



# Community Connection

Autism Connections: a Pathlight program

## Newsletter

### 2019 Annual Autism Conference news!

#### 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Autism Conference – new format and location!

The 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Autism Conference returns next year on April 23, 2019, at the Sheraton Springfield Monarch Hotel with a refreshing new format of breakout sessions plus morning keynote speakers and an exhibitor fair.

Children, teens experiencing transition to adulthood, adults, and all related services and education continue to be our focus with the conference theme of

*Autism, HOPE in Action: Building Blocks to a Fulfilling Life.*

#### Speakers

Gina (Terrasi) Gallagher, and Patricia Terrasi, authors of *Shut Up About your Perfect Kid, a Survival Guide for Ordinary Parents of Special Children* will speak about their experiences as moms raising children with social, emotional and behavioral challenges. The sisters are known for very powerful, positive presentations full of resources and hope.

#### School lottery

We will once again offer all schools in western Massachusetts the opportunity to win 3 complimentary conference passes for educators at their schools. Three separate winning schools will be chosen through a lottery process. The online application process starts at the end of December when we will email letters to schools who have participated in the past. Please keep an eye out for

your letter with all details. If your school does not receive a letter, all of the information will be on our Facebook page as well as our website. Schools who enter the lottery but are not chosen will not be

automatically registered for the conference, but can register educators with a special discounted rate for a short period of time.

#### Community awards

We are also looking for nominations for our community awards program.

The awards will be presented during the conference and are a wonderful way to honor someone who has supported you and/or your family and has made a meaningful impact to your life. Please call us if you have someone in mind. Forms will be online soon.

#### Breakout sessions

Nine different workshops will be offered in both the morning and afternoon sessions with a variety of very relevant topics. The Sheraton Monarch Hotel provided excellent accommodations for these separate meeting spaces.

#### Exhibitors

We will again be inviting exhibitors to participate with an expanded schedule of times for table visits.

#### Registration

We will be opening registration on January 1, so get ready for a great conference this year! Much more information to come.



#### IN THIS ISSUE

- 2019 Autism Conference.....1
- Team directory..... 2
- ACBC and Berkshire activities.....2
- Center News.....3-4
- Conferences, Webinars, Workshops/ Trainings.....5
- Calendar of events.....6-7
- Community/Family events, Young Adult, Sensory Friendly.....8-9
- Support groups.....10-11
- Let's Dance, Let's VOTE!.....12

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

##### Easthampton Office

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

##### Berkshire Office

100 North Street, Suite 322  
Pittsfield, MA  
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.*



# NEWS & UPDATES

## STAFF DIRECTORY

**Karen Serra** (x123)  
*Director*

**Ben Breton** (x121)  
*Autism Specialist*

**Lora Cortis** (x124)  
*Autism Specialist*

**Amber Curry** (x122)  
*Autism Specialist/Support Broker*

**Erica Donovan** (413.443.4780 x19)  
*Berkshire Program Manager*

**Carla Doyle-Florence** (x119)  
*Autism Support Broker*

**Katie Drum** (x111)  
*Easthampton Program Manager*

**Nancy Farnsworth** (x113)  
*Educational Advocate*

**Elizabeth Flaherty** (413.443.4780)  
*Autism Specialist*

**William Liverpool** (x112)  
*Autism Support Broker*  
**Habla español**

**Joanne Lucey** (x116)  
*Project Manager*

**Kimberly Marchese** (x118)  
*Behavioral Specialist*

**Joyce Paige** (x110)  
*Office Coordinator*

**Danielle Plasse** (x115)  
*Office Coordinator*

**Gaby Santiago** (x125)  
*Bilingual Autism Specialist*  
**Habla español**

**Rhonda Setkewich** (x117)  
*Autism Specialist / IFFS Coordinator*

**Kelly Summers** (413.443.4780)  
*Autism Specialist*

**Tanya White** (413.585.8010 x127)  
*Autism Specialist*

**Kim Wyckoff** (x127)  
*Autism Support Broker*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Betsy Benton**

**Lisa Crouser**

**Paula Fredericks**

**Bill Loomis**

**Pamela Sandler**

**Michael Wilcox**

**Jeanne Zobel-Lachus**

## Berkshire Activities

### The Autism Collaborative of Berkshire County



This month's topic at our monthly ACBC meeting was Fire Safety. The meeting was held in the library of the new Hillcrest Academy located in the old St. Mark's school building. Hillcrest has done a wonderful job at renovating the space to serve the students. We were very fortunate to have Lili Dwight of Galactic Smarties come and speak with us about a new fire safety app they developed called FireGuide. Their mission is to improve fire safety for every family using smart technology combined with knowledge of how people actually behave (not how we hope or expect them to

behave. Lili demonstrated the app. And also gave an in-depth overview of smoke and fire detectors. You can find out more about Fireguide here: <http://www.galacticmarties.com/>.

In November, ACBC will hold two meetings. Our regularly scheduled morning meeting is November 16 from 10a.m.-noon. We will be back at the BCARC Training room. We also have another workshop opportunity in November for professionals and families. Sarah Mitchell, a financial representative with Northwest Mutual will be holding a financial planning workshop on November 7 from 6:00-8:00p.m. This workshop will be held at the BCARC Training Room in Pittsfield. If you would like more information about this event, please visit our events page at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1372795912850550/>.

*ACBC is always looking for Spotlight Speakers. Spotlight Speakers are welcome to talk about their programs, topics of interest to the autism community, events, and/or initiatives that affect our families and individuals we work with. Please contact us at [emailacbc@gmail.com](mailto:emailacbc@gmail.com) if you are interested.*

You can find out more information about our meetings at : <https://www.facebook.com/ACBCBerkshire/> or <https://autismconnectionsma.org/berkshire-collaboration/>



### Thankful 5K Run/Walk: All proceeds benefit Autism Connections!



Are you looking for some fresh air and exercise before your big Thanksgiving Day meal? Please consider joining us for the Berkshire Running Center's FREE Thankful 5k Run and Walk in downtown Pittsfield on Thanksgiving morning. There is no registration fee for this race—T-shirts are on sale online for \$25 and you do not need to run in the race! Click [HERE](#) to see T-shirt design and order form.

Apple, Pumpkin and Cherry pies will be available for prior \$10 order and pick up the day of the race. All t-shirt and pie sale proceeds will be donated to Autism Connections! Race starts at 8a.m. and in the spirit of the day, please bring a non-perishable food item for the local food pantry. What a wonderful way to start off a day of thanks and gratitude.



## Center News

### Welcome Kelly!



Kelly Summers just joined our Berkshire office as an Autism Specialist. She is an amazing addition to our team and has been working in the field for more than 6 years. She has a social work degree from Elms

College and is currently working on her Masters in Social Work at Westfield State College.

She loves to read and hike the high peaks in the Adirondacks. Welcome Kelly!

### Autism Housing Pathways Workshop Springfield, Pathlight office

We are sponsoring a housing workshop in Springfield on November 27 at the Pathlight main office. Presenter Cathy Boyle is the president of [Autism Housing Pathways](#), and an amazing resource in the housing field. She is a commissioner of the Winchester Housing Authority and a member of the Winchester Partnership Board.



Discussions will cover the crucial process of combining available public funds with realistic family assets to create the best potential for housing options. Topics include:

- *Finding public funds available to pay for housing*
- *Determining level of supports needed*
- *Living skills development*
- *Assessment of personal resources*
- *Housing models*
- *Person-centered planning*
- *State care support options (including non-DDS)*

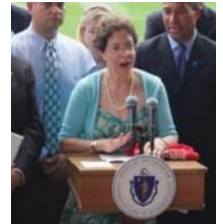
Although this is a basic workshop, it highlights all of the important steps to any plan in process, and will be useful even for those already on the section 8 wait list. This workshop is November 27 at Pathlight, 220 Brookdale Drive, Springfield, 6:00pm-8:00pm. Please email [Danielle.plasse@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:Danielle.plasse@pathlightgroup.org) to register.

### ARICA Workshop with Amy Weinstock Palmer Library

Do you need help interpreting some of the details of ARICA law? We have organized a workshop for you to answer your questions. The presentation will discuss autism insurance for families, including:

- *ARICA*
- *MassHealth, including recent changes*
- *How to figure out what coverage you need, and eligibility*
- *Premium Assistance*
- *The Health Connector*
- *Covered treatments and how to access them*
- *Frequently asked questions*

Amy Weinstock is the Director of the Autism Insurance Resource Center at the University of Massachusetts Medical School's Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center, and an instructor in the medical school's Department of Psychiatry. She has an extensive background on insurance issues related to autism and has played a key role in passing several significant pieces of autism insurance legislation in Massachusetts, including the groundbreaking 2010 law requiring health insurance to cover medically necessary treatment for autism. Amy also serves as a trustee of the Riverview School, and as a Commissioner on the State's Autism Commission.



The workshop is December 11 at the Palmer Library, from 5:30pm-7:30pm. To register, please email [Danielle.plasse@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:Danielle.plasse@pathlightgroup.org).

### We are hiring!

We are hiring four compassionate and dedicated Autism Specialists for our IFFS Program (Intensive Flexible Family Supports). Is this you?



Please see this link for a full description: <https://pathlightgroup.applicantpro.com/jobs/916263.html>.

## Center News

### Easthampton Holiday Party

Celebrate with us at our family potluck Holiday Party! We will have music, activities, and a few surprises. Our sensory-friendly Santa is the best and so wonderful at creating memorable experiences for children (and adults alike)!

Please save the date of December 14 to spend a relaxing time with us to enjoy the holiday atmosphere. Here are a few memories from last year...



### Berkshire Holiday Celebration

Celebrate the tradition of *A Christmas Carol* with the whole family, and revel in the joy and redemptive power of Christmas as told in the timeless story of Ebenezer Scrooge. Journey back to Victorian England and the experience the classic story filled with holiday carols.

The December 12 performance will be modified to accommodate those with sensory input challenges. There will be “relaxed house rules”, which mean movement and noise will not only be allowed but expected. The goal is to create an experience where people with sensory

challenges and their entire family can enjoy a holiday experience together, in a supported environment.

FREE tickets are available for families connected to Autism Connections (2 per family for 15 families). Please call Erica at 413-443-4780 x19 to reserve your seats now! The show is December 12 at 6:00p.m. at the Colonial Theater in Pittsfield.

All tickets for this sensory-friendly event are \$5. Tickets for other performances are \$29/\$39.



## WORKSHOPS/TRAININGS

### Autism Collaborative of Berkshire County: Financial Planning with Sarah Mitchell



Sarah is a Financial Planner with Northwestern Mutual, and is passionate about helping those traditionally left out of financial conversations.

Her goal is to share practical steps that can hopefully begin to ease some concerns and inspire confidence that loved ones will be taken care of in the present, and the future.

Please see flyer [HERE](#) or contact Erica in our Berkshire office ([Erica.donovan@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:Erica.donovan@pathlightgroup.org)) to RSVP for the event.

The meeting takes place on November 7, 2018 from 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., at the BCARC Training Room in Berkshire Common, 2 South Street, Suite 370, Pittsfield.

## Upcoming Events

### WORKSHOPS/TRAININGS

#### DDS 101

Various locations in Western MA. FREE

The DDS 101 Family Empowerment workshop was previously held for a full house at Hadley Farms Meeting House. Due to the large interest, Autism Connections will hold more workshops in western MA. A panel of DDS professionals will review the self-direction service model, family support services and autism services. Topics include self-direction, family support, and information about autism services. Please email your interest to [Katie Drumm](mailto:Katie.Drumm@autismconnectionsma.org).

#### The Journey of Autism Series: Behavioral Strategies

Tuesday November 6, 2018 6:00 p.m.– 8:00 p.m.

Liberty Bay Credit Union  
300 Granite St, Braintree, MA

The Autism Resource Center of The Arc of the South Shore is pleased to present our Autism Journey Workshop Behavioral Strategies: There will also be time for individual questions and specific concerns.

Workshops are free of charge, but registration is required by November 2, 2018. Contact Janine Birmingham at [autismresourcecenter@arcsouthshore.org](mailto:autismresourcecenter@arcsouthshore.org) or call the center at 781-974-4602.

#### ABLE Accounts

November 13, 2018 6:00 p.m.—8:00pm

Family Empowerment, 41 Russell Street, Hadley

Are you an individual (or do you have a family member) who needs to save income for disability related expenses without impacting state benefits? ABLE Accounts were created just for that purpose. Sue Crosby, a MEFA trained ABLE Account advisor, will facilitate this presentation to help you understand these confusing, but very useful accounts. RSVP to [michelle.mendes@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:michelle.mendes@pathlightgroup.org).

#### The Nuts and Bolts of SSI and SSDI, Public Health Insurance and Other Public Benefits

November 7-8, 2018 8:30 a.m.

Future Works Career Center  
1 Federal St. Bldg. 103-3 Springfield, MA

This training focused on how earnings from work affects SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare and other public benefits such as subsidized housing and food stamps. This training is geared toward employment professionals, case managers, peer specialists, and rehabilitation counselors. Participants should attend both days to gain a firm understanding. Register at <http://www.workwithoutlimits.org/node/416>

#### Autism Housing Pathways Workshop

Tuesday November 27, 2018

Pathlight, 220 Brookdale Drive, Springfield

See page 3 for more information

#### ARICA Workshop

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Palmer Library, Palmer

See page 3 for more information

### WEBINARS

#### Simple micro self-care practices for a calmer you and a happier family too!

AANE/[Kendra Wild](http://www.aane.org) presenter

November 8, 2018 7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. \$25

The number one predictor of child well-being is parent well-being, yet parents like us often think of self-care as indulgent, or occasional. In this webinar you will discover some simple, science-based, life-tested techniques you can use at any time to feel grounded, calm and connected. [www.assistivetechologyconference.com/general-registration/](http://www.assistivetechologyconference.com/general-registration/) to register.

SUN

MON

TUES

WEDS

# NOVEMBER 2018

KEY: Activity open to the community; Workshop/Meeting open to the community; Regularly scheduled group currently closed to new

**Open Swim**  
2:30pm-3:30pm  
Berkshire Family YMCA  
North Adams

4

5

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

6

**WORKSHOP/MEETING**  
**ACBC Meeting**  
BCArc Training Room  
Financial Planning  
6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.  
Pittsfield

7

**Open Swim**  
2:30pm-3:30pm  
Berkshire Family YMCA  
North Adams

11

**Veteran's Day (observed)**  
*Autism Connections' offices are closed.*

12

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

13

**Autism Connections Parent Support**  
5:30pm-7:30pm  
Holyoke

14

**Open Swim**  
2:30pm-3:30pm  
Berkshire Family YMCA  
North Adams

18

19

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

20

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

21

**Open Swim**  
2:30pm-3:30pm  
Berkshire Family YMCA  
North Adams

25

26

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

**WORKSHOP/MEETING**  
**Autism Housing Pathways Workshop**  
6:00pm-8:00pm  
Pathlight Office, Springfield

27

28

# THURS FRI SAT

# AUTISM CONNECTIONS

# CALENDAR

members

<p><b>Adult Social Group</b> 4:00pm-6:00pm Autism Connections' Pittsfield Office</p> <p><b>Open Swim</b> 2:30pm-3:30pm Berkshire Family YMCA North Adams</p>	<p><b>Berkshire Teen Group</b> Various Locations</p>	
<p><b>Open Swim</b> 2:30pm-3:30pm Berkshire Family YMCA North Adams</p> <p><b>Adult Social Group</b> 4:00pm-6:00pm Autism Connections' Pittsfield Office</p>	<p><b>WORKSHOP/MEETING</b> <b>ACBC Meeting</b> BCArc Training Room 10 a.m.-12:00 p.m.</p> <p><b>Berkshire Teen Group</b> Various Locations</p>	<p><b>Let's Dance! 2018</b> Sheraton Springfield 7:00p.m.-10:00p.m.</p>
	<p><i>Autism Connections' offices are open.</i></p>	
<p><b>Open Swim</b> 6:00pm-7:00pm Gladys Allen Brigham Center, Pittsfield</p> <p><b>Adult Social Group</b> 4:00pm-6:00pm Autism Connections' Pittsfield Office</p>		<p><b>Berkshire Teen Group</b> Clash Before Christmas: Wrestling event at the Berkshire Mall</p>

## Coming Up

### December

**December 11**  
Autism Resource Insurance Center  
with Amy Weinstock  
Palmer Library  
*Autism Connections workshop*

**December 12**  
Autism Connections' Family Holiday Party

**December 12**  
Sensory Friendly Performance of A Christmas Carol  
Colonial Theater, Pittsfield

### April 2019

**April 23, 2019**  
Autism Connections' Annual Autism Conference

# EVENTS & CLASSES

## CONFERENCES

### NFXF Connecticut Chapter Learning Series

Saturday November 3, 2018 8: a.m.-4:30 a.m.

UConn Health Center, Keller Auditorium

263 Farmington Ave. Farmington, CT

The NFXF Connecticut Chapter is hosting its 11th Annual Fragile X Conference by bringing together Fragile X experts from across the country for this one day education opportunity. The audience will consist of families, educators, therapists, and providers who care for children and adults with fragile X-associated disorders and autism spectrum disorders.

<https://give.fragilex.org/event/2018-connecticut-educational-conference-teaching-pro-social-behaviors/e198035/register/new/select-tickets> to register.

### Assistive Technology Conference of New England

November 29 and 30, 2018

Crowne Plaza, Warwick, RI

This conference is dedicated to technology, people with disabilities, families and professionals. Pre-Conference workshops will be held on November 29th, and the Conference will be held on November 30th. Visit [www.assistivetechconference.com/general-registration/](http://www.assistivetechconference.com/general-registration/) to register.

### DDS Artists in our Midst 2018

Thursday, November 15, 2018

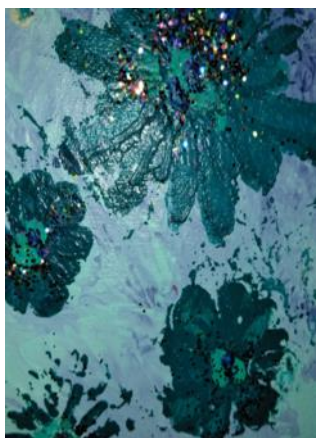
4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

DDS Holyoke/Chicopee Office

113 Hampden Street

Holyoke, MA

The Holyoke/Chicopee DDS office would like to invite you to their 7th Annual Art Show. This event is free and open to the public. Call the Holyoke/Chicopee DDS office for more information at 413-535-1022.



## COMMUNITY/FAMILY EVENTS

### UCP Open Swim

Gladys Allen Brigham Center

Thursdays 6:00 p.m. –7:00 p.m.

165 East St, Pittsfield, MA

2  
Locations!

### Berkshire Family YMCA

Sundays 2:30 p.m. –3:30 p.m.

22 Brickyard Court, North Adams, MA

Open and free to all individuals and families affiliated with UCP and Autism Connections. Registration is required. Please call the Gladys Allen Brigham Center at 413-442-5174 ext. 25 or the Berkshire Family YMCA at 413-663-6529.

*Please note there will be no staffing at open swim. All children must be accompanied by an adult and all adults that will need personal care must come with a caregiver.*

*Be sure to sign-in when you arrive and indicate which agency you are associated with (UCP or Autism Connections).*

### Let's Dance! 2018

Saturday, November 17, 2018, 7:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel

A night of dancing and celebration to support enrichment programs for people with intellectual disabilities! Your ticket guarantees an evening of joyous entertainment, delicious appetizers, and a cash bar. More info [HERE](#).



Please note that Autism Connections will directly benefit from this fundraiser.

Click [HERE](#) for a glimpse of previous emcee Kelsey Flynn's introduction and link to all performances from last year's event.



## COMMUNITY/FAMILY EVENTS

### DDS Commissioner Town Meeting

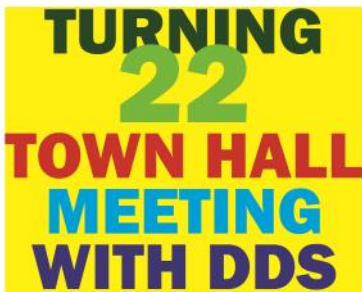
Wednesday November 7, 2018 6:00 p.m.— 8:30 p.m.

Holyoke Community College, KC301-303

Kittredge Center for Workforce Development

303 Homestead Ave, Holyoke, MA

*Visitors should park in D Lot*



**TURNING  
22  
TOWN HALL  
MEETING  
WITH DDS**

This meeting will focus on the topic of DDS “turning 22” services. The purpose of the meeting is to solicit information and feedback from families and individuals to improve the transition process for young adults who are

eligible for DDS services. The anticipated audience is those individuals and families heading into the transition years of 14-21 and **Jane Ryder, state DDS Commissioner** will facilitate the meeting!

RVSP by to [awilda.ayala@state.ma.us](mailto:awilda.ayala@state.ma.us). Light refreshments will be served.

### FLOATAPALOOZA

Sunday, November 25, 2018 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Springfield JCC Pool

1160 Dickinson St, Springfield, MA

*\$5 for general public, Free for JCC Members*



Come play with three different inflatables including a rock wall & waterslide, a see-saw, and a log-roll! This event is open to all ages however, participants must be able

to swim one lap of the pool safely without any floatation devices. The lifeguard team will conduct a swim test for all children to check their swimming ability. There will be swimming areas away from the pool floats for any participant who does not want to use the floats. RSVP to Erica, the Swim Director, [efriedman@springfieldjcc.org](mailto:efriedman@springfieldjcc.org).

## SENSORY-FRIENDLY

### Sensory Friendly Day at Connecticut Science Center

November 4, 2018, 10:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Connecticut Science Center

250 Columbus Blvd. Hartford, CT

CT Science Center will be lowering the volume and dimming the lights for those with sensory disabilities.

All are welcome! There will be plenty of activities, arts and crafts, and live Gallery Science Demonstrations with out the usual lights and sounds.

For more information, contact Brit Montmeat at [bmontmeat@ctsciencecenter.org](mailto:bmontmeat@ctsciencecenter.org) or (860) 520-2112.

### Sensory-Sensitive Sundays at Chuck E. Cheese

First Sunday of the month, 9am-11am,

Chuck E. Cheese

1716 Boston Road Springfield, MA

Chuck E. Cheese in Springfield now offers a sensory-sensitive experience on the first Sunday of every month.

## YOUNG ADULT

### AANE Pizza and Game Night

November 1:

*UMASS Amherst Campus Center*

November 7:

*East Longmeadow Congregational Church*

November 15:

*Holyoke at MCS*

**All times—6:00pm-8:00 p.m. \$12**

Have dinner, socialize, and play games (feel free to bring your favorite games). reserves the right to cancel this event if the minimum number of registrants is not met by the deadline. Please go to [aane.org/events/2018-09/](http://aane.org/events/2018-09/) to register at your preferred location, and call 617-393-3824 for more information.

# 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.	Saturdays 10:00am-11:30am Bridge Family Resource Center 101 University Dr, Suite A3 Amherst, MA	Group meets on Saturdays. Childcare available, refreshments served. Please call 413.549.0297 with questions.
<b>ATHOL</b>			
<b>Autism 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-7:00pm Athol Memorial Hospital, The Hillis Conference Room, 2033 Main St., Athol	The first meeting will be held on August 26th. Please contact Amanda Gallant at <a href="mailto:Amanda.gallant@heywood.org">Amanda.gallant@heywood.org</a> with questions or to RSVP.
<b>The United ARC, Caregivers' 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. Join us to discuss ideas and gain valuable resources.	3rd Thursday of the month 10:00am-12:00pm 6:00pm-8:00pm 361 Main Street, Athol, MA	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 will meet on the 2nd Friday of each month.	For more information or to RSVP, please contact Cathy at <a href="mailto:camorgado@verizon.net">camorgado@verizon.net</a> .
<b>EASTHAMPTON</b>			
<b>Asperger's Social Night for Adults</b>	Autism Connections is happy to provide this social night twice a month for folks 18+ who identify as having Asperger's.	Autism Connections 116 Pleasant Street, Suite 366 Easthampton, MA	This group will resume in the near future. Please contact Kimberly LaMothe at 413.529.2428 x118 with questions.
<b>GREAT BARRINGTON</b>			
<b>Adult Discussion Group</b>	This group is being offered by the Asperger/Autism Network (AANE). There is an attendance fee of \$5.	Mason Library 231 Main Street, Great Barrington	For more information please contact <a href="mailto:stephanie.birkdale@aane.org">stephanie.birkdale@aane.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, MA	Email Linda Wynne 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. Call our office at 413.529.2428.
<b>Mom's Night Out</b>	Moms of people with different abilities are invited to bring their problems, triumphs and their need to laugh. Jericho will supply drinks and refreshments. Bring something to share!	Jericho 537 Northampton Street Holyoke, MA	For meeting times and to RSVP contact Linda LaPointe at <a href="mailto:lindal@jerichobeca.org">lindal@jerichobeca.org</a> or calling 413.538.7450
<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> or email <a href="mailto:eszela@ppal.net">eszela@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.	Western Mass Training Consortium 187 High Street, Suite 202 Holyoke	For questions or to find out meeting times contact Tammy Nothe-Hebert at 413.536.2401 x3036
<b>NORTHAMPTON</b>			
<b>Growing Strong Skills Training</b>	The group is for children and their caregivers and will use the Attachment Regulation and Competency Framework to help children learn different skills.	Tuesdays 4:45-6:15pm CSO Outpatient Clinic 8 Atwood Dr, Suite 201, Northampton	For more information and to register please contact Dave at 413.582.0471 ext. 5080 or Kim ext. 5032
<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	1st Monday of the month, 6:30-8:00pm Northampton Area Pediatrics 193 Locust St., Northampton	For more information contact <a href="mailto:ValleyADHDFamilies@gmail.com">ValleyADHDFamilies@gmail.com</a> .

GROUP NAME	GROUP DESCRIPTION	MEETING DETAILS	CONTACT/MORE INFO
<b>NORTHAMPTON</b>			
<b>Florence Women's Support Group</b>	Support group for women with Autism, ages 18+. This free group is being offered by the Asperger/Autism Network (AANE).	Third Thursday of the month, Lilly Library, 19 Meadow Street, Florence	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 for all mamas like grand, step, foster, and any mama who cares for a child.	Every other Monday evening 6:00pm-7:00pm 1 Market Street, Northampton	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> or 413-218-5055
<b>SOUTH HADLEY</b>			
<b>LGBTQ and the Autism Spectrum</b>	This group is being offered by the Asperger/Autism Network (AANE). There is an attendance fee of \$5.	S. Hadley Public Library Conference Room 2 Canal Street South Hadley, MA	For information or to join, please contact Stephanie Birkdale at <a href="mailto:stephanie.birkdale@aane.org">stephanie.birkdale@aane.org</a> .
<b>WESTFIELD</b>			
<b>Westfield 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 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.
<b>WILLIAMSBURG</b>			
<b>Families of Spirited Children (It Takes a Village)</b>	This is a group for parents, grandparents and caregivers of children with special needs, autism, ADHD or physical, sensory, or medical challenges. Free childcare and refreshments provided.	Tuesdays, 10:00am-11:30am Anna T. Dunphy School 1 Petticoat Hill Road, Williamsburg	For more information, contact It Takes a Village at 413-650-3640 or Kat at <a href="mailto:info@hilltownvillage.org">info@hilltownvillage.org</a> or <a href="http://www.facebook.com/hilltownvillage">www.facebook.com/hilltownvillage</a>

**ONLINE SUPPORT GROUPS****NEW**

GROUP NAME	GROUP DESCRIPTION	DATES/TIMES
<p>Before formal registration for the below groups, a 1-1 informational meeting with the facilitator is required. The purposes of the informational meetings are for you, the participant, and facilitator to get to know one another, to discuss the format of the group, and gain a sense of the needs and interests of the participants. This meeting can take place virtually via Skype, FaceTime or Zoom. Email <a href="mailto:events@aane.org">events@aane.org</a>. or call 617-393-3824 x 32 for more information and to schedule a meeting with the facilitator.</p>		
<b>Weekly Support Group for Adults</b>	Join other adults on the spectrum in an environment of support and understanding. This group will provide a forum for increasing self awareness and connection.	<b>11am –12:30pm. \$80</b> 11/6, 11/13
<b>Weekly Support Group for Young Women (18-22)</b>	This group provides an opportunity to meet other young women in an environment of support and understanding. Group limit is 12 and a strong internet connection as well as a computer with a camera and a microphone are required.	<b>11am –12:30pm. \$80</b> 11/2, 11/9 11/16

2018 November Edition

# Community Connection

Autism Connections: a Pathlight program

# Newsletter

## Alex and Jossie are representing Autism Connections in Pathlight's Let's Dance fundraiser!

**Let's Dance!** pair Alex Campurciani and Holyoke City Councilor Jossie Valentín are coming to spice up the competition! You'll definitely want to witness their amazing moves to Ricky Martin's "Por Arriba Por Abajo", choreographed by Dawn Larder. Get your tickets and vote for team #Sazón here: <http://bit.ly/Sazón>.

**AUTISM CONNECTIONS WILL DIRECTLY BENEFIT FROM THE PROCEEDS OF LET'S DANCE, AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!**



*Please help support Alex, Jossie, and Autism Connections by donating to their team or voting for them.*

## Election Day! Tuesday, November 6

On Election Day every vote matters and your vote makes a difference. Please vote!

