

## Transition

Over the past 19 years I have come to dread that word. I have 3 sons, Wayne (19), Gage (16) and Joel (14) all with Autism. For as long as I remember our life has been wrought with transition. Transition grade to grade, school to school, aide to aide, the list is endless. I think other people with children who do not have developmental disabilities call it an adjustment period. "Johnny needed a few weeks to adjust from Elementary school to Middle School." Transition for the rest of us can be seemingly endless, wrought with stress, anxiety and plain out exhausting. We prepare



for it, we batten down the hatches for it, BUT low and behold our amazing kids have the ability to keep surprising us!

Last August my oldest son, Wayne, was on the transition journey to college. To add some framework to this transition, Wayne was our first born, so that being said we were clueless new parents. He seemed to be developing normally, and he spoke one word when he was a year old. After that short stint he never spoke another word. Despite me bringing it up at every visit to the pediatrician, I got the old, "it's a boy" thing. By the time he was two and a half, my husband and I knew something wasn't right. After much argument I got the pediatrician to refer him to early intervention. At that time, he was diagnosed with a speech delay and began services. Wayne finally spoke words and pointed on his 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. He was sitting on my husband's lap he pointed to his face and said eyes, nose, ears and mouth. I will never forget it. Just single words, no sentences, just individual words. We were becoming increasingly alarmed. One night shortly after he turned 3, we were taking a walk around the neighborhood and we came to the cover on the street labeled electric. Wayne looked down and said "Electric." My husband and I were completely puzzled. Huh? He can't put together a sentence but he can read and spell like no other? Still being clueless, we were elated that we had a genius! That period was very short lived, we began to notice increasingly strange behavior, he knew all of the license plate numbers of our cars and our neighbors' cars. He was very shy, withdrawn, liked to be alone, he didn't play with toys, he had a ton of verbal stimming. It just got more alarming as he moved into Pre-School, Kindergarten and Elementary School. At that point my two other sons had come along. It was not until my second son was diagnosed with Autism that the puzzle of Wayne came together. Wayne was my first born, but 3<sup>rd</sup> to be diagnosed with Autism at 7 years old.

## Transition Cont.

As the years progressed, we fought for services, tried every therapy that was inside the box and too many to count that were outside the box. We struggled to provide our son with the best possible tools to make him as functional and successful as he could be in his life.

Wayne got to high school and seemed to mature and branch out. As a freshman he was on the Unified Track team but he did not fit in there. His sophomore year he joined Cross Country Track, he became the Homeroom Representative, he tutored other kids in math, he participated in all the school plays. In his Junior year Wayne informed us he wanted to go to college. UGH OH, my husband and I panicked. OK, one step at a time we said, we would get through this. This was our goal, to make him thrive. We gave him roots and a plethora of tools and now we needed to give him wings. Regardless of our trepidations.

Wayne decided the only place he wanted to go was his father's alma mater, Worcester State University. We encouraged him to look at other colleges, but no, this was his staunch decision and he wanted to live there. Wayne applied for early admission to WSU and low and behold he was accepted in December of 2017 for the upcoming 2018/2019 school year. He was also accepted to the WSU Track Team. He was elated and we were both horrified and unequivocally proud.

Then came the doubt. For months were many sleepless nights for me and much obsessing over whether or not he was capable of making the transition from home to living on his own at college. Along with rivers of tears. All those worries I had, would he remember to eat, would he take a shower, would he remember to brush his teeth, would he make it to class on time, would he get in with a party crowd, would he take his medication? Every scenario pummeled my brain for the entire summer.

Then the day arrived, August 20, 2018. This was the day we were releasing one of our baby boys into the wild. We loaded the car and I put his room together. Arming him enough stuff to survive Armageddon. Yes, my husband thought I was crazy! Wayne never looked back! He barely came home, much to my dismay. I was certain he would be home every weekend.

Wayne learned how to do his own laundry, get to class on time, get to track practice on time, seek out academic resources, live with a roommate. He did shower, brush his teeth, take his medication and he thrived on the track team. Beating his own personal best at every meet. Branching out and hanging out with his team mates. It was the biggest phenomenon I have ever seen. To be a part of the amazing journey of this transition in my son's life is an absolute miracle.

We just moved Wayne in earlier this week for his Sophomore year at WSU. Being part of the journey of Wayne's life, although tumultuous is one of the greatest gifts I have been blessed with as a parent. I've learned transition is not always doom and gloom, it can be beautiful too.

Kelly Carey  
Family Advisory Board Member





# Halloween Costume Ball

*For teens, young adults and siblings*

**Friday October 25, 2019**

**The Manor Restaurant**  
42 West Boylston Street,  
West Boylston, MA

**Ages**  
**13-19**  
5pm - 7pm

**\$15pp**  
**\$45**  
**Family**  
**cap**

**Ages**  
**20+**  
7:30pm - 9:30pm



**Parent Night Out runs concurrently**

<https://www.autismresourcecentral.org/About/The-Center/Register-For-An-Activity/>

# Fundraising Events

August was a busy month with 3 events. We started on August 16th with Wild About Wine followed by New Balance Falmouth Road Race on August 18th and ended with Tee Up for Autism on August 23rd. Thank you to the center staff, IFFS program staff and volunteers who worked tirelessly making sure these events were a huge success. We were able to raise more than \$55,000 that will go towards supporting, educating and empowering families that we serve.

We are grateful to the sponsors and donors who gave generously to support our Center.

## Thank you to the following Sponsors

- BCI
- Strategic Behavioral Solutions
- Autism Allies
- Ubuntu Autism Consultants
- New Beginnings ABA
- Futures Behavior Therapy Center
- ABS Behavioral Health Services
- James Curtin
- Visions By Baker
- Howland Muscular Therapy
- Wabisabi Family Photography
- Enterprise Foundation
- Moody Street
- Fletch Tilton
- Frogg Brewery
- Sullivan Travel
- United Bank
- Unibank



Megan Gregoire, Katie Sullivan, Kathryn Newell and Wanja Kiraguri (not in the picture is Christopher Sharry) who braved the heat and ran the New Balance Falmouth Road Race to raise Autism Awareness and Acceptance

Great job to all our 127 golfers at the Tee Up for Autism August 23, 2019



Lisa Thompson and Kristen Delannoy at the Wild About Wine event on August 16, 2019. Lisa is the chair of the Family Advisory Board

## Sensory , IEP & ADL Clinics & Inclusion Grants

Participants for all groups MUST be DDS eligible, and under the age of 18. Parents must register within 30 days of request for funding.

### Social Skills

Those who would like to enroll their child in a Social Skills Group with a clinician may apply for funding, up to \$300.00 towards a group session. Funds will be sent directly to providers, and families are responsible for any fees beyond \$300.00. If a provider charges less than \$300.00 the fee will be covered in total by the funding. Funding for social skills groups is limited to eligible candidates under the age of 18 who meet the criteria for participation as set by the clinician.

Call Cid DeLeo 508-298-1610 at the Resource Center to request funding

Once your DDS status has been verified your provider may invoice the Center for payment of \$300.00 for your child.

### IEP, ADL & VISUAL CLINICS

To book all clinics please call 508-835-4278 . ADL and Visuals Clinics are by appointment. ADL Clinics are booked only upon request. For Visual Clinics, parents may drop by the Center at any time during regular business hours to access the Board maker Program and material to create visuals.

### 1 Hour IEP Clinics with Advocate Gayle Green M. Ed

Meet with an Advocate to discuss your child's IEP, concerns and needs and how best to advocate for changes with your school. Please

send a copy of your child's IEP to CDeleo@hmea.org so she can forward to Gayle to read before you meet. See Fall Activities Calendar for dates.

### Sensory Clinics with Mary Loughlin MS OTR/L

Clinic will provide consultation to families in the area of Sensory Processing Dysfunction. A Sensory Profile Assessment will be done which will identify any sensory specific needs their child may or may not have. Parents will be provided with resources including websites, DIY sensory equipment, sensory play and activities. At conclusion of the sessions parents will be given an individual "sensory diet" for their child. Parent and child must attend and participate in both 1 hour sessions for evaluation to be done. If you miss a session the clinic will be cancelled and you will have to sign up in the next quarter. Please call the center if you need to cancel so that the OT does not travel to the center to meet you. See dates in Fall Activities calendar.

### INCLUSION GRANTS

Please call Cid DeLeo at 508-298- 1610 to request Inclusion Grants for Youth YMCA Memberships. The Autism Resource Central will provide scholarships to the following YMCA's for children under 18 with ASD who are DDS eligible, for a one year membership.

- Greendale YMCA in Worcester
- Montachusett YMCA in Fitchburg

- Tri Community YMCA in Southbridge
- Hockomock YMCA, Franklin Branch,
- Boroughs YMCA Branch in Westborough
- The Clark YMCA in Winchendon
- Whitins Community Center in Northbridge

Children who qualify may be accompanied by 1 parent or a 1:1 aide. Access to some of the program areas for children under the age of 13 may require the person accompanying the child to have a CORI & SORI check done, which would take 24 hours.

### AUTISM 101

When you first receive an autism diagnosis it can be overwhelming. There's the initial emotional shock, which is quickly followed by feelings of inadequacy as there is no manual for parenting itself, let alone parenting a child with an autism spectrum disorder. And there is SO much to learn. Our Autism 1010 series is designed to help families who are new to the diagnosis gain a solid footing to begin their journey. It includes an overview of autism, the medical management of ASD, how to access public supports, an overview of sensory issues seen in ASD, a workshop on SPED Law and an organizational workshop. See dates in Fall Activities calendar.



# ANNUAL CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY PARTY



## SUNDAY DECEMBER, 15TH 2019

### TIME SLOTS

**VISIT WITH SANTA  
GIFTS FOR  
KIDS AGE 12 &  
YOUNGER**

### THE MANOR RESTAURANT ITALIAN DINNER BUFFET

42 WEST BOYLSTON STREET,  
WEST BOYLSTON, MA 01583

SPONSORED BY



AUTISM ALLIES

**11:30AM  
12:45PM  
2:00PM  
3:30PM  
4:45PM**

**EACH SEATING  
IS FOR ONE HOUR**

**RSVP for you and your family at  
508-835-4278 • [www.autismresourcecentral.org](http://www.autismresourcecentral.org)**

Register here: <https://www.autismresourcecentral.org/About/The-Center/Register-For-An-Activity/>



**\$15**  
Registration Fee

# MUSICALITY RHYTHM IN 45 MIN



SEP 5 12 19 26 OCT 4 11

4-8 yrs old 4:30 PM - 5:15 PM

9-12 yrs old 5:30 PM - 6:15 PM

712 Plantation Street, Worcester, MA 01605

Siblings are welcome.

Register online at [www.autismresourcecentral.org/](http://www.autismresourcecentral.org/)

# Fall Family Fun Activities and Groups

Unless otherwise noted, all activities will take place at the Center  
712 Plantation Street, Worcester, MA 01605

- **Sensory Clinic with Mary Loughlin**  
Session 1 Wednesday **Oct. 2, 9, 23** 3pm, 4pm, 5pm  
Session 2 Wednesday **Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 20** 3pm,  
4pm, 5pm
- **IEP Clinic with Gayle Green M.Ed**  
Wednesday **Oct. 16** 3:30pm, 4:30pm, 5:30pm,  
6:30pm, 7:30pm  
Tuesday **Oct. 22** 9am, 10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm,  
2pm *Leominster Public Library, 30 West St., Leominster*  
Tuesday **Oct. 29** 9am, 10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm,  
2pm *HMEA, meeting room C3, 8 Forge Park East,  
Franklin*
- **Adaptive Exercise with David Crowley**  
Mondays, **Sept. 23, 30, Oct. 7, 21, 28, Nov. 4, 18,**  
25 6pm—7pm \$15pp
- **Autism 101**  
Tuesdays, **Sept. 24, Oct. 1, 8, 22 Nov. 5, 12**  
10am—12pm
- **Hip Hop Dance**  
Session 1 Thursdays **Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10,**  
4:30—5:15 (ages 4-8), 5:30pm-6:15pm (ages 9-12)  
Session 2 **Oct. 17, 24, Nov. 7, 14, 21, Dec. 5** 4:30—  
5:15 (ages 4-8), 5:30pm-6:15pm (ages 9-12)  
\$15 per person per session siblings welcome.
- **SibShop**  
Saturdays **Sept. 21** 10am—1:30pm  
712 Plantation St. Worcester MA  
**Oct. 26** 10am—1:30pm *Zion Lutheran Church 70  
Main St., Oxford (Halloween theme costumes  
optional)*  
**Nov. 16** 10am—1:30pm *United Parish Main St @  
Mass Ave, Lunenburg (thankful theme)*  
\$10 per child \$15 per family
- **Apple Picking**  
Sunday **Sept. 22** 1pm *Brookfield Orchards, 12 Lincoln  
Rd., North Brookfield, MA \$7 per family*
- **Autism Acceptance Day at Great Wolf Lodge**  
sponsored by BCI Sunday **Sept. 29** 2pm—7pm  
(sold out)
- **Parents of Adults Support Group**  
Wednesday **Oct. 2, Nov. 6** 7pm—9pm
- **Ramblewild**  
Sunday **Oct. 6** 1pm—5pm person with ASD and  
helper \$10 each. Any additional family members  
\$30 adults, \$18 youth. *110 Brodie Mtn Rd, Lanesboro,  
MA*
- **Parents of Tweens (ages 8-12) Support group**  
Wednesday **Oct. 9, Nov. 13** 6:30pm—8pm
- **Parents of Teens (ages 13-22) Support Group**  
Wednesday **Oct. 16, Nov. 20** 5:30pm-7pm Teen  
social group runs concurrently facilitated by staff
- **Parents and Tots (ages 3-7)**  
Sunday **Oct. 20, Nov. 17** 10:30am—12pm
- **Parents of Girls (ages 8-15) Support Group**  
Wednesday **Oct. 23** 6:30—8pm, girls social groups  
runs concurrently facilitated by staff.
- **Halloween Dance Party**  
Friday **Oct. 25** Ages 13-19 5pm-7pm, Ages 20+  
7:30pm-9:30pm *The Manor Restaurant 42 West  
Boylston Street, West Boylston*
- **Family Fun at West End Creamery**  
Saturday **Oct. 26** 2:30pm-5pm \$6.00pp
- **Family Fun Bowling & Pizza**  
Friday **Nov. 24** 11am—12:30pm *Putnam Street  
Lanes, 14 Putnam St. Fitchburg, MA \$5.50pp*

## Save the date and register now!

1. **Children's Holiday Party** sponsored by Autism  
Allies Sunday **Dec. 15** *The Manor Restaurant,*
2. **New Year's Eve Celebration**  
Friday **Dec. 27** *Teens & Young Adults  
The Manor Restaurant.*

For questions please contact Cid DeLeo at 508-298-1610 or [cdeleo@hmea.org](mailto:cdeleo@hmea.org)



71 Sterling Street  
West Boylston MA

Phone: 508-835-4278 Fax: 508 -835-3723

Email: [autism@HMEA.org](mailto:autism@HMEA.org)

[www.autismresourcecentral.org](http://www.autismresourcecentral.org)

**Business Hours**

Monday through Thursday 9AM- 5PM Friday 9 AM—3 PM

## We are the **CENTER** of the autism community



The Resource CONNECTION is a quarterly publication of HMEA's Autism Resource Central

*The Autism Resource Center does not endorse any treatments, programs or products. Articles, announcements and resources are provided for information purposes only.*

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