

## Join Arc of Whatcom County Staff, Volunteers, Families, Self Advocates, Service Providers and Elected Officials for the 2021 Virtual Advocacy Days.



### March 3rd - Education During COVID-19

The pandemic has had a huge affect on education services and early intervention for children with DD. What can the legislature do to ensure the needs of children who need special education services are not falling further behind. Zoom link to register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAldemvrTwiG9awb0OWQxa9wFVUsBaYNj5r>

### March 10th - Rights and Protections: No New Institutions!

A workgroup was charged with creating a plan for the future of the RHCs (Residential Habilitation Centers) in our state. Although the plan would downsize and close our RHCs, it also would build a new 120 bed nursing facility on the grounds of one of the RHCs, Fircrest. Zoom link to register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcrcuuhrij8qH9KOilpZTPGQPe6PkszbTn22>

### March 17th - Self-advocacy: Nothing About Us Without Us

Last year a report to the legislature proposed to build a new nursing facility on the grounds of Fircrest, something self-advocates strongly oppose! Learn about this new bill that will change this inequity and give people with DD a voice where it matters most. Zoom link to register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAAtfuCrqz8pGNOzMFHgoULLi2oiG54DYpnR>

### March 24th - Budget: NO Cuts!

With many new legislators, it is important that you educate yours about the needs of people with DD. Learn what services and supports are proposed for cuts or increases and what you can do to help. Zoom link to register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZloduyqrjMqG9VkfNhyI43pVpmGD9EOMoRo>

### March 31st - April is Autism Awareness, Acceptance & Appreciation Month

In 1970, the Autism Society began spreading awareness about autism in the month of April and it is now recognized nationally. It is not enough to be aware of what autism is. We need to be accepting of the many gift autistic people have to share and appreciate the diversity they bring. Zoom link to register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYucumtpj8rHdDoWa2LFxQZb3adW83bek0P>

# **Down syndrome Awareness Virtual Walk**

Sunday, March 21

World Down syndrome Day is Sunday, March 21st. Even though we are celebrating virtually, we still have the opportunity to participate and be active, while keeping loved ones and ourselves safe! We can create new memories, and bring awareness to our Down syndrome community.

You determine your location, time, and distance. We will be promoting on social media, and encourage participants to post pictures & videos for awareness on our Facebook page.

We are encouraging walkers to wear their bright mis-matched socks and even carry posters! Feel free to wear your Buddy Walk t-shirts from years past.

Walk, run, or roll anytime, any place to bring awareness to our Down syndrome Community!

Families can choose to walk individually at their convenience or connect with others.

Any donation made will directly support Down syndrome Outreach, a program of The Arc of Whatcom County  
<https://www.classy.org/give/328320/#!/donation/checkout>

# Parent to Parent

## Virtual Parent Support Meeting

A meeting for all parents and caregivers of children of any age, with developmental delays, disabilities and ongoing health care needs.



**7 - 8 pm, Monday, March 8**

Parent Support meeting is now Virtual! We may not be therapy, but we sure are therapeutic! For parents and caregivers of children with developmental delays, disabilities, on-going health care needs.

Register by emailing [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org).

After registering you will receive an e-mail containing the link for you to join the Parent Support Meeting. Pre-registration is REQUIRED to get the link. You can connect through a cell phone, tablet or computer.

Questions? Contact Parent to Parent at: [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org) or call (360) 715-0170 ext 302.

**Save the date for our April Meeting:**

**7 - 8pm, Monday, April 12**

## Adult Caregiver Virtual Support Meeting

The Adult Caregiver Support Meeting is for people who are in the role of caring for adult loved ones (ages 16 and up) with a developmental delay or disability.



**7 - 8pm, Thursday, March 18**

We will be meeting to share resources, and support one another as we navigate adult services. We will be discussing DDA, Guardianship, Transition Services, and more.

Register by emailing [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org).

After registering you will receive an e-mail containing the link for you to join the Parent Support Meeting. Pre-registration is REQUIRED to get the link. You can connect through a cell phone, tablet or computer.

*See page 6 for a helpful Transition Planning Checklist from Informing Families.*



SAVE THE DATE:

**4 - 5:30pm, Thursday, April 8th**

National Sibling Day is April 10 and we will be celebrating on April 8th. Join us for our Virtual Sibshop. Register at: [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org)

## Overnight Planned Respite: Changes for 2021

Overnight Planned Respite is a community-based service for adult clients of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) who live with their primary caregiver. It offers a break to a paid or unpaid caregiver, and provides individualized activities and support for the adult client.

Services are Provided in a Community Setting, such as a home or duplex staffed by contracted, certified providers. Each respite setting serves one person at a time, using a person-centered plan developed with the individual and family or primary caregiver to create a schedule and activities that meet the person's needs.

Respite Settings are Currently Located in 7 areas of the state: Bellingham, Lynnwood, Olympia, Shoreline, Spokane, Tacoma and Vancouver.

Contact your family member or client's DDA Case Manager to request Overnight Planned Respite for a period of dates (up to 14 days in a calendar year) that you would like to plan a break from caregiving.

Your Case Manager will review your family member or client's CARE Assessment with you to ensure the information is up-to-date. Overnight Planned Respite does not affect (or reduce) assessed respite hours received through a waiver program. It is assessed and approved as a separate service. The Respite Coordinator will review your request and updated assessment.

Learn more at: <https://informingfamilies.org/overnight-respite/>



**Informing Families**  
*Today and Tomorrow*



## Free Tax Preparation Available to Whatcom County Residents

Not sure where to start with your taxes or which site is the best to meet your needs? Call the tax hotline and let us help guide you through the process. Please leave a message if calling after hours, or if no one is available to take your call. Messages will be returned within 2 business days.

Tax Hotline: 360-746-0100  
Monday - Friday 8:00am – 4:30pm

Learn more about local tax services at <https://www.whatcomabc.org/money-management/taxes/>



## SPIN Dance at Home!

March 15, April 19

SPIN Dance is every 3rd Monday of the month from 6 - 8pm, currently being held virtually. Bellingham Parks and Recreation and the Max Higbee Center will host SPIN Dance at Home for individuals with disabilities. Everyone 14 and older is invited to SPIN Dance at Home!

Learn more and register at: [https://apm.activecommunities.com/bellingham/Activity\\_Search/11087](https://apm.activecommunities.com/bellingham/Activity_Search/11087)





## Blueprints for Special Education Online Training Workshop

9:00 am - 2:30 pm, Saturday, March 20

Join 4 of our state's most prominent special education attorneys for an in-depth explanation on how to use the building blocks of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to develop appropriate services for your child or student. The special education process is like building a house. There is a logical order to both. This virtually hosted workshop will explain how to use the building blocks of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to develop appropriate services for your child.

For more information and to register online visit: <https://washingtonautismalliance.org/events/special-education/?occurrence=2021-03-20&time=1616230800>

## Virtual Office Hours

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JOIN ARC STAFF ON ZOOM FOR  
RESOURCES, INFORMATION &  
SUPPORT. NO RSVP REQUIRED.

THURSDAYS

12 - 1PM

Meeting ID: 869 0930 4702



## Informing Families

### Building Trust

A Partnership for Better Communication  
On Developmental Disability Issues in Washington State

### Preparing for Life After High School



## Transition Planning Checklist

Consider the following checklist of skills, activities, and services when creating your child's high school transition plan for his/her IEP. For more information on transition planning, visit [www.informingfamilies.org](http://www.informingfamilies.org).

### Independent Living

Identify skills and abilities that will help your son or daughter be as independent as possible, such as:

- Money Management and Budgeting
- Decision-Making
- Self-Advocacy
- Registering to Vote
- Communication
- Transportation Training
- Shopping
- Cooking
- Housekeeping

### Social/Recreational

- Build friendships outside the family.
- Create a circle of support (family, friends, neighbors).
- Identify and connect with groups that share similar interests:
  - Athletic
  - Faith-Based
  - Creative Arts
  - Humanitarian
  - Civic

### Employment/Post-Secondary

#### Education

- Identify interests, strengths and needs, and list the types of jobs that would be a good fit.
- Identify personal contacts useful in finding jobs.
- Research college courses and programs (integrated and/or specialized).
- Learn and practice job skills.
- Apply for employment services from DVR and DDA.
- Obtain Assistive Technology and Training.

### Financial and Legal

- Apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Arrange for a Representative Payee for SSI (benefits if money management is a concern)
- Benefits Planning (including Social Security Work Incentives, such as PASS and IRWE)
- Establish a Special Needs Trust
- Seek guardianship (if less restrictive alternatives are not appropriate)

### Health & Safety

Identify needed skills and/or resources to be healthy and safe:

- Emergency Recognition and Response
- Personal Care/Hygiene
- Counseling
- Physical/Occupational Therapy
- Adult Medical Care Provider

What kinds of supports and instruction are needed to reach these goals??

### Housing and In-Home Supports

- Apply for DDA services/supports (e.g., Medicaid Personal Care, Supported Living, Companion Home, Adult Family Home).
- Apply for HUD federal housing assistance. (Contact your local Housing Authority to find out how long the waiting list is.)
- Research home ownership programs for adults with DD: [washingtonaccessfund.org/resources/homeownership.php](http://washingtonaccessfund.org/resources/homeownership.php)

# Self - Advocacy

## What is self-advocacy?

Self-advocacy can have many different meanings for different people. One focus of the self-advocacy group is teaching people with disabilities how to let others know what they need, while learning skills to be able to provide for themselves.

## What to expect from the self- advocacy group?

The self-advocacy group meets the first Thursday of every month for two hours. Typically, a group of young-adults with developmental disabilities gather to discuss and practice different topics of interest. During this time, important skills are learned and connections are made.

## Topics of Interest:

- Person Goals (January's Self-Advocacy Meeting Topic)
- Independent Living Skills
- Financial Advocacy (March's Self - Advocacy Meeting Topic)
- Nutrition
- Peer Relationships
- Personal Safety & Emergency Preparedness
- How to Talk to Legislators
- Assistive Technology

## How to Join:

If you are over 16 and an eligible client of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), you are welcome to come and join. If you are not a client of DDA, and still want to get involved, contact us to find out how. To sign up, email [SelfAdvocacy@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:SelfAdvocacy@arcwhatcom.org) or call (360)715-0170.

## Virtual Self-Advocacy Meeting Thursday, March 4, 4:30 - 6:30pm

Topic: Megan Greely from Northwest Access Fund will be sharing about financial advocacy

Register: [SelfAdvocacy@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:SelfAdvocacy@arcwhatcom.org)

After registering you will receive an email containing the link for you to join the Self Advocacy Meeting. Pre-registration is REQUIRED to get the information on how to connect. You can connect by phone or through the free zoom app on your cell phone, tablet or computer. This is a fun opportunity to learn about self-advocacy, make friends, and work together to make a difference! Check out the self-advocacy page on The Arc of Whatcom County's website: <http://arcwhatcom.org/wp/programs/self-advocacy/> or on Facebook [www.facebook.com/WhatcomCountySelfAdvocacy](http://www.facebook.com/WhatcomCountySelfAdvocacy)





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 Arc of Whatcom County  
 Dan Godwin Community Center  
 2602 McLeod Road, Bellingham, WA 98225  
 (360) 715-0170  
[www.arcwhatcom.org](http://www.arcwhatcom.org)

The Arc's office is currently closed due to COVID-19. Program Staff are working remotely and checking their messages so there may be a brief delay in response.

**Arc of Whatcom County Staff:**

Executive Director: Beverly Porter  
 Care & Resource Coordinator:  
 Mary Jo Durborow  
 Asst Inclusion Advocate: Terri Hansen  
 Parent to Parent & Self Advocate Coordinator:  
 Karlene Umbaugh  
 P2P Parent Assistant & Parent Coalition  
 Co-Coordinator: Melissa Abraham  
 Padres a Padres: Marta Mejia  
 Finance Director: Julia Chen

**Board of Directors:**

Susan Larson, President  
 Melissa Mitchell & Leslie Weilbacher, Co-Vice Presidents  
 Missy Bartel, Secretary  
 Susan Jewell, Treasurer  
 Ellie Posel, Margaret Jahn, Melanie Hartley,  
 Sarah Godwin; Directors

# Event Calendar

## MARCH

4 Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30pm  
 Virtual Self-Advocacy Meeting  
 Topic: Financial Advocacy  
 Register: [SelfAdvocacy@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:SelfAdvocacy@arcwhatcom.org)  
 more info on page 7

8 Monday, 7 - 8pm  
 Parent Support Meeting  
 Register: [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org)  
 more info on page 3

18 Thursday, 7 - 8pm  
 Adult Caregiver Support Meeting  
 Register: [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org)  
 more info on page 3

21 All Day  
 Virtual Down syndrome Awareness Walk  
 more info on page 1

24 Wednesday, 5:30 - 6:30pm  
 Arc of Whatcom County Virtual Board Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88178812214?pwd=WnFwZFUUT09>

## APRIL

1 Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30pm  
 Self-Advocacy Meeting  
 Register: [SelfAdvocacy@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:SelfAdvocacy@arcwhatcom.org)

12 Monday, 7 - 8pm  
 Parent Support Meeting  
 Register: [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org)  
 more info on page 3

28 Wednesday, 5:30 - 6:30pm  
 Arc of Whatcom County Virtual Board Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88178812214?pwd=WnFwZFUUT09>

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

Follow our Facebook Pages:  
[www.facebook.com/ArcWhatcom](http://www.facebook.com/ArcWhatcom)  
[www.facebook.com/ParenttoParentWhatcom](http://www.facebook.com/ParenttoParentWhatcom)  
[www.facebook.com/WhatcomCountySelfAdvocacy](http://www.facebook.com/WhatcomCountySelfAdvocacy)

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PARTNER