

# EMPOWER

*The Arc of Whatcom County's mission is to improve the quality of life, increase the independence and assure the full inclusion in the community of all persons with developmental disabilities.*



Wednesday, June 11  
11am - 1pm

Arc of Whatcom County  
Dan Godwin  
Community Center  
2602 Mcleod Rd,  
Bellingham

## Home & Beyond: Staying Safe Together

Caring for someone with a disability comes with unique challenges and responsibilities — and your role as a caregiver is invaluable. We invite you to join us for an informative and supportive workshop. We will discuss:

- Emergency Preparedness (e.g. fire, flood, power outage)
- Building Safety Supports into a IEP/504 Plan
- Home Security (smart devices, alert systems)
- Emergency Contact Planning & Communication Tools
- De-escalation and Self-Advocacy in Public Settings
- Building a Safety Circle (trusted allies, family, support workers)

Let's come together to learn, support one another, and build a stronger safety net for those we care for. If you are unable to attend the presentation, free Safety Packets will be available at our office Monday-Thursday from 10am - 1pm. Please email [admin@arcwhatcom](mailto:admin@arcwhatcom) to set up a time if those hours do not work for you.

### REGISTER HERE:

<https://forms.office.com/r/YYKvkFXnYP>

**JUNE 2025**

***A newsletter by The Arc's Parent Coalition and Parent to Parent of Whatcom County***

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# Am I Eligible?

*Your child with special needs may be eligible for programs and services that help him or her and your family.*

**Advocacy** - Organizations can help you advocate for your child (0-21) within the state's educational system:

- **The Arc of Whatcom County (360) 715-0170**
- **PAVE: (253)565-2266 [www.wapave.org](http://www.wapave.org)**
- **Washington State Office of the Education Ombuds: (866) 297-2597 [www.governor.wa.gov/oeo](http://www.governor.wa.gov/oeo)**
- **Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Community Liaison: 1-360-725-6075**

**Developmental Disability Ombuds-** The DD Ombuds is a private, independent office focused on improving the lives of persons with developmental disabilities in Washington State.

- **(833) 727-8900 <https://ddombuds.org/>**

**The Single Entry Access to Services (SEAS) Program-** Navigators help families with linkages to needed services and supports. This program serves children with special needs, age birth to age 21, and their families.

- **SEAS: (360) 715-7485**

**Crisis Lines** – 24-hour confidential mental health and substance use crisis lines.

**Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT): (800) 584-3578**

**Suicide Crisis line – Call 988** 24-hour confidential support to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress

**Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)** - State and federal benefits may be available to eligible children and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

- **DDA: (360) 714-5000 or (800) 822-7840 [www.dshs.wa.gov/dda](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/dda)**

**Informing Families** – An excellent website with up-to-date information about services and supports for children with special needs and their families: [www.informingfamilies.org](http://www.informingfamilies.org)

## Family Support

- **Parent to Parent** - Family support and activities including peer support, family events, parent and sibling groups, social/recreation program and resource navigation: **(360) 715-0170 <https://arcwhatcom.org/programs/parent-to-parent/>**

**Healthcare** - **Children's Medicaid/Apple Health: (877) 501-2233**

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports/apple-health-medicaid-coverage>

**The Whatcom Resource Information Collaborative (<https://whatcomresources.org/>)** is your locally based, community governed guide to the services & information you need to navigate life in Whatcom County. Opportunity Council is the steward of the resource directory.

**School Services-** Special services are available to eligible children per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act- <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>

- **Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers (0-3 program)** - for infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities- contact SEAS (360) 715-7485
- **Developmental preschool** - free preschool program in school districts for eligible children- contact local school district
- **School services for eligible children and youth age 3-21** - contact local school district

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** - Federal benefits are available to eligible children with special needs. Eligibility includes child's level of delay or disability and family income.

- **800-772-1213 [www.ssa.gov/ssi](http://www.ssa.gov/ssi)**

**Transportation** - If your child has Medicaid, you should be eligible for transportation/gas assistance.

- **(360) 738-4554 or 1-800-860-6812 or [www.nwrcwa.org/medicaid-transportation/](http://www.nwrcwa.org/medicaid-transportation/)**

This document was developed by **Parent to Parent** and **The Arc of Whatcom County**.

For questions about resources or support, please call: **(360) 715-0170** or email:

**P2P@arcwhatcom.org**

# Parent to Parent

## Coffee & Conversation

1st Monday of each month

June 2, 10am - 11am

July 7, 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.

## Monthly Parent Connect

2nd Monday of each month

June 9, 7 - 8pm

July 14, 7 - 8pm

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. Register by sending an email to [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org)

## Super Sitter Training



Tues & Wed, June 17 & 18

9:30 am - 2:30 pm

Thurs, June 19,

12:45 pm – 2:45 pm

(Sibshop day)

This class is for youth ages 13 and older and teaches basic baby-sitting skills along with skills caring for children with disabilities. Participants will gain confidence in caring for children, particularly for children with special needs, and they will also enjoy the learning environment of the camp as they meet new friends. This training also includes a day of infant/child CPR and First Aid certification.

<https://arcwhatcom.org/2025-super-sitter-training/>

*Sibshops are free, fun-filled event for brothers and sisters of kids with developmental differences, delays, and on-going health care needs.*



## Secret Society Sibshop & Ice Cream

Saturday, June 14, 1 pm - 2:30 pm

The Arc of Whatcom County,  
2602 McLeod Rd. Bellingham

This sibshop is offered for siblings ages 6 -16.

This Sibshop will start with a fun scavenger hunt and end with ice cream! Please RSVP by Wednesday, June 11 to guarantee your child's spot. Register at [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org) If this is your child's first time, please arrive 10 minutes early to fill out our Sibshop Form. Contact us at [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org) or (360) 715-0170 ext 302 with any questions or to RSVP for your child.

## Cupcake Decorating Sibshop

Thursday, June 19 from 1 – 2:30 pm

The Arc of Whatcom County  
2602 McLeod Rd. Bellingham

This sibshop is offered for siblings ages 6 -16.

We will play AWESOME games and eat cupcakes while connecting! Limited spots available! Please RSVP by Monday, June 16th to guarantee your child's spot. If this is your child's first time, please arrive 10 minutes early to fill out our Sibshop Form To register your child for these events, please give us a call at 360-715-0170 ext 302 or email at [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org).

***These Sibshops are for the siblings only, not the child with developmental differences, delays, and on-going health care needs.***



## Parent to Parent in the Park

**11am, Wednesday**

**July 2nd**

**July 16th**

**July 30th**

**Cordata Park, 4510 Cordata Pkwy,  
Bellingham**

Join our casual meet-up for families to connect with staff and meet with other families with children with developmental disabilities and on-going medical needs.

The splash park opens at 11am. Please bring your own towels and lunch. We will have bottled water available. We try to set up at a table near the splash park. Look for the Parent to Parent banner and come say hi!

No registration needed.

Questions? Contact: [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org) or  
360-715-0170





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, June 5, 4:30-6:30pm**

### Healthy Relationships

We will have a conversation on Friendships, Peer Relationships, Boundaries, and Consent. Please join us for a fun and friendly discussion on zoom.



## Self-Advocacy Group Connecting to our Community

**Monday, July 21, 6 - 8pm**

### Spin Dance

Meet in-person at the Spin Dance at Depot Market Square.

**Friday, August 1, 6 - 8pm**

### Silent Disco

Meet in-person at the Silent Disco at Max Higbee Center, 1400 N. State Street, Bellingham

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

# Recreational Opportunities

A colorful graphic for the 2025 Summer Camp. It features a sun, mountains, a blue tent, yellow binoculars, a green leaf, a campfire, and a blue kayak. The text is in various fonts and colors, including orange, blue, and green.

**THE AIROW PROJECT**  
ADAPTIVE & INCLUSIVE RECREATION OF WHATCOM COUNTY

## 2025 Summer Camp

**July 7th - August 21st**  
**Bellingham, WA**  
**7 WEEK DAY CAMP PROGRAM**

**Monday-Thursday**  
**10:00 am - 2:00 pm**

**AGES 6-30**

**Swimming, hiking, crafts, kayaking & more!**

**Exploring a different local park every week!**

**Cost varies— DDA funds or private payment plans accepted**

**SIGN UP AT THEAIROWPROJECT.ORG > PROGRAMS > ADAPTIVE & INCLUSIVE SUMMER CAMP**

A graphic for the Sensory Space at the Northwest Washington Fair. It features a woman and a child playing with colorful sensory toys. The text is in white and pink on a dark blue background.

## SENSORY SPACE AT THE NORTHWEST WASHINGTON FAIR

**Date: August 7 - 16, 2025**  
**Hours: 12 - 5pm**

**Location: Located in BP Place, next to the Young Life BBQ and adjacent to Dairy Women Moo'wiches**

**Sponsored by Becoming Complete**  
[becomingcomplete.org](http://becomingcomplete.org)

**If you would like more information please contact**  
[rhonda@becomingcomplete.org](mailto:rhonda@becomingcomplete.org)  
**for more details!**

**Does your loved one need a break at the fair? This space will offer a quiet place to take a break from the large crowds, overwhelming noises and provide families with sensory-friendly activities. All ages welcome!**

A graphic for the 15th Anniversary Rascal Rodeo. It features a collage of photos of people at the rodeo, a cowboy character, and a large number 15. The text is in white, red, and blue on a dark background.

## CELEBRATING 15 YEARS Rascal Rodeo

**Abilities > Disabilities**

### ALL AGES ADAPTIVE RODEO

**Tuesday, August 12, 2025**

**Northwest Washington Fair and Event Center. Lynden, Washington**

**10:00am - 11:00am**

Rascal Rodeo produces adaptive rodeos for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities of all ages throughout several states. Events are safe, modied and free of charge. **Volunteers and horses needed.**

**Registration: [rascalrodeo.org](http://rascalrodeo.org)**

**Questions: 509-528-5947**

A graphic celebrating the Bellingham Independents Soccer team. It features a green background with white and red text, and images of trophies and medals.

## Congratulations Bellingham Independents Soccer!

**TEAM A | State Qualifiers!**

Bobbie, Desean, Evan, Jentzen, JoJo, Joey, Gabbie, Maddie Moi, and Sophie!

**TEAM C | State Qualifiers!**

AJ, Christopher, Dale, Danny, Kieren, Richard and William!

**TEAM B**

Ben, Ellie, Holly, Josh, Keri, Larry, Melissa, Ryan, and Sterling!

**TEAM D**

Brook, Jaxsen, Kaylee, Kevin, and Marco!





## Virtual Office Hours

Information and resources for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families



Staff are available every Thursday (unless it is a holiday)

11am - 12pm, No RSVP needed

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

Meeting ID: 869 0930 4702

Do you have questions about:

- Special Education
- Disability Systems & Resource Navigation
- Future Planning & Transition to Adulthood
- Disability Family Support

There is no 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.



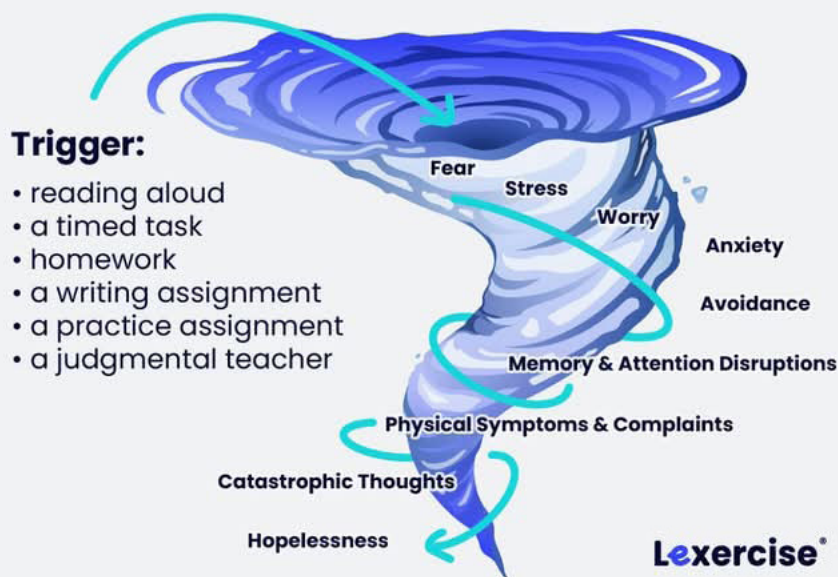
Scan here to enter Zoom



[admin@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:admin@arcwhatcom.org)  
360-715-0170  
[www.arcwhatcom.org](http://www.arcwhatcom.org)



## The Vortex of Dyslexia



***Do you have questions about your children's school and/or reading performance? Feel free to reach out to our Family Advocate Laura at: [laurak@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:laurak@arcwhatcom.org)***



### PAVE Provides Sample Letters to Support Families in their Advocacy

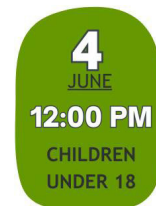
An advocate is someone who works toward a cause or goal. Sometimes the hardest part of advocacy is figuring out what to do next. When a child has unmet needs at school, family advocates can seek changes to a student's services by asking for an evaluation, a meeting, a behavioral assessment, or something else. Putting any request in writing formalizes the process and holds everyone accountable. PAVE helps families get started with a collection of sample letters.

PAVE has bundled links to those letter templates here for easy reference. Each link takes you to a short article with key information to help you understand the process of special education and how your customized letter can move you forward in that process.

**<https://wapave.org/pave-provides-sample-letters-to-support-families-in-their-advocacy/>**

## NAVIGATING SSI APPLICATIONS

### ONLINE CLASSES



Join NW Access Navigating SSI Applications classes! These classes are online, free, and are created and led by a certified benefits planner. These classes are intended for parents and service providers of youths with disabilities in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Get a better understanding of the SSI application process, learn tips and strategies to navigate it, and get a chance to ask questions.

Financial How-To's for People with Disabilities: Monthly Classes Bring your questions! Each class is generally held every 2-3 weeks and led by a financial coach. These classes provide financial education designed to meet the unique needs of people with disabilities. Get tips and strategies on a variety of financial topics and leave with a clear idea of the next steps to take to help you reach your goals.

**[www.nwaccessfund.org](http://www.nwaccessfund.org)**





## Need Paperwork & Application Support from Arc Staff Members?

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday  
of every month**

**June 11\*, June 25**

**July 9, July 23**

**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
- Use of our printer, scanner, and paper shredder free of charge

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](mailto: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.

\*Cancelled, we will be holding our Home & Beyond: Staying Safe Together workshop

**(360) 715-0170**



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



Ready, Set, KNOW...

## DDA Home Visits

*What to expect, purpose, and more.*

If you are receiving or planning to receive any DDA-paid services, a case resource manager will conduct a home visit and request to view the living space of your loved one. For instance, they will view your child's or supported loved one's bedroom, but not the parent's or caregiver's room. These visits will take place in your home.

### Are home visits and in-person visits the same?

No, they're not. In-person visits refer to a DDA case manager meeting with a client face-to-face, but this doesn't necessarily mean the visit takes place at the client's home. Home visits specifically occur when the case manager goes to the client's home.

### Who is a case resource manager?

A case resource manager, or a CRM is a DDA case manager, social service specialist, or social worker.

### When do home visits occur?

If your loved one receives an initial, annual, or significant change assessment, the CRM must conduct a home visit. During this visit, the CRM will request permission to view the living quarters of your child or the loved one you support.

### A home visit may occur during:

- The assessment
- Up to 30 days before or after your child or loved one you support assessment
- Or up to 30 days after the individual moves from an institutional setting to a community-based setting



### What will happen during this home visit?

The case manager will take note of their general observations of the living quarters and the individual's overall well-being. They will observe to learn about the condition of the home and the quality of care. Some questions they may consider when conducting their home visit include the following, but are NOT limited to:

- Does the client have access to food and running water?
- Are there locks on the refrigerator or cabinets preventing client access?
- Does the client's bed and bedding meet the client's individual needs?
- Are there locks on the outside of the client's bedroom?

**If you have more questions, reach out to your DDA case manager.**



# 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.



We are affiliated with The Arc of United States with more than 140,000 members and nearly 700 state and local chapters nationwide, we are on the front lines to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families have the support they need to be members of the community.

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.

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/>

## JUNE

2 Monday 10 - 11am  
Coffee and Conversation

5 Thursday, 11am -12pm  
Open Office Hours

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

9 Monday, 7 - 8pm  
Virtual Parent Connect

11 Wednesday, 11am - 1pm  
Home & Beyond: Staying  
Safe Together Workshop

12 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

14 Saturday, 1 - 2:30pm  
Secret Society Sibshop & Ice  
Cream

17 Tues, 9:30 am - 2:30 pm  
Super Sitter Training

18 Wed, 9:30 am - 2:30 pm  
Super Sitter Training

19 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

19 Thursday, 1 - 2:30pm  
Cupcake Decorating Sibshop

25 Wednesday, 11am - 1pm  
Paperwork Application  
Support

25 Wednesday, 6 - 7:30pm  
Board of Directors Meeting  
[https://arcwhatcom.org/  
about-the-arc/board-of-  
directors/](https://arcwhatcom.org/about-the-arc/board-of-directors/)

26 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

## JULY

2 Wednesday, 11am  
Cordata Park Gathering

3 Thursday, 11am -12pm  
Open Office Hours

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

7 Monday 10 - 11am  
Coffee and Conversation

9 Wednesday, 11am - 1pm  
Paperwork Application  
Support

10 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

14 Monday, 7 - 8pm  
Virtual Parent Connect

16 Wednesday, 11am  
Cordata Park Gathering

17 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

23 Wednesday, 11am - 1pm  
Paperwork Application  
Support

24 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours

30 Wednesday, 11am  
Cordata Park Gathering

31 Thursday, 11am - 12pm  
Open Office Hours



**OUR LENDING LIBRARY IS AVAILABLE!**

Please click on the link and click on books.

Search our collection on our website at [the Resources tab under books.](#)

**STAY CONNECTED**

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