

## Join our 2023 Buddy Fest on Saturday, September 23!

Buddy fest is a 3/4 mile walk, festival and lunch with plenty of fun activities for everyone. Lunch is provided with registration this year! Hots dogs (with a vegetarian option), chips or a healthy snack and a drink! Come join us in supporting and celebrating individuals with down syndrome in our community.

- 12 Noon: Arrival & Registration
- 12:30pm: Event kick-off! Hear local speakers, make posters, take photos with your team!
- 1:00pm: Buddy Fest Awareness Walk • Join us for a stroll through Lynden
- 1:30-3:00pm: Lunch, Games, Activities & Music!



You can register online until September 20th. If you miss the deadline, you may register in person at noon at the event. **Register Today at <https://www.classy.org/event/buddy-fest-2023/e495671>**

This year we made ordering your shirt for Buddy Fest simple, easy and affordable! Click the link below to order and pay for the shirts you'd like through Advantage Sports, a local and online vendor. Choose pick up at Advantage Sports - Lynden and we will pick them up and have them ready for you at Buddy Fest!  
**Orders must be placed by Sept 6th by Midnight: <https://www.shopadvantagesports.com/buddy-fest-dso/>**

## THANK YOU SPONSORS!



**Interior Doors & More  
HUB International  
Costco**

**LFS Marine  
Twinbrook Creamery  
Lombardi's  
Samson Rope**

## The Arc of Whatcom County's Parent Coalition "Ask the Advocate"

### Special Education 2 Part Series Online Zoom Workshop

**Part 1: Special Education 101**  
**6 – 8pm, Tuesday, September 19**

Families are encouraged to attend this parent focused workshop navigating the IEP process. Participants will gain an overall understanding of special education, its purpose, and the process. Learn more about the 'nuts and bolts' of an IEP.

Pre-registration required at:  
<https://tinyurl.com/436xdbbp>



**Part 2: Building a Foundation for Advocacy:**  
**Parent Action, Accountability, & Resolving Differences**  
**6 – 8pm, Tuesday, October 17**

Families are encouraged to attend this parent focused workshop empowering participants to advocate for their child's Special Education services. Parents will learn the importance of their role, how to voice disagreements or concerns at any time within the process, and how to resolve differences or disagreements. We will share skills needed for a successful IEP team meeting.

Pre-registration required at:  
<https://tinyurl.com/yz2u6xc5>



After the presentation, there will be a Q & A with Arc of Whatcom County staff. Questions can be submitted prior by sending an email to [parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org) or can be asked during the workshops.

Questions about registration or in need of accommodations? Contact us at 360-715-0170 or [parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org)



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



## Monthly Parent Connect

7 - 8pm, Monday, September 11  
7-8pm, Monday, October 9  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

This is a meeting for parents and caregivers of children with developmental delays, disabilities, and ongoing health care needs.

REGISTER your spot today!  
Register: [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org)

You will receive an email containing the link for you to join the Parent Support Meeting via Zoom. Please register early so you can get the link. Must be able to connect through a cell phone, tablet or computer.

## Join us for an afternoon of Bowling & Pizza Sibshop!

Sunday, October 1, 12 - 2:30 pm  
Mt. Baker Lanes & Coconut Kenny's  
1788 Labounty Drive, Ferndale

A fun filled event for brothers and sisters of kids with developmental differences, delays, and on-going health care needs! This sibshop is offered for siblings ages 8 - 16 Mentor siblings welcome.

Please call Parent to Parent (360) 715-0170 or email [2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:2p@arcwhatcom.org) to register your child by September 27.



Parent to Parent of Whatcom County

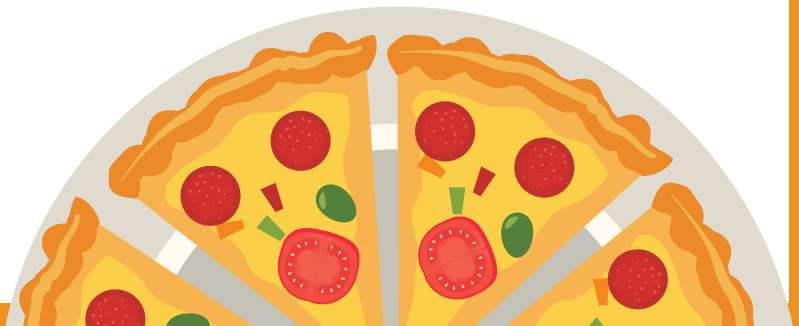
## DADS SOCIAL



Thursday, September 28  
6pm  
Coconut Kenny's  
1740 La Bounty Dr, Ferndale

Join Parent to Parent's Dads Social. For fathers raising loved ones with developmental disabilities and chronic healthcare needs. A chance to be able to meet and talk with other dads that are dealing with similar issues and enjoy free wonderful pizza.

Please RSVP so we can get a heads up on how many people will be there. For questions or to register contact P2P at (360) 715-0170 ext 302 or [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org)



## VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

Every Thursday, 11am – 12:00pm

Staff will be available on zoom to help with resources, support, information, and connection. No RSVP needed. We will not have a password to join, but participants will be in a waiting room until we admit you. We can utilize breakout rooms to enhance privacy if multiple participants have joined.

Join Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86909304702>  
Meeting ID: 869 0930 4702

## Resources



### Websites:

**Office of Education Ombuds (OEO)** assists anyone with questions or concerns about Washington's K-12 public schools. We can provide you with information, referrals, toolkits, and other resources.

Learn more at: <https://www.oeo.wa.gov/en>

**Wright's Law** is a resource where parents, advocates, teachers, and attorneys come to for reliable, up-to-date information about special education law and advocacy for children with disabilities.

Read more at: <https://www.wrightslaw.com/>

**Understood** is a lifelong guide for those who learn and think differently.

Find resources, toolkits, and videos at <https://www.understood.org/>

### Podcasts:

**Once Upon a Gene** is a podcast that explores the world of raising children with disabilities and rare genetic disorders.

Listen at: <https://effieparks.com/>

**The LowDOWN: A Down Syndrome Podcast** brings a professional perspective on issues facing individuals with Down syndrome and their loved ones. Hosts Marla Folden and Hina Mahmood of the Down Syndrome Resource Foundation welcome North America's leading Down syndrome experts, parents and self-advocates to cover topics from across the lifespan including health, physical and intellectual development, advocacy, employment and much more.

Listen at: <https://www.dsrf.org/resources/the-lowdown-podcast/>

**The Special Siblings Podcast:** For Parents, Healthcare Providers, and Sibs Themselves We focus exclusively on supporting siblings of kids with disabilities—a too-often overlooked population—and the unique issues they face. Hear from psychologists, researchers, and sibs of all ages on how to best support the sib in your life. For parents, healthcare providers, and sibs themselves.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-special-siblings-podcast-for-parents-healthcare/id1494633297>

# Resources & Events



**2023 FASD 5K Your Way**  
**1pm, Sunday, September 17**  
**Zuanich Point Park playground**  
**2600 North Harbor Loop Drive,**  
**Bellingham**

Anyone interested can join us at Zuanich Point Park playground at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 17th. We will walk, run, or roll to DISH Foundation's Our Kitchen, in the Container Food Stalls next to the Pump Track downtown.

For more information, please contact Laura Kaptinski at 360-715-0170 ext 307 or [laurak@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:laurak@arcwhatcom.org) or call or text LauraJane Randall at 360-201-1719.

The event is free but folks can show their support by registering at:  
<https://runfasd.org/>

Run FASD is a project of FASD United

FASD United (formerly NOFAS) is the National Voice on FASD. Proceeds from Run FASD go to benefit FASD United a 501(c)3 registered non-profit.

**Join a Virtual Run from**  
**September 9th - 17th!**

Run FASD embodies Strength, Tenacity, Empowerment, Hope, and Vision. A virtual 5k event that can happen at your own pace wherever you are. From September 9th-17th, 2023, we want you to Run FASD to bring awareness to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders



We are so excited to announce that The Arc of Whatcom County is partnering with partners4housing to provide free Residential Assessment (RA) to local families, courtesy of the Dan Thompson Memorial Fund. Completing this RA will help your family explore housing possibilities for your loved one and make a resilient plan for the future.

The RA starts with an online questionnaire, where you and your loved one answer questions about your loved one's needs and current benefits and define your vision of "home."

After completing the questions, you'll meet online with a trained Solutions Coordinator. They will help you understand how to access all the benefits your loved one is eligible for, including that all-important section 8 voucher, so you can start planning for your loved one's future housing needs.

Eligible families will also have free access to a roommate matching pool, to help you connect with other families and find compatible roommates for your loved ones.

We are so excited to be partnering with partners4housing on this important project because we know how much this can help families like yours in our local communities.

**SIGN UP HERE:**

**<https://signup.partners4housing.com/promo/WAWAT>**

Please reach out if you have any questions. We look forward to helping you take this important step for your loved one!

# Halloween Fall Festival

Wednesday, October 25th, 5:30 - 7pm  
 Bloedel Donovan Park Multipurpose Building  
 2114 Electric Ave, Bellingham



This event is for families and individuals with developmental delays, disabilities and ongoing healthcare needs. There will be fun games and prizes for all to enjoy. Costumes are encouraged but not required. No scary costumes, please.

This party will be a great inclusive opportunity for children and adults of all different abilities to interact and have fun together!

For more information or if you would like to volunteer, contact us at (360) 715-0170 ext 302 or email [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org). Fully accessible location for all to enjoy!

Co-sponsored by the City of Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department



WASHINGTON STATEWIDE LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE  
Training Family Leaders  
 Elevating Family Voice  
 Changing Systems



Free and online Interactive Training!

## TELLING YOUR STORY WITH A PURPOSE

- Thursday, September 28
- 9:30 am - 2:00 pm
- For parents, caregivers, self-advocates, and non-profit leaders
- Learn how to communicate your story and your message, quickly and concisely, to policy makers and the public.



Register by September 3 to be entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift card!

[wslicoalition.org](http://wslicoalition.org)

[www.tfaforms.com/5080955](http://www.tfaforms.com/5080955)

Register at: <https://www.tfaforms.com/5080955>

# 11TH ANNUAL FALL DAD'S RETREAT



Register here:



This weekend event is open to Dads, grandparents, and other male caregivers, who have a special needs child in their family, or extended family.

Register at: <https://www.dadsmove.org/>

Build your Self-Advocacy & Leadership Skills. These meetings empower individuals to develop advocacy and leadership skills and set lifetime goals for employment, independence and community involvement.

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## Self-Advocacy Group Meetings



**Thursday, September 7, 4:30-6:30pm**

### What is Self-Advocacy?

Develop and build your self-advocacy, self-confidence, and self-awareness skills. Join us virtually for this meeting on zoom.

**Thursday, October 5, 4:30-6:30pm**

### Goal Setting

Setting goals for employment, recreation, independent skills, and community involvement. Join us virtually for this meeting on zoom.



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The virtual meetings are on zoom. After registering you will receive an e-mail containing the link for you to join the Self-Advocacy Meeting. For more questions or information call (360) 715-0170. Pre-registration is REQUIRED to get the link. Must be able to connect through a cell phone, tablet or computer.

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



## SELF-ADVOCACY

*A program of The Arc of Whatcom County*

*"Be Strong. Be Proud. Be Heard."*



*Sponsored by The Arc of Whatcom County with funding from the Whatcom County Developmental Disabilities Program*

# Staff & Board of Directors

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.

## Arc of Whatcom County Staff:

Executive Director: Beverly Porter

GIDES Family Advocate: Barbara Roxas

Asst Inclusion Advocate: Terri Hansen

Family Advocate: Laura Kaptinski

Parent to Parent & Self Advocate Coordinator:  
Karlene Umbaugh

P2P Parent Assistant & Parent Coalition

Co-Coordinator: Melissa Abraham

Rhonda Rische: Assistant Director

Padres a Padres: Marta Mejia, Alina Zollfrank

Office Manager: Hilary Scheibner

## Board of Directors:

Melissa Mitchell & Leslie Weilbacher, Co-Vice  
Presidents

Missy Bartel, Secretary

Susan Jewell, Treasurer

Ellie Posel, Margaret Jahn, Melanie Hartley, Sarah  
Godwin Dale Whipple; Directors

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



Our office is now open to the public  
Monday through Thursday, 10am - 1pm  
if you would like to browse our Lending  
Library or are in need of resources. Staff  
are available outside those time also by  
appointment. Please call 360-715-0170  
if you are needing any assistance and  
would like to connect with a staff member.

Staff are available every Thursday via  
Zoom for Open Office Hours. No RSVp  
needed. For more information,  
see page 3.

The Arc of Whatcom County  
Dan Godwin Community Center  
2602 McLeod Rd  
Bellingham, WA 98225-1368

Phone: (360) 715-0170

Fax: (360) 715-8522

Email: [admin@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:admin@arcwhatcom.org)

To see a list of staff positions and  
extensions, visit:  
<http://arcwhatcom.org/about-the-arc/staff/>



# Get Involved!



Looking for a way to give back to your community?

## Volunteer at The Arc!



*The Arc of Whatcom County has exciting opportunities for volunteering, college internships, or high school culminating projects. Help others in your community and gain valuable skills at the same time!*

*Contact the Arc today today for details. We greatly appreciate your interest and look forward to working with you soon!*

### Volunteer & Internship Opportunities

- **DsO Spring Fling, annually in May** – Join the fun at this annual event for individuals with Down syndrome and their families.
- **Self-Advocacy (SA)** – Help support adults with developmental disabilities work on skills to advocate for themselves and others in the community. Meets one Thursday afternoon per month.
- **DsO Buddy Fest, annually in September\***–Join the fun and promote the inclusion and acceptance of people with Down syndrome!
- **Board Members** – We are looking for passionate and committed individuals to join our Board of Directors, providing oversight of The Arc’s programs and representing The Arc in the community.
- **Spanish Speaking Intern** – Help support our Padres a Padres program in supporting our Spanish speaking community in Whatcom County.
- **Outdoor Landscaping and maintenance** – Help keep the Dan Godwin facility in great shape by helping with yard work and small projects around the facility.
- **Smiles of Life Calendar\*** – Help with the development of our annual Smiles of Life Calendar featuring photos and profiles of individuals with developmental disabilities.
- **Parent to Parent Holiday Party, annually in December** - Help with setting up event, food, games, and making the event memorable for children and their families.
- **Resource updates and distribution\*** – Help update and distribute resources for individuals, families and youth with special needs.
- **Parent to Parent Halloween Fall Festival, annually in October** – Volunteers are needed to help with set up, activities, and snacks during this event which supports families in our community.
- **Social Media Intern** – Help us spread the word about all the great things the Arc is doing to support individuals with disabilities in Whatcom County!

**2023**

Some information listed is time-sensitive and subject to change. Please contact us for current details.

# 2023 Event Calendar

## SEPTEMBER

7 Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30pm  
Self-Advocacy Meeting  
more info on page 5

11 Monday, 7 - 8pm  
Parent Connect Meeting  
more info on page 3

14 Thursday, 11am-12pm  
Open Office Hours  
more info on page 3

17 Sunday, 1pm  
2023 FASD 5K  
Starts at Zuanich Point Park  
more info on page 5

19 Wednesday, 6 - 8pm  
Parent Coalition's Virtual  
Workshop Part 1:  
Special Education 101

21 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

23 Saturday, 12noon - 3pm  
Down syndrome Outreach's  
Buddy Fest!  
more info on page 4

28 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

28 Thursday, 6pm  
Dad's Social  
more info on page 3

## OCTOBER

1 Sunday, 12 - 2:30pm  
Pizza & Bowling Sibshop!

5 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

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

9 Monday, 7 - 8pm  
Parent Connect Meeting

12 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

17 Tuesday, 6 - 8pm  
Parent Coalition's Virtual  
Workshop Part 1:  
Special Education 101

19 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

25 Wednesday, 5:30 - 7pm  
Halloween Fall Festical! All ages!  
more info on page 6

26 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

## NOVEMBER

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

13 Monday, 7 - 8pm  
Parent Connect Meeting



## STAY CONNECTED

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)  
[www.facebook.com/DownsyndromeOutreach](http://www.facebook.com/DownsyndromeOutreach)

Follow our Instagram @arc\_whatcom

Find resources, information, and more at:  
[www.arcwhatcom.org](http://www.arcwhatcom.org)