



# Community Connection

Autism Connections: a Pathlight program

# Newsletter

## Last call for the Flutie Grant Application

Don't forget to apply for a Doug Flutie Foundation for Autism grant, generously awarded again to Autism Connections to support local families.



The focus of this grant is to enhance the quality of life for people with autism. Autism Connections has been awarded

\$10,000 to provide allocations to families of children with autism, which may be used for a wide variety of purposes related to best supporting an individual.

Families that meet the criteria will be eligible to receive up to \$300.00 to purchase items or fund activities that empower, enhance and provide opportunities for their child with autism. This grant cannot fund the purchase of iPads.

Those applying for the grant must meet the following criteria:

- *Have a low to moderate household income*
- *Must be a family of a child or adult child with a diagnosis on the autism spectrum residing at home*
- *Must be living in Hampshire, Franklin, Hampden Counties, or the Worcester County towns of Royalston, Athol, Petersham, and Phillipston*
- *Must NOT be receiving services through the MA Autism Waiver*

### Program

- *Must NOT be receiving services through the DDS DESE Program*
- *Must NOT be receiving Adult DDS Services*
- *Must NOT be receiving services through the DDS IFFS Program*
- *Must be willing to turn in receipts from funds used and submit a thank you note to the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism*

Please see the application for a complete list of requirements.

Find the application online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019FlutieEnglish>.

Haga clic aquí para la traducción en español: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019FlutieEspanol>.

If you have questions, please call Danielle Plasse 413-529-2428 X115. Applications must be received at Autism Connections, 116 Pleasant St. Suite 366, Easthampton, MA 01027 by 5:00 p.m. on May 15. If mailing in, please send to the attention of Joyce Paige and must be postmarked by 5:00 p.m. on May 15.

**ALL APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY May 15, 2019 AT 5:00 P.M.**

**Thank you to the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism for their continuing support of local families through Autism Connections!**

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Easthampton Office

**¡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.***

**donate**  
Thank You!



# NEWS & UPDATES

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## Berkshire ACBC May meeting

### Autism Collaborative of Berkshire County, May 17 Meeting



Pamela Farron, the coordinator of the Disability Resource Center at Berkshire Community College (for 24 years!) will speak about disability resources at BCC during the May meeting at Autism Connections, 75 South Church Street, Suite 402, Pittsfield, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. on May 17.

ACBC meetings are open to the public. We welcome anyone who would like to learn more about autism resources in the community to attend. We encourage fellow services providers, educators, and families to bring information to share with the group or to display on our resource table. You can find out more about other ACBC Collaborative of Berkshire County events [HERE](#) or call Erica at 413.443-4780 or email [Erica.donovan@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:Erica.donovan@pathlightgroup.org).

### Thank you to all of our community partners who raised funds for us during Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month in April!



#### Haven Body Arts

LLC participated in **Ink 4 Autism** again this year.

Proceeds from a select group of autism themed

tattoos benefited Autism Connections!

Thank you Penelope!



Thank you to solar energy company PV Squared for supporting Autism Connections as a featured non-profit during Autism

Awareness month.



New Moon Gifts from Pittsfield donated a portion of April sales of the beautiful crystal Bracelet "Sodalite" to

support Autism Connections.



The Holyoke Police Department generously included Autism Connections as a beneficiary in their fundraising sale of Autism

Awareness Patches - thank you!



Officer Derby with Karen Serra, Benjamin Breton, Erica Donovan and Kelly Summers

Officer Darren Derby led the effort from the Pittsfield Police Department in their campaign selling autism-themed police patches. The Pittsfield Police Association just announced a donation of \$2500 to benefit Autism Connections' services in the Berkshires. Thank you!



Gary Rome Hyundai showed amazing support for Autism Awareness throughout the month of April. The location on Whiting Farms Road in Holyoke featured blue lights and blue cars on their main lot. They accepted donations for Autism Connections at their dealership, and through their Facebook page for the entire month.

## 2019 Autism Conference

### 29th Annual Autism Conference takes place at Springfield Sheraton

This year's Autism Conference rolled out a new format of breakout sessions at a new Springfield location. Gina Gallagher and Patti Terrasi began the day on a high note with a presentation about their experiences raising their differently-abled daughters. Their keynote was moving, funny, and set the tone for a day packed with information, resources, and positivity. The two floors of the Exhibitor Hall were filled to capacity and Breakout Sessions were comfortable and informative. Participants let us know through exit surveys that they were very happy with the new format, which we will continue next year – we will finalize the 2020 Conference date soon. Next year will mark the 30th Anniversary of the Autism Conference and we hope you will join us in celebrating this significant milestone! Here are some highlights of this year's event.



*Gaby Santiago, from Autism Connections at the book sales table*



*Award Winners Radcliffe and Gina Kenison*



*Special guest Barbara Veal, a co-founder of Autism Connections (CRPA), and Mary Zagula from Pathlight*



*Gina Gallagher and Patti Terrasi signing books.*



*Breakout presenters and co-authors Milan Bonilla-Cruz and Alison Butler*



**Visit our facebook page to see a complete photo album of the day!**

# NEWS & EVENTS

## Conference Community Award Winners

We would like to take the opportunity to share this year's Community Award winners. They are a group of dedicated individuals, committed to supporting people with autism and their families. Thank you to the nominators who shared their stories, and thank you to the award winners for their care and guidance.

***You are There for Me*** Award to Kathryn Dulchinos, nominated by her daughter, Nicholle Harrison.



***Above and Beyond*** Award, to para-professional Colleen Kennedy Letourneau, nominated by Matt and Louella Brown.



***Excellence in Advocacy*** Award to school counselor Christine Soverow, nominated by Suehaley Rivera.



***Community Inclusion*** Awards to swim instructor Tara Gehring and Aquatics Coordinator Jenn Butler of Roots Aquatics in Westfield, nominated by Nicholle Harrison.



***You are There for Me*** Award to Kathryn Dulchinos, nominated by her daughter, Nicholle Harrison.



***Above and Beyond*** Award to ASignature Fence, nominated by Amber Curry.



***Above and Beyond*** Award to "Sensory Santa" John Richards, from Valley Marketing, nominated by Joanne Lucey.



***The Radcliffe and Arthur Too, Fight for Autism Fundraising and Community Engagement Award*** was new in 2019. In this initial year of what will be a repeating award, Gina and Radcliffe Kenison were honored as the first recipients.

Community members may be nominated at any time throughout the year. Please let us know you would like to honor someone with an award at next year's conference and we will get you the paperwork.

## SENSORY-FRIENDLY

### Once Upon a Time...Stories at the Symphony

**Saturday, June 1, lobby opens at 10:00 a.m., performance begins at 11:00 a.m., Symphony Hall, 301 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston \$37**

This sensory-friendly performance by the Boston Pops will last about 75 minutes. There will be multiple seating intervals if you arrive after the concert begins. Post-concert, you are invited to try out all of the string instruments in the lobby! More information [HERE](#).

### New England Aquarium

**Sunday, June 2, 8:00 a.m., 1 Central Wharf, Boston**

The Aquarium will open at 8 a.m. exclusively for people with special sensory processing needs and their families. Soft lighting, limited use of microphones, and other modifications will ensure a comfortable environment for all participants. The building opens to the public at 9 a.m., but building modifications will remain in place until 10 a.m. More information [HERE](#).

## AWARENESS & ADVOCACY

### Autism Advocacy Day at the Statehouse

April 11 was Autism Advocacy Day at the State House in Boston. Our team members Rhonda, Katie, Lee and Nancy (pictured below with Jill Scibelli) attended the moving program hosted by Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts. The day featured powerful speakers on the importance of the current legislative priorities for the Autism community, as well as the vital importance of ongoing Autism awareness and advocacy. We joined self-advocates, families and professionals from across the state in visiting our legislators to make the voices of our community heard. To learn more about the current proposed bills and budget, visit [www.afamaction.org](http://www.afamaction.org). If you would like to find your legislators so you can contact them about any of these bills, visit [HERE](#) to help you identify them quickly.

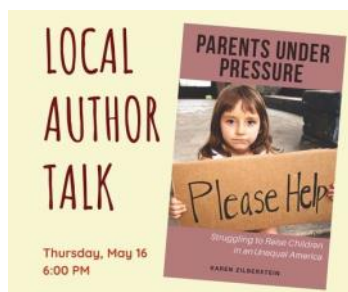


## FOR PARENTS

### Parents under Pressure

**Thursday, May 16,  
6:00 p.m., Holyoke  
Public Library**

Local author Karen Zilberstein will speak about her most recent book *Parents Under Pressure: Struggling to Raise Children in an Unequal America*. Her writing presents unforgettable portraits of six overburdened families here in Western Massachusetts.



## YOUNG ADULTS

### AANE Pizza and game night

**Thursday, May 16, Amherst, UMass, Furcolo Hall, Room 101, 1 Campus Center, Way, Amherst, \$10.00**  
**Thursday, May 23, Holyoke, MCS, 260 Westfield Street, Holyoke, \$10.00**

Join young adults for pizza and board games in a casual setting. Please RSVP at AANE or email [Stephanie.birkdale@aane.org](mailto:Stephanie.birkdale@aane.org) or call 617-393-3824 x32 for more information.

### Potluck Social

**Friday, May 17, June 21, July 19, 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 for more information: 413-585-8010.

### Milestones

**41 Russell St., Hadley, MA**

Recreational programs for young adults. More info [HERE](#).

## CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

### Whole Children

**41 Russell St., Hadley, MA**

Recreational programs for young children. More info [HERE](#).

### SensiPlay

**Mondays - Thursdays (ages 4-10) call for specific dates/times/ages, 413-739-4715, x 325 or email [byoung@springfieldjcc.org](mailto:byoung@springfieldjcc.org), Springfield JCC, Kehillah**

A sensory motor program in collaboration with Bay Path University. Children will enhance their fine and gross motor skills through OT strategies.

## ACTIVITY RESOURCES

**CHD:** <https://chd.org/adult-services/community-based-programs/disability-resources/adaptive-sports-activities/>  
**CSO:** [The Bridge Family Resource Center](#)

SUN

MON

TUES

WEDS

# AUTISM CONNECTIONS CALENDAR: MAY 2019



5

6

Social Skills Gym Class  
4:00pm-5:00pm  
Patterson Field House  
Berkshire CC

7

Yoga Class 4 :00pm-5:00pm  
Autism Connections'  
Pittsfield Office

8

Autism Connections,  
Parent Support Group  
5:30pm-7:30pm, Holyoke

Navigating Social Nuances  
6:00pm-7:30pm

12

13

Social Skills Gym Class (see  
above) 4:00pm-5:00pm

14

Caregiver Time Away Workshop  
6:00pm-8:00pm, Inclusive  
Community Center, Hadley

15

Yoga Class 4 :00pm-5:00pm  
(see above)

Navigating Social Nuances  
(see above) 6:00pm-7:30pm

18

19

20

21

Yoga Class 4 :00pm-5:00pm  
(see above)

Aspergers' Support Group  
5:00pm-6:00pm  
Autism Connections, Pittsfield

Navigating Social Nuances (see  
above) 6:00pm-7:30pm

25

26

27

28

Social Skills Gym Class  
(see above)  
4:00pm-5:00pm

Driving, Autism and  
Developmental Disabilities,  
workshop 10:00am—  
4:00pm  
Pathlight Office in Green-  
field Corporate Center,  
Greenfield

# THURS

# FRI

# SAT

Adult Social Group  
4:00pm-6:00pm, Autism  
Connections' , Pittsfield Office

2

Open Swim  
6:00pm-7:00pm, Gladys Allen  
Brigham Ctr , Pittsfield

Berkshire Teen Group

3

4

Adult Social Group (see  
above) 4:00pm-6:00pm

9

Holyoke/Chicopee DDS  
Transition Fair, 4:30pm-6:30pm,  
Chicopee Comp Hs

ARHS Autism Awareness Night,  
4:45pm-7:00pm, Amherst

Open Swim (see above)  
6:00pm-7:00pm

Potluck Social, Karaoke &  
Video Game Night. 6:30pm-  
8:30pm, Inclusive Community  
Center  
41 Russell Street, Hadley  
Call 585-8010 for more info

10

11

Adult Social Group  
(see above) 4:00pm-6:00pm

16

Open Swim (see above)  
6:00pm-7:00pm

ACBC monthly meeting  
10am—12:00pm

17

Potluck Social, 6:30pm-  
8:30pm, Inclusive Community  
Center, 41 Russell Street,  
Hadley. Call 585-8010 for  
more info

20

Adult Social Group (see  
above)  
4:00pm-6:00pm

22

Open Swim (see above)  
6:00pm-7:00pm

Berkshire Teen Group

23

Thinking about Housing 101,  
Athol Public Library, 6:00pm-  
8:00pm

Thinking about Housing  
101, Individual consulta-  
tion, Athol Public Library,  
9:30am-5:00pm

24

29

30

31

# May 2019

# EVENTS & CLASSES

## CONFERENCES

### Autism Spectrum and Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Clinical Updates for Pediatric Primary Care

**Friday, May 31, 2019, 9:00 a.m. –2:30 p.m., UMass Medical School, Albert Sherman Center, 55 Lake Ave. North, Worcester, Fee based**

This is a one-day symposium for pediatric providers in New England, including pediatricians, family practitioners, nurse practitioners, pediatric psychiatrists and psychologists and allied health providers. This conference is designed to provide primary care practitioners with up-to-date, evidence-based information. For more information, visit the online event: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/asd-and-neurodevelopmental-disorders-clinical-updates-for-pediatric-tickets-59118833021>. This event is sponsored by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center and CANDO (Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders).

### Work Without Limits

**Thursday, October 10, 2019  
Four Points Sheraton, Norwood, MA, Fee based**

This one-day annual conference features prominent national keynote speakers, educational sessions, exhibitors, networking opportunities and sharing of best practices on disability employment. For more information, visit <http://raisethebar2019.org/>. Early Bird Registration opens June 3.

## WORKSHOPS/TRAININGS

### Parent Workshop: Social Emotional Learning—Bridging skills beyond the school day

**Tuesday, May 14, 5:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.  
SEPAC info meeting at 5:30, workshop starts at 6:00  
Gateway Regional Middle School, Huntington MA, FREE**

Sean O'Neill, an 22 year veteran Autism Consultant for MA school districts, is the presenter of this free workshop. Complimentary pizza and childcare will be offered. RSVP to Karen Malinowski at 413-685-1017 or [kmalinowski@grsd.org](mailto:kmalinowski@grsd.org).

## WORKSHOPS/TRAININGS

### Caregiver “Time Away” Workshop

**Tuesday, May 14, 6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.  
Family Empowerment, 41 Russell Street, Hadley, FREE**

Respite can also be called caregiver “time away” or, how to find skilled support for your loved one while you take care of other responsibilities or needs. Give yourself the time to learn more about how to create breathing space in your schedule of caregiving at this free community panel discussion. Panelists include Ashley Woodman—Program Director of Developmental Disabilities and Human Services at UMass, Amy Naziare—Director of Family Support at DDS, and Donna Kushi—Family Empowerment Program Manager and parent. View the flyer [HERE](#). For more information or to register, contact Michelle Mendes at 413-585-8010 or [michelle.mendes@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:michelle.mendes@pathlightgroup.org).

### What are sensory diets: How to create an effective sensory diet

**Wednesday, May 15, 6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.  
The Center for Rehabilitation at Berkshire Medical Center, 413-447-2234, Pittsfield, FREE**

This is part of a free lecture series provided by Allison Gallagher M.S.OTR/L and Judith Leland OTR/L at The Center for Rehabilitation at Berkshire Medical Center. For more information or to register, call BMC at 413-447-2234. Upcoming lectures: June—How to survive changes in routines, transitions and behaviors; July—How to help your child develop social skills.

### Transition Fair

**Thursday May 16, 3:30 p.m.—5:30 p.m.  
Springfield Central High School (in the large cafeteria)  
1840 Roosevelt Avenue, Springfield, MA FREE  
For Springfield special education students who are graduating or turning 22 years old (and their parents)**

Meet representatives from MA Rehabilitation Commission, DDS, MA Commission for the Blind, Department of Public Health, NE Farm Workers' Council Youth & VISTA Programs, and Key Program. Call Maureen Ferriter (413-787-7085, x 47850) or Marc Riccio (413-750-2000 x 59858) for more information.



## WORKSHOPS/TRAININGS

### Introduction to the Transition Planning Process

**Tuesday, May 21**

**Welcome/refreshments: 9:30 a.m. –10:00 a.m.**

**Workshop: 10:00 a.m. –12:00 p.m.**

**Lunch and networking: 12:00 p.m. –1:00 p.m.**

**Enlace de Familias Inc., 299 Main Street, Holyoke, FREE**

This workshop is for parents, caregivers and professionals to understand and advocate for appropriate special education services for students. Participants are welcome and encouraged to stay for lunch and meet other families.

Contact the Federation for Children with Special Needs for more information and to register: Ingrid Arvidson (English at [iarvidson@fcsn.org](mailto:iarvidson@fcsn.org)), Olga Lopez (Spanish at [olopez@fcsn.org](mailto:olopez@fcsn.org)).

### Thinking about Housing 101, with Catherine Boyle from Autism Housing Pathways

**Thursday, May 23, 6:00 p.m. –8:00 p.m., FREE**

**WORKSHOP, Athol Public Library, large program room**

This workshop is for families at all stages of the housing planning process. Topics discussed will include: public funds available to pay for housing; level of support needed; living skills development; assessment of personal resources; housing models; person-centered planning; state care support options (including non-DDS).

**Friday, May 24, 9:30 a.m. –5:00 p.m., FREE**

**PRIVATE CONSULTATION, Athol Public Library**

As a follow up to the Housing 101 workshop presentation, Cathy Boyle will provide an *Individualized Housing Consultation* to address your unique needs. Your meeting with Cathy will include: *discussion of housing needs/desires; exploration of options for renting, owning or applying for subsidies in MA; reviewing the responsibilities of living independently, identifying goals and developing skills to maintain good standing as a tenant; considering environmental modifications.*

You are encouraged to attend the workshop in order to gain the most benefit from your private consultation appointment. Only 6 slots are available. Call or email Donna Kushi for more information, parking directions or to register, [donna.kushi@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:donna.kushi@pathlightgroup.org), 413-6585-8010. Download flyer [HERE](#).

### Driving, Autism and Developmental Disabilities

**Tuesday, May 28, 10:00 a.m. –4:00 p.m. with one hour for lunch (provided free for attendees)**

**Pathlight's Greenfield Office, Greenfield Corporate Center, 101 Munson Street. Greenfield, MA, FREE**

This free, introductory presentation is designed for families or caregivers of people with autism or developmental disabilities (14+), and driving school instructors who want to work with learner drivers with autism or developmental disabilities. The training will prepare instructors to tailor their teaching methods to support learning preferences, and will prepare family members/caregivers/guardians for what to expect about the learning process. The attendees will learn about red flags that may indicate a learner driver is not ready to pursue driving. In addition, the presenter will provide an overview of resources and strategies that may be beneficial. The training is sponsored in collaboration with DDS and The United Arc. Download the flyer [HERE](#). RSVPs are required—contact Caroline Wenck at 413-585-8010 or [caroline.wenck@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:caroline.wenck@pathlightgroup.org).

*Trainer Dr. Miriam Monahan is an occupational therapist, driving school instructor, and certified driving rehabilitation specialist. She is founder of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit [Driver Rehabilitation Institute](#).*

### CONNECT • INTERVIEW • HIRE

**Tuesday, June 4, Family Empowerment, 41 Russell Street, Hadley, MA, FREE**

This is a fair for both families looking for skilled respite/PCA/skilled childcare person, and for skilled support workers looking for jobs helping a person with autism or developmental disability.

If you are a family looking for a staff member, your set up is at 5:30 to be ready to receive interested job applicants at 6:00. If you are looking for work (18+), please come with your resume ready to interview between 6:00-7:30.

Call Michelle Mendes for more information, or to get on a list to receive packets of information prior to the event. [Michelle.mendes@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:Michelle.mendes@pathlightgroup.org), 413-585-8010.

**Please note that this is not an event for organizations looking to hire. Only families will be given space.**

# 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 10:00am-11:30am Bridge Family Resource Center 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 for 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 5:30pm-7:30pm MCS 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 Northampton Area Pediatrics 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 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 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 Ben Breton at <a href="mailto:benjamin.breton@pathlightgroup.org">benjamin.breton@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 12pm-1:30pm Grupo Español-Y el tercer Viernes de 10am-11:30am 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 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 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 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. 507 Southampton Road #1 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
Before formal registration for the below groups, a 1-1 informational meeting with the facilitator is required. The link for more information is <a href="https://conta.cc/2DwDWrl">https://conta.cc/2DwDWrl</a>		
<b>Online Support Group: Parents of Teen Boys</b>	This online support group will focus on topics of particular interest to parents of tween boys. Remaining Meeting dates: 4/11/2019, 4/25/2019, 5/9/2019, 5/23/2019	12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m.. \$120

**Autism Connections**

A Program of Pathlight, Inc.  
116 Pleasant Street, Suite 366  
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2019 May Edition

# Community Connection Newsletter

Autism Connections: a Pathlight program

## **Awareness, Acceptance and Advocacy events from April**

*Here are just some of the April events that we attended to support Autism Awareness, Acceptance and Advocacy. Thank you to everyone in the community who supported these events.*

April 2: Umass Medical School World Autism Day

April 2: Greater Springfield YMCA

April 4: Amherst Regional Middle School Autism Night

April 5: ACBC Resource Fair & Art Show, Adlib, Pittsfield

April 9: DDS Springfield/Westfield Transition Fair at the Basketball Hall of Fame

April 9: Functional Communication Training/Positive Behavior Supports at Autism Connections in Pittsfield

April 10: DDS Holyoke/Chicopee Transition Fair

April 11: AFAM Advocacy Day in Boston

April 16: WHMP Radio—discussion with Katie Drumm on Bill Neuman's morning show

April 17: Our Sensory Friendly skating event at *Interskate* in Wilbraham

April 18: Our Sensory Friendly family hour at *Bounce! Trampoline Sports* in Springfield

April 18: Russell Police 1st Annual Autism Awareness Night

April 19: WWLP *Mass Appeal* appearance by Rhonda Setkewich and Joemary Rodriguez of Autism Connections

April 23: Our 29th Annual Autism Conference in Springfield

April 24: Holyoke Public Schools 7th Annual Autism Night

April 26: Autism Awareness Rally, Park Square Pittsfield

April 26: Family Support Conference, Pittsfield

April 30: Athol Public Library Autism Resource Fair

***Look for photos from these events in June's newsletter!***