



a program of  Advocates




## October Newsletter

**Please Read This Important Message  
to Massachusetts Families with Children Under Age 9  
Diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder**



### **DDS Autism Waiver Program Open Enrollment Open Request Application Period October 16, 2023 to October 31, 2023**

The Autism Division of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) runs an Autism Waiver Program that provides one-to-one interventions to help children with autism who exhibit severe behavior, social and communication problems through a service called Expanded Habilitation, Education (intensive in-home services and supports). This service occurs in the child's home or other natural settings under the supervision of trained clinical staff and is available for a total of three years. The program also provides related support services such as community integration activities and respite. At the conclusion of the three years of intensive services, a child may access supplemental services that meet the child's needs and help with the transition out of the intensive Autism Waiver Program until the child's 10th birthday. For more information and to apply visit: [DDS Autism Waiver Program](#)



“When you are kind to others, it not only changes you, it changes the world.”

-Harold S. Kushner

***Thank you!***  
***Speedy Auto & Wenygttom***



Autism Alliance thanks [Speedy Auto](#) & Wenygttom for their very generous gift. Your support will allow us to continue providing resources to the people in our community who need them most. People like you truly make a difference in the world, and we're incredibly grateful! Thank you!!

**Special Thanks to Joey Lively  
for his Outstanding Fundraising**



The Autism Alliance would like to thank Joey Lively for his fundraising efforts. Joey sets up his lemonade stand each year at his local Labor Day Parade and is proud of helping folks enjoy a refreshing sip of his famous lemonade while spreading autism awareness. Joey is a true self-advocate, and we proudly receive this year's \$400.00 donation. And, because of Joey's lemonade stand, others that attended the parade want to do a fundraiser for the Autism Alliance as well. ❤️

## Autism Alliance Guest Speaker Series

**special education**

**THE NEW IEP AND TRANSITIONS WITH CYNTHIA MOORE**

**October 16th 6:30 p.m.**

**Cynthia Moore, Special Education Advocate**  
**Monday October 16, 2023**  
**6:30-8:00pm**

**Location: Virtual**

Join us for this informative virtual presentation as we welcome guest speaker Cynthia Moore. Cynthia is a special education advocate and will be discussing the IEP New Form & Critical Stages of the IEP Process. We will have Q & A, so be sure to mark this on your calendar.

[Learn More](#)

 **AUTISM ALLIANCE**



**Autism**  
*Welcoming*

**Thank You Lucas Lima Barbers & Beauty,  
Our Newest Certified Autism Welcoming Business**



**Lucas Lima Barbers & Beauty**  
38 Main Street  
Marlborough, MA 01752  
Phone: 508-663-7589

Autism Alliance is proud to announce that [Lucas Lima Barbers & Beauty](#) has officially become Autism Welcoming certified. These kind and talented professionals are ready to welcome new clients within the Autism Alliance community. Barbers, hairdressers, beauticians, makeup artists, and more - all in one place.

**Autism Welcoming Business Spotlight**



**Discovery Museum**  
177 Main Street (Route 27)  
Acton, Massachusetts 01720  
Phone: 978-264-4200

What's not to love about The Discovery Museum? They recently underwent refresher training as part of their Autism Welcoming Initiative. Find out more about their sensory-friendly afternoons, autism-friendly evenings, and all-access evenings. [Especially for Me at Discovery Museum](#)

## Help Spread Inclusivity Within Our Community



Sensory kits, such as these, are provided upon certification

Do you know a business that would like to become Autism Welcoming certified? Or, perhaps a business that you wish would become Autism Welcoming certified? If so, please let us know. We will be happy to connect with them.

Through our Autism Welcoming Initiative<sup>SM</sup>, businesses learn how to welcome individuals and families living with an autism diagnosis while creating new customers and creating a more inclusive community for all. Together, through simple but impactful changes, we make life richer, easier, and more welcoming for all.

For more information, contact: [Penny Anderson](#)

## New Friends Social Skills Group



### New Friends Social Skills Group (Virtual) - Limited slots available

#### Must be eligible through the DDS Middlesex West Area Office

This social skills group is for children ages 11-14 with autism. This program is co-facilitated by the Autism Alliance and [Successfully Social New England](#). This group is limited to 8 participants. Program is held 2x a month on Wednesday's from 4:00pm-4:45pm. To ensure that social goals are met for each participant, we have a limited number of slots available. Consistent attendance is strongly encouraged. Program inquiry at this link: [New Friends Social Skills Group | Autism Alliance](#)

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## Autism Alliance Upcoming In-Person Events

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**No School, No Worries**  
**Join Autism Alliance at Jam Time / Natick Mall**  
**Thursday October 9th**  
**8:30am - 10:00am**

**For children up to 12 years**

Thank you to the Flutie Foundation for funding this fun event. [Jam Time](#) is a children's indoor playground located within the Natick Mall. Jam Time offers climbing structures, playhouses, a bouncy house, play tables, kiddie gym equipment and infant + toddler soft play toys amongst many other activities unique to their center. Adults can enjoy comfy seating and free wi-fi. The best place to park is Parking Lot A (near the old Wegmans) on the second floor. Jam Time is across from Newbury Comics and Build-A-Bear. Let the kids play while you connect with other parents.

[Register Here](#)

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# Let's Build a Village: MetroWest Moms Self-Care Group Presents Yoga by Candlelight with Wendi O'Neill Thursday October 12th at 6:30pm



*Yoga | Reiki | Sound Healing*



**AUTISM ALLIANCE**  
*Empowering Families for 30 Years*



**"Let's Build A Village" Mom's Meet Up: Yoga by Candlelight**  
**Thursday October 12th**  
**6:30pm - 8:30pm**

**Christa McAuliffe Branch Library**  
**746 Water St, Framingham, MA 01701**

Moms, please join Penny and Katie in welcoming Wendi O'Neill, owner of [Soul Spark Healing](#) on Thursday, October 12th for an amazing evening of relaxation. Wendi is a certified 200-hour yoga instructor with a 20-hour certification in Mindful, Trauma-Informed Yoga. Wendi is also a reiki master teacher and mother of 3 children. Come to relax and connect to the mind, body, and spirit in this gentle yoga class by candlelight. Reiki will be offered to those who wish to receive it during Savasana. Finally, Wendi will create space for an even deeper state of relaxation by using her Tibetan singing bowls for sound healing. Cost is \$10 cash at the door. Refreshments and conversation to follow this amazing session.

[Register Here](#)



Autism Alliance and  
Intercultural Family Support Center

# HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR

OCTOBER 28, 2023 | 11:30 AM TO 2:30 PM  
DAVE AND BUSTERS

YOU MUST BE A CURRENT MEMBER OF THE  
AUTISM ALLIANCE OR INTERCULTURAL FAMILY  
SUPPORT CENTER. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

**Family Halloween Spooktacular**  
**October 28, 2023 - 11:30am to 2:30pm**  
**Dave & Busters**  
**1235 Worcester Street**  
**Suite 3201 | Natick, MA 01760**

The Autism Alliance is teaming up with Advocates Intercultural Family Support Center for our second annual Halloween Spooktacular at Dave & Busters. We will host this exclusive family event where kids can come dressed in their Halloween costumes, have unlimited video game play and enjoy a fun lunch. This event will have a limited number of slots available. We will let you know if you have successfully registered and received a slot.

[Register Here](#)

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**Sensory-Friendly Happenings at the Natick Mall**

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### Snap into the past, present, and future at The Selfie Studio

Go on a discovery of the decades one pic at a time with totally awesome photo moments. Whether you're looking to spruce up your social media feeds, searching for some much-needed creative inspiration, or just looking for a unique family photo, check out The [Selfie Studio](#) at the Natick Mall. Discover multiple photo opportunities that are bursting with creativity and color. Visit anytime between September 15 through October 14, during mall hours.

Autism Alliance will be at Jam Time on **Monday October 9th from 8:30am - 10:00am**. Feel free to meet us there, say hello and visit the selfie studios during this time - before the mall opens to public. Jam Time is on the second floor, near the old Wegmans.

OCTOBER 31ST  
**MALL-O-WEEN**  
3PM - 6PM | CENTER COURT  
Lower Level Near Kay Jewelers

**\$5 DONATION INCLUDES:**  
DYO Trick or Treat Bag  
Games & Prizes  
Music & Dancing  
Character Visits

**PROCEEDS BENEFIT:**  


**TRICK OR TREATING AT PARTICIPATING STORES!**  
3PM-4PM: AUTISM WELCOMING HOUR  
Calm & accommodating environment created  
in partnership with  AUTISM ALLIANCE

October 31, 2023 - 3:00pm to 6:00pm  
Natick Mall  
1235 Worcester Street  
Natick, MA 01760

The [Natick Mall](#) has invited the Autism Alliance to attend this year's Malloween! We are so excited to have a table there so we can greet our families and wish you a Happy Halloween. We will have treats, crafts, and sensory kits on hand. Meet in the lower level near Kay Jewelers to get the party started and make your way around the shopping center for trick-or-treating at participating retailers. Come join us during the sensory-friendly hour where the mall will be less crowded, and the music will be turned down. This event is hosted by the Natick Mall and benefits [Second Chance Animal Services](#). A \$5 donation at the door will go directly to this amazing, local organization to help animals in need.



### [Jazz Along the Charles](#)

October 7, 2023 | 2:00pm

DCR Charles River

Esplanade, Boston, MA

Explore one of Boston's iconic outdoor spaces and experience one set list played 25 different ways! One hundred Boston-based musicians, in twenty-five jazz ensembles, will perform a single Boston-inspired setlist in their own style. Many bands will be playing purely acoustic instruments. Only some bands will be lightly amplified. Staff members will be on hand to direct you to park benches or quieter locations in the park if you need to take a break. Earplugs (in-ear foam style) and sunglasses will be available for free at any Information tent. There will also be sensory kits available to check out at all information tents. The 1.5-mile series of connected locations form a loop from Community Boating along the Dudley Bike Path to Esplanade paths around the Storrow Lagoon and Charles River. Please note, there is no barricade between guests and the water, both on the lagoon-facing side and the river-facing side.

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## Calmer Con - A Comics & Pop Culture Convention

October 21, 2023 | 10:00am and 1:00pm

Meadowbrook School

10 Farm Road

Weston, MA 02493

Like a traditional “comic con” [Calmer Con](#) will have artists, vendors, cosplay, as well as activities such as Jedi training, superhero academy, block building, and an art area. Calmer Con Boston is a collaboration between [Calm Passion](#) and the [Boston Comic Arts Foundation](#) (BCAF), a non-profit charitable organization. BCAF's mission is to celebrate comics through art festivals, artist grants, and educational programming. A donation will provide free admission and creative programming to hundreds of families at an event designed just for them. Professional service organizations will staff tables during the event to provide information to the parents of attendees.

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**[Holiday Pops Sensory-Friendly Concert](#) |**

**December 2, 2023, | 10:30 am  
Symphony Hall, Boston, MA**

The show is designed for all families with children or adults with an autism spectrum disorder or sensory sensitivities. This is a shortened 60-minute version of our standard Holiday Pops concert, with a flexible, non-judgmental environment. Modifications include relaxed house rules, reduced volume and lighting levels, extra space for movement, available noise-reduction headphones, designated quiet room and support spaces, modified food concessions, and credentialed autism therapist volunteers on site.

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Portuguese Educational Autism Family Support Group

*Fourth Monday of Every Month  
Next Date: October 23rd  
6:30pm-8:30pm*

*Location: Virtual*

*Drop-in's welcome*

Autism Support Group for Parents of children aged 10 and under

*First Wednesday of Every Month  
Next Date: October 4th  
12 noon-1:00pm*

*Location: Virtual*

*Drop-in's welcome*

Grief and Loss Support Group

*First Thursday of Every Month  
Next Date: October 5th  
12 noon-1:30pm*

*Location: Virtual*

Contact Allison Daigle

Mom's Self-Care Support Group

*Third Thursday of Every Month  
Next Date: October 19th  
12noon to 1pm*

*Location: Virtual*

Contact: Penny Anderson





## Autism Alliance Support Groups

for mom's, dad's, siblings, and all who ❤️ a child with Autism



### Just for Dad's Support Group

#### Just for Dads Support Group

First Wednesday of Every Month  
Next Date: October 4th | 7:00pm-8:30pm

Morse Institute Library  
14 East Central Street  
Natick, MA

Our Just for Dads support group is where fathers can meet and talk about fatherhood as it relates to raising a child or children with autism. Our group is open to new fathers, experienced fathers, and single fathers where they can speak to other dads and learn from their experiences. Drop-in's welcome



### Sibshop

Support groups for school-age siblings  
of individuals with autism



#### Sibshop Support Group

Meets Monthly  
Next Date: October 28th | 2:30pm - 4:30pm

YMCA  
45 East Street  
Hopkinton, MA

Sibshop meets monthly during the school year. In addition to traditional sibshop curriculum, participants will also enjoy activities such as archery, orienteering, navigational games, snowshoeing (weather permitting), animal tracking and survival skills. There's still room in this amazing program. [Registration required.](#)

## Book of the Month

# PAUSE POWER



*Learning to stay  
calm when your  
buttons get pushed*

Written by **JENNIFER LAW**  
Illustrated by **BRIAN MARTIN**

## **Pause Power by Jennifer Law**

Young readers will learn how to use PAUSE POWER to reset their mindset, calm down and stop losing control when others push their buttons. It's a great lesson and fun read for children in grades K-6.

Tips for parents and educators to help children managing their emotions when they become angry and to raise self-awareness in themselves are included at the end of the picture book.

A clever tale from school counselor and author Jennifer Law about Gabe, a young boy navigating school life. Her stories include

Pause Power – Learning to stay calm when your buttons get pushed.

Practicing Patience – How to wait patiently when your body doesn't want to.

Available from [Amazon](#)



Did you miss seeing one of our featured guest speakers? If so, click on the link and you will see the recordings on the Autism Alliance of MetroWest YouTube Channel.

YouTube

*Please submit requests for accommodations, including ASL interpreters, at least 2 weeks prior to the event date to [AutismAlliance@advocates.org](mailto:AutismAlliance@advocates.org) or call (508) 652-9900*

## Connect With Us



[www.AutismAlliance.org](http://www.AutismAlliance.org) | (508) 652-9900 | [AutismAlliance@Advocates.org](mailto:AutismAlliance@Advocates.org)  
1881 Worcester Road, Suite 100A, Framingham, MA 01701

Donate

### Our Contact Information

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