

Smiles of Life 2024



Proudly presented by The Arc of Whatcom County

2025 Smiles of Life Calendar

The Arc's 2025 smiles of life calendar is available starting January 6th! Featuring beautiful photos, inspiring profiles, and motivating quotes, the 2025 smiles of life calendar is dedicated to people with developmental disabilities and their friends and families. The calendar makes a unique and inspiring gift for families, friends, neighbors, teachers.

To make a donation online visit:
<https://shorturl.at/vV7V3>

Please put the the amount of calendars you would like in the Comment Section. Your generous support (suggested donation of \$10 per calendar) will help fund valuable programs for individuals with developmental disabilities. Calendars are available pickup Monday through Thursday from 10am - 1pm at 2602 McLeod Rd., Bellingham. Please contact admin@arcwhatcom.org for alternative pickup arrangements.



Please join us for our Annual Parent to Parent

Holiday Party

Potluck

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

Sunday, December 8
Bloedel Donovan Park Building
2214 Electric Ave., 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.

Co-sponsored by Parent to Parent and City of Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department





Need Paperwork & Application Support from Arc Staff Members?

2nd Wednesday of every month
December 11
January 8
February 12
11am - 1pm

Dan Godwin Community Center,
The Arc of Whatcom County
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.

Virtual Office Hours

Join Arc Staff on Zoom for Resources, Information & Support.
No RSVP Required.
Thursdays
11am - 12 noon
Join Meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86909304702>
Meeting ID: 869 0930 4702

The Arc
Whatcom County

Virtual Office Hours

Join Arc Staff on Zoom for Resources, Information & Support.

No RSVP Required.
Thursdays, 11am - 12 noon
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86909304702>
Meeting ID: 869 0930 4702

We 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.

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY

In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.

In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.

In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.



Monthly Parent Connect

7 - 8pm, Monday, December 9
7 - 8pm, Monday, January 13
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

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

Register: p2p@arcwhatcom.org

After registering you will receive an email containing the link for you to join the Parent Support Meeting via Zoom.



Parent to Parent of Whatcom County

DADS SOCIAL



Thursday, December 5
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



EMERGENCY CHILD CARE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Eligible families in Whatcom County are able to obtain temporary child care tuition assistance through the Emergency Child Care Voucher Program



Loss of Income?



Unexpected Hardship?



Risk of Losing Child Care?

If you are facing a medical emergency, loss of wages, or an unexpected hardship, job training and/or are at risk of losing child care; and you live in Whatcom County, you may be eligible to receive short-term child care tuition assistance. Please contact us to apply.

CONTACT:

childcare@oppco.org



(360) 734-8396 ext. 1119



Coffee & Conversation
December 2, January 6
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! Light refreshments provided.

Transition Services

What to do and when to do it, here are some activities to do by age.

15-16	<p>Apply for a Washington State I.D. card. (before 18 is easier) Located at 4180 Cordate Pkwy Ste. A, Bellingham, WA (360) 676-2096</p> <p>WHY: A photo ID will be needed to apply for many adult services.</p>	
16	<p>Apply with Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) WHY: Case management, family support and other services to help your son or daughter maximize their independence. Long term supports for employment after age 21. Applying early helps ensure funding availability. 360-714-5000</p>	
17-17 ½	<p>Consider if guardianship is necessary and determine type of guardianship.</p> <p>WHY: At age 18 your son/daughter becomes a legal adult and may need support making legal, medical and vocational decisions. Consider alternatives to full guardianship. Contact the Arc, 715-0170 for resources and planning guides.</p>	<p>GUARDIANSHIP and alternatives</p>
17-19	<p>Apply for low income Housing at the Housing Authority</p> <p>WHY: The wait list for housing can be long, so it's important to apply early. (360) 676-6887. Learn about housing choice vouchers and project based housing.</p>	
18	<p>If your child does not receive Social Security Benefits—apply now!</p> <p>WHY: He or she is now an adult and parent's income is not counted. He/she may be eligible for cash and medical benefits. There are many provisions available, called WORK INCENTIVES, that allow people with disabilities to keep benefits, including Medicare/Medicaid, while working.. He or she needs to pay rent to the family in order to maximize SS benefits.</p>	
18	<p>Ask your DDA case manager about Personal Care funding.</p> <p>If your son or daughter needs help with bathing, grooming, dressing, laundry, etc. funding may be available for Personal Care. Support can be provided by either family members or a contracted provider. Contact your DDA case manager and ask about the "Community First Choice" (CFC) Program 360-714-5000. Apply now to see how this and other services may benefit your family.</p>	<p>Personal Care</p>
Senior year	<p>Fill out the Free Application for the Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</p> <p>WHY: If seeking aid to attend college, this form must be filled out by March 1 of Senior year for best consideration. www.fafsa.ed.gov</p>	
18-21	<p>Apply for services with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)</p> <p>WHY: This agency helps people with disabilities get and keep a job, and understand how working affects benefits. 360-812-6610</p>	
19-20	<p>Apply to the Job Foundations Program</p> <p>WHY: Connects students their second to last year of school with adult vocational agencies to ensure an effective transition to work and adult life. Must be DDA eligible. Talk with your teacher or DDA case manager.</p>	
Anytime	<p>Apply for job search assistance with WorkSource Youth Services</p> <p>WHY: This is a local program that can help self-directed job seekers find part time and/or summer employment to help develop work skills.</p>	
Anytime	<p>Whatcom Transportation Authority and Paratransit services</p> <p>WHY: Learning to ride the bus helps your son or daughter to be more independent. They offer flexible alternative public transportation for people with disabilities. Ask about travel training and reduced fares. 360-676-7433</p>	
Anytime	<p>Connect with the Arc of Whatcom County</p> <p>WHY: Assistance in helping navigate system, connects with resources, and provides support to parents by other parents of individuals with disabilities. 360-715-0170.</p>	

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, December 5, 4:30-6:30pm

What is Important to Me

We will have an opportunity to share what is important to us. Please join us for a fun and friendly discussion on zoom.



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

Trying New Things in 2025

We will share our goals and what new things we would like to try in the New Year. Please join us for a fun and friendly discussion on zoom.

Thursday, February 6, 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.



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



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



Sensory-Friendly Movies

Regal's My Way Matinee gives everyone the opportunity to experience a movie with the lights turned up and the volume turned down. This becomes safe space where our guests are free to express themselves by singing, crying, dancing, walking around, talking or shouting while enjoying Hollywood's latest films! These showings will be the first show of the day on select Saturdays each month.

Regal Barkley Village
3005 Cinema Place
Bellingham WA 98226

Learn more at:
<https://www.regmovies.com/>



ONLINE CLASSES AND TOOLS

[BROWSE RESOURCES](#)

Exercise and wellness | Cooking | Education
Virtual museum tours | And more!

Need new indoor activities as it gets closer to winter?

Try The Arc's Virtual Program Library! People with disabilities and their caregivers can find on-demand activities such as arts, health and wellness, virtual clubs, and more. On this site, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their caregivers can find and share on-demand activities that they can use whenever it is convenient for them in the comfort of their own homes. Service providers can also find and share resources that they can use to facilitate or deliver live, remote programming for people with IDD. <https://pulse.ly/eal07odtz8>

Navigating SSI Applications

Navigating SSI Applications: Monthly Classes - NW Access Fund

Bring your questions! Monthly classes are led by a Certified Benefits Planner and provide an overview of the SSI application process. Get tips and strategies for the application and redetermination process and leave with a clear idea of the next steps to take. These classes are recorded and shared with the people who registered.

Classes are held on the first Monday of each month. If you need spoken language interpretation, schedule a free one-on-one session and request interpretation services. To learn more and register, visit: <https://www.nwaccessfund.org/youth/navigating-ssi/>



SPIN Dance

Open to the Community
Free!

When: Third Monday of each month
Where: 6pm-8pm

Monday, December 16th, 6 - 8pm
Bloedel Donovan Community Building

Come dance with us to music provided by Glitt3r Lyfe's Aireekah!

Registration Information:

<https://maxhigbeecenter.org/special-events/>

SPIN DANCE

EVERY 3RD MONDAY OF THE MONTH | 6-8PM

FREE
14 AND OLDER
ALL ABILITIES



WITH LIVE DJ AIREEKAH

**Glitt3r
Lyfe**
EVENTS,
FUN & ART

First Friday Silent Disco Party!

Open to the Community!!



SILENT DISCO PARTY!

EVERY FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH | 6-8PM

FREE * ALL AGES * ALL ABILITIES

MAX HIGBEE CENTER | CORNER OF STATE & MAGNOLIA

When: First Friday of each month
6pm-8pm

Where: Max Higbee Center

Join us for an awesome headphone dance party hosted by weekend group program members and staff!

<https://maxhigbeecenter.org/special-events/>



Recreational Opportunities



THE AIROW PROJECT
ADAPTIVE & INCLUSIVE RECREATION OF WHATCOM COUNTY

ADAPTIVE PICKLEBALL

November 18-December 16th
4:30-6:00PM

Whatcom Family YMCA
1256 N. State St.
Bellingham, WA 9225

REGISTER EARLY - SPACE IS LIMITED
\$25 per session
or DDA Funds

EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO PLAY!

For More Information
airowproject.com

THE AIROW PROJECT
ADAPTIVE & INCLUSIVE RECREATION OF WHATCOM COUNTY

SKI & SNOWBOARD DAY



MT. BAKER SKI AREA
DEC 23RD & 30TH

WWW.AIROWPROJECT.COM



THE AIROW PROJECT
ADAPTIVE & INCLUSIVE RECREATION OF WHATCOM COUNTY

ADAPTIVE RECREATION

STARTS ON NOVEMBER 23RD SATURDAYS 10:30-1:00 PM

REGISTER EARLY - SPACE IS LIMITED
\$250 for 5 weeks
or DDA Funds can be used

- Fun and Friendly Environment
- Teamwork and Sportsmanship
- All Skill Levels Welcome
- All Bodies Welcome

Adaptive Pickleball
Dates: November 18 - December 16
Whatcom Family YMCA
1256 N. State. St, Bellingham
4:30 - 6:00 pm
Register at <https://forms.gle/PBxEbPyk1bL9P2DD9>

Adaptive Rec at Rec Center WWU
November 23rd - December 21st
10:30am - 1:00 pm
1880 Bill McDonald Parkway, Bellingham
Register at: <https://forms.gle/gPboiZXXwBKJobNt7>

Ski Day at Mt. Baker Ski area!
Transportation is provided
Adaptive & Inclusive lessons are provided
Register at <https://forms.gle/3oNLc6XhsXh2k5Z58>

Learn more at <https://airowproject.com/>



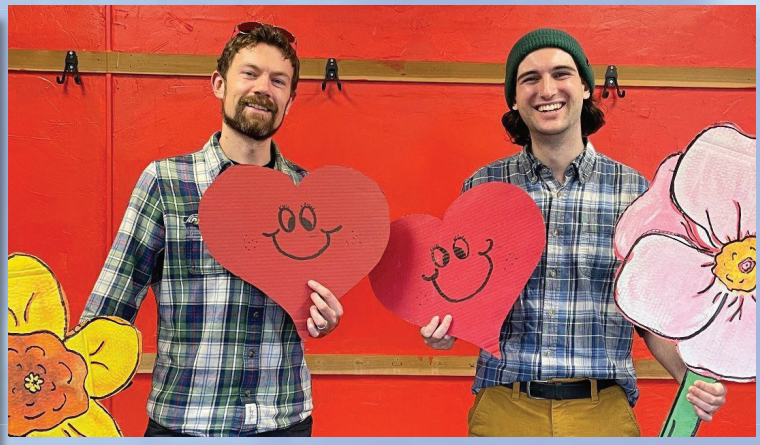
Join us on the theater stage for the...

Savvy Social Improv Club

(Neurodivergent Edition)

The Facts

- 10 week class, Jan-Apr 2025
- Fridays at BAAY, 4:30-5:30pm
- Weekly improv games
- Ages 7-17 invited
- Designed for neurodiversity!
- Become *Socially Savvy**...



Chris (occupational therapist) and Logan (theater instructor) are ready for some fun improv games.

"It got everyone involved and having fun!" - Participant from Improv & Laughter in Therapy

*This class is designed and reserved for participants eligible for DDA *Specialized Habilitation* services who are likely to benefit from a 10-week social skills curriculum. Ask your case manager or call the number below!



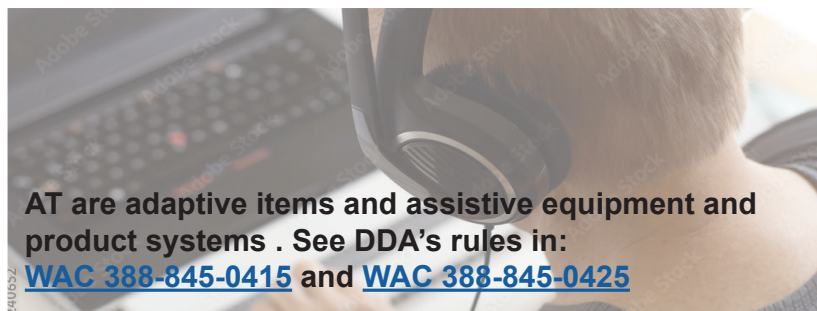
Register for the Open House!
December 6th & 13th, 4:30-5:30pm

Call **(360) 207-4560**, or visit
LearningCoachWA.com/groups



Assistive Technology through DDA Waivers

Assistive Technology is available on all the home and community based services waivers at the Developmental Disabilities Administration. AT helps people accomplish everyday tasks and be more independent.



AT are adaptive items and assistive equipment and product systems . See DDA's rules in:

[WAC 388-845-0415](tel:388-845-0415) and [WAC 388-845-0425](tel:388-845-0425)

Guidelines for Requesting Assistive Technology

All requests for AT must come from the person needing it and must be approved by DDA. A recommendation for the requested technology is required. Your DDA case manager can recommend basic items that meet eligibility criteria in DDA's waiver rules, while other items used for expressive and receptive communication need a more thorough recommendation from a qualified professional that you're working with, like a speech therapist.

Additionally, all AT items should be affordable and meet health, safety, and welfare standards. The requested AT must not be available through other sources, like private insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, or the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program.

If approved for AT, make sure to get a copy of the approval in writing or email from your case manager.

Some AT items include:

- Tablets
- Communication applications
- Switches
- Adaptive utensils to assist with eating, dressing, and writing
- Timers or electronic devices that monitor or sense movement
- Voice Activated systems
- Visual alert systems

Not receiving a paid service? Call your local DDA office or visit <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/dda/service-and-information-request> to ask for a DDA assessment.

More Resources to Learn about Assistive Technology:

[Northwest Access Fund](#) provides low-interest loans for people to purchase assistive technology for individuals with disabilities of all types, including seniors with age-related functional limitations.

[Washington Assistive Technology Act Program](#) provides resources and services to individuals who face challenges related to disability and aging help in the selection of and use of AT.



To learn more about eligibility, reach out to your DDA case manager or PASRR assessor today.

Not sure who your DDA case manager is? Call or visit your local DDA Field Office and ask them to look that up for Visit <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/office-locations> to find your local DDA Field Office.

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

Ken Larson -Vice President

Susan Jewell – Treasurer

Sam Hogan – Secretary

Dale Whipple – 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 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 also available by appointment outside of those times. 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 2.

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

To see a list of staff positions and extensions, visit:

<http://arcwhatcom.org/about-the-arc/staff/>

2024 - 2025 Event Calendar

DECEMBER

Our office will be closed starting Monday, December 21 and will reopen Monday, January 6

2 Monday, 10am
Coffee & Conversation
more info on page 3

5 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

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

5 Thursday, 6pm
Dads Social
RSVP at:
p2p@arcwhatcom.org
more info on page 3

8 Sunday, 12 - 3pm
Holiday Party
more info on page 1

9 Monday, 7pm
Virtual Parent Connect
more info on page 3

11 Wednesday, 11am - 1pm
Paperwork Application
Support

12 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

JANUARY

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

6 Monday, 10am
Coffee & Conversation
more info on page 3

8 Wednesday, 11am - 1pm
Paperwork Application
Support

9 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

13 Monday, 7pm
Virtual Parent Connect
more info on page 3

16 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

22 Wednesday, 6 - 7:30pm
Board of Directors Meeting
more info at:
arcwhatcom.org/about-thearc/board-of-directors/

23 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

30 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours



STAY CONNECTED



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

