

Medically Complex Program

Fall Photo Scavenger Hunt

Gather the family and get outdoors for this fun Fall photo scavenger hunt. It's a great way to capture what Fall looks like and teach kids about one of my favorite seasons of the year. What's not to love when it comes to pumpkins, hayrides and Fall leaves hitting the ground? Send your pictures to ShanellStewart@nemasketgroup.org

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Leaves | <input type="checkbox"/> Corn Maze |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unwinding | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkin spice latte |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cozy socks | <input type="checkbox"/> Frost |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkin pie | <input type="checkbox"/> Family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jack-o-lantern | <input type="checkbox"/> Hayride |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bonfire & S' mores | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boots | <input type="checkbox"/> Brown |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scarecrow | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweater collection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Halloween costume | <input type="checkbox"/> Thanksgiving table |

Medically Complex Program at The Nemasket Group

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For Parents of Disabled Children, School Mask Wars Are Particularly Wrenching

By **Erica L. Green**

Sept. 23, 2021, 3:00 a.m. ET

In Tennessee, where the governor allows families to ignore school mask mandates, some parents are making excruciating calculations each morning about whether to send their children to school.

FRANKLIN, Tenn. — Five years ago, Kim Hart's son underwent an open-heart surgery that got him healthy enough for the family to move from Cincinnati to this quiet suburb of Nashville. Her son has Down syndrome and autism, and she liked that Williamson County had a reputation for caring neighbors and safe schools.

But every day for the past month, she has wondered whether she made a mistake.

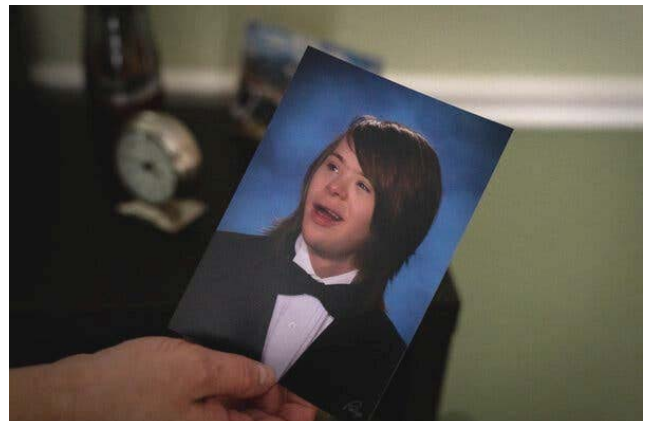
It was here that an explosive debate over masking in schools — one of the most effective strategies for keeping students learning in person safely during the pandemic — made the county a poster child for divisions over coronavirus safety measures. A [video clip of a county school board meeting last month](#), showing protesters heckling and threatening medical professionals and parents who supported a universal mask mandate as they left the meeting, drew national attention and a rebuke from President Biden.

As cases in Tennessee surged — the state was [leading the nation in new infections per capita](#) earlier this month — many residents of the predominantly white, wealthy county were left despondent that a piece of fabric had become a political statement.

"It's very dystopian," Ms. Hart said. "I'm used to arguing with a district to get my kid what he needs. I'm not used to my neighbors screaming at a school board meeting over a mandate that protects everybody."



Kim Hart met her son after school in Franklin, Tenn., last week. The mask debate has been particularly crushing for parents like her, who see in-person schooling as a lifeline for their children with disabilities.



At the school board's [August meeting](#), parents who objected to the mandate pleaded with board members to allow them to be the arbiters of their children's health decisions. Many said they believed that forcing children to wear masks negatively affected their emotional and physical health; some said they did not believe masks had been proven to work at all.

One parent, Leigh-Allyn Baker, a self-described "California refugee," said [she gave up a Hollywood career](#) "for freedom, and to come to this friendly place of Tennessee and be greeted with open arms."

Holding up copies of the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Federalist Papers and the Bible, Ms. Baker told the board: "These guarantee my freedom, and yours, and my children's to breathe oxygen."

The opposition to masks has been particularly crushing for parents like Ms. Hart, who see in-person schooling as a lifeline for their children with disabilities. Those students have been among the most underserved during the pandemic but also sometimes face a higher probability that going to school could make them severely ill.

Tennessee is one of seven states that the federal Education Department is investigating to determine whether governors' orders allowing families to flout school mask mandates discriminate against students with disabilities by restricting their access to education.

Even though many local school boards, including Williamson County's, have voted to require universal masking, [an executive order](#) issued by Gov. Bill Lee, a Republican, allows parents to send their children to school maskless, no questions asked. At the high school Ms. Hart's son attends, [data published weekly by the district](#) shows that more than 30 percent of parents have formally opted out, a percentage that mirrors the district's overall.

"We've always known that not everybody really cares about our children, but it is in our face right now — that it's not worth you asking your child to wear a mask, so my child can be safe," said Ms. Hart, who is a researcher and a trained epidemiologist. "That is the scar that I will carry from the pandemic, this playing out in my face over and over and over again."

Parents of special education students in two Tennessee counties covering the eastern and western parts of the state have sued to block the governor's order; one lawsuit has succeeded. A third, covering Williamson County, had a hearing before a judge this week.

In the most recent complaint, three lawyers argued that the governor, the Williamson County school board and a carve-out district within the county called the Franklin Special School District, are violating the rights of special education students by allowing parents to opt their children out of the mandate.

The suit was filed on behalf of a student with Down syndrome and another with Type 1 diabetes, but seeks protections for all "similarly situated" students. "Defendants' actions have pitted children against children, while placing the health and safety of medically vulnerable children with disabilities in danger," the complaint said.

A spokeswoman for the governor did not respond to several requests for comment.



Becky Peterson with her son at their home in Brentwood, Tenn., last week.

The federal scrutiny and legal challenges were welcome news to Becky Peterson, whose 16-year-old son has a rare chromosomal disorder called Dup15q syndrome, as well as autism and epilepsy. At the outset of the pandemic, it seemed that all parents understood the value of the “free appropriate public education” that federal law guarantees special-needs children.

“There was somewhat of a level playing field because we were all in the same boat,” she said. “As this has worn on, we’re all in the pandemic, but our boats look very different.”

Last fall, her son contracted the coronavirus at school — and that was when there was a mask mandate with no loopholes. Ms. Peterson, a professor, said her son’s bout with the virus was distressing, but not as much as the idea of keeping him home from his school, where more than 37 percent of students are not wearing masks.

The gregarious teenager’s communication is limited, but on a recent day he gave hugs and fist bumps as he got off the school bus. One day during remote learning last year, he hugged his computer when his teacher appeared on the screen.



Ms. Peterson’s son has a rare chromosomal disorder called Dup15q syndrome, as well as autism and epilepsy.

Every morning, Ms. Hart makes excruciating calculations about the risks of sending her nonverbal 18-year-old son to school. He still has residual complications from the congenital heart defect that his surgery sought to correct. And while he recently got the coronavirus vaccine, she worries about breakthrough cases — as a child, he got the chickenpox despite being vaccinated against it.

Like other parents of special education students, Ms. Peterson and Ms. Hart also have, between them, hundreds of other reasons to send their children to school: the hours of instruction and services lost to the pandemic, which the district is supposed to make up this year.

This week, the school boards of both local districts voted to extend their mask mandates until January. The governor’s opt-out order expires on Oct. 5; he has not indicated whether he plans to renew it. The judge overseeing the Williamson County lawsuit ordered the state to notify the court of its intentions by Oct. 1.

In Williamson County, [this week’s board meeting](#) was much more civil than the one in August, but just as divided.

“All mandates say that I don’t get to choose, but the ruling class does,” Shelby Rollins, a parent who opposes masks, told the board.



"People here are done with the pandemic, but the pandemic is not done with us," Mrs. Coons said.

Laura Coons's youngest child is not going back to school until he is vaccinated. Credit...Sarahbeth Maney/The New York Times



Mrs. Coons reviewing class material with her son. She quit her job working for the school system last year because she didn't feel safe.



Ava Martin, who identified herself as a junior at Independence High School, which has a nearly 40 percent opt-out rate, implored the board to keep the mask mandate. "There's many people that find masks a violation of their rights," she said, "but I say it's a greater violation to ignore those who need us to help them."

District officials acknowledged that the percentage of students not wearing masks was most likely much higher than the roughly 30 percent formally opting out. But they maintained that more students were wearing them than before, and that coronavirus positivity rates and quarantine cases were dropping.

Understand Vaccine and Mask Mandates in the U.S.

Vaccine rules. On Aug. 23, the Food and Drug Administration [granted full approval to Pfizer-BioNTech's coronavirus vaccine](#) for people 16 and up, paving the way for an increase in mandates in both the public and private sectors. Private companies have been [increasingly mandating vaccines](#) for employees. Such mandates are [legally allowed](#) and have been upheld in court challenges.

Mask rules. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in July [recommended](#) that all Americans, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks in indoor public places within areas experiencing outbreaks, a reversal of the guidance it offered in May. [See where the C.D.C. guidance would apply](#), and where [states have instituted their own mask policies](#). The battle over masks has become contentious in some states, with some [local leaders defying state bans](#).

College and universities. More than 400 colleges and universities are requiring students to be vaccinated against Covid-19. [Almost all are in states that voted for President Biden](#).

Schools. Both [California](#) and [New York City](#) have introduced vaccine mandates for education staff. A survey released in August found that many American parents of school-age children [are opposed to mandated vaccines for students, but were more supportive of mask mandates for students, teachers and staff members who do not have their shots.](#)

Hospitals and medical centers. [Many hospitals and major health systems are requiring employees to get a Covid-19 vaccine,](#) citing rising caseloads fueled by the Delta variant and stubbornly low vaccination rates in their communities, even within their work force.

New York City. Proof of vaccination is required of workers and customers for [indoor dining, gyms, performances and other indoor situations, although enforcement does not begin until Sept. 13.](#) [Teachers and other education workers](#) in the city's vast school system will need to have at least one vaccine dose by Sept. 27, without the option of weekly testing. [City hospital workers](#) must also get a vaccine or be subjected to weekly testing. Similar rules are in place for New York State employees.

At the federal level. The Pentagon announced that it would seek to make coronavirus vaccinations mandatory for the country's [1.3 million active-duty troops](#) "no later" than the middle of September. President Biden announced that [all civilian federal employees](#) would have to [be vaccinated against the coronavirus](#) or submit to regular testing, social distancing, mask requirements and restrictions on most travel.

"For the purpose of our mission of serving students, it strikes me as wise to leave it in place," Jason Golden, Williamson County's superintendent, said of the mandate. "And I think with the balance of the opt-out, we've got a structure that's stable."

The extensions brought parents some relief. But even without the added challenge of disabilities, some families with children who are too young to be vaccinated have concerns about the safety of attending schools in the county.

Laura Coons does not plan to send her youngest child, a fourth grader, back to in-person classes at his Williamson County school until he is vaccinated. She quit her job with the school system last year because she did not feel safe. She had helped recruit one of the speakers at the August board meeting who was harassed. She knows of local pastors who have preached "faith over fear" from the pulpit. Recently, a man in a Kroger grocery store yelled at her, "The mask don't work, ma'am."

"People here are done with the pandemic, but the pandemic is not done with us," she said. "I couldn't send him in there knowing there are a fair number of people in this district, in this area, who weren't taking precautions in life and weren't going to do so when they send their kid to school."



Clifton and Shanika Robinson having dinner with their three children at their home in Franklin last week.

Clifton and Shanika Robinson's three children were excited to head back to school on Aug. 6, having not attended in-person classes since the spring of 2020.

Their two sons started school in the Franklin Special School District, which did not impose a mask mandate until Aug. 20. Their daughter attended high school in Williamson County, which voted to establish the mask mandate in high schools on Aug. 26.

On Aug. 28, their youngest son — the only unvaccinated person in the house — tested positive for the virus. Ms. Robinson, a registered nurse, felt defeated: "It was in our house, down a couple doors from our bedroom, in my baby."

The Robinsons wonder if it was a child who was allowed to go to school without a mask who sent the virus into their home. They worry that their son might have passed it to someone else. They fear it is inevitable that it will happen again.

His sister, Amari Robinson, was terrified she had given it to him. Amari, a 16-year-old junior, attends a high school with a 19 percent opt-out rate, and prays every day that the percentage dwindles.

"I just want us to do what we can to keep ourselves safe, and those around us safer," she said. "It's a group effort; everyone just hasn't realized it yet."

Erica L. Green is a correspondent in Washington covering education and education policy.

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**Courses are a community benefit offered by South Shore Health in
collaboration with Jewish Vocational Services**

SouthShoreHealth.org



**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
THE AUTISM DIVISION
1000 Washington Street | Boston, MA 02118**

MESSAGE TO FAMILIES OF YOUNG CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

**An Important Message to Massachusetts Families
With Children Under Age 9
Diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder
Open Request Application Period **October 15, 2021 to October 30, 2021****

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 9th birthday.

Eligibility: the following requirements are necessary for participation in this waiver program:

1. The child must have a **confirmed diagnosis** of an Autism Spectrum Disorder, subject to verification by the Department of Developmental Services.
2. The child has not yet reached his/her 9th birthday. Children birth through age 8 may participate.
3. The child is a resident of Massachusetts.
4. The child meets the level of care required for services in an Intermediate Care Facility for persons with an Intellectual Disability (ICF/ID) as assessed by DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES.
5. The family chooses to have the child receive services in the home and community.
6. The child must be able to be safely served in the community.
7. The child must have a legally responsible representative able to direct the services and supports of the Waiver.
8. The child must be found by the MassHealth agency to be eligible for MassHealth Standard coverage, based on family income. **For families who have not yet applied for MassHealth, this must be done at the time of the filing of the Waiver Program Request Form.** (Instructions on how to apply for MassHealth are on the next page)

The Autism Waiver Program maintains reserved capacity (30 statewide slots) for children who are age 3 and transitioning out of Early Intervention. Children who meet the eligibility criteria for the program can be served up to their 9th birthday. All waiver services require that the child continues to meet the financial and clinical eligibility requirements for the Waiver Program throughout their enrollment.

While the Autism Waiver Program is near capacity currently, there are always children who leave the program because they turn 9 or for other reasons. Therefore, we want a current applicant pool to draw from when these spots become available for the Program. The Autism Division is offering an opportunity to apply for the current applicant pool through an open request application period. The Autism Division held its last open request in October 2020.

The 2020 Open Request period runs from October 15 - October 30, 2021. Please be sure to MAIL or EMAIL the *Open Request Application* between October 15th and October 30th. The Autism Division will discard submissions outside of this timeframe. If you submitted an application during the last open request application period in October 2020, YOU MUST RESUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR 2021.

How to Participate in the Open Request Process:

1. Get a copy of the *Open Request Application*

- a. Please contact your local Autism Support Center (attached) to request the *Open Request Application*.
- b. Autism Support Centers are available to help you complete the application.
- c. All forms are also posted on the DDS website www.mass.gov/DDS under "DDS Autism Waiver Services"

2. Complete the *Open Request Application*. You will need your:

- a. child's date of birth
- b. child's social security number
- c. child's MassHealth ID number

3. Submit the *Open Request Application*:

- a. Applications must have a Postmark or Date Stamp between October 15, 2021 and October 30, 2021.
- b. Applications received outside of this designated time period will be discarded.
- c. Complete the application in pen and print clearly.
- d. Sign the application in pen.
- e. ONLY ONE APPLICATION PER CHILD—The Autism Division will discard multiple applications

4. The Autism Division is NOT accepting hand delivered applications, applications must be mailed to:

**Department of Developmental Services
Autism Division
Att. Autism Program Application Form
1000 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02118**

It is a priority of the Autism Division of DDS to ensure that the process for requesting participation for the Autism Waiver Program is fully accessible to families and children with autism who are from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. Materials are available in Arabic, Burmese, Chinese (Mandarin & Cantonese), Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, Portuguese (European), Spanish, Khmer, Vietnamese, Nepali and Somali

Translation and interpretation are available free of charge to all participants.

How to Apply for MassHealth: You can apply for MassHealth in any of the following ways:

- If you have an account, sign into mahealthconnector.org and apply for MassHealth
- If you do not have an account, the quickest way is to apply online and create a secure online account at mahealthconnector.org.
- Fill out and sign the [Massachusetts Application for Health and Dental Coverage and Help Paying Costs](#) and mail to:

**Health Insurance Processing Center
P.O. Box 4405
Taunton, MA 02780
or Fax to 1-857-323-8300**



PILGRIM AREA COLLABORATIVE EXTENDED SERVICES

2021-2022 Transition Learning Workshops

PACES

Connecting SCHOOL – HOME – COMMUNITY

www.pilgrimac.org

Transition Learning Workshops 2021-2022

The transition of a child to adulthood can make any parent nervous, but the challenges faced by parents of a child with special needs often makes this journey more complicated. This multi-part series of learning opportunities introduces participants to the principles of transition needs, services and resources. The content of these will relate specifically to those individuals who are moving through transition from middle/high school to post-secondary settings. Participants will have the opportunity to learn specific information about creating independence, navigating services, and accessing resources. The target audience for this series is young adults, parents, administrators, and educators.

| Topic | Details | Description |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Letting Go Slowly</p> <p>Presenters: Joanna Silverman, M.Ed. Irene Volpe Barry, M.Ed.</p> | <p>Date: Tuesday, October 26, 2021 Time: 6:30-8:30 pm</p> <p>Location: Pilgrim Academy 42 Industrial Park Road Plymouth, MA 02360</p> <p>No Cost Pre-registration required by: Thursday, October 21, 2021 Register Here</p> | <p>Do you wonder if you do too much for your child? Do you wish your child was more self-sufficient?</p> <p>Oftentimes families struggle to know when to increase expectations for their child’s independence and reduce the support they have always provided. There are no clear instructions to guide parents on this journey. This workshop will provide you with information about age appropriate expectations, tools to foster self-sufficiency and begin the discussion of letting go.</p> |
| <p>Transition Assessments as the Common Thread in the Transition Process</p> <p>Presenter: Mary Brennan, M.Ed., Certified Special Education Teacher and DESE Endorsed Transition Specialist.</p> | <p>Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 Time: 8:30 am-12:00 pm</p> <p>Location: Pilgrim Academy 42 Industrial Park Road Plymouth, MA 02360</p> <p>Cost: \$100</p> <p>Pre-registration required by: Friday, October 22, 2021 Register Here</p> | <p>Transition assessments are an ongoing process of data collection on an individual’s needs, preferences and interests as they relate to the demands of living as independently as possible. Conducting meaningful assessments and creating appropriate programming to meet the needs of individuals often presents a challenge to many educators.</p> <p>In this workshop participants will learn how to navigate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age Appropriate Transition Assessment Toolkit • Formal and Informal Transition Assessment Models • How to effectively weave the Assessment findings into the IEP and TPF. |

"Sensory-Friendly" Hour at Apex/Marlborough



October 2, 2021

Marlborough, MA

Every first Saturday of the month, **for a one-hour time slot**, they offer special accommodations such as

- reduced lighting and sound
- sunglasses
- sensory toys
- quiet rooms

Attractions include:

- Bumper Cars
- Ropes Course
- Arcade
- Bowling
- Laser Tag
- Go Kart Racing
- Sports Simulators
- Apex Mini Golf

To register or for more information visit www.facebook.com/ApexEntertainmentNE/events or contact (508) 251-8666 ext. 3

Why Didn't Somebody Tell Me This? Things Advocates Should Know



Webinar

October 8th, 2021

Hosted by the **Special Needs Advocacy Network of Massachusetts**. Hear from advocates with a variety of experiences answer pressing questions this panel discussion, including:

- What do you wish you knew when you started
- Lessons learned along the way
- Unexpected occurrence at team meetings
- Advocate tips – what to do and what not to do
- and much more

Speakers:

Elaine Rabbitt is 1st Vice President at SPaN, and is a special education advocate and parent coach

Noreen Curran is Director at Advocacy Associates in Belmont.

Bill Peever is a member of the Special Needs Advocacy Network, the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, and the International Dyslexia Association

Lisa Nelson is an Advocate for students with special needs

Diane Willcutts works throughout Connecticut, helping families to navigate the special education, Section 504, and Birth to Three processes.

To register or for more information visit www.spanmass.org/span-program-calendar.html or contact 508-655-7999 info@spanmass.org

"All Access" Morning at The Museum for Kids with Disabilities



Acton, MA

October 24, 2021, 3:00 – 4:30 pm.

Free but a reservation-only event.

Join the museum for a special, afternoon event for all their previous Especially for Me families, as well as any family with a developmental disability.

- Play and explore in the Museum's welcoming, ADA-compliant, and universally designed exhibits during this time dedicated to families with similar experiences.
- The Museum will be closed to the general public and headcount will be limited. * Advance registration is required.
- COVID-19 protocols – please check with the museum for updates.

Pre-registration is required to www.discoveryacton.org/event/all-access-afternoon-2 or contact The Discovery Museum 978-264-4200 ext 114.

Special-Education Compensatory Services During Covid-19 for Massachusetts Families



Webinar Series for Massachusetts Families

October 26th, 2021

Mass Advocates for Children, Massachusetts Families, and the Arc of Greater Haverhill – Newburyport.

Part of the free Special Education

This workshop will address COVID-19 compensatory services for students with disabilities.

* This workshop will describe the range of compensatory services still available to address:

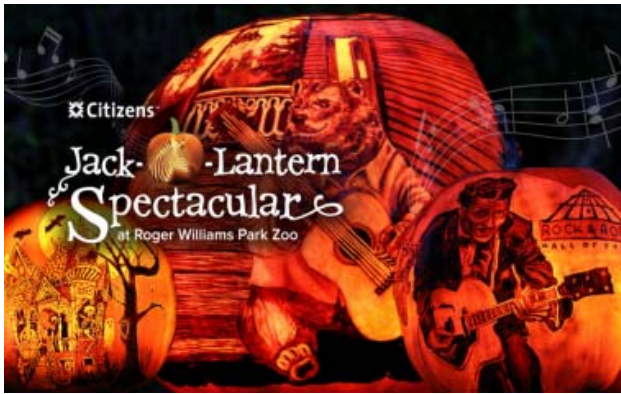
- disruptions during the 2019-2020 school year and the 2020-2021 school year
- the steps to determine the need for services for individual students
- the importance of including parents in the discussion, and strategies to support parents

* **Zoom registration is required to** [Working Together Series](#) or contact andrea.morris@thearcofghn.org or sophia@massfamilies.org

Boston Lights at Franklin Park Zoo

Jul 23 to Oct 11, 2021

Experience the wonder of over 60 magnificent displays comprised of hundreds of beautifully crafted lanterns spanning Franklin Park Zoo's 72 acres. Walk through glowing corridors of lotus and sunflowers, cranes and cherry blossoms, and a towering 87-foot-long Tyrannosaurus Rex tunnel!



JACK-O-LANTERN SPECTACULAR

September 30, 2021 - October 31, 2021
6:00pm to 10:30pm

It's music to our ears as the nationally acclaimed walk-through Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular at Roger Williams Park Zoo is back and better than ever.

Presented by Citizens, this year's spectacular takes you from Joplin to Jay-Z, as we celebrate the greatest music from the last 150 years. Stroll, or dance your way, past thousands of intricately carved pumpkins displayed while listening to the soundtracks from 1860's through today. Feast your senses on Rhode Island's biggest and greatest pumpkin spectacular!

Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular is open rain or shine. In the case of light to moderate rain, the show will be open. NO REFUNDS OR RESCHEDULING.

PLEASE NOTE: All tickets are available for purchase **ONLINE ONLY** and timed ticket entry requires pre-registration.

SLIGHTLY SPOOKY FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Now in its 20th year – Boo at the Zoo will satisfy all your fall, Halloween and cool weather cravings. With campus wide daytime trick-or-treating, there are seven chances to enjoy Boo at the Zoo this year. Want to show off your little ghosts and goblins? Baby Boo is for you! Baby Boo is geared towards children 5 and under, but any age is welcome!



Boo at the Zoo

Saturdays & Sundays
October 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 and 31
10:00am – 6:00pm

Baby Boo

Friday, October 29
9:00am – 2:00pm

Dress the kids in their favorite costume and come explore all that BPZOO has to offer! We'll provide families with a socially-distanced walk through experience with some twists and turns along the way.

Our slightly spooky theme will include mazes, a scavenger hunt, plenty of trick-or-treat stations, free carousel rides, endless photo opportunities including a photo costume contest, Halloween themed animal enrichment, and up-close meet and greets with the Zoo's Animal Ambassadors. Don't forget to stop into the Cafe to enjoy festive, fall favorites – who can resist kettle corn and apple cider!

Families are encouraged to bring their own "trick or treat" bags.

What will you create this year!? Submissions for our popular [Pumpkin Decorating Contest](#) can be dropped off at the Zoo on October 11 & 12.

Family Connections

A Conversation with Russell Johnston, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner of DESE
October 7th at 5:00 pm



JOIN US!

FAMILY CONNECTIONS
with
Russell Johnston, Ph.D.,
Deputy Commissioner of DESE

10.07.2021
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Location: [Register Online](#)

Date: Thursday - October 7th, 2021

Time: 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM



Presenter: Russell Johnston, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Topic: Join us for the opportunity to ask questions related to special education in Massachusetts.

Please complete the registration form. Interpretation will be provided in Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese. Please notify us of any additional translation needs prior to the event.

www.fcsn.org

617-236-7210 or 800-331-0688



Strategies for an IEP meeting / De Reunião Iep (Português)



Webinar

October 26th, 2021

With the Federation for Children with Special Needs in collaboration with Brockton ARC and DPH/program.

Together, these program together are presenting a series of workshops about special education for Portuguese families.

* The meeting link for each workshop will be sent to all who sign up the day of the presentation.

Inscrição: <https://forms.gle/oDqAY8GVZoBqoV42A> o Inscrição: Aceriane Leal, aleal@fcsn.org

For more information visit [Parent Workshop Series Registration](#) or contact Aceriane Leal, aleal@fcsn.org

DDS 101 Training

What you should know about DDS as the transition from high school to life after high school approaches.

This free workshop will focus on the following topics:

ELIGIBILITY

How do I become eligible for DDS Services?

AREA OFFICE

What is the role of the DDS Area office?

FAMILY SUPPORT

What can Family Support provide to my family, and what are the limitations?

SELF-DIRECTION

What are Self-Directed Services?

How do they differ from Traditional Services?

AUTISM SERVICES

What support is available to my family member with autism, and how do we access it?

When: Tuesday, October 5, 2021, 6:00pm -7:30pm

Where: Virtually via WEBEX

Follow This Link To Register: <https://conta.cc/38THTpo>

Contact Becky Morrissey, Regional Trainer, with any questions:

Rebecca.Morrissey@mass.gov

We have 2 great opportunities for you to help yourselves, others, and The Nemasket Group.



Come join our Medically Complex Advisory Committee.

The committee will meet virtually on Zoom and will be looking for ways to help families get information, get resources and connect. The Nemasket Group's Medically Complex Program realizes that you know best what your children may need. So we invite you to make your voice heard and let's get together to help make your children's future better.

Please email Shanell Stewart@nemasketgroup.org for more information.



Do you have an interest in being part of our parent to parent support group?

This group will meet virtually on Zoom and will focus on parents helping parents with the same questions, struggles, breakthroughs, etc. as other parents. For example, if you are in the middle of a Home Modification and need help finding builders, the group will ask others would have gone through the process who they would recommend. If you are in the middle of shopping for a new van and need a good deal.

Let's ask other parents. If you need help finding a good dentist, PCP, or even a new nursing agency. Let's ask. Some of us just need an ear to listen to us because our family, friends, neighbors, etc., don't get us like other parents do. We, as parents, never give ourselves enough credit for all the knowledge that we have and we never want to ask another parent for help but they may just know the answer.

Please email ShanellStewart@nemasketgroup.org for more information.



**ALSO DON'T FORGET TO FILL OUT OUR SURVERY.
HERE IS THE LINK AND IT IS ALSO ON OUR WEBSITE.**

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdNGsbNmkjVdTloc9bXx5VZ4a-QLaeJZwAfqISrj0KGEJ12rw/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0>

The Salvation Army 2021 Christmas Assistance

Registration is now underway! Due to increasing needs, please sign up early!

All questions can be directed to our Social Service Office at 508.997.6561.

As we continue to recover from the pandemic, we anticipate that more people in our community will need assistance this year. Registration has returned to "in-person only."

Masks are required. Early registration is recommended.

For more information, visit: [www. https://massachusetts.salvationarmy.org/MA/NEBHoliday](http://www.https://massachusetts.salvationarmy.org/MA/NEBHoliday)