



Island County Parent to Parent Newsletter

February 2026

Upcoming Events

Events are All Ages,
All Abilities, All Welcome

Sensory Friendly Movie:

Charlie the Wonderdog

Saturday, February 7, 2026

2:00pm at Oak Harbor Cinemas \$8pp

Guardianship vs Power of Attorney

What is the Difference? What is the Process?

Presented by Disability Attorney Christy Ibrahim

Saturday, February 21, 2026

Virtual: [RSVP Link](#)

Autism Acceptance BBQ &

Sensory Friendly Touch a Police Car

We provide the food and entertainment. Bring the whole family. Activities, Balloon Artists & More. The BBQ is not sensory friendly, only the "touch a car" Sunday, April 12 at Fort Nugent Park Noon-2pm

Autism Community Connections Summit

Saturday, April 18th at The Center (next to the pool)

9:00am-4:00pm. Connections, presentations, resource booths and community support. Including a Q & A panel with local providers.

More events listed in newsletter

In this Newsletter:

- Upcoming Events
- Summer Camp
- Sensory Movies
- WA State Disability Park Pass
- Family Resource Toolkit
- School Refusal vs Sick Days



Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson, Island County Coordinator

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(360)632-7539 call/text

All Ages, All Abilities, All Welcome. Events are subject to change/cancellations. Follow our Facebook Page for up to date information

<https://www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent>

UPCOMING EVENTS WITH PARENT TO PARENT SPRING 2026



FEB
21

GUARDIANSHIP VS POWER OF ATTORNEY

Virtual with Disability Attorney 10-11:30am
RSVP required. QR Code on back page.

MAR
17

SENSORY FRIENDLY PARADE ZONE

St. Patrick's Day Parade in Oak Harbor

APR
12

ANNUAL AUTISM ACCEPTANCE BBQ

and Sensory Friendly Touch a Police Car at
Fort Nugent Park Noon-2:00pm

APR
18

AUTISM COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS SUMMIT

Location to be announced soon

APR
25

HOLLAND HAPPENINGS PARADE

Sensory Friendly Zone at Hal Ramaley
Park in Oak Harbor on Bayshore

MAY
3

HAWAIIAN DANCE PARTY

Noon - 2:00pm Coupeville Rec Hall



**ALL AGES,
ALL ABILITIES,
ALL WELCOME!**

Parent to Parent provides resources,
support, trainings and connections
for families who support a child or
adult with disabilities

Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson (360)632-7539 call/text

**For More Info
Visit Our Website**



[https://www.islandcountywa.gov/
198/Parent-to-Parent](https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent)


Event Details on back page. All events are subject to
change/cancellation. Questions? Call/Text Tiffany (360)632-7539

Mark Your Calendars! All Events are All Ages, All Abilities, All Welcome. Events are Subject to Cancellation

ONGOING MONTHLY EVENTS

- **Mom Meet Up at Whidbey Coffee** next to Wendy's in Oak Harbor. 1:00-2:00pm. Pop in, join us for a chat. Grab your favorite beverage, ask questions, find resources, seek support or just hang out with adults. Very informal. First Tuesday of the Month. No February gathering. See you March 3, April 7, May 5
- **Connect with Parent to Parent** virtual opportunity to connect with Parent to Parent and other families. Find resources, ask questions, etc, all from the comfort of your place. First Tuesday of the Month. No February Meeting. March 3, April 7, May 5 Zoom Email for Zoom link t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountywa.gov
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82712379811?pwd=ftFFK2pZ9eUQY4yba1MDN3Cw9vyckn.1>
- **Sensory Friendly Movies at Oak Harbor Cinemas** First family movie of the day, usually around 2:00p.m. \$8 per person. Film titles released ASAP. Be around others who will understand if your kiddo/adult doesn't sit still, makes noises, needs quiet space, etc. Be around others that "get it." Lowered sound, lights on low, warning for any flashing lights, staff are aware, trained and intended to make the experience less overwhelming for all. First Saturday of the Month. Winter/Spring 2026 dates are: Feb 7, March 7, April 4, May 2

NEW UPCOMING EVENTS

- **February 21, 2026 Guardianship vs Power of Attorney** What are the Differences? Virtual presentation with Disability Attorney Christy Ibrahim. 10:00-11:30 am. Get your questions ready. RSVP with QR Code 
- **March 17, 2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade Sensory Friendly Zone** Our zone is located in front of My Sister's Closet on Pioneer in Oak Harbor. Parade starts at 4:30pm. Designated parking is just kiddy corner, look for the signs. No whistles, horns, loud noises in this area. Plus the parade participants know our group may not want to be approached or witness anything too wild and overwhelming. Great way to test the waters for upcoming events.
- **April 12, 2026 Annual Autism Awareness and Acceptance BBQ Plus Sensory Friendly "Touch a Police Car"** at Fort Nugent Park. Noon-2pm. We provide the food and entertainment. You bring your whole family and enjoy the afternoon. Activities, games, and of course, lunch. All welcome. Sensory Friendly = No lights, no sirens, no horns or whistles on the police car, swat truck or fire department vehicle.
- **April 18, 2026 Autism Community Connections Summit** Resources, presentations, information and connections with those that love and support people with autism, provide services and connect our community. In Oak Harbor with childcare offered with limited spaces. More details to follow.
- **April 25, 2026 Holland Happenings Parade Sensory Friendly Zone** Our zone is located at Hal Ramaley Park on Bayshore. Look for the signs. We also have designated parking next to Orlando's. Parade details will be coming soon. No whistles, horns, or loud noises in this area. Plus the parade participants know our group may not want to be approached or witness anything too wild and loud. It is a whole weekend of fun. This is a great way to start it.
- **May 3, 2026 Hawaiian Dance Party** Noon-2:00pm at Coupeville Rec Hall. 901 NW Alexander Street. Coupeville. Enjoy some music, dancing, potluck, arts & crafts and more. If you are able to bring a side dish or snack, great. If not, no problem. Dress up Hawaiian style or come as you are. Engage as little or as much as you like.

Engage as little or as much as you like. All Ages, All Abilities, All Welcome

Questions? Contact Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson at Island County Parent to Parent (360)632-7539 call/text

All events are subject to change and cancellation. Follow our Facebook Page to keep up to date, especially outdoor events.



GUARDIANSHIP & POWER OF ATTORNEY

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?
WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

IT IS NEVER TOO EARLY TO START
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW.
- GET YOUR QUESTIONS READY
- WHEN CAN YOU START THE PROCESS?
- AFTER APPROVED, WHAT IS NEXT?

FEBRUARY 21, 2026

10:00AM VIRTUALLY
TO RSVP USE QR CODE



QUESTIONS? PARENT TO PARENT TIFFANY (360)632-7539 CALL/TEXT

Hosted by Island County Parent to Parent
**April is Autism Awareness &
Acceptance Month**

**Sunday,
April 12
Noon-
2pm**

BBQ

**Free
Lunch
Arts &
Crafts
& Games**

And

✦ *Sensory Friendly* ✦
Touch a Police Car



Fort Nugent Park

2075 SW Fort Nugent Ave, Oak Harbor

- We Provide the Food & Entertainment. Bring the Whole Family! All Ages, All Abilities
- Welcome! Activities, Arts & Crafts & More. We are partnering with OHPD to offer
- “Sensory Friendly Touch a Police Armored Truck” and Balloon Artists Jenny & Julie
- Island County Parent to Parent provides Resources, Support, Trainings, Activities and Events to families raising and supporting children and adults with disabilities Questions? Tiffany (360)632-7539 call/text



AUTISM COMMUNITY

CONNECTIONS SUMMIT

SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 18TH, 2026 9:00AM-4:00PM

THE CENTER 51 SE JEROME STREET OAK HARBOR

Representing Island County with resources for North, Central, South
Whidbey and Camano Islands.



Join us for a day of connection, resources, and community support. The Autism Partnership Spring Connections Summit will bring together families, caregivers, professionals, and local organizations to share tools, insights, and services that support Neurodivergent individuals.

The Event Will Feature:

- Resource booths from local and regional service providers
- Speakers and community voices
- Opportunities to ask questions and engage in meaningful dialogue

“Together, we can create a world where everyone, including people with autism, can reach their full potential.”

Interested in participating or staying informed?

Providers, parents, and community members are invited to email breana.r@takingstepstogether.org or scan the QR code to receive updates and learn more as details become available.



Hawaiian

DANCE PARTY

Enjoy some Music, Dancing, Potluck, Arts & Crafts, and more. If you are able, please bring a side dish or snack to share. Dress up Hawaiian style or come as you are.

All Ages, All Abilities All Welcome.
Engage as little or as much as you like.

**SUNDAY,
MAY 3RD**

12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Coupeville Rec Hall
901 NW Alexander St.
Coupeville, WA 98239

Questions? Contact Tiffany (360)632-7539

Parent to Parent provides resources and support for
special needs families in Island County



ADAPTIVE & SENSORY SUMMER CAMPS



Camps fill up quickly, don't wait! Register Now!

Most camps accept DDCS/DDA respite funds

Comprehensive List: <https://arcwa.org/info-resources/camp-resources-2/>

It's time to make arrangements for your child's summer fun. One great way to ensure that your kid has a great time, stays occupied and makes new friends this summer is by sending him to camp! While this may present more of a challenge than sending a typical child, summer camp and kids with special needs are particularly well suited for one another.

Local Overnight Camps include:

- **The WABE of Whidbey Island** <https://ktjfellowship.org/> Kevin Heller: kevinwilliamheller@gmail.com
- **Camp Korey** in Mt Vernon for families and specific diagnoses <https://www.campkorey.org/>
- **Lions Camp Horizon** in Ferndale (just north of Bellingham) ages 12 & up <https://www.lionscamphorizon.org/>
- **Kiwanis Camp Casey** is now held at Lions Camp Horizon ages 6-17 with physical disabilities
- **Camp Beausite NW** in Chimacum Ages 10 & up (25 minutes off Coupeville ferry) <https://campbeausitenw.org/>
- **Camp Killoqua** at Lake Goodwin (Snohomish County) up to age 21 <https://campkilloqua.org/>

Tips for Choosing Camps for Kids & Adults with Special Needs/Disabilities

Here are some tips that can help your child have an excellent time at camp this summer even with the added challenge of social, behavioral or other neurobehavioral issues.

- **Choose the Right Camp** Many camps exist for children both with and without special needs, and choosing the right program for your child can help ensure he has a positive experience. You might want to consider a camp that is specifically tailored to children with special needs, particularly if your child has a hard time integrating into a large group of children. Alternatively, you might consider a regular camp that features a subject or skill your child is particularly good at or interested in – like art or horseback riding – if your child thrives when focused on something he is passionate about.
- **Communicate with Your Child About Camp** Your child might be nervous about getting through required tasks, or simply spending the day away from you (or the night away, if it is a sleep-away camp). Thus, you should talk openly with your child about what they can expect at camp and address any fears he or she might have. Help your child figure out what goals he might want to get out of a camp experience, and set up a plan for contacting you or expressing himself should he feel uncomfortable or unhappy in his situation.
- **Communicate with Camp Staff About Your Child** The most important thing you can do for your child once you choose a camp is to communicate with the camp's staff. You should be very open and honest about the needs of your child and any struggles he might have. Summer camp and processing disorders can present challenges to your child, and you will want to give the right staff members at the program any medical information or sensory tools that are relevant to avoid any unpleasant situations. You will also want to share information about what your child wants and needs from camp, as well as any concerns he might have about being there. The more knowledge the staff is armed with, the better chance they will be able to effectively handle any situation that arises.

JOIN US FOR SENSORY FRIENDLY MOVIES AT OAK HARBOR CINEMAS ON THE FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH AT 2:00PM YOU NEVER KNOW WHO YOU WILL RUN IN TO



Family Resource Toolkit

We customize it to your needs. Do you need/want to know more about Autism? Special Olympics? Support & Social Groups? Transition to adulthood? Developmental Disabilities Community Services/DDA? Send us your snail mail address and let us know what resources you would like sent to you. All resources are available on our website too.



PODCAST: SCHOOL REFUSAL VS. SICK DAYS: WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

IN THIS EPISODE, JULIAN BREAKS DOWN "CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM." WHAT IS THAT, YOU ASK? AS PARENTS, YOU'RE PROBABLY FAMILIAR WITH KIDS AVOIDING SCHOOL. BUT WHEN DOES A FEELING TURN INTO A PATTERN? AND WHAT CAN THAT TELL US ABOUT A CHILD'S SCHOOL EXPERIENCE? JULIAN WILL EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OCCASIONAL SICK DAYS AND ONGOING PATTERNS, WHAT TRUE SCHOOL REFUSAL REALLY LOOKS LIKE, AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT.

[HTTPS://WWW.UNDERSTOOD.ORG/EN/PODCASTS/THE-OPPORTUNITY-GAP/SCHOOL-REFUSAL-SICK-DAYS?](https://www.understood.org/en/podcasts/the-opportunity-gap/school-refusal-sick-days?)

Washington State Park Disability Pass

Offered to Washington state residents who are legally blind, profoundly deaf, or who meet the disability definition used by the Social Security Administration & are currently receiving benefits.

Pass benefits

- Free parking (no Discover Pass needed), watercraft launch and trailer dump use at state Parks.
- 50% discount on nightly camping or moorage fees. Provides access to ADA accessible campsites.

This pass is free to apply for and must be renewed every 1 or 5 years. To renew your pass, please reapply. This pass is not accepted at Sno-Parks, National recreation sites or on lands managed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife or Department of Natural Resources.

Residents of Washington who've been issued a permanent disabled parking ID card, or special license plate, under state law, get the same benefits as the Disability Pass. Temporary parking placards do not accepted qualify for discounts. [WA State Park Disability Passes Website](#)

Local Island County WA State Parks

- Camano Island State Park
- Cama Beach Historical State Park
- Joseph Whidbey State Park
- Fort Ebey State Park
- Deception Pass State Park
- Fort Casey Historical State Park
- South Whidbey State Park



Passes for People with Disabilities, Veterans, Senior Citizens & Foster Families

Island County Parent to Parent

Have you checked out our website?

Oh boy, there is lots of new content, resources, information and more.

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>

Hard copies of these resource guides, Family Toolkits and “Island County Transition: School-age to Adulthood In Depth Guide: English” are also available. Email t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountywa.gov. Provide your contact information to ensure a reply.

Island County Disability Resources

- ◆ Island County Disability Resource Guide: English & Spanish
- ◆ Island County Autism Resource Guide: English & Spanish
- ◆ Autism Resources for Families website: English & Spanish
- ◆ Special Education Quick Guide: English
- ◆ Island County Behavioral/Mental Health Resource Guide: English

Other resources: Ages & Stages

- ◆ P2P Resource Birth to Three
- ◆ P2P Resource Three to Six
- ◆ P2P Resource Six to Fourteen
- ◆ P2P Resource Fourteen to Twenty One
- ◆ P2P Resource Twenty One-Adulthood

Transition Support & Resources

- ◆ Transition Packet Info, Timelines and Checklists
- ◆ Transition IEPs, Services, Planning
- ◆ Transition DDA
- ◆ Transition Employment Support
- ◆ Transition HS vs College
- ◆ Transition Advocacy and Social Emotional
- ◆ Transition Resource Federal State Local
- ◆ Transition Legal and Financial Planning
- ◆ Transition Healthcare
- ◆ Transition-Toolkit PAVE

Island County Parent to Parent Support & Resources for Special Needs Families

Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson, Coordinator 105 NW 1st Street Coupeville, WA 98239
Call/Text (360)632-7539 **Email:** t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountwa.gov

**Check us out on Facebook for up-to-date resources, information and activities **
www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent

We have resource guides on our website:

*Island County Parent to Parent Disability Resource Guide

*Autism Spectrum Disorder Resource Guide & website <https://www.pilotace.org/>

*Special Education Quick Guide

*Island County Behavioral Health Resource Directory

*Island County School Age to Adulthood Transition Guides

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>



All events are subject to cancellation or rescheduling. Check our Facebook Page before you head out to the event www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent