



# Community Connection

Autism Connections: a Pathlight program

# Newsletter

## Golf in the Berkshires

### Opportunity to support Autism Connections and play some golf!

There are many golf tournaments to choose from this summer, but Buddy's Sunshine Angels Golf tournament for Autism is special. You will be joining Jennie and Joe Clark in honoring their son Buddy, and in helping other children and adults with autism by supporting Autism Connections.



Bas Ridge Golf Course in Hinsdale hosts the tournament on August 24 for 2 and 4 person teams. The \$80 entry fee includes 18 holes with a cart, raffle opportunities and food throughout the day.

For more information, contact Joe at 413-212-2443, download a brochure [here](#), or download raffles, donation and sponsorship details [here](#).

## Family Picnics in Westfield and Pittsfield

Have you been able to attend a picnic yet this summer? Our annual family picnics offer a welcoming environment with activities, food, and the opportunity to feel supported and connected to a larger community. If you have not yet attended an Autism Connections' picnic, please come! If you are a regular every year, we look forward to seeing you again. Please [RSVP to Danielle](#) for both events. Activities include juggling lessons and a performance from the folks at [SHOW Circus Studio](#)! Please click the individual flyers below for more info.



**Easthampton office picnic**  
 Stanley Park, Westfield  
 Saturday, August 17, 2019  
 1:00-1:00  
 Download the flyer [here](#).

**Pittsfield office picnic**  
 Pittsfield State Forest Ski Lodge  
 Thursday, August 22, 2010  
 5:00—7:00  
 Download the flyer [here](#).

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

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**¡Hola! Hablamos español**  
 116 Pleasant Street, Suite 366  
 Easthampton, MA 01027  
 413.529.2428

**Berkshire Office**  
 75 South Church Street, Suite 402  
 Pittsfield, MA 01201  
 413.443.4780

*Our Mission: To help families, schools, professionals, agencies, and communities understand autism, promote the well-being of individuals with autism, and foster their inclusion in the community.*



## Resource Directory

Autism Connections' Resource Directory is now live on our website! Our goal is to provide a database of resources for families in Franklin, Berkshire, Hampshire and Hampden counties. If you have had positive experiences with providers, please share the provider link with them so they can submit their information and other families can also benefit from their services. The provider link is [here](#), and the searchable database is [here](#). Let us know if you have any comments or suggestions. 😊



# NEWS & UPDATES

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## Berkshire County

### Autism Collaborative of Berkshire County

ACBC meetings will resume in September 2019, please stay tuned for more details. If you have questions about The Autism Collaborative of Berkshire County, download an informational flyer [here](#), or contact Erica Donovan at 413-443-4780 X19 or [Erica.donovan@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:Erica.donovan@pathlightgroup.org).



### Back to School Giveaway

**Saturday, August 24, 2019**

**1:00 p.m. — 3:00 p.m.**

**Berkshire Dream Center**

**475 Tyler Street, Pittsfield, MA**

Doors open at 12:45 and backpack giveaway for children in K-12 starts at 1:00. Children must be present to receive a backpack. Tickets will be given to the first 200 children to make sure they receive a back pack after entering. More information is on the facebook event [here](#).



### Berkshire Family Picnic

**Autism Connections**

**Thursday, August 29, 2019**

**5:00 p.m. — 7:00 p.m.**

**Pittsfield State Forest Ski Lodge**

Join us for an family picnic at the beautiful Pittsfield State Forest Ski Lodge. Let's celebrate the season before the summer turns to fall!

Enjoy an afternoon of family, friends, activities, food and relaxation.

We will provide the meal and beverages, but dessert will be Potluck, so bring your favorites to share. Invite your extended family for a no-fuss celebration for **all ages**. RSVPs to [Danielle](#) are required so we have enough food for everyone!

Enjoy an afternoon of family, friends, activities, food and relaxation.

*sip to support*  
A Benefit for Autism Connections

You are invited to join **The Berkshire Autism Initiative** for an evening of awareness, entertainment, and premium wines with Pop and R&B singer-songwriter [Matt Cusson](#) at Balderdash Cellars in Richmond on Saturday, August 31, 2019, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Your \$25 ticket includes 2 complimentary glasses of wine of your choice and entertainment. Find more information on our [website](#).

## Getting Back to School

### What you can do to prepare for school

#### 1. When can my child and I visit the school and the teachers before school begins?

Visiting ahead of time also gives us an opportunity to meet teachers on a more relaxed and one-on-one time and gives the opportunity to share with them without feeling the pressure of other parents or children waiting in line at an open-house.

Tip: Bring a little treat as a thank you to the teachers who make time for us to visit ahead of time.

#### 2. What will my child's day look like? What will their schedule be?

It can help kids to talk through school schedules before school begins, especially if there are therapies during the day.

You can practice getting around the building to follow a schedule to make sure your child knows where every classroom is, how to get there and to get an idea of how long it will take her to go from classroom to classroom. This is especially important to do before school begins and hallways are crowded.

#### 3. Who will be providing supports for my child and when?

If the school doesn't know yet, that could be a problem that needs to be addressed right away.

#### 4. Have all my child's teachers received a copy of the IEP?

This is especially important for kids in middle school and high school who have multiple teachers.

Tip: When you visit teachers ahead of time, bring a copy of the IEP for each teacher highlighting the important sections that apply to that particular class. Or, write your own "cheat sheet" version of the IEP and go through it with the teacher. Don't just hand it out. Invite the teacher to ask questions, too.

#### 5. What are the teachers' expectations for my child?

Some teachers have low expectations, and some may have unrealistic expectations you know will frustrate your child. Take this as an opportunity where only you, the teacher and your child can talk about this together.

Tip: Discuss academic, behavioral, social and physical expectations.

#### 6. Are you aware of my child's behaviors and triggers?

Some kids may display behaviors due to being overwhelmed or not feeling regulated. Discuss this with all their teachers ahead of time. You will be helping not only the teachers but your child as well.

#### 7. Do you know how to help my child when he is triggered or overwhelmed?

Take this as an opportunity to offer suggestions to the teachers. As the parent, you know best how to help. But invite your child, if they are able, to be the ones to offer suggestions.

#### 8. What is the best way to contact you regarding my child and receive a timely response?

This is really important. Some teachers check their email constantly, some only once a day. Some might even be open to text messages. Make sure you know ahead of time what each teacher prefers and what is most likely to get a prompt response. Also, discuss with them what you consider to be a prompt response — and be reasonable.

#### 9. What is the plan if my child needs a break?

Pushing a child past a certain point can result in a meltdown when a break could have been sufficient to help them get regulated. It is important to discuss with all teachers what they prefer our kid say or do when they need that break. Again, expectations.

#### 10. Where can my child go if he/she feels overwhelmed or has a meltdown?

When kids are unable to get regulated, it is no surprise it results in being overwhelmed or having a meltdown. For some kids, it is important to know there is a place in the building they can go to if they are extremely overwhelmed or have a meltdown. Some schools have sensory rooms. Some teachers have pop-up tents in their classrooms. Kids need to know there is a safe place in the school when their emotions feel out of control. What is that place?

#### 11. Who are "safe people" my child can look for if they need help?

Who are the people your child can talk to if they begin to feel overwhelmed? Who does your child talk to if they are being bullied? Who are the safe people they know they

*Continued on page 4*

## Getting Back to School

can talk to outside of their teachers? Ask your child as well — they may have a preference. If they do, let teachers know who your child has designed as their “safe people.”

### 12. Who will my child be having lunch with?

It may seem like a silly question, but for some of our kids, this is important. You are basically asking, what is the lunch plan? Yes, most kids have lunch with their friends, but things like friendships can be hard, especially for those who are nonverbal. Some kids have lunch with their special education class. Some kids end up eating lunch alone and being isolated. Some kids get bullied during lunch. Don't be afraid to request someone keep an eye for your child during lunch, especially as school begins and your child establishes a routine.

### 13. Who do I contact if I have academic concerns?

Our kids tend to have an entire team of “teachers”. So if you have a question about reading progress, do you contact the homeroom teacher, the special education teacher or the reading specialist? Knowing who to contact for academic concerns will make the process go better.

### 14. Who do I contact if I have concerns about my child's social and emotional interactions at school?

Typically, teachers only see what happens inside their classroom (and some things may go unnoticed). Knowing who the person is who can help your child if the need arises is crucial.

### 15. What will you do to prevent and tackle bullying?

Knowing ahead of time what the school will do to prevent bullying or what they will do if it happens will get everyone on the same page.

*Excerpted and adapted from a blog on [The Mighty](https://themighty.com/2018/08/questions-parents-of-kids-with-disabilities-need-to-ask-schools/), by Ellen Stumbo, August 8, 2018. The original article can be found here: <https://themighty.com/2018/08/questions-parents-of-kids-with-disabilities-need-to-ask-schools/>*

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## Turning 18 checklist

For older students, turning 18 is a very important milestone. Once 18 years old, a person becomes an adult from a legal perspective. Quite a bit changes, but a little organization can help everyone involved in the planning process. Autism Housing Pathways is a great source of information, and provides an important checklist which you can access on their website [here](#).

## Special Education Parent Action Committees (SEPAC)

SEPACS are very important in making sure the voices of the community are heard by schools, who want to hear what you have to say about educational services. Involvement in SEPACS can also lead to making sure that town leaders are aware of services that are needed in your school. Family members have very important and meaningful input to discussions about services. Learn more from the Federation for Children with Special Needs website [here](#).

## Transition Fair



**Family Empowerment's Transition Fair** (similar to a college fair) addresses the needs of students with a broad range of abilities and learning differences, aged 14-22+. The Fair highlights options and supports for all students with learning differences who want to explore post secondary education and employment possibilities. This is a free community event for school and service professionals, and parents and students. The fair will be held on October 16, 2019 at the Hadley Farms Meeting House from 5:00-8:00 pm. Contact [joanne.lucey@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:joanne.lucey@pathlightgroup.org) with any questions.

## FREE BACKPACKS (for K-12 in North Quabbin area)

Patch Parent's Council Annual Backpack Distribution is Tuesday, August 13, 2019 from 10am-12pm and 1-3pm at ACU Community Room, 527 Main Street in Athol. Backpacks will be distributed on a first come, first served basis, while supplies last. Contact Kelly Flaherty with questions: 978-5070 ext 30.

## WEBINARS

### What is Neurodiversity?

An AANE webinar for parents, adults and professionals

Thursday, August 22, 2019

7:00pm-8:30pm

Online

[Register \(\\$25\)](#)

Neurodiversity: What is it? What do we mean when we say Inclusion? Is autism a condition or a culture? Answers to these questions and many more will be covered in this exploration of neurodiversity and inclusion in the context of our current cultural and societal landscape. Gain a greater understanding of neurodiversity, how to make inclusion a priority in your life, and a substantial appreciation for neurodiversity as a movement, and its intrinsic role in the autistic culture.

Becca Lory Hector, CAS, BCCS was diagnosed on the autism spectrum as an adult and has since become an active autism advocate, consultant, speaker, and author. After four years supporting the autism community in the non-profit sector in her work for grass-roots organizations that provide resources and services directly to individuals on the autism spectrum, Becca pursued dual certifications as a Certified Autism Specialist (CAS) and Cognitive Specialist (BCCS). She is a board member for several autism organizations and the Assistant Editor and Feature Writer at *Spectrum Women Magazine*.

## COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

### Ohana Performing Arts Open House

September 5, 2019, 5:30pm—7:30pm

41 Sheridan Street, Chicopee MA

Ohana's new space is officially opened! The community, dancers and their families, friends, and loved ones are all invited to visit Ohana on Thursday, September 5 from 5:30pm - 7:30pm to celebrate its new location at 41 Sheridan Street in Chicopee. The event will begin with a ribbon-cutting ceremony followed by refreshments and tours. Expected attendees include Chicopee Mayor Richard Kos and state Rep. Joseph Wagner. Ohana School of Performing Arts is open to students of all abilities. Check out their rhythm works integrative dance class [here!](#)

## YOUNG ADULTS

### Potluck Social/Video Game nights

August 23, Milestones, 41 Russell Street, Hadley, 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m., (all ages), FREE

Live music, food, karaoke and video games. Please bring a nut-free appetizer, entrée, dessert or drink to share. Call 413-585-8010 for more information.

### Milestones

41 Russell St., Hadley, MA

Recreational programs for young adults. Summer session starts Monday July 8. Fall session information will be available soon.

## CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

### Whole Children

41 Russell St., Hadley, MA

Recreational programs for young children. Fall session information will be available soon.



## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY RESOURCES

**Springfield JCC, Springfield:** The mission of *Kehillah, the JCC Special Needs Program* (*Kehillah means "community"*), is to provide quality social and recreational enrichment programs for children, teens, and adults with social challenges, cognitive delays, and physical limitations.

**CHD:** activities including therapeutic summer camp and many adaptive recreational opportunities in the greater Springfield area

**CSO: The Bridge Family Resource Center:** Amherst based activities

**The 413 Mom:** community based events in western Massachusetts for all children and families

**All Out Adventures:** <https://alloutadventures.org/calendar/programs-calendar/>

SUN

MON

TUES

WEDS



# AUTISM CONNECTIONS CALENDAR: AUGUST 2019

4

5

6

7  
Navigating Social Nuances  
6:00pm-7:30pm  
Autism Connections' Pittsfield Office

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12

13

14  
Autism Connections,  
Parent Support Group  
5:30pm-7:30pm, Holyoke  
CALL FOR INFO: 413-529-2428

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THURS

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15

16

**Family Picnic**  
Stanley Park  
11:00am—1:00pm

17

**Family Picnic**  
Pittsfield State  
Forest Ski Lodge  
5:00pm-7:00pm

22

23

24

29

30

**Sip to Support**  
Balderdash Cellars  
6:30pm—8:30pm  
Richmond, MA  
Benefit for Autism  
Connections

31

August 2019

# EVENTS & CLASSES

## CONFERENCES

### Shared Living and AFC Conference

*Thursday, October 3, 2019, 8:45 a.m.—5:00 p.m.*  
*Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel and Trade Center,*  
*Marlboro, Massachusetts*  
*Fee based*



This popular annual event is coming up in the fall. Be sure to save the date!

The Shared Living & AFC Conference mission is to provide and exchange practical information and innovative ideas that

promote community living as model of choice where people can live in a dignified, normative arrangement.

### The Arc of Massachusetts 2019 Transition Conference: *Charting the Life Course during transition years*

*Saturday, November 16, 2019*  
*College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA, Fee based,*  
*Registration opens September 1, 2019*

This full day conference will feature the LifeCourse Frameworks and Tools from the Institute for Human Development at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. Co-founder and parent Jane St. John will lead us through the frameworks and tools to use in transition planning. The conference will also welcome families of teens and adults ages 12-26.

**30th ANNUAL** **30th annual Autism**  
**AUTISM CONNECTIONS** **Conference**  
**AUTISM** *Thursday, April 2, 2020*  
**CONFERENCE** *(World Autism Day!)*  
**SAVE THE DATE** *Springfield Sheraton Monarch*  
**APRIL 2, 2020** *Place Hotel*

Save the date for the 30th annual Autism Connections Conference on World Autism Day! **Kerry Magro** is our keynote speaker and we will have a full selection of exhibitors and breakout sessions. Join us!

## Workshops and Trainings

### Educational Advocacy

*Friday, August 9, 2019, 10:00am—2:45pm*  
*Wednesday, August 14, 2019, 2pm—6:45pm*  
*Saturday, August 17, 2019, 10:00am—2:45pm*  
*Saturday, August 31, 2019, 10:00am—2:45pm*  
*247 Northampton Street, Easthampton*  
*Advanced registration required: One hour: \$40*  
*[emchambers123@gmail.com](mailto:emchambers123@gmail.com)*

National award winning special education advocate Ellen Chambers will be in Easthampton during August to meet with families who have questions about their children's special education rights. These consultations are sponsored by SPEDWatch, Inc., in partnership with Hasper and Associates of Easthampton.

Ellen is a recipient of the national Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates' Diane Lipton Award for Outstanding Educational Advocacy on Behalf of Children with Disabilities, and the Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly Women of Justice Award. She holds a B.A. in English from the University of Lowell and an M.B.A. from Bentley University and is the mother of a 27 year old daughter who has autism.

### Speech and Play: Strategies to strengthen parent/child interaction through games/toys

*Wednesday, August 14, 2019*  
*East Longmeadow Library, 60 Center Square*  
*Register: 413-525-5400 ext 1515 or*  
*<https://eastlongmeadowlibrary.org/>, FREE*

Samantha Bernier (M.A., CCC-SLP, Speech Language Pathologist) will lead this discussion on communication skills, how to promote typical language development and when to look to outside resources for support. This training is for parents and caregivers of children from birth to preschool age.

### Autism Trainings for your school or organization

Autism Connections' specialists are available to present to your school team, organization or group about various topics related to autism. Please contact Rhonda for more information, [Rhonda.setkewich@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:Rhonda.setkewich@pathlightgroup.org)



## Sensory-friendly



### Story Land

**September 14-15, 2019, Sensory-Friendly weekend**  
**850 NH Route 16, Glen, NH 03838**

**More information: <https://www.storylandnh.com/sensoryfriendlyinfo>**

The Certified Autism Center designation granted by [IBCCES](#) signifies that Story Land has completed training from leading autism experts and is committed to providing accommodations to guests with autism and other sensory disorders.

You can expect park music to be turned down, ride music will be off/turned down, ride announcements will be turned down to a lower decibel, certain geysers/water features turned off and MAP (Medical Access Pass) passes will be available for any guests who cannot wait in line. In 2018 we held the Grand Opening of our new Calming Room, a sensory sensitive environment for those who need a break. As always, guests are more than welcome to pack lunches/snacks if food lines are of concern. During this weekend only, a special exit by Bamboo Chutes will be open from 4 pm – 6:15 pm to offer families an easier way back to their cars.

### Calm Passion at Granite State Comicon

**September 15-16, 2019**

**10am—5pm**

**Manchester, NH**

**More information: [www.facebook.com/events/2361745487446871/](http://www.facebook.com/events/2361745487446871/)**

The Calm Passion team will be managing a sensory reduced Calmer Space at the event all weekend. The sensory room will have bean bags, a lego station and more quiet activities for attendees needing a place to escape the hustle & bustle. The room is free to all Granite State Comicon attendees. Sat & Sun 10am – 5pm.

## Family and community events

### Friday Summer Movies

***The Bridge Center, 101 University Drive, Amherst***  
**More info: call Anne, 413-549-0297, ext. 6566**

**Friday, August 16, 2019**

The Fairy King (PG): this is a film of prejudice, hope and perseverance, with the fairies created by stunning computer animation and effects combined with live action.

**Friday, August 30, 2019**

Age of Summer: A determined young boy struggles to find acceptance within the Jr. Lifeguards while juggling relationships and challenges in the summer of 1983.

### Back to school celebration

***The Bridge Center, 101 University Drive, Amherst***  
**Thursday, August 22, 12pm—4:30pm**

**More info: call Sarah, 413-549-0297, ext. 6501**

Games, raffles, food, music and school supply giveaways!

### This is Me: Portraits of Pathlight

***Northampton Center for the Arts during Arts Night Out Northampton on September 13, 2019***

**More info: [https://www.facebook.com/events/876942122671956/?active\\_tab=about](https://www.facebook.com/events/876942122671956/?active_tab=about)**

This is Me: Portraits of Pathlight is a photography project that focuses the camera lens on people served by Pathlight throughout Western Massachusetts.

Renowned local photographers have partnered with Pathlight to shoot portraits that convey the strength, beauty, complexity, and personality of people with intellectual disabilities and/or autism. All of the portraits will debut that evening, and we will celebrate our Pathlight subjects, the talented photographers and the gorgeous collaboration between all that have made this project possible. The show will then run in the mezzanine gallery through October.


Whole Children's Joyful Chorus will also be performing at 6pm!

# SUPPORT GROUPS

| GROUP NAME   | GROUP DESCRIPTION  | MEETING DETAILS  | CONTACT/MORE INFO  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>AMHERST</b>   |  |  |  |
| <b>Clinical &amp; Support Options (CSO) Parent Support Group</b> | For parents of children/youth with high functioning autism (Asperger's). Come share your experience, learn about resources, and hear from experts in the field. Childcare available. This is a parent led support group. | 1st Saturday of the month<br>10:00am-11:30am<br>Bridge Family Resource Center<br>101 University Dr, Suite A3, Amherst                              | Group meets on Saturdays. Childcare available, refreshments served. Please call 413.549.0297 with questions.   |
| <b>ATHOL</b>   |  |  |  |
| <b>Autism Caregiver's Support Group</b>                          | This is a monthly support group for parents, caregivers, grandparents and siblings of autistic children. RSVP is required.   | 4th Sunday of the month, 6:00pm-8:00pm, Athol Memorial Hospital, The Hillis Board Room 2033 Main St., Athol  | Please contact Amanda Gallant at <a href="mailto:Amanda.gallant@heywood.org">Amanda.gallant@heywood.org</a> with questions or to RSVP.978-257-5143                                     |
| <b>North Quabbin Caregiver's Resource Group</b>                  | Socialize with other caregivers and help support each other through all of the ins and outs of being a caregiver or parent to a person with intellectual or developmental disabilities.                                  | 2nd Monday is for conversation and networking. 3rd Thursday of the month, presentations, workshops and more. 6:00pm-8:00pm, 361 Main Street, April | Refreshments will be provided. RSVP is not required, but is helpful for planning purposes. Call Karen Parker at 978-249-4052, x 1047.  |
| <b>CHICOPEE</b>  |  |  |  |
| <b>HOPE Autism Support Group</b>                                 | This group is designed for parents and caregivers of family members on the autism spectrum to meet and talk with others that are on the same journey in a positive and confidential environment.                         | Group meets on the 2nd Friday of each month. Please note this group is on hiatus in the summer.  | For more information or to RSVP, please contact Cathy at <a href="mailto:camorgado@verizon.net">camorgado@verizon.net</a> .  |
| <b>GREENFIELD</b>  |  |  |  |
| <b>Special Needs Family Alliance</b>                             | This support group is a new, very committed and welcoming group for anyone who is caring for a loved one with a disability, no matter the age. The group's goal is providing support, advocacy, education and resources  | 3rd Thursday of each month, 10:00am. Pathlight Office, Greenfield Corporate Center, 101 Munson St., Greenfield                                     | For more information please call or email Caroline Wenck at 413-585-8010 x122 or <a href="mailto:carolinewenck@pathlightgroup.org">carolinewenck@pathlightgroup.org</a>                |
| <b>HOLYOKE</b>   |  |  |  |
| <b>Autism Connections Western MA Support Group</b>               | This support group is open to all family members of children and young adults with autism. The group is designed for parents and other caregivers to come together for support and to share information.                 | 2nd Wednesday of the month<br>5:30pm-7:30pm<br>MCS<br>260 Westfield Road, Holyoke  | Email Linda Manning at <a href="mailto:wynne92@aol.com">wynne92@aol.com</a> for RSVP and more info. Childcare is offered and requires a reservation one week in advance. 413.529.2428. |
| <b>Parent/Professional Advocacy League</b>                       | Moving Forward: Our Journey. A group for empowering families through transition planning.  | Please contact PPAL for locations and times.   | For more information visit <a href="http://www.ppal.net">www.ppal.net</a>  |
| <b>Rainbow Support Group of Western Mass.</b>                    | This group provides support and info to individuals with intellectual challenges who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or those who are questioning.   | Fourth Wednesday of the month. Western Mass Training Consortium 187 High Street, Suite 2303, Holyoke   | For more information, call Ness at 413-997-4205 or emailed at <a href="mailto:nbellini@wmtcinfo.org">nbellini@wmtcinfo.org</a> .   |
| <b>Leadership Through Advocacy (LTA)</b>                         | Come have your voice heard, learn and develop skills to speak up for yourself, grow individually and make the world better by participating in legislative advocacy.   | First and third Wednesday of the month, Holyoke Community College, Frost 309 5:30-7:30pm   | For more information, call Ness at 413-997-4205 or emailed at <a href="mailto:nbellini@wmtcinfo.org">nbellini@wmtcinfo.org</a>   |

| GROUP NAME   | GROUP DESCRIPTION  | MEETING DETAILS  | CONTACT/MORE INFO   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>NORTHAMPTON</b>                                       |  |  |   |
| <b>Valley ADHD Parent Support Group</b>                  | This group is for parents and caregivers to receive ADHD information and support. It is a place where you can be heard and not be judged.  | First Monday of the month, 6:30-8:00pm<br>Northampton Area Pediatrics<br>193 Locust St.  | For more information call 413-584-8700 x226   |
| <b>Northampton Women's Drop-In Support Group</b>         | Support group for women with Autism, ages 18+. This free group is being offered by the Asperger/Autism Network (AANE).   | Second Monday the month, Forbes Library, 20 West Street  | For more information or to join this group, contact Stephanie Birkdale at <a href="mailto:stephanie.birkdale@aane.org">stephanie.birkdale@aane.org</a> .  |
| <b>Wire Monkey Mama's Coffee Club</b>                    | A bi-weekly meetup and solidarity circle like grand, step, foster, and any mama who cares for a child.   | Every other Monday evening<br>6:00pm-7:00pm, 1 Market Street,  | At The Roost in Northampton. For more information, text Yoshi at 413-347-2517   |
| <b>PITTSFIELD</b>  |  |  |   |
| <b>Asperger's Support Group of the Berkshires</b>        | This group is for individuals with Asperger's syndrome to come together and offer friendship, fellowship and support.  | Wednesdays, 5:00pm-6:30pm<br>Group will meet in various locations.   | Please contact Elizabeth Flaherty at 443.4780 x16 or <a href="mailto:Elizabeth.Flaherty@pathlightgroup.org">Elizabeth.Flaherty@pathlightgroup.org</a> to RSVP.  |
| <b>Berkshire Teen Group</b>                              | This group is for teens and young adults who live in Berkshire County and are on the autism spectrum. The group meets regularly for conversation and community based activities.   | Will meet regularly, every other Friday evening, throughout the community.   | Please contact Kelly Summers at <a href="mailto:Kelly.summers@pathlightgroup.org">Kelly.summers@pathlightgroup.org</a> or 413.529.2428 x121 for monthly group schedule and outing details.  |
| <b>SPRINGFIELD</b>                                       |  |  |   |
| <b>Impact Center Support Group</b>                       | A monthly support group for parents and caregivers of youths' with social/emotional/behavioral challenges. El Support Network en colaboración con Gandara ofrece un grupo de apoyo mensual para padres y cuidadores de jóvenes con problemas sociales / emocionales y de | English Group: 1st Friday of the month<br>12pm-1:30pm<br>Grupo Español-Y el tercer Viernes de<br>10am-11:30am<br>41 Taylor Street, Springfield       | For information and to RSVP, please contact Cynthia Santiago at <a href="mailto:csantiago@wmtcinfo.org">csantiago@wmtcinfo.org</a> or 413-218-5055<br>Informacion de RSVP: Cynthia Santiago at <a href="mailto:csantiago@wmtcinfo.org">csantiago@wmtcinfo.org</a> |
| <b>Self Advocacy Network (SAN)</b>                       | Come have your voice heard, learn and develop skills to speak up for yourself, grow individually and make the world better by participating in legislative advocacy.   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday of every month, 11 Wilbraham Rd, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor in the SC@N<br>360 Conference room, 5:30pm-7:30Ppm | For ore information, call Ness at 413-997-4205 or emailed at <a href="mailto:nbellini@wmtcinfo.org">nbellini@wmtcinfo.org</a>   |
| <b>WESTFIELD</b>   |  |  |   |
| <b>Support Group for Adults with Asperger's Syndrome</b> | This group is an opportunity for support and discussion among adults on the autism spectrum. We provide a "safe space" and as such are not recommended for friends and family members except in a support role.  | Building Autistic Community, Inc<br>507 Southampton Road #1  | For more information, contact the group at <a href="mailto:info@bacautism.org">info@bacautism.org</a> or call BAC at 413.359.0222.  |
| <b>WILLIAMSBURG</b>                                      |  |  |   |
| <b>Support Group for Adults with Asperger's Syndrome</b> | This group is an opportunity for support and discussion among adults on the spectrum. We provide a "safe space" so this is not recommended for friends and family members except in a support role.  | Building Autistic Community, Inc.<br>507 Southampton Road #1<br>Westfield, MA  | For more information, contact the group at <a href="mailto:info@bacautism.org">info@bacautism.org</a> or call BAC at 413.359.0222.  |

**ONLINE SUPPORT GROUPS**

| GROUP NAME  | GROUP DESCRIPTION  | DATES/TIMES  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Asperger/Autism 101: For parents and adult family members</b><br> | This online support group is designed for parents and other adult family members of children and teens who have recently been diagnosed with autism feel they need a better understanding of the diagnosis. This is limited to 14 participants. Email <a href="mailto:Stephanie.birkdale@aane.org">Stephanie.birkdale@aane.org</a> for more information. | <b>6:30—8:00pm \$90, financial assistance is available</b><br><b>DATES: 6/17/2019, 7/1/2019, 7/15/2019, 7/29/2019, 8/12/2019 8/26/2019</b> |

2019 August Edition

# Community Connection Newsletter

Autism Connections: a Pathlight program

## **Autism Connections receives a donation from the 2019 Spring Shootout**



*AC Director Karen Serra and Mike Lynch at Pathlight*

Mike Lynch has been organizing the Spring Shootout golf tournament for many years at Chicopee Golf Club in honor of his nephew. This year he also honored Autism Connections by choosing us as the beneficiary of tournament proceeds, which totaled \$2775!

Fundraisers like this are an important part of our ability to offer special programming to the community that we can only provide with your help. If you or your organization are interested in holding an event to benefit Autism Connections, please let us know!

**Thank you Mike!**