a voter?

Federal law gives voters with disabilities the right to decide whether to get assistance in casting a ballot and who will provide it. The only people who may not assist a voter are the voter's employer or an agent of that employer, or, if the voter is a member of a union, a union officer or agent of the union.

What can assistance providers do to help a person vote?

- First, an assistance provider or helper should ask the voter what choice he or she wants to make.
- The helper must respect the voter's privacy at all times during the voting process.
- The helper should be familiar with the instructions on how to cast a ballot and be prepared to explain them to the voter and/or demonstrate the voting process.
- The helper may mark a ballot for a voter with a disability only if the voter has directed him or her to do so.
- After the ballot has been completed, the helper should make sure that it accurately reflects the voter's choices. The helper should offer to correct any mistakes and to check the ballot for any election contests or questions that may have been missed.

What actions would not be appropriate?

- Making decisions for the voter—for example, marking or changing a ballot to reflect a choice other than a choice expressed by the voter. Everyone has the right to choose whether or not to vote on each contest.
- Communicating with the voter in a way that makes the voter feel forced to make certain choices.
- ***The assistant protects the voter's privacy.***

If you have any problems providing assistance on Election Day, you can call Election Protection at 1-866-OUR-VOTE (1-866-687-8683).



Whatcom County Auditor's Office

311 Grand Avenue, Suite 103
Bellingham, WA 98227-0369
Office Hours: 8:30am - 4:30pm

An accessible voting unit is equipped with visual and audio technology that allows a voter with impaired or no vision to vote independently. The accessible voting unit will be available at the Whatcom County Auditor's Office on the following dates:

When: Oct 17 - Nov 5 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Nov 6 (Election Day) 8:30 am - 8:00 pm

Call the Election Division of the County Auditor's office at (360) 778-5102 with any questions. Visit <http://www.whatcomcounty.us/1574/Elections>

Get Informed!

The Arc of Washington State sends a Developmental Disabilities Questionnaire to each Legislative candidate. You can view candidates responses at: http://arcwa.org/index.php/takeaction/washingtonstate/2018_candidates_questionnaires/2018_legislative_candidates/

The League of Women Voters of Bellingham/Whatcom County hosted candidate forums for local candidates. You can view the forums at: <https://www.lwvbellinghamwhatcom.org/>

Parent Coalition

Housing

Finding affordable housing is a challenge that many Americans face, especially in urban settings. This task is especially daunting for people with disabilities, many of whom rely on government assistance programs as their sole income if they're unemployed and who earn significantly less (on average) than people without disabilities if they are employed.



\$763

National average for Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

\$861

National average monthly rent for a basic one-bedroom apartment

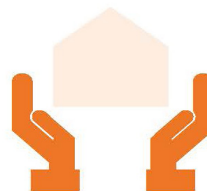


RENT BURDENED:
Those that pay more than 40% of their income

WORST CASE NEEDS:
Households that pay more than 50% of their income for housing costs and/or live in seriously substandard housing

(Source: Schaak et al., 2017)

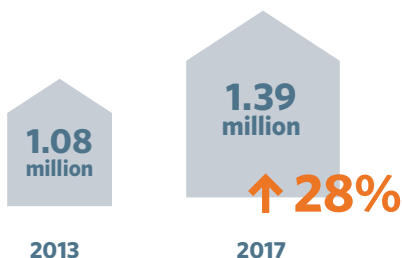
Living at home



71%

of all individuals with I/DD received residential care and supports from family members and caregivers

Worst case needs households that included a non-elderly person with disabilities



(Source: Schaak et al., 2017
Worst Case Housing Needs Report to Congress 2017)

369,081

total homeless individuals

living emergency shelters, transitional housing, on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation identified in the 2017 AHAR

86,962 were chronically homeless

A person is considered chronically homeless if they have a disability and if they have been continuously homeless for one year or more or have experienced at least four episodes of homelessness adding up to at least 12 months in the last three years.

(Source: Henry et al., 2017)



The annual publication State of the States in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities reports that in 2015:

680,851

individuals with I/DD lived in out-of-home settings

Source: Braddock et al., 2017

50%

lived in supported living and/or person assistance settings



HOUSING LAB

TUESDAYS 10:00AM-NOON
625 CORNWALL AVE, BELLINGHAM, WA 98225

WHAT WE CAN DO

- Complete a housing needs assessment and action plan with a housing advocate
- Assist individuals in their housing search
- Help creating renters portfolios, develop letters of explanation
- Referrals to community resources as needed
- Provide assistance with housing retention
- Help navigating tenant landlord laws
- Help with coordinating relocations
- Offer roommate and/or landlord mediation

HELP US HELP YOU

Try to show up at 10:00 on Tuesdays to 625 Cornwall as prepared as you can be. If you have access please bring information on your rental history and information on any sources of income you have.

CONTACTS:

jonathan_amos@whatcomhsc.org, 360-255-2091 x 136

cheri_cariveau@whatcomhsc.org, 360-255-2091 x 136

adrienne_solenberger@whatcomhsc.org, 360-603-0377

Parent to Parent

County Parent Support Meeting

Topic: Resource Sharing



We will share knowledge, resources, provide support and guidance. Has there been a resource that has helped you? A book, website, or helpful tip you think others will benefit from? Please bring a resource to share with the group.

**Monday,
November 5
7 pm - 8:30 pm**

Fisher Elementary School
501 N. 14th Street, Lynden

Question?

p2p@arcwhatcom.org
360-715-0170 ext 302

We offer free on site child supervision for family members during our meetings by our trained Super Sitters. Please RSVP for care by Friday, November 2nd.

New Family Social

For families with children birth to 5

**10:30-11:30am, Thursday,
November 15**

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



Do you care for a child with special needs and maybe feeling isolation? Are you adjusting to a new diagnosis for your child? Are you looking for more information about services and resources in our community? The purpose of this group is to provide an atmosphere of mutual trust and support. All families who have a child 5 and under who has been diagnosed with a developmental delay, disability or medical condition are welcome to join us. We will have coffee, tea, and light snacks to enjoy while talking to others that understand. Very casual, children are welcome. We are in an enclosed area with toys for the children.

Holiday Craft Sibshop!



1 - 3pm, Saturday, December 15
The Arc's Dan Godwin
Community Center
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham

Sibshops are fun filled events for brothers and sisters of kids with developmental differences, delays, and on-going health care needs. Join us for our Holiday Craft Sibshop. We will be decorating treats, making holiday themed crafts, and listening to festive music! This sibshop is offered for siblings ages 6 -12.



Please RSVP by Monday Dec 10, at p2p@arcwhatcom.org or (360) 715-0170 ext 302

**Please join us for our Annual
Parent to Parent**

Holiday Party

Join us for crafts, fun activities, photos with Santa and much more!



Saturday, December 8

Bloedel Donovan Park

Large Multipurpose Gym

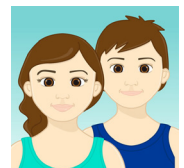
2214 Electric Avenue, Bellingham

There are 2 time slots families are welcome to join:
Families of a child with special needs ages birth to seven are invited from: **12 noon to 1:30 pm**
Families of a child with special needs ages eight and up from: **1:30 pm - 3 pm**

**Beverages will be provided. Please bring your favorite healthy potluck dish to share.*

Parent Reviews: Puberty Clues App

"I recommend checking out this app 'Puberty Clues'. Simplistic, but effective. My daughter and I sat down and went through it, she didn't get scared (which has happened in the past) and was excited to move on to the next category. There are mini games that she plays which also teaches her how to care for herself. I love this app!!"



Community Events

Parent Coalition Workshop

Topic: Guardianship

6-8pm, Tuesday, November 20

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

- Guardianship & Alternatives to Guardianship
 - Power of Attorney
 - Supported Decision Making
 - New Reporting Rules
 - How to know if Guardianship is appropriate
- For questions, contact us at (360) 715-0170 ext 303 or parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org

Self - Advocacy Group Meeting

4:30-6:30pm, Thursday, November 1

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

Topic: Community Living

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. Visit <http://arcwhatcom.org/wp/programs/self-advocacy/>, call 360-715-0170 or email selfadvocacy@arcwhatcom.org



Familias Latinas Art Night!

5-7pm, Friday, Nov 9

Pace' Atelier Art Studio
3815 Bakerview Spur
Bellingham (building #2)

Come and share with other

Latino families of children with developmental delays or disabilities and ongoing health care needs. There will be fun, support, ceramic, paint, plasticine and more. No experience is needed and the event is free! Everybody is welcome!

For information or to confirm attendance call (360) 715-0170 ext 308 or email at familia@p2pwhatcom.org

Autism 200 Series

7-8:30pm, Thursday, November 15

Autism 210: We Are All in This Together: Finding Common Ground Between Autistic and Parent Advocates – A Panel Discussion

Autism 200 is a series of 90-minute classes for parents and caregivers of children with autism who wish to better understand autism spectrum disorder.

View at <http://www.seattlechildrens.org/classes-community/current-class-offerings/autism-200-series/>

My Way Matinee: Sensory-Friendly Films

Get the movie theatre experience, but with lower sound and brighter lights. Movies start at 10:30am on 1 Saturday per month. For the movie schedule, visit <https://www.regmovies.com/promotions/my-way-matinee>



Washington Hands & Voices

Family Meet & Greet

For families of deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing children and their friends to meet one another and have fun!

All Communications are Welcome!

Light snacks and fun activities will be provided

For questions & RSVP: Christine Griffin gbys@wahandsnadvoices.org (425) 268-7087
For more information about Washington Hands & Voices www.wahandsandvoices.org



Birth to 7 years old
Sunday Oct. 21, 2018
10am-12pm
Food Co-op Roots
Community Room
315 Westerly Rd
Bellingham, WA 98226



All ages
Thursday Dec. 20, 2018
11am-2pm
Ferndale Library
2125 Main St.
Ferndale, WA 98248



Birth to 7 years old
Saturday, Feb. 9, 2019
10am-12pm
Maritime Heritage Park
Pavilion
500 W Holly St
Bellingham, WA 98225

Thank you to our co-sponsors: Whatcom Educational Credit Union, Bellingham Parks & Rec and volunteers from the NSSLHA chapter at WWU for making these events possible

Get to Know The Arc Volunteer Orientation



5:30-6:30pm, Thursday, November 8
The Arc's Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham

Have you been considering getting involved and just need a little nudge? Then this fun and quick Volunteer Orientation is for you! There are so many exciting things happening at The Arc, and we would love for you to be a part of it. *For more information or to sign up, please call (360) 715-0170 or volunteer@arcwhatcom.org.*

Whatcom County Housing Panel



Housing is the foundation for a good life.

Tuesday, November 6, 2018

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

St. Luke's Health Education Center
3333 Squalicum Pkwy, Bellingham, WA

Please join us for an evening to discuss housing and independent living strategies for individual with developmental disabilities.

What resources are available and what can families expect?
What innovative strategies and solutions have families developed on their own?

Who will be there?

- Pam Blanton, Partners4Housing works to create housing opportunities for individuals with DD. Partners4housing.com
- Case managers from the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)

For more information contact:
Jessica Lee, Whatcom County DD Program
360-778-6047 jlee@co.whatcom.wa.us

RSVP appreciated, but no registration required.

Square Pegs Adult Autistic Meetup Group

11 - 2pm, Sunday November 25
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 Visit <https://www.meetup.com/Squarepegs/> and look for "Bellingham Meeting"

Ferndale Toddler Time

Tuesdays, 10am – 11:30am*
Ferndale American Legion Hall
5534 2nd Avenue, Ferndale
*Closed the 2nd Tuesday 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.

WCCEL is partnering with the Lynden Kaleidoscope Play & Learn classes on Wednesdays. Classes will follow the Lynden School district schedule and will be held at Lynden Academy (1986 Main Street, Lynden)

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



FACES Northwest 7th Annual Autism Awareness Music Benefit!

3-8pm, Saturday, November 3
Mountain Room at Boundary Bay Brewery
1107 Railroad Ave, Bellingham
Suggested \$5 donation at the door/kids are free

For more information visit www.facesnorthwest.com



Down syndrome Outreach

On Sunday, October 7th, Down syndrome Outreach held our 15th Annual Buddy Walk in downtown Bellingham at Depot Market Square. Despite a little bit of rain, there were over 400 people walking, celebrating, honoring, dancing and spreading awareness of Down syndrome! Inside of the building, kids were crafting, making posters, playing with Lego's and enjoying our sensory areas. With the help of over 75 volunteers, the event ran smoothly. Thanks so much to all of the families, friends, volunteers, and community supporting for this event. This day was made possible by all of the amazing sponsors, community partners, and donors!



THANK YOU!

Sponsors:

Bellingham Police
Cascade DAFO
City of Bellingham
Coppinger Carter P.S.
Neilson Bros.

Event Speakers:

Clifford Green
Beth Margolis
Gene Knutson

Photo Credit:

Christine Griffn

Snack Donations:

Boundary Bay
Frito-Lay
Starbucks

Table Sponsors:

Abili Trek
Inner Child Studios
Kids In Motion
Miss Whatcom County
Alyssa Sizemore

Food Trucks:

Tacos el Tule
Mobile Mouth Hole

Thank you to the 75 volunteers who came to the Buddy Walk. We could not of done it without you!

Self Advocacy

Are you a Representative Payee?

Some representative payees were recently notified of changes to their rep payee accounting responsibilities.

Who is not required to file a representative payee report? Due to a recent change in law, Social Security Administration (SSA) no longer require the following representative payees to complete an annual Representative Payee Report:

- Natural or adoptive parents of a minor child beneficiary who primarily reside in the same household as the child;
- Legal guardians of a minor child beneficiary who primarily reside in the same household as the child;
- Natural or adoptive parents of a disabled adult beneficiary who primarily reside in the same household as the beneficiary; and
- Spouse of a beneficiary.

Do I still need to keep financial records if I am not required to annually file the representative payee report? Yes, you are still required to keep records of how you spent or saved the payments, and make all records available for review if requested by SSA.

Further information is available online at Social Security Administration, <https://www.ssa.gov/payee/faqrep.htm>

Call Social Security

If you don't have access to the internet, SSA offer many automated services by telephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** or at our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**, if you're deaf or hard of hearing.

If you need to speak to a person, SSA can answer your calls from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. They ask for your patience during busy periods since you may experience a higher than usual rate of busy signals and longer hold times to speak to a staff member.

Unity Club at Western Washington University

6-7pm, Thursdays

Academic West, Room 205 (same room as last quarter)

WWU Campus

The WWU Unity Club is looking to have more people join! It is a great opportunity to expand connection with Western and meet new people. Meetings are once every 2 weeks. The WWU Unity Club is focused on closing the social barrier between people living with and without developmental disabilities in Whatcom County.

November 1 - Cookie Decorating

November 15 - Scavenger Hunt

November 29 - Thanksgiving Potluck and Games

Contact Chloe Rosenfiled at 206-909-6801 or rosenfc@wwu.edu or questions. Join the Unity Club Facebook page! (Search WWU Unity Club)



The Arc

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

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 Durborow

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 and click on Events.

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.



PARTNER AGENCY

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

Did you know?

The City of Bellingham is offering Home Rehabilitation Program Loans to individuals interested in turning their home into an Adult Family Home.

Who Qualifies?

- Individuals who own a home within the City limits of Bellingham, WA and occupy that home as their primary residence
- Homeowners who earn at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI); and will provide housing and care to adults who are in need of long-term care that qualify as low income (Medicaid recipients), in their primary residence or will provide childcare for families that qualify as low to moderate income (less than 80% AMI), in their primary residence.

For more information, visit <https://www.cob.org/services/housing/Pages/rehab-owners.aspx>

Youth Mental Health First Aid Class

8:30-5pm, Thursday, November 8
St. Luke's Health Education Center
3333 Squalicum Parkway

The Sendan Center is hosting a free Youth Mental Health First Aid Class for Bellingham Public Schools parents/guardians and staff. Space is limited and registration is required. Sign up at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/youth-mental-health-first-aid-tickets-50676751528>.

Jessika Houston, our Self Advocacy and Down syndrome Outreach Coordinator is currently on family leave. Please see below for how to contact each program.

Self Advocacy

selfadvocacy@arcwhatcom.org
(360) 715-0170

Down syndrome Outreach:

DsO@arcwhatcom.org
(360) 715-0170 ext 304

Event Calendar

November

1 Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30pm
Self Advocacy Meeting
see page 7 for more details

3 Saturday, -8:30pm
FACES Music Benefit
Fisher Elementary, Lynden
see page 3 for more details

5 Monday, 7-8:30pm
Parent Support Meeting
Fisher Elementary, Lynden
see page 3 for more details

6 Tuesday, 6-8pm
Housing Panel
St. Luke's Health
Education Center
see page 5 for more details

8 Thursday, 8:30-5pm
Youth Mental Health
First Aid Class
see left sidebar for more details

15 Thursday, 10:30-11:30am
New Family Social
see page 3 for more details

15 Thursday, 7 - 8:30pm
Autism 200 Series
see page 4 for more details

19 Monday, 6 - 8pm
SPIN DANCE
Theme: Favorite Movie Character
<http://www.maxhigbee.org/spin-dances.html>

20 Tuesday, 6 - 8pm
Parent Coalition Workshop
"Ask the Advocate"
Topic: Guardianship
see page 4 for more details

28 Wednesday 5:30 - 6:30pm
Arc of Whatcom County
Board Meeting
contact Beverly at
beverlyp@arcwhatcom.org

December

**Please note there will be no Parent Support Meetings in December. Meetings resume in January.*

6 Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30pm
Self Advocacy Meeting
see page 7 for more info

8 Saturday, 12-3pm
Parent to Parent Holiday Party
Blodel Donovan Multipurpose Building
see page 3 for more details

15 Saturday, 1 - 3pm
Holiday Craft Sibshop!
see page 3 for more details

19 Monday, 6 - 8pm
SPIN DANCE
Theme: Winter Wonderland
<http://www.maxhigbee.org/spin-dances.html>



Our full community events calendar can be found at arcwhatcom.org/wp/events/

