



Need Paperwork & Application Support from Arc Staff Members?

2nd Wednesday of every month
April 10, May 8, June 12
11am - 1pm
Dan Godwin Community Center
2602 McLeod Rd., Bellingham

Join Arc Staff in-person at the Dan Godwin Community Center. We will be supporting families with filling out paperwork for their loved ones. Bring a laptop or tablet if you have one, some laptops will be available for use at the Arc.

- Partners4Housing Residential Assessment
- Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) Eligibility
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Guardianship

We may not have time to complete all your paperwork, but this is a great opportunity to have support looking over where to start. If you need private one-on-one support, please email admin@arcwhatcom.org to set up an appointment at a different time. At our Paperwork Support Workshops, staff may be helping multiple people, and we cannot guarantee privacy.

April is Autism Acceptance Month

Autism acceptance means embracing and valuing autistic people as autistic people instead of being afraid of us, having low expectations, or trying to find a way to make us not autistic. The Americans With Disabilities Act says “disability is a natural part of the human experience.” Autism is a natural part of the human experience, and autistic people are members of our community, citizens, friends, family members, and fellow humans. Accepting autistic people is about honoring human diversity and making sure that everyone is included, valued, and contributing in our society.

1 in 45 people are autistic. You probably know an autistic person. Autism acceptance means you want us around. At its heart, autism acceptance is about accepting autistic people, instead of being afraid of us, having low expectations, or trying to find a way to make us not autistic.

Acceptance is not passive tolerance. Acceptance is an action. Does acceptance mean no therapies, no education, no intervention, just letting my kid stay where they are forever? Isn't acceptance passive? No! Acceptance is not passive. Acceptance is an action. Acceptance means doing everything you can so that your autistic child will grow up into the best autistic adult they can be.

Resources:

<https://autisticadvocacy.org>
<https://autismsocietyofwa.org>
<https://autisticgirlsnetwork.org>



autistic
girls network



ASAN
AUTISTIC SELF ADVOCACY NETWORK

Parent Coalition

**Looking for support
as your loved one
transitions to adult
services?**



**Tuesday
April 16
6 – 8pm**

Transition 101: What to expect when your child turns 18?

When your child turns 18 years old, they legally become an adult. This is an important time to consider their future – especially if they need additional care into adulthood.

Health and Welfare Decision-making
Living Arrangements Supports

Education Transitions
Financial Protections

Meet with Arc Staff and other parents who have been through this process. After a short presentation, we will open the workshop to Q&A.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwvcumtpzooHtP4x9aFsZWGzJIZtL2zIATJ>

**Thursday
May 23
6 – 8pm**

Navigating Adult Services Virtual Workshop

Panel of local representatives from The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), School to Work and the Arc will provide an overview of the adult service system and important steps to help keep you on track for a successful transition.

After a short presentation, we will open up the workshop to Q&A with representatives from DDA, DVR, and Arc staff.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlodeCvpzItH9NVfzy58Bfj4VynYINiizID>

**Thursday
June 20
6 – 8pm**

Adult Caregiver Virtual Connect Meeting

This Parent Connect is for people who are in the role of caring for adult loved ones (ages 16 and up) with a developmental delay or disability. Register by emailing p2p@arcwhatcom.org. You will receive an email containing the link for you to join via Zoom.

Questions?

Email parentcoalition@arcwhatcom.org or
call (360) 715-0170



Parent to Parent



Monthly Parent Connect

7-8pm, Monday, April 8th
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

This is a meeting for parents and caregivers of children with developmental delays, disabilities, and ongoing health care needs. After registering 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. For questions, contact Parent to Parent at 360-715-0170 ext 302 or



Sibshops are fun filled events for brothers and sisters of kids with developmental differences, delays, and ongoing health care needs. Sibshops provide opportunities for siblings of children with special health care needs to obtain peer support and education while participating in recreational activities. Siblings have an opportunity to share joys, concerns, problem solve and have a better understanding of their sibling's disability.

Bowling & Pizza Sibshop For siblings ages 8 – 16 years old

Saturday, April 20 from 12 pm – 2 pm
Mt. Baker Lanes & Coconut Kenny's Pizza
1788 Labounty Drive, Ferndale

We will meet at Mt. Baker Lanes and your child can be picked up at Coconut Kenny's. Please have your child arrive 10 minutes early to have time to get their shoes and choose a bowling ball. Limited spots available! Please RSVP by April 17th. If this is your child's first time, please arrive 15 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.

Coffee & Conversation



April 8*, May 6, June 3
10am - 11am
The Arc of Whatcom County
2602 McLeod Rd., Bellingham

Parents and Caregivers of loved ones with developmental delays, disabilities, and on-going healthcare needs are welcome to join us for coffee (or tea) and a relaxed and friendly chat. Meet other caregivers in our community, find out new resources, and share your thoughts, insights, triumphs and experience. Adults only please! RSVP is welcome but not required.

Light refreshments provided.

**date changed due to Spring Break*



Dad's Social

Thursday, April 18, 6 - 7 pm
Coconut Kenny's
1740 La Bounty Dr, Ferndale

Join Parent to Parent's Dads Social with FREE Pizza. 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 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

SAVE THE DATE!



COMMUNITY SUMMIT 2024

EMBRACING THE CHALLENGE: TOGETHER WE THRIVE

DSHS Developmental Disabilities Administration is proud to announce Community Summit 2024. The Community Summit continues a long tradition of conferences that have focused on expanding access to supported employment, supported living and assistive technology. The Summit is an annual three-day conference that brings together individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, self-advocates, families, friends, partners and allies to work together toward building more inclusive communities. Join us in person or virtually on May 7th to 9th!

DATE:
May 7-9, 2024

LOCATION:
Wenatchee Convention Center

STAY CONNECTED:

Planning is underway! To stay up to date, please visit us at the Community Summit [Facebook page](#). If you have questions about Community Summit 2024 or want to know how you can be involved, please contact the Community Summit steering committee coordinator Ron Bryan at Ronald.Bryan@dshs.wa.gov

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL

The Community Summit website is now live at www.communitysummit.ws and our Call for Proposals.



Looking for Housing Supports for your Loved One?

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.

If you or someone you know has a loved one with IDD, 18 years or older, living in Washington State, claim your free RA today ... at no cost!

SIGN UP HERE:

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



SPIN Dance

Every 3rd Monday of the Month

April 15, 6 - 8pm

Bloedel Donovan Gym, 2114 Electric Ave, Bellingham

Everyone 14 and older is invited to dance with us to music provided by Glitt3r Lyfe's Aireekah! Though we are returning to in-person, registration is still suggested. Learn more at: <https://maxhigbeecenter.org/special-events/>



FREE
14 AND OLDER
ALL ABILITIES

WITH LIVE DJ AIREEKAH

Glitt3r
Lyfe
PARTNERS
FOR 4 ALL





Designed for children aged 12 and under with autism spectrum and/or sensory-processing needs, our Low Sensory Sundays provide a special, quieter experience at our museum's Family Interactive Gallery (FIG).

WHEN: May 26, and Jul 28.

TIME: 10 - 11:30 a.m.

WHERE: Family Interactive Gallery (FIG) inside the Lightcatcher building, 250 Flora Street.

COST: Absolutely FREE!

What to expect:

- Wheelchair accessibility
- A quiet room for downtime
- Supportive tools including gloves, cue cards, sunglasses, timers, and sensory maps

Brought to you by Hoagland Pharmacy, our mission is to break down barriers and foster a welcoming museum community. Our vision is to provide consistent access and support for families with children who benefit from a low-sensory environment. RSVP is appreciated but not required.

Let's make art inclusive!

Details:

<https://ow.ly/b6LB50PLo24>

Is your child "consistently inconsistent", or do they struggle with many, or all, of the following:

- understanding consequences
- emotional regulation and/or behavior challenges
- ADD/ADHD
- fine or gross motor delays
- sensory processing sensitivities
- language delay or related challenges
- memory and/or processing speed difficulties
- math comprehension – i.e. money, time, large quantities



Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders are the number one cause of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDDs) nationwide and worldwide, and are more common than Autism, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and Tourette's combined.

Community is important, as are people who "get it," and who understand. FASD Focus NW support groups are a chance to build community, make connections and share ideas. To know that you are not alone. Each group meeting is spent sharing joys as well as tears, asking questions, and offering and receiving support from others. This is a volunteer ran and peer-led support group that is open to families or caregivers to individuals who have been diagnosed with or are suspected of being impacted by Prenatal Substance Exposure (PSE) and/or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) as well as to adults impacted by PSE/FASDs. Our groups are respectful of and open to birth mothers. In 2008, the CDC reported that more than half of all pregnancies (51%) were unplanned. At FASD Focus NW, we seek to educate and reduce stigma related to unintentional alcohol consumption and pregnancy.

***FASt Friends Virtual Support Group will be held on Wednesday, the 24th in April from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m.**

Our support group is always the 4th Wednesday of each month from 8-9pm. There is no fee to attend and you do not need to sign up each month.



Sign up to receive meeting invites at:
<https://www.nofaswa.org/support>



SPECIAL EDUCATION LEGAL CLINIC

Northwest Justice Project is introducing a free special education legal clinic to provide advice about your child's rights to an education.

Attorneys from the Northwest Justice Project will meet with you by phone to discuss topics related to your child's IEP or 504 plan, including: qualifying for services, access to the services you need, discipline of students with an IEP or 504 plan, failure to provide interpreters or translations, and discrimination .

Appointments

Tuesdays	Thursdays
12 – 1:30pm	7 – 8:30pm

To schedule an appointment for the special education legal clinic, please leave a voicemail with contact info at:

206-707-7292



Interpreter Services Provided

Or use NJP's online intake form: www.nwjustice.org/apply-online

NJP provides legal assistance to eligible low-income families and individuals needing help with civil (non-criminal) legal problems in Washington state. View our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more info on our services.

Find free legal information and court forms at: washingtonlawhelp.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.

Self-Advocacy Group Meetings

Thursday, April 4, 4:30-6:30pm

Advocating for our Community Goals

Setting goals for our Self-Advocacy group meetings, ourselves, and community. Join us virtually for this meeting on zoom.



Thursday, May 2, 4:30-6:30pm

Self-Advocacy 101

Build your self-advocacy and self-awareness skills with our interactive game of Jeopardy. Join us virtually for this meeting on zoom.

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



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

Assistant Director: Rhonda Rische

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

Padres a Padres: Marta Mejia, Alina Zollfrank

Office Manager: Hilary Scheibner

Board of Directors:

Missy Bartell – President

Jason McGill – Co Vice President

Melissa Mitchell – Co Vice President

Susan Jewell – Treasurer

Dale Whipple – Director

Sarah Godwin – Director

Ellie Posel – Director

Margaret Jahn – Director

Melanie Hartley – Director

Frances Chalmers – Director

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 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. Call 360-715-0170 if you are needing any assistance and would like to connect with a staff member.

We now offer Open Virtual Office Hours.

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

Thursdays, 11am - 12 noon

Join Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86909304702>

Meeting ID: 869 0930 4702

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



Staff and Board of Directors at The Arc of Whatcom County would like to congratulate Dale Whipple on his retirement from working over 30 years at Red Robin in Bellingham. Dale is a longtime Board member and active volunteer at The Arc.

"I started working for Red Robin in March 1991 as a dedicated hard working employee. I have worked with them for 32 1/2 years, going onto 33 years in March 2023. I receive employment support from Work Opportunities, I will be retiring from Red Robin in March 2024.

I still receive independent living services from Evergreen Supported Living. I will be going to Hawaii in August 2024 with TRIPS inc. Special Adventures. I serve on the Board of Directors for The Arc of Whatcom County. I put in my time volunteering for events with the Arc.

I go to weekend programs at the Max Higbee Center to spend time with my friends and the staff. I enjoy working on Wonder Arts latch hook kits to help decorate my apartment walls. I use my slow cooker during the fall and winter time. I use the WTA busses when traveling to places out in the community. I participate in Special Olympics sports such as Basketball, Bowling, and Soccer. I am grateful to have friends in my life."

To read more about Dale's time at Red Robin and to hear from him and his con-workers visit KGMI's website: <https://tinyurl.com/274jfk62>

2024 Event Calendar

APRIL

4 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

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

8 Monday 10 am – 11 am
Coffee & Conversations

8 Monday, 7 - 8pm
Parent Connect Meeting

10 Wednesday, 11am
Paperwork Support with Arc Staff

11 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

16 Tuesday, 6pm
Parent Coalition Workshop
“Transition 101: What to Expect
When Your Child Turns 18”

18 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

18 Thursday, 6pm
Dad’s Pizza Social

20 Saturday, 12noon - 2pm
Bowling & Pizza Sibshop

24 Wednesday, 6 - 7:30pm
Board of Directors Meeting
All Community Members
Welcome! Learn more at:
<http://arcwhatcom.org/about-the-arc/board-of-directors/>

25 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

28 Sunday, 1 - 4pm
Down syndrome Outreach’s
Spring Fling

MAY

2 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

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

6 Monday 10 am – 11 am
Coffee & Conversations

8 Wednesday, 11am
Paperwork Support with Arc Staff

9 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

13 Monday, 7 - 8pm
Parent Connect Meeting

16 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

22 Wednesday, 6 - 7:30pm
Board of Directors Meeting
All Community Members
Welcome! Learn more at:
<http://arcwhatcom.org/about-the-arc/board-of-directors/>

23 Thursday, 11 - 12pm
Open Office Hours

23 Thursday, 6pm
Parent Coalition Workshop
“Navigating Adult Services”



STAY CONNECTED

Follow our Facebook Pages:
www.facebook.com/ArcWhatcom
www.facebook.com/ParenttoParentWhatcom
www.facebook.com/WhatcomCountySelfAdvocacy
www.facebook.com/DownsyndromeOutreach

Follow our Instagram @arc_whatcom

Find resources, information, and more at:
www.arcwhatcom.org