

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.



Need Paperwork & Application Support from Arc Staff Members?

2nd Wednesday of every month
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.

SAVE THE DATE



Advocacy Days 2025

	JANUARY 15TH ALL DAY IN PERSON REGISTER HERE	Build Capacity How can plan for our system to grow so that it meets the needs of our community?
	JANUARY 22ND 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE	Supporting Families How can we ensure families have the support they need?
	JANUARY 29TH 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE	Housing How can I get the support I need to live in my home?
	FEBRUARY 5TH 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE LIVE CRSA (COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION) @ 12:00 PM	Supported Living How can I have a safe, affordable, inclusive place to live?
	FEBRUARY 12TH 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE	Crisis Why are so many people in crisis?
	FEBRUARY 19TH 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE LIVE CEA (COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT ALLIANCE) @ 1:00 PM	Employment & Community Inclusion How do we ensure that individuals have the adequate supports and individualized services needed to work and build relationships in the community?
	FEBRUARY 26TH 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE	Education What is needed to ensure every student has an inclusive education?
	MARCH 5TH 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE SAIL (SELF- ADVOCATES IN LEADERSHIP) RALLY @ 1:00	Community Living What are the community and housing supports and services I need in order to live successfully in the community?
	MARCH 12TH 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE	Social Engagement How do we create welcoming communities and prevent social isolation?
	MARCH 19TH 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE	Workforce How do we ensure there is a quality workforce available to care for our loved ones?
	MARCH 26TH 10:00-11:30 AM VIRTUAL REGISTER HERE	Budget What can you do now?

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on Advocacy Days visit: arcwa.org/advocacy/advocacy-days/

SPONSORED BY THE ADVOCACY PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Parent to Parent



Monthly Parent Connect

7 - 8pm, Monday, January 13
7 - 8pm, Monday, February 10
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.



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



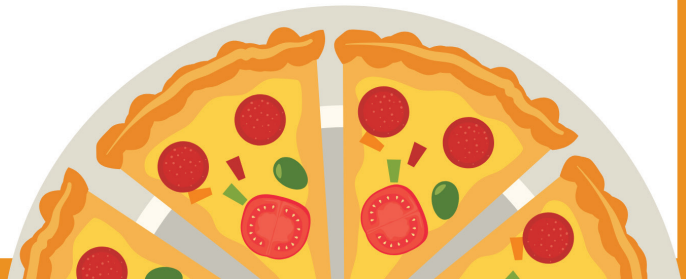
Parent to Parent of Whatcom County DADS SOCIAL



Thursday, January 23
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



Coffee & Conversation January 6, February 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! Light refreshments provided.



Ready, Set, KNOW...

Guardianship/Conservatorship Overview

This information is intended to give an overview of guardianship in Washington State. It is for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for legal advice. For advice on making legal decisions, please talk to an attorney.

Many people think that Guardianship is the only and best way to help and protect adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. While guardianship may be appropriate for some individuals, it is often unnecessary for many. The truth is, Guardianship is often not needed. Washington law requires considering alternatives to guardianship/conservatorship first, such as Supported Decision-Making.

People may start to consider guardianship or conservatorship for a loved one in the following situations:

- A child with a disability turning 18;
- Fears that an adult with disabilities is being abused, neglected or exploited;
- An elder has dementia and can't live independently;
- An adult has trouble managing their money, and
- An adult has health issues they cannot manage alone.

Categories of Guardianship



Conservator Responsibilities

Keep detailed records of the person's property and finances. Record everything the person owns, pays for, and receives. The conservator must file an inventory with the court of all the person's possessions and assets within three months of appointment and periodic accounting (annually or every three years) of income and expenses. Records and receipts must support them. You will need to tell the court of an ABLÉ account and special needs trusts.



Guardianship Responsibilities

Ensure the person's physical, mental, and emotional needs, as well as any need for assistance in activities of daily living, are being assessed and addressed. A Guardian is responsible for putting a plan in place to meet these needs and must file that care plan (identifying needs and explaining how they will be met) with the court within three months of being appointed. Additional reports are required annually. Report any changes in circumstances such as a change in residence.

Scope of Guardianship/Conservatorship



Limited

Grants the authority to make specific decisions identified in a court order and may be time-limited. Guardianship/Conservatorship is supposed to be no broader than necessary.



Full

Grants the authority to make all decisions provided under the law. Full guardianship/conservatorship denies a person's significant rights, which may include the right to vote, marry, get a driver's license, enter contracts, or decide who will provide care. It should be entered into only if alternatives to guardianship, or limited guardianship, are not sufficient.

Self Advocacy

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, 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.



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

Believing in Yourself

Build your self-confidence, self-love, and self-esteem. We'll look at what self-esteem is, why it's important for a self-advocate, and how to build yours up.



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



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/>



All-Star Club!

6pm, Friday, January 17
North County Christ the King, 1816 18th Street, Lynden

The All-Stars Club is hosted by North County Christ the King Church! This is a bi-monthly, faith-based, respite program for families and caregivers with individuals who have special needs. We welcome you to bring your All-Star for a night of pure fun which will include adaptive sports activities, arts & crafts, karaoke, gluten-free snacks, and some of the best volunteers who are excited to facilitate a personal and joyful experience! You are welcome to drop your children off and enjoy the evening away, or you are welcome to stay and participate or just observe.

Check in will begin at 6pm and pickup will be scheduled for 8:30pm. If you would like to join us for a devotion and time of worship and prayer, please be at the Student Center at 8:00pm

Learn more and register at: <https://www.allstarsclub.org/ncctk/>

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

January 20th
February 17th
March 17th

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



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



Recreational Activities for CYSHCN in Whatcom County & WA

Ask your DDA Case Manager if DDA will cover costs of any of the following activities.

The National & Federal Recreation Lands Access Pass

The National Park Service is offering a free pass to federal recreation sites for people with disabilities who present documentation of disability status and ask for the free Access Pass. This life-long pass provides that person, along with three other adults, free admission to federal recreation sites around the country. For more details, visit www.nps.gov/findapark/passes.htm

Washington State Parks Access Pass

Washington State Parks also offers pass programs that reduce or waive camping, moorage and watercraft launch fees for limited-income senior citizens, disabled veterans, foster parents, and people with disabilities. For more information, visit www.discoverpass.wa.gov/131/Exemptions

Whatcom Transportation Authority

Regional Reduced Fare Permits - Riders with disabilities can get a Regional Reduced Fare Permit, valid throughout the Puget Sound. Riders who show this card upon boarding can pay a reduced cash fare on WTA fixed route buses (as well as on buses operated by over ten other transit agencies in the region.) One personal care attendant (PCA) can ride for free with a reduced-fare passenger. The reduced-fare passenger must have an RRF with "PCA" on the card.

205 E Magnolia St, Bellingham, WA 98225 Phone: (360) 676-7433

<http://www.ridewta.com/fares-passes/fares/reduced-fare>

City of Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department – Adaptive Recreation

210 Lottie Street, Bellingham WA 98225 Phone: (360) 778-7000

<https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/activities>

Adaptive Aquatics

Arne Hanna, 1114 Potter St, Bellingham, WA 98229 Phone: (360) 778-7665

<https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/aquatic>

Max Higbee Recreational Center

Supports and empowers teens (14+) and adults with developmental disabilities to build community, friendships, happiness, life skills and health through recreation.

1400 N State St Suite #101, Bellingham, WA 98225 Phone: (360) 746-7181

<http://www.maxhigbee.org/>

North Coast Gymnastics Academy

1710 Express Dr. Bellingham, WA 98229 Phone: (360) 733-6969.

<https://northcoastgym.com>

Bellingham Bay Gymnastics and Pre-school

1414 Meador Ave. Suite H-100, Bellingham, WA 98229 Phone: (360) 715-8842

<http://www.bellinghambaygymnastics.com>

Inner Child Studio

Tween Peer Adventure Program ages 10 - 13

Email: play@innerchildstudio.org

<https://www.innerchildstudio.org/>

Camp Korey

24880 Brotherhood Rd, Mt Vernon, WA 98274 Phone: (425) 440-0850

<https://campkorey.org/>

Summer Camp Directory for Children with Special Needs



Adapted Aquatics

Arne Hanna Aquatic Center

Mission: To provide a fun, stimulating aquatic learning environment that positively contributes to the physical and social development of participants with differing abilities.

What is Adapted Aquatics?

Adapted Aquatics is a swimming program for individuals ages 3+ with neurological, developmental, or physical disabilities. Each participant is paired with a volunteer to assist in their personal exercise and behavioral goals.

What are the benefits?

Exercising in water facilitates muscle relaxation, strengthening, range of motion, mobility, endurance, and balance. This program is also a great opportunity for participants to work on communication and social skills.



How can I register to participate?

Want to join in on the fun? Check out cob.org/Adapted-Aquatics for more program and registration information or contact our front desk! Scholarships are available.

Volunteers needed!

This program is made possible with the help of volunteers. Anyone 16 years and older may register to volunteer. All volunteers must complete and pass a criminal background check, participate in one training session, and are required to commit to at least one class per week for eight weeks. Contact our front desk or program coordinator for registration information.

Winter 2025

Wednesdays, January 15 to February 26, 4:15-5:30 pm (No class Feb. 5)

Fridays, January 17 to February 28, 5:00-6:15 pm (No class Feb. 7)

Registration opens January 13

<https://cob.org/services/recreation/aquatic/adapted-aquatics>





Partners4Housing
The journey home starts here

FREE Benefits and Housing Review

Thanks to a generous grant from the Dan Thompson Memorial Fund and contracted through the Developmental Disabilities Administration (\$500 value)

Available for a limited time for individuals with IDD 17 and older



Benefits and Housing Review

- Identify gaps in benefits and services
- Learn about Section 8
- Housing options in WA
- Access to Roommate Matching Pool



Roommate Matching Pool

- Find compatible roommates and partnering families
- Easy-to-use search functions
- Private messaging



Watch our video to learn more



partners4housing.com

971-599-1010

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 from 11am - 12pm via Zoom for Open Office Hours. No RSVP needed.

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

Staff will be available to help with resources, support, information, and connection We will not have a password to join, but participants will be in a waiting room, until we admit you.

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/>

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, 10
-11:30am
Virtual Advocacy Day:
Supporting Families
more info on page 2

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

23 Thursday 6pm
Dads Social
more info on page 3

22 Wednesday, 10
-11:30am
Virtual Advocacy Day:
Housing

30 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

FEBRUARY

3 Monday 10 - 11am
Coffee and Conversation

5 Wednesday, 10 -11:30am
Virtual Advocacy Day:
Supported Living
more info on page 2

6 Thursday, 11am -12pm
Open Office Hours

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

10 Monday, 7 - 8pm
Virtual Parent Connect

22 Wednesday, 10
-11:30am
Virtual Advocacy Day:
Families in Crisis
more info on page 2

12 Wednesday, 11am - 1pm
Paperwork Application
Support

13 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

19 Wednesday, 10
-11:30am
Virtual Advocacy Day:
Employment & Community
Inclusion

20 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours

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

27 Thursday, 11am - 12pm
Open Office Hours



STAY CONNECTED



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

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



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[@arc_whatcom](https://www.instagram.com/arc_whatcom)

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