

Come Support a Dough Raiser 2016 5K Run & Walk for Autism Acceptance Kick-off at UNO® Pizzeria & Grill

As the 2016 Walk Run committee starts planning for next year's 5K Run & Walk, we are excited to partner with UNO® Pizzeria & Grill to kick-off the online registration and fundraising. From Sunday, **January 17th to Saturday the 23rd**, you can eat in or take-out meals at the **Worcester, Framingham, Sturbridge, Westboro, Leominster & Millbury** locations and UNO® Pizzeria & Grill will donate up to 20% of your check to HMEA's Autism Resource Central.

On any of these days, Sunday through Saturday, present this certificate at the time of payment (Good News! You can also show it digitally on your phone) and Uno's will make a donation to the Center. Go ahead and share it with everyone you know and let's have the whole of central Massachusetts eating at UNO's that week and showing this certificate.

The certificate will also be available on our website and social media pages. On designated days, a member of our staff and our Family Advisory Board will be at one of the six locations if you want to connect or just say hello. This information will also be posted on our website and social media too.

EST. 1943
UNO
PIZZERIA & GRILL

**EAT, DRINK &
RAISE MONEY!**

COME SUPPORT A DOUGH RAISER TO BENEFIT

**HMEA - Autism
Resource Central**

DATE:
January 17th - 23rd

VALID AT:
**Worcester, Framingham,
Sturbridge, Westboro,
Leominster, and Millbury**

UNO® will
donate up to
20%
of your check

**DINE-IN
or
TAKEOUT!**

Please present this certificate at the time of payment to have up to 20% of your check's value, excluding tax and tip, donated to the organization above. Not to be used with other coupons or discounts. Tickets are not to be distributed in the restaurant or within the perimeter of the parking area. Valid only for the date listed above.

unodoughraisers.com

PRESENT THIS TO YOUR SERVER

Flamingo Uno Corporation © 2014

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Donations

UNITED WAY DONATIONS

Sharon Dwelley
Jennifer Kramer
Debra Snow
Macy's Employees

UPS

John Amorello
Mathieu Michaud
John O'Leary

Hanover Insurance

Brian Kelly
Margo McCaffrey Bishop
Maria Panerelli
Coreen Gaffney

Liberty Mutual

Matthew Desimone
Brittany Tirozzi
Michael Couturier
Chelsea A. Olson

To designate the Autism
Resource Center as the recipient of
your United Way Donation use the
name Autism Resource Center and
the code UN 00365

DONATIONS

Michael D. Gorman
Alina Micheliwicz

CARS FOR AUTISM **You can donate a used** **car and support your** **Center.**

A professionally licensed, bonded
and insured towing company will
pick-up your car donation and pro-
vide you with a vehicle donation
receipt. **Car Donations are**
accepted at

<http://www.donateacar.com/>

or call

800-240-0160 to speak to a

representative of Car Program LLC
directly

Our Sincere Thanks

SMITTY'S TAVERN

We wish to thank Smitty's Tavern for
hosting a Golf Tournament to benefit
HMEA's Autism Resource Central
This is the second year the folks at
Smitty's Tavern have taken this on and
we are extremely grateful for their
donation of \$4,000 to further our
mission.

STAPLES FOUNDATION

Once again the Staples Foundation has
made a \$5,000 grant to our Camp
Programs so that we may continue to
support teens to be part of Camp
Starfish's LEADERS program through
the Center. We are beyond thankful.

DCU

Thank you to the employees at DCU
Federal Credit Union who selected
the Center for a \$15,000 grant as
part of DCU's celebration of reaching
500,000 members .

Autism 101 at UMASS Medical Center

When you first receive an autism diagnosis it can be overwhelming. There's the initial emotional shock, which is quickly followed by feelings of inadequacy as there is no manual for parenting itself, let alone parenting a child with an autism spectrum disorder. And there is SO much to learn.

Our Autism 101 series is designed to help families who are new to the diagnosis gain a solid footing to begin their journey. It includes an overview of autism, the medical management of ASD, how to access public supports, an overview of sensory issues seen in ASD, a workshop on SPED Law and an organizational workshop. Also Included is an on-line learning experience from UMass Medical School called UDiscovering : Discovering Behavioral Interventions. This interactive online course will be made available to parents who register for Autism 101 for a period of 3 Months. Going at your own pace, you will learn about ABA .

Autism 101 will take place in January & February ,watch our updates for specific dates, time and location at UMass Medical School! We are thrilled to be collaborating with Dr. Roula Choueri and her staff to bring this to the University Campus There is a \$25.00 fee for the series. Register online at our website or call 508-298-1610 to register

Clinics and Social Skills Funding

Participants for all groups MUST be DDS eligible, and under the age of 18. Parents must register within 30 days of request for funding.

Social Skills

Those who would like to enroll their child in a Social Skills Groups with a clinician may apply for funding, up to \$300.00 towards a group session. Funds will be sent directly to providers, and families would be responsible for any fees beyond \$300.00. If a provider charges less than \$300.00 the fee will be covered in total by the funding. Funding for social skills groups is limited to eligible candidates under the age of 18 who meet the criteria for participation as set by the clinician. Contact the Resource Center to secure possible funding by calling Donmarie Smith at 508-298-1609. Once your DDS status has been verified your provider may invoice the Center for payment of \$300.00 for your child.

IEP, ADL & VISUAL CLINICS

To book all clinics please call Donmarie Smith at (508) 298-1609.

ADL and Visuals Clinics are by appointment ADL Clinics are booked only upon request. For Visual Clinics, parents may drop by the Center at any time during regular business hours to access the Boardmaker Program and material to create visuals. Printing and laminating are provided without charge. After a brief tutorial on how the Boardmaker software works, most parents can create their own visuals.

1 Hour IEP Clinics with Elaine

Rabbitt Meet with an Advocate to discuss your child's IEP, concerns and needs and how best to advocate for changes with your school.

Dates available for consultation are as follows:

February 4, 2016

Leominster Public Library

9, 10 & 11 AM, 12:15, 1:15 PM

February 11, 2016

Seven Hills Family Support

Center Sturbridge MA

9, 10 & 11 AM, 12:15, 1:15 PM

February 25, 2016

Autism Resource Central

9, 10 & 11 AM, 12:15, 1:15 PM

Sensory Clinics with Mary Loughlin MS OTR/L Autism Resource Central

Clinic will provide consultation to families in the area of Sensory Processing Dysfunction. Child and Parent will meet with Mary for four (4) 1 hour sessions across 4 weeks. A Sensory Profile Assessment will be done which will identify any sensory specific needs the child may or may not have. Parents will be provided with resources including websites, DIY sensory equipment, sensory play and activities. At conclusion of the sessions parents will be given an individual "sensory diet" for their child.

Dates : Session 1 Jan 6, 13, 20, 27
Snow date February 3

Times 3 PM, 4 PM, 5 PM

Session 2 Feb 10, 17, 24 and March 2nd
snow date March 9th

Times 3 PM, 4 PM, 5 PM

YMCA Membership Inclusion Grants

This offering has become very popular, so much so that the funding allocated for the memberships has been depleted and we have a wait list currently. If funding for other activities is not depleted by spring this offering will be re-opened and we will serve those on the wait list first then others on a first come first served basis.

The YMCA branches currently working with us are as follows:

Greendale YMCA in Worcester,
Montachusett YMCA in Fitchburg
and Leominster,
Tri Community YMCA in
Southbridge,
Hockomock YMCA, Franklin
Branch,
Boroughs YMCA Branch in ,
The Clark YMCA in Winchendon

Children who qualify may be accompanied by 1 parent or a 1:1 aide. Access to some of the program areas for children under the age of 13 may require the person accompanying the child to have a CORI & SORI check done, which would take 24 hours.

New Year—New Growth

Last summer the Autism Omnibus bill passed by our Legislators opened a new era in services for those with autism in our Commonwealth.

The key components of the bill were as follows:

- A requirement that MassHealth cover medically necessary treatments for children with ASD who are under 21 years old – including ABA therapies and copays as well as dedicated and non-dedicated AAC devices;
- Extension of Department of Developmental Services (DDS) eligibility to many persons with Autism, Prader Willi Syndrome and Smith-Magenis syndrome;
- The creation of an Autism Endorsement for special education teachers to enable them to voluntarily gain in-depth knowledge about the complexities of educating students with ASD;
- The creation of tax-free saving accounts (called “Achieving a Better Life Experience” or ABLE) to help families cover anticipated disability-related expenses for individuals with ASD and other physical and developmental disabilities;
- Requiring DMH and DDS to develop and implement a plan to

provide services to individuals who have both a mental illness and a developmental disabilities;

- Establishing the Autism Commission as a permanent entity.

The implementation of these components has been rolling out over the past few months. The first meeting of the Commission was held last September.

For many low income families who rely on MassHealth, having access to autism services places their children on an equal footing and a chance for success with the children whose families who have coverage with private health insurance.

We are especially excited to see the eligibility for DDS services expanded for adults. Many who have adult children who experience severe functional limitations have been on their own for far too long. If you were denied services in the past it is well worth your while to explore this as a possibility. Equally exciting is the requirement that DMH and DDS collaborate to provide services for the significant portion of those on the spectrum with comorbid mental health issues. So many educators are confronted each day with children in their classrooms on the spectrum, the Autism Endorsement will go a long way to insuring that our children’s complex needs are met in their classrooms.

We at HMEA’s Autism Resource Central have been staunch supporters in effecting these changes knowing full well that our services and focus would need to grow along with the expansion of services. Initially conceived as a support for families of children on the spectrum we discovered several years ago that the need for support and a way to connect can be even more important to families as their children become adults. This is why we expanded our activities to include Teens & Young Adults and why we offer support groups for their parents.

In order to serve the ever expanding population we are expanding our Advisory Board to include a Professional Advisory Board to the Center with input from Educators, Doctors, Speech and Language Pathologists, Attorneys, OTR/L’s BCBA’s and Assistive Technology Specialists. We still believe that family members are an important voice, and several of those we have invited to be on our Professional Advisory Board are also parents of children on the spectrum.

As the implementation of the omnibus bill unfolds we look forward to working collaboratively with DDS, the Autism Service Coordinators and others to insure that families in Central Massachusetts receive all that is promised by this exciting legislation and more. We want to thank you for your continuing support in helping to change the world for those with ASD!

SPECIAL HONOR FOR SUE LORING

On October 7, a large Milford ballroom filled with people to celebrate HMEA's 26th Annual Awards Night Celebration. Every year the Autism Resource Central's parent agency celebrates both staff and consumers of HMEA's services, through a number of awards in various categories. One of those awards, the HMEA Award, is given to an employee "who gives a consistently outstanding performance, and who demonstrates energy, enthusiasm, and a positive outlook."

This year, our own Director, Sue Loring, received the HMEA Award! She was nominated by HMEA Senior Vice President, Donna Boucher, who wrote:

The Autism Center is at the heart of the autism community in Central MA. Ask any one of the over 3,000 families connected to the Center in West Boylston and they will undoubtedly mention the impact that Sue has had on their families' lives over the years. As a mom of an adult son with autism, Sue has walked the autism walk and can definitely talk the talk in her own humorous yet poignantly honest way. It is her personal story that continues to spark the passion she possesses to tirelessly help families struggling with raising their child or children on the Autism Spectrum. Sue is educated as a RN but decided long ago that her time was better spent and her efforts more impactful through her work at the Center. She often jokes about how she'll never leave—we'll have to carry her out in a bag because she will die doing what she loves. She has been there since its inception and has seen it grow to become one of the larger centers in the Commonwealth.

You will see Sue at the Center on weeknights helping facilitate a support group or family meeting or leading one of the family fun and fitness groups and on any number of weekends she will be involved in the Center's social outings, sib shops, teen dances, fundraising events. ...Sue rarely if ever says no to the endless requests for her valuable input, perspective and experience whether it be to participate at a conference, speak at a legislative event, participate on a committee – e.g. Autism Commission, Statewide DDS Advisory Council, North Central DDS Citizen Advisory Board, CANDO board, Ex. Board of AFAM, and the Mass Act Early Task Force. Sue is a champion and advocate for the autism community at each and every opportunity that comes her way... Sue is many things to many people and she is deserving of this recognition and our gratitude for all that she has given of herself to better the lives of so many families.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, congratulations to Sue Loring, our fearless leader! It is an honor well deserved. -Carla C. Cataldo, Member, HMEA Board of Directors

Introducing Priya Tikku



Hi, I am Priya Tikku and I am thrilled to be here working at HMEA's Autism Resource Central with Sue Loring and her amazing staff as an Autism Waiver Support Broker. Previously I worked at TILL's Autism Support Center for two years in the same capacity working with the Boston families. I moved because of my long association with the center as I have a son on the autism spectrum. So when this opportunity came up, it was like coming home. Our center does amazing work and I am very excited to be part of it helping other families who walk through our doors, just like I did 18 years ago.

I live in Boxborough with my husband, Sanjay and two boys, Arjun and Amar. Arjun is off to college now but grew up coming to the summer camps held by the center and remembers the good times even today. Amar continues to participate in the Fun and Fitness program and other activities at the center. I hope to continue doing good work for all our families that we serve and in making a difference in their lives as much as I can.

Register for Events @ www.autismresourcecentral.org or call 508-298-1610 Fees for Events are as stated on site

DECEMBER

December 2, 2015

**Support Group for Parents of
More Able Kids on the Spectrum**
7-9 PM

December 6, 2015

Children's Holiday Party

December 7, 2015

CENTER CLOSED

Family Fun & Fitness

Strength Training with Julie O'Mara
3 Bartlett Pond Way Sterling
6-7 PM

December 9, 2015

**Support Group for Parents of
Kids More Challenged by Autism**
7-9 PM

December 14, 2015

Family Fun & Fitness

Walking at St V's Atrium
6-7 PM

December 16, 2015

**Parents of Teens Support Group
TRANSITION to Adult Services**
7-9 PM

December 17, 2015

Grupo de Apoyo

11 Sycamore Ave
Worcester MA
10 AM

December 21, 2015

Parents & Tots

4:30- 5:30 PM

Family Fun & Fitness

Strength Training with Julie O'Mara
3 Bartlett Pond Way Sterling
6-7 PM

December 22, 2015

Autism Friendly A Christmas Carol
Hanover Theater 6 PM

*Tickets may be purchased on Hanover
Theater's web site Use Code HMEA*

December 24, 2015 Vacation Fun

Friends & Family Movie

Polar Express with Santa
West Boylston Cinema
10 AM Fee: \$2.00/pp

December 25, 2015

CENTER CLOSED

December 28, 2015

Family Fun—Bowling & Pizza

Mohegan Bowl
51 Thompson Rd Webster MA
11 AM Fee: \$2.00/pp

Family Fun & Fitness

Walk at St Vincent's Atrium 6-7 PM

December 29, 2015

BOUNCE AROUND

Skills & Thrills

21 Main St Lunenburg MA
10 AM Fee :\$2.00/pp

Jump Nation

810 Boston Turnpike Rd
Shrewsbury MA
10 AM Fee \$2.00/pp

Zoinks

7 Pioneer Dr, North Oxford,
10:15 AM Fee: \$2.00/pp

Winter Re-Imagined

Light Display

Tower Hill Botanical Gardens
11 French Drive, Boylston
4 PM fee \$3.00/pp Kids under 6 free
registration closes on Dec 21st

December 30, 2015

New Years Eve Dinner Dance for
Teens & Young Adults 6:30 PM
(see page 8)

December 31, 2015

CENTER CLOSED

JANUARY

January 1, 2016

CENTER CLOSED

January 4, 2016

Family Fun & Fitness

Strength Training with Julie O'Mara
3 Bartlett Pond Way Sterling
6-7 PM

January 6, 2016

Parent Night Out and

**Support Group for Parents of
More Able Kids on the Spectrum
(all parents welcome!)**
99 Restaurant W. Boylston St
Worcester MA
7-9 PM

January 11, 2016

Parents & Tots Support Group
4:30-5:30 PM

Family Fun & Fitness

Walk at St. V's Atrium
6-7 PM

January 13, 2016

**Support Group for Parents of
Kids More Challenged by Autism**

January 14, 2016

Family Fun for Teens & Adults

Pizza & a Movie
meet at the Center
6 PM Fee: \$2.00/pp

January 16, 2016

Sibshop for Siblings 7-18



Register for Events @ www.autismresourcecentral.org or call 508-298-1610 Fees for Events are as stated on site

United Parish of Lunenburg Main St
Lunenburg MA
10 AM-2 PM

Fee: \$10.00/per child \$15 family cap

**January 17 th – 23 rd WALK
KICKOFF EVENT
Dough Raisers at UNO Pizzerias**
See page 1 for details

**January 18 , 2015
CENTER CLOSED
Family Fun Activity
KIDS Paint Day**

3 Bartlett Pond Way Sterling
1 PM Fee \$10.00/per painting

**Family Fun & Fitness
Healthy Eating**
Dough Raiser at UNO Pizzeria
225 Turnpike Rd, Westborough 6 PM

**January 20, 2016
Parents of Teens Support Group
& Teen Social Group**
Dough Raiser at UNO Pizzeria
Twin City Shopping Center
Leominster MA 7 PM

**January 21, 2016
Grupo de Apoyo**
11 Sycamore Ave
Worcester MA
10 AM

**CAMP HAVVAGO
INFORMATION NIGHT 7-9 PM**

**January 25, 2016
Family Fun & Fitness**
Walk at St Vincent's Atrium
6-7 PM

**January 27, 2016
Support Group for Parents of
Adults**

7-9 PM

FEBRUARY

**February 1, 2016
Family Fun & Fitness**
Strength Training with Julie O'Mara
3 Bartlett Pond Way Sterling
6-7 PM

**February 3, 2016
Support Group for Parents of
More Able Kids on the Spectrum**
7-9 PM

**February 8, 2016
Parents & Tots Support Group**
4:30 –5:30 PM

Family Fun & Fitness
Walk at St. V's Atrium
6 –7 PM

**February 10, 2016
Support Group for Parents of
Kids More Challenged by Autism
Overview of Qigong Massage**
Fran Bruen OTR/L , ABT(AOBTA)
7-9 PM

**February 13, 2016
Sibshop for Siblings 7 –18**
Celebrating Chinese New Year
Autism Resource Central
10 AM—2 PM
Fee: \$10.00/per child \$15 family cap

**VACATION FAMILY FUN
February 15, 2016
Friends & Family Movie**
West Boylston Cinema
10 AM Fee \$2.00/pp

Family Fun & Fitness
Strength Training with Julie O'Mara
3 Bartlett Pond Way Sterling 6-7 PM

**February 16, 2016
BOUNCE AROUND
@ Jump & Play**
486 Chestnut St, Gardner 10 AM
Fee :\$2.00/pp
@ Jump Nation
810 Boston Turnpike Rd
Shrewsbury MA 10 AM
Fee \$2.00/pp
@ Zoinks
7 Pioneer Dr, North Oxford,
10:15 AM Fee: \$2.00/pp

**February 17, 2016
Rollerskating Roll On America**
90 Duval Rd Lancaster
10:30 AM Fee: \$2.00 pp

**February 18, 2016
Grupo de Apoyo**
11 Sycamore Ave
Worcester MA 10 AM

**February 19, 2016
Holy Cross Hockey Game**
Hart Recreation Center
Holy Cross
7:05 PM Fee: \$2:00/pp

**February 22, 2016
Family Fun & Fitness**
Healthy Eating Dinner at B Good
Shrewsbury MA 6 PM

**February 24, 2016
Parents of Teens Support
Group**
Teen Social Group runs
concurrently 7-9 PM

**February 29, 2016
Family Fun & Fitness**
Strength Training with Julie O'Mara
3 Bartlett Pond Way Sterling 6-7 PM



71 Sterling Street
West Boylston MA

Phone: 508-835-4278 Fax: 508 -835-3723

Email: autism@HMEA.org

www.autismresourcecentral.org

Sue Loring RN - Director

Cid DeLeo - Assistant to Director

Donmarie Smith Autism Information Specialist

Kris Gregoire , Autism Waiver Supervisor

David Iborra - Autism Waiver Support Broker

Priya Tikku - Autism Waiver Support Broker

Wanja Kiraguri- Event & Development Coordinator

Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 9 AM– 9 PM
Tuesday 9AM –5 PM Friday 9 AM–3 PM

We are the Center of the autism community



The Resource CONNECTION is a quarterly publication of HMEA's Autism Resource Central

The Autism Resource Center does not endorse any treatments, programs or products. Articles, announcements and resources are provided for information purposes only.



New Years Eve's Eve Ball

*You are cordially invited to
HMEA's Autism Resource Central's*

Annual Teens & Young Adult Holiday Party

Wednesday, December 30, 2015

*The Manor Restaurant ~Route 12, West Boylston , Massachusetts
For Teens, Teen Siblings and Parents
6: 30 PM—9:30 PM*

Music , Dancing & Karaoke with DJ Greg Engvall

Regular and GFCC menu, served buffet style

RESERVATION BY PHONE REQUIRED

RSVP by Friday December 18th Call 508-298-1610



**Family Advisory Board
Chair**

Heidi Robbins (Millbury)

Vice Chair

Kristen Saad (Worcester)

Secretary

Tina D'Asti (Bellingham)

AFAM Liaison

Erica Ploof (Sterling)

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Kim Athanassiades (Oxford)

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Tina Colbert (Worcester)

Kristen Saad (Worcester)

Brian Kovalski (Clinton)

Kelly Carey (Shrewsbury)

Lisa Thompson (West Boylston)

Mia McDonald (Worcester)

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