

The Autism Support Center

The Spectrum

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*Vacations and
Downtime!
Page 5*

FEBRUARY VACATION WEEK FUN

PLASTER FUN TIME
The Plaster Painting Place Where Kids Do It Their Way

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST
10:00 AM

347 Main Street
Reading, MA 01867

Children may pick one item to paint from the
red wall and can take it home that day.

RSVP: Stacey at 978-624-2347
COST: FREE



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH
10:00 AM

AMC Methuen 20
The Loop, 90 Pleasant Valley St
Methuen, MA 01844

**COST: \$10 for a family of 3 or fewer,
\$15 for a family of 4 or more**
RSVP: Whitney 978-624-2305



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST
1:00 PM

100 Phoenix Ave #1
Lowell, MA 01852

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD
11:00 AM

470 Wildwood Ave
Woburn, MA 01801

Join us in a private and safe environment where
children can burn off energy playing, sliding and
jumping on the inflatable equipment and trampolines.

COST: FREE
RSVP: Jackie 978-624-3721



**Space for all events is limited and
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED**
**Activities are not drop-off events;
parents must remain at the site.**

**Questions? Please contact the
Autism Support Center
at
asc@ne-arc.org**

IT'S A FACT:

Autism is the fastest growing serious developmental disability in the United States.

Guidelines for Participation in ASC Events and Activities

Who may participate in Autism Support Center events and activities?

Participation is limited to families who are registered with us. You may register by calling the Center at 978-777-9135.

May we just show up at the activity?

All activities (except for support groups) require advance registration. You may RSVP by calling the event contact person on the flyer or the ASC general phone number: 978-777-9135. Registration will close when the event is fully subscribed, or two business days before the event. For many activities space is limited; we may keep a waitlist for certain events.

What else should we know?

Please be considerate and arrive at the designated start time for each activity.

Who can attend?

Registration for events is for your **immediate** family only: This includes the child(ren) with ASD, their siblings who live in the family home, their mother, father or guardian(s), or live-in grandparents. This does not include cousins, nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, etc.

What is the cost?

Registration fees vary for activities and are listed on the flyers. Fees are non-refundable.

What if we change our minds?

Those who register for an event and fail to participate without notifying us will be placed on a waitlist status for three months for all activities and be allowed to participate only if there is space available. In order to allow us to fill your spot, we require notification via phone or e-mail as soon as it becomes evident that your family will be unable to attend to avoid being placed on waitlist status. Acceptable excuses for missing an activity include illness, lack of transportation and other unforeseen circumstances. Please be aware that ASC's office is closed on weekends.



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Support Groups

GROUP NAME	GROUP DESCRIPTION	MEETING DETAILS	CONTACT INFO
Central Middlesex Area			
Mandarin Group	ASC-sponsored For Mandarin-speaking parents of children diagnosed with ASD; connect and network with other families; enjoy periodic family days	Acton Memorial Library, 486 Main St, Acton. Bi-monthly meetings, TBA. Facilitator: Wen Li	ASC at 978-777-9135 or asc@ne-arc.org
Burlington Group	ASC-sponsored General discussion and networking for parents of children and teens with ASD. Occasional guest speakers.	@ Burlington Public Library, 22 Sears St, Burlington. Meets the 1 st Monday of the month @ 6:30pm Facilitator: Chris Curtin	ASC at 978-777-9135 or asc@ne-arc.org
Merrimack Valley Area			
Spanish Group	ASC-sponsored for Spanish-speaking parents of children with disabilities. Occasional workshops & events offered	@ Family and Youth Initiative, 130 Parker Street, Lawrence; Meets 3rd Friday of the month, 9:30-11:30 am. Facilitator: Gloria Ricardi Castillo	Gloria Ricardi Castillo at 978-624-23201 or gcas-tillo@ne-arc.org
Newburyport Group Note Change!!	ASC-sponsored for parents of children diagnosed with ASD. General discussion and networking.	@ Newburyport 5 Cents Bank, State St, Newburyport; Meets the 2 nd Thursdays at 7 pm. Facilitator: Nancy Lucier For February only: Feb 16th!!!	Contact Susan Gilroy at 978-624-2302 or asc@ne-arc.org
North Shore Area			
Parents of Adults (18+) with AS New Day & Time!	ASC-sponsored for parents of adults with Asperger's, high cognitive autism; general discussion, info sharing.	@ Autism Support Center, 6 Southside Rd, Danvers; 1st Thursdays, 6-8 pm; Facilitator: Phyllis Kizner	Phyllis Kizner at 978-624-3747 or pkizner@ne-arc.org
Grandparents' Group Just for February: Last Monday!	ASC-sponsored for grandparents coping with ASD. Networking, info sharing, support.	@ Autism Support Center, 6 Southside Road, Danvers; 3 rd Mondays at 10-11:30 am Facilitator: Susan Gilroy	Susan Gilroy at 978-624-2302 or sgilroy@ne-arc.org
Danvers Group	ASC-sponsored for parents of young children (under 10), info sharing and occasional workshops/guest speakers	@ Autism Support Center, 6 Southside Rd, Danvers, 6 to 7:30 pm; 3 rd Thursdays; Facilitator: Jackie Murphy	Jackie Murphy at 978-624-3721 or jpmurphy@ne-arc.org
Transition Group	NeArc-sponsored for parents of transition-aged youth ((14-22). Discussion and workshops on turning 22 related topics	@ NeArc, 6 Southside Rd, Danvers; 3 rd Tuesdays at 6:30-8:30 pm; Facilitated by Nancy Lucier	Nancy Lucier at 978-624-2350 or nalucier@ne-arc.org
Adult Group (18+)	ASC-sponsored for adults with Asperger profile, high cognitive autism.	@ Breaking Grounds Café, 67 Main St., Peabody. 1 st Thursday, 11am-noon. Facilitated by Phyllis Kizner	Phyllis Kizner at 978-624-3747 or pkizner@ne-arc.org
Danvers Panera Group	NeArc Family Resource Center sponsored; for parents of children with disabilities; general discussion	@Panera Bread, Liberty Tree Mall, 100 Independence Way, Danvers; 2 nd Tuesdays at 10 am. Facilitated by Aymee Lucifora/Fariba O'Donald	Fariba O'Donald at 978-624-2381 or Aymee Lucifora at 978-624-2380
Lynn Group	NeArc Family Resource Center sponsored; for parents of children with disabilities; general discussion	@ Brothers Deli, 41 Market Street, Lynn; Last Thursday at 10 am. Facilitated by Fariba O'Donald	Fariba O'Donald at 978-624-2381 or Aymee Lucifora at 978-624-2380
Lynn Spanish Group	NeArc Family Resource Center sponsored; for Spanish-speaking parents of children with DD; general discussion	@ CenterBoard, City Hall Sq.Lynn; 2/28 Facilitated by Aymee Lucifora	Aymee Lucifora at 978-624-2380

*Does your child's
Individualized Education Program
meet their unique needs?*

Educational Advocacy IEP Consult \$25

(1 hour Consultation- regularly \$80)

Tuesday

February 7th & 14th

9:00 am - 10:15 am - 11:30 am

@

Northeast Arc

Center for Excellence

6 Southside Road

Monday

February 13th & 27th

9:00 am - 10:15 am - 11:30 am

@

Centerboard

16 City Hall Square

Lynn, MA

For more information or an appointment, contact:

alucifora@ne-arc.org / 1-978-624-2381 or

fodonald@ne-arc.org / 1-978-624-2380

Thanks to support from the Department of Developmental Services
and the United Way of the North Shore these Consultations may be
FREE to eligible families through the North Shore area office.



Vacations and the Downtime that Follows

Contributed by Bailey Strangman, M.A., BCBA
Northeast Arc Autism ABA Services

School has been in session and daily routines have been established for families and their children. However everyone deserves some time off to relax, take trips, visit family and friends or the opportunity to just sleep in! The word vacation may hold a different meaning for families who have a child with a disability. For these children a change in routine may increase challenging behaviors and anxiety during the unstructured vacation time. Below is a list of suggestions to help prepare you and your family for any upcoming break from the ordinary.

- **Plan ahead!** Create a basic structure of what the vacation will entail. Whether you are planning on travelling or staying at home, having a general idea of what each day looks like will provide some structure throughout the vacation time. This will also allow you to add in some unexpected activities!
- **Consult with your BCBA** or teacher about successful strategies for flexibility and change in routine. They may be able to provide you with simple tips that will make vacation more relaxing for all.
- **If your child has a morning routine** or an evening routine stick with it throughout vacation. This provides your child with a familiar structure and will also ease the transition back to school.
- **Allow your child to make choices.** They may not know what to do with the free time or what exactly is expected of them. For example, giving them a choice between playing with their favorite puzzle, watching a movie or watching YouTube videos.
- **Utilize visual schedules!** Visualizing what is expected may reduce anxiety and anticipation of what may lie ahead. These schedules may include pictures or written activities. When making the schedule of the day, include your child in the process! This is a great way to incorporate them as well as allowing them to make

choices as to what their day will look like!

- **Calendars are a great way to visualize** upcoming vacations, holidays or any other scheduled plans. As each day passes cross off the present day and count the days left until the event.
- **Social stories!** Create a social story (or ask teacher and/or BCBA for one) about upcoming events, so you can discuss what to expect and safety rules. These stories are a fun way to inform your child of what the vacation may entail and how they will spend their time during it. These stories could be done while referencing the visual calendar.
- **Role-play and practice** during the weekends if you and your family are planning any new activity during the break. Such as, role-playing any safety concerns that may arise and including other family members into the practice. This allows all members of the family to participate and help prepare the child for twists and turns along the way. Practice makes better!
- **Try to minimize demands** that are placed on the child and increase positive reinforcement. Provide social praise, items or activities that your child enjoys for compliance (waiting/listening/etc.), acting appropriately or being flexible during the day.
- Please note that these are suggestions and are not an exhaustive list of guidelines. I hope you find some of these tips helpful. And remember enjoy your vacation! You all have worked hard and have earned some relaxation time!

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Summer Camp Fairs

Wellesley LINX Camps Tour

February 5th, March 26th, April 9th, July 5th & 12, 2017, Wellesley, Dana Hall Campus, register for camp tours at 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Not Disability Specific. Find camps for kids age 3 – 16, with programs focused on Adventure, Fine Arts, General, Junior, Leadership, Performing Arts, Sports, STEMM, Red Cross Certified swim lessons and a full array of camp activities. Meet with camp leadership and tour the facilities. Registration required to <http://www.linxcamps.com/tours> or call 781-235-3210.

Chelmsford Summer Camp Fair

March 11, 2017 all-day

Chelmsford Summer Camp & Activities Fair: March 11th, 2017, 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., McCarthy Middle School, Chelmsford. Not disability specific. Programs may include soccer, basketball, baseball, computers, weight loss, recreation, gymnastics, performing arts, football, nature, travel, softball, tutoring, and more. Contact info@summercampfairmass.com

Methuen Recreational & Resource Fair for Special Needs

Methuen Comprehensive Grammar School, Methuen, April 30th, 3 – 6 p.m., 2017. The Methuen Special Education Parent Advisory Council's special-needs resource fair will feature information from vendors who support advocacy, financial planning, special needs trusts, vocational training, sports and summer programming, activities, and more. 2017 Vendors TBA.

2016 Special needs organizations and vendors included:

- Surfing w/ Smiles
- Boy Scouts of America
- Methuen Karate Association
- YMCA Merrimack Valley
- North East Rehabilitation
- Ella's Way (Special Needs books)
- American Training
- SPaN
- Asperger's Works
- Northshore ARC
- Blue Skies Wellness
- Exceptional Lives
- Clinical Solutions
- Mass Down Syndrome Congress
- Methuen Fire Department
- Methuen Police Department
- FCSN/Family Ties
- Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center

For more information visit the www.methuensepac.com or contact methuensepac@gmail.com



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Spotlight Social Skills For All Ages! **Contact Chris Curtin @ 978-624-2335**



Pizza and Video Game Night
\$20.00/week
January 6th-February 24th
RSVP by Friday at noon!
Call Chris
978 624 2335



Ladies Night Out!
\$20.00/week (includes pizza)
January 6th-February 24th
RSVP by Friday at Noon
Call Chris
978-624-2335

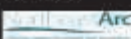
Why video games?

Not only are Video Games super fun they have a lot to offer to enrich a social experience. Video games create opportunities for turn taking, collaboration, sportsmanship, and tolerance all the while throwing bananas!



Girls are...

Amazing, awesome, fun, inspiring, incredible! However so are ALL kids! Girls face their own unique challenges socially, and Spotlight Friday Night is a place for ladies to come and relax and hang out in a supported environment to be who they are with no judgement or expectations. It's a time to unwind and have fun!



Spotlight
Program

Take One

Winter Session 2017
January 7th-February 25th
9am-10am
ages 2.9yrs-5yrs



Take One is a therapeutic play-based pragmatic skills groups utilize music, movement, drama, and play activities to encourage children ages 2.9-5 to learn and practice social skills and have fun being part of a group.

Take One focuses on transitioning between activities, following group instructions, collaborating with peers, attending and sensory experiences through art and movement.

Activities Include:

- Group Meetings
- Parachutes
- Arts and Crafts
- Peer Interaction
- Sensory Activities

"If a child cannot learn in the way we teach, we must teach in a way the child can learn."

- Unknown



RSVP/week by 12:00pm the Friday prior
\$20.00/week per child

Chris Curtin 978-624-2335
ccurtin@ne-arc.org

What if video games could help children with autism have better executive functioning?



WHO 7-11 year olds with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders

WHAT Join a study of computer games designed to improve executive function, or problem solving.

WHERE The Faja Lab at Boston Children's Hospital.

WHY Help test a new intervention. Families receive feedback about their child's skills, free parking, childcare for siblings, and up to \$100 for participating.

Boston Children's Hospital
Join every child's world

HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
TEACHING HOSPITAL

Please call 617-919-4108 or email gamesproject@childrens.harvard.edu for more information



MASSACHUSETTS ADVOCATES for CHILDREN

Apply to the Young Adult Leaders Fellowship Program!

In our program, young people with disabilities:

- Learn how laws are made here in Massachusetts
- Talk to lawmakers at the State House about disability rights
- Find out how students can ask for what they want at IEP and other meetings
- Practice giving speeches and trainings about rights for people with disabilities
- Learn how to work in an office setting

Our fellowship is open to people in Massachusetts, ages 18 to 26, who have autism and/or intellectual and developmental disabilities. Fellows work part time for one year, supported by a lawyer and autism information specialist from Massachusetts Advocates for Children.

Why our program works:

- It gives real life opportunities for young people to communicate effectively about their educational experiences, lives, and goals
- When lawmakers meet young people with disabilities, they are more likely to pass laws to protect everyone's rights
- The best way to improve your life and get what you want is to learn to speak up for yourself!

"I learned a lot about advocacy at MAC... Someone that does advocacy is someone that can think or do things to help themselves and so they can help others."

—Harry Goulart,
MAC Fellow

Interested in applying? Great!

Contact Leslie Hughes to learn more: lhughes@massadvocates.org (617) 357-8431 x3233

Applications are due February 15, 2017

massadvocates.org/young-adult-leaders-fellowship/

Northeast Arc
A non-profit organization for autism

PARENTS OF ADULTS WITH ASPERGER SYNDROME: SUPPORT GROUP



Next meeting
February 2nd!!

Parents of adults (18+) living with Asperger syndrome or high cognitive autism have unique needs for information and support. To meet those needs we have formed a support group that will meet at the Autism Support Center, 6 Southside Road, Danvers on 1st Thursdays from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Participants will also learn what programs and services are available at Northeast Arc as well as other agencies. Information shared at a support group is confidential and will be respected. Participants may shape the group to specific needs, for instance requesting speakers on topics of interest. For more information please contact Phyllis Kizner at 978-624-3747 or pkizner@ne-arc.org



A minimum of 3 participants needed to run this group!
Please call Phyllis



Northeast Arc

JUST FOR GRANDPARENTS!

If you are a grandparent of a child diagnosed on the autism spectrum and you would like to meet other grandparents you are encouraged to join our support/discussion group. We recognize that your needs and concerns may be somewhat different than a more traditional parent support group so we hope to come together to build a network to share tips and resources, as well as encouragement. Our meetings are on the 3rd Monday* of the month at 1 p.m. at our site in Danvers.
*February only: Monday Feb 27

Change for February Only!!!
Monday February 27

When:
3rd Mondays at 1 p.m.

Location:
The Library @ ASC, 6 Southside Road, Danvers

Contact:
Susan Gilroy 978-624-2302 or sgilroy@ne-arc.org

- Information
- Encouragement
- Support
- Sharing



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Cutting-edge Research

Participate in important research!!

New opportunity for you and your child to be involved in a fun, play-based study using a new toy developed by researchers at MIT along with ***cutting-edge wearable technology*** that can measure heart beats and stress levels. We're looking for parents and their children who have a diagnosis of an ASD aged 2-5 years old to take part in a 1.5-2 hour study in our Northeastern University lab; you'll be with your child the entire time. We will pay you \$50 plus \$25 toward travel costs (\$75 total) as well as a small toy/gift for your child; parking is available. If you're interested in learning more, please visit www.cbslab.org/entrainASD or email entrain@cbslab.org



FEBRUARY BINGO!

JOIN US!

Our friends from Camp Fire North Shore
will be here to play bingo!

February 12, 6 to 7:30 pm

Prizes, snacks, and lots of fun!!

Any questions?

Contact Suzanne at 978-624-2318 or

sryan@ne-arc.org



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Flexible funding for low-income families



We are pleased to announce that ASC's proposal for family support flexible funding to the **Doug Flutie, Jr., Foundation for Autism** has been approved. We will begin accepting flex funding requests for Flutie funds in February. **Low income families** with a child on the autism spectrum **not** receiving funding from another source of support (for example, DDS family support, intensive supports, DESE/DDS, autism waiver, etc.) are eligible to apply. Funds can be requested for recreational activities, respite care, tuition to a social skills group, Y membership or other goods and services of direct benefit to the child with ASD.

The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation awards grants on an annual basis to non-profit organizations and schools that provide services, education and advocacy for children with autism spectrum disorder and to organizations that conduct research on the causes and effects of autism. Over \$402,000 was distributed to organizations all over the US and Canada.

We are very grateful to the Flutie Foundation for their continued support of the families we serve!

Please call the Center at 978-777-9135 if you would like an application. Funds will not be allocated until March 2017.

HOLLAND PROJECT

Barn Program for Teens with Autism and Other Developmental Delays

An integrated farming and agricultural Saturday program for teens diagnosed with autism and other developmental delays. The program is designed for the teens to have a typically developing volunteer from the community to assist them. Each program participant will experience the many educational, therapeutic, vocational and social benefits of working on a farm with a peer and caring for the animals on a farm setting.

- Age group: 14-30;
Program Structure: 6 Wk Saturday program
9:30:am - 11:00 am.
- 1 ½ hrs in length
 - 1:2 ratio participant to volunteer
 - 8 participants
 - Additional volunteer staff include a LICSW.

Participant Requirements:

- Ability to handle the physical aspects of the program and interact with animals
- Behavioral assessment/intake questionnaire completed by

parent, caregiver, or educator prior to start of program.

· Screening for medical conditions or allergies that might interfere with the participation of the program

Volunteer Requirements:

All volunteers must be 14 yrs old and will participate in a volunteer orientation program. Community service hours will be awarded.

Sign-up Deadline: Feb. 27th; Max: 10 participants Each session: \$150; payment must be received to reserve a spot

Program begins:

Session 1:

3/18, 3/25, 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22

Session II:

4/29, 5/6, 5/13, 5/20, 6/3, 6/10

Contact Info: Eileen Mitchell, The Holland Project

email: thehollandproject@comcast.net

www.thehollandproject.org

tel: 978-764-8611

fax: 978-997-1289

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Transition Talk



Who is eligible for a 688 referral (turning 22 law)?

Persons who are automatically eligible for Chapter 688 include:

- Anyone receiving SSI and/or SSDI based on his/her own disability or;
- Anyone listed in the registry of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

All young adults referred to Chapter 688 must be:

- Receiving special education services in Massachusetts paid for by the school district (LEA) and
- In need of continuing services because of the severity of their disability and
- Unable to work 20 or more hours per week in competitive employment

Want to know more?

Go to <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/688/>

If you have questions about Turning 22 and adult services, contact Phyllis Kizner, Adult Specialist, at 978-624-3747.

A NIGHT TO SHINE

Time: 6-9 pm

Date: February 10, 2017

Where: North Shore Community Baptist Church, 9 Hart Street, Beverly, MA 01915

Cost: Free!! (We are thankful for a grant from the Tim Tebow Foundation to make this all possible)

Who Can Come: Those from our community with and without developmental disabilities and their caregivers/parents

What Will Happen: This will be a Prom like no other with music, dancing, karaoke, fancy dinner, limousine rides, pictures, take home gifts, and much much more!

What To Wear: Wear the best of what you have. Some will rent tuxedos and buy dresses but please do not feel obligated to do so.

Caregivers: We will have buddies to spend time with guests or you are welcome to join in the fun.

How To RSVP: Click on the link below to register

REGISTER NOW!!

***This Program is not offered by the Northeast Arc. All Questions: Please email us at nighttoshine@nscbc.org ***



The Spectrum

The Spectrum is a monthly electronic publication of the Autism Support Center. This newsletter is published to inform parents and professionals of resource information, upcoming events, and other autism-related topics. ASC is funded primarily by the Mass. Dept. of Developmental

INFORMED. EMPOWERED. CONNECTED.

Services. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the funding source. ASC does not endorse any product, service or theory referred to in this newsletter. Articles, resources and announcements are included for information only.

Anyone wishing to contribute information for this newsletter should send it to asc@ne-arc.org or to our mailing address. Parent contributions are encouraged. *Announcements are included as space is available.*



PLEASE CONTACT

ASC AT 978-777-9135

OR VISIT [HTTP://NE-ARC.ORG/SERVICES/AUTISM-SERVICES/](http://ne-arc.org/services/autism-services/)

FOR MORE INFORMATION.



6 SOUTHSIDE ROAD, DANVERS MA 01923

NortheastArc
Lifelong support for people with disabilities

