

Thank You to Our Autism Super Heroes!



The 2020 Autism Super Hero 5K Run and Walk was supposed to be the biggest and best ever as we celebrated 20 years of coming together and supporting the cause which has captured our lives. But like autism, Covid 19 arrived in our lives, unexpected and unwelcome and lay waste to plans and altered our paths. We went virtual, and some people came with us, continuing to fundraise, knowing that not all would be able and would be needing a hand in the coming months as Covid impacts finances and lives. Some families lost people they love to this pandemic and endured the loss without the usual rituals that help us adjust to a grievous loss. Our hearts go out to those directly impacted by this dreadful virus.

Most of us have been isolated for months in our homes and we've made the best of it, rediscovering our own families as the frantic rush of day to day work, school and social obligations came to a grinding halt. We began to find new ways to connect by Zoom meetings, Skype, Go To Meeting & Trainings. Home instruction for children instead of school became the norm and the curse for those who were balancing work, home, and care duties now had to integrate a new role as teacher for their children. But you know what? We all rose to the occasion and having been through the pivot required when we got our child's diagnosis we did it like we were born to it. So whether or not you participated in this year's effort you ARE an Autism Superhero!

We want to thank those who spent so many hours, organizing, brainstorming and altering plans for this event. Our Walk/Run Committee is one of the most resilient and ingenious group of people we've ever met. We started planning in October, and lost our Event & Development Coordinator, but like the little engine that could, the team kept meeting and planning with staff. After months of searching we hired a new Event and Development Coordinator and Maryann Johnson joined the team, and began to take on leadership. The effort was herculean to try and salvage this, the most important fundraising effort of the year. While we missed the goal the team never gave up and we simply will soldier on and begin planning for next year! Covid has taken its toll, we've had to make cuts across the board and the position for fundraising was lost for now. It is a grievous loss and we thank Maryann for her time and effort. Like other sport teams we simply say "wait till next year" at the end of the season. We believe in this team and we will be back.

We're still planning to have a celebration of some sort for those who participated by fundraising. The restrictions for public gatherings make it problematic to include everyone but again we say with hopeful anticipation, wait till next year. If you registered to attend the event and desire a refund please contact us. If you decide to forgo a refund and make it YOUR donation to the cause we will be eternally grateful. Thank You



REGISTER TODAY!

\$130 PER GOLFER

TEE UP FOR

AUTISM

SEPTEMBER 25TH, 2020

REGISTRATION 8AM SHOTGUN 9AM

**INCLUDES GOLF FEES, LUNCH & 2 COMPLIMENTARY
ROUNDS AT CYPRIAN KEYES GOLF CLUB**

REGISTER AT OUR WEBSITE :WWW.AUTISMRESOURCECENTRAL.ORG
QUESTIONS: CONTACT SUE AT SLORING@HMEA.ORG OR 508-298-1605

Summer Fun

This summer we've turned from the offerings of support groups and educational programs to providing what we hope will help when the kids say "I'm Bored" which probably already has happened given the constraints we are living under due to Covid 19. For the foreseeable future we will only offer virtual activities and we're hoping that now that kids are no longer required to attend zoom classrooms that they are ready for some fun.

On the next few pages you will find descriptions of activities we'll be doing for kids this summer. Some will require adult supervision, like going on hikes and cooking others they can do independently, like Legos and backyard explorations. We'd like to think that parents will join in the fun, making this special summer REALLY special. We're all so busy making a living that some times we miss out on living! One positive aspect of this pandemic is being able to spend time with our families. Imagine when your kids are old and they tell stories of the great Covid19 Pandemic to their grand-kids, you'll want it to be happy memories. Together we can help make that happen. Activities are for all the kids in the family, some may hold appeal for your kid with ASD, some for their siblings, everyone can join.

We are requesting that **families register** for the activities on our website so we have an indicator of the interest and can change things up if kids aren't interested. So we'll

continue with Lego Design each weekday but we're adding two evening sessions as well.

Getting outside and walking is one of the few safe activities for physical exercise so Monday's Cid will be traveling to various trails for a hike. Socially distance with masks and have some fun.

Arts & Crafts are fun for some kids and they can tune in on Monday and Thursday afternoons

Tuesdays We'll explore nature in our own backyards to get some fresh air, Thursdays we'll engage in water play, either with a bucket of water or a hose.

We've groups for learning life skills related to food. On Tuesdays we'll teach some cooking skills with kid friendly recipes and on Wednesdays making no bake snacks.

Engineering activities will be offered on Wednesdays as well, a fun way to learn, plan and build together.

Teens can participate in Karaoke with young adults as well on Tuesday nights and on Wednesdays there is a chance to watch a Movie together on Netflix for teens and young adults. Netflix offers a one month subscription free, but even so the monthly fee is reasonable and offers everyone in the family a chance to be entertained on THEIR time table.

We hope there is something for everyone and look forward to seeing you soon.

Mondays

- 1-2 PM Hike or Scavenger Hunt
- 2:30- 3:30 PM Legos
- 4-5 PM Arts & Crafts
- 7-8 PM Legos

Tuesday

- 11-12PM Discovering your back yard
- 2:30 PM Legos
- 4-5:30 PM Kids Can Cook
- 7-8 PM Karaoke

Wednesday

- 11-12 PM Edible Crafts
- 2:30 PM Legos
- 4-5 PM Awesome Engineering for Kids
- 6:30-8:30 PM Netflix Watch Party

Thursday

- 11AM Splash Party
- 2:30 PM Legos
- 4-5 PM Arts & Crafts
- 7 PM Legos

Friday

- 11AM –12 PM Around the World Virtual Tours
- 2:30 – 3:30 PM Legos

SAVE THE DATE !

Mother's Retreat

November 7-8, 2020

TAKE A HIKE !
JOIN CID AND DISCOVER
WALKING TRAILS IN YOUR
NEIGHBORHOOD



Mondays at 1 PM
Rain Day Activity Scavenger
Hunt at Home

Discovering Your Backyard

FIND AND IDENTIFY NATURE JUST
OUTSIDE YOUR DOOR!
TUESDAYS AT 11 AM



Summer Fun
Low Mess Crafts
Join Cid on Mondays
and Thursdays at 4 PM
to Create using
recycled items and
typical household craft
items.



Kids Can Cook

Join us at 4 PM on Tuesdays then
sit back & watch your kids
prepare dinner.

You provide some supervision
we'll supply recipes &
instructions . They learn life
skills while you relax !





Karaoke

FOR TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS
TUESDAY 7 PM

Edible Crafts



Have your Kids Join us on
Wednesdays at 11 AM for Fun in
the Kitchen Making Edible Crafts
that can be part of their lunch!
They'll learn valuable life skills while
having fun !

Adult Supervision recommended



AWESOME ENGINEERING FOR KIDS

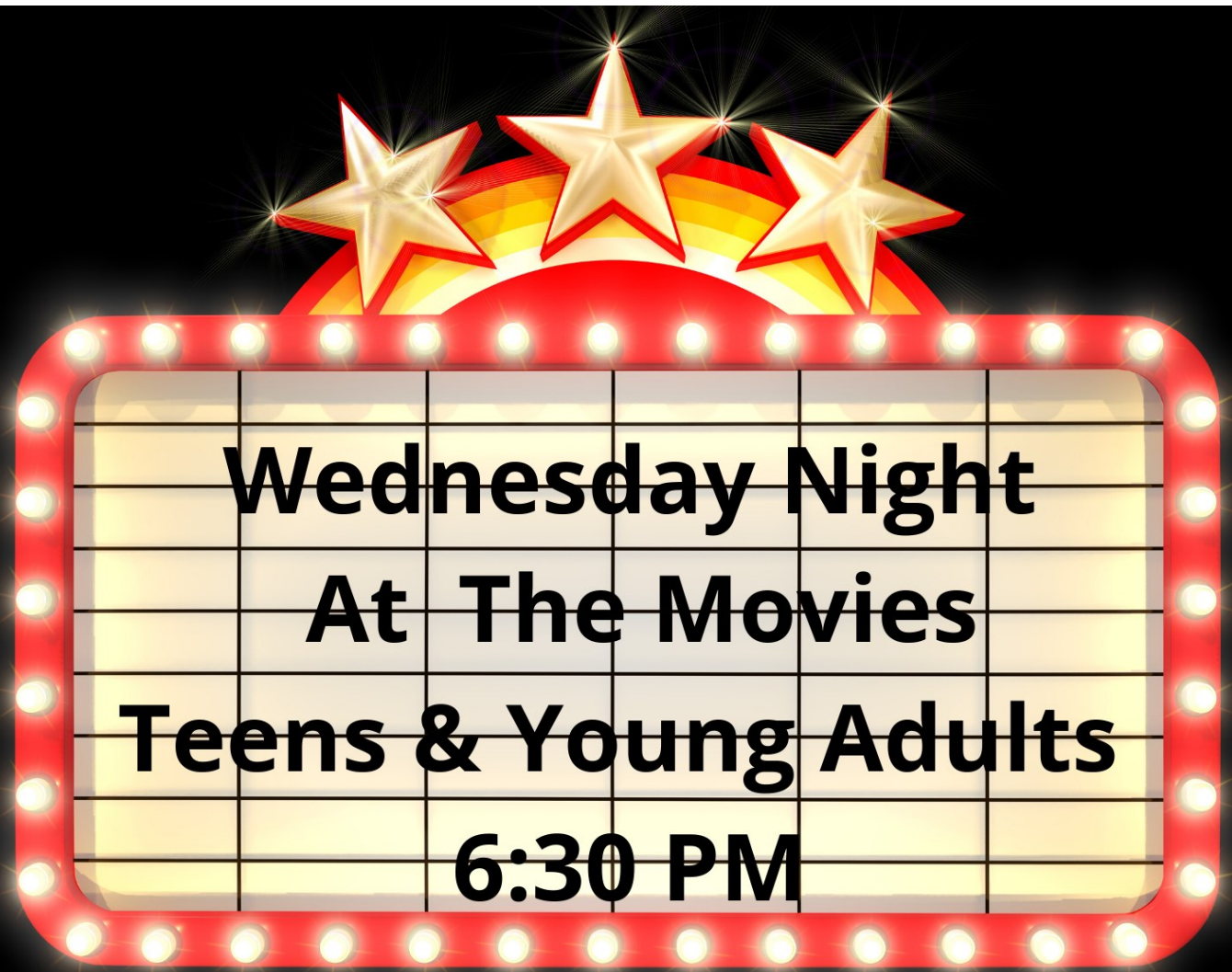


Planning
Building
Learning
FUN



WEDNESDAYS
4-5 PM





Join us for a
Netflix Watch
Party each week



CANDY

CALLING ALL LEGOMANIACS



JOIN CID WEEKDAYS AT 2:30 PM AND AT
7 PM ON MONDAY & THURSDAY NIGHTS

A young boy with dark hair and a headband is playing with a water hose. He is holding a blue cup with a cartoon character on it. Water is spraying from the hose into the cup. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage. A large blue splash graphic is in the top left corner.

SPLASH PARTY !!!
THURSDAYS
11 AM

GET OUT THE HOSE
OR A BUCKET OF WATER
SOME CUPS AND SPONGES FOR SOME WET
AND WILD FUN!



**Fridays at 11 AM
Travel the world & your
State with Cid through
Zoom**

Registration is OPEN!
Please contact us today for
registration information!
Team Captain: kcariglia@hmea.org



We Need A Few SUPERHEROES
This Could be YOUR year!

The background is a solid yellow color. It is decorated with a border of autumn-themed illustrations. In the corners and along the sides, there are red flowers with yellow centers, green leaves, and brown acorns. Small black dots are scattered throughout the background.

HMEA'S
AUTISM RESOURCE CENTRAL

Mother's Retreat Fall Edition

Colonial Hotel
625 Betty Spring Road
Gardner, Ma 01440
November 7-8, 2020

Check in 3:00 PM /Cost \$100 /pp
Includes room (double occupancy)
Dinner and Breakfast Buffet
Afternoon Workshop
Evening activities as you like

Donations And Memorial Gifts

MEMORIAL GIFTS

In Memory Of Geraldine and Thomas Egan

Advisory Council Member Kelly Carey lost both her parents to Covid 19 at the beginning of June. In lieu of flowers The family requested that donations be made to HMEA's Autism Resource Central. We join the donors in extending our condolences to Kelly and her family during this time of loss.

Scott Sosnowki

James Harring

Kristi Toupal

Jeanie Chrisman

Scott Letier

Keith Prusek

Lisa Hicks

Vincent Caldara

Ted Navitskas

Joel Chidester

Steve Trinkle

Linda Robison

Lucy Brennen

Alexis E. Lodde

MV Transportation

DONATIONS

Joan Mikalauskas

Todd Toubert

UNITED WAY DONORS

Melissa Barr

Meredith Blakely

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

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 provide 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

Our Thanks to the following who donated

Jaime Walker

POLICE PATCHES



Our thanks to three Police Departments who took the initiative to sell special autism awareness patches during the spring and donated the proceeds to our Center.

The Town of Harvard made patches available for the second year in a row, raising over \$500.00



The Full Time Officers Association Of Leicester also held a patch fundraising effort and donated \$1169.00 to the Center.

Bolton's Police Department had plans for a series of events in their town where they would have sold patches, but the lock down for Covid 19 made that impossible. We are grateful to these departments for their Thoughtfulness and support.

My Three Sons By Kelly Carey

The second of my three sons with Autism just graduated from High School a few short weeks ago. Many of you know me and an increasing number of you probably don't, as you may have younger children. I have three sons with Autism, Wayne (20), Gage (17) and Joel (16).

Over the past several weeks I have been reflecting upon how the Autism journey has been very different for each of my children as well as for my husband and I as their parents. They have all reached success in their own way at their own pace.

I do not like to assign their level of functioning to the Autism Spectrum; however, in this case it is important as it is relevant to understand the markers for success in their journeys thus far.

My oldest son, Wayne, is very high functioning (probably more Asperger's). My youngest son, Joel, is the highest functioning than both his brothers. He is as close to Neurotypical as you can get. My middle son, Gage, is my most severely affected. He has classic Autism with his overall cognitive functioning in the borderline range of cognitive abilities. He is moderately severe.

When I think of the typical markers of success for NT's, I

foresee High School Graduation, College Graduation, career, marriage, family, possibly children as I am sure most parents think. For us the typical markers for success are not typical but they are nonetheless herculean successes for our children.

Wayne has followed a pretty NT path for the most part.



The Carey's Then L-R front row
Wayne Junior, Joel & Gage
Second row Wayne & Kelly

He graduated High School in 2018 and to our shock and surprise decided to go to college. Wayne entered Worcester State University in the fall of 2018 as a live on campus student. He has acclimated although sometimes awkwardly into full immersion to college life.

He acquired enough skills along the way to be for the most part self-sufficient and capable of self-direction. He is double majoring in Mathematics (surprise...lol... he thrives on concrete information) and Education. He hopes to become a Math teacher. This past spring, he just completed his second successful year of college. Wayne is also a member of the Worcester State Cross Country Team. Over the past two years he has catapulted himself to one of the top ten Cross Country runners in Massachusetts division 3 (MASCAC). He was also named All Conference Athlete for Cross Country this spring.

Gage at the age of 33 months old functioned at the level of a 6-month-old baby. We were informed by the experts at the time he would probably be institutionalized. Gage had a very different plan from a very young age. He entered Early Intervention and when he entered the public-school system he set out on an academic path as opposed to a Life Skills path. He set a goal for himself in 6th grade that he was going to earn his High School Diploma. We always had faith but stayed cautiously optimistic that he would actually achieve that. MCAS seemed like an insurmountable challenge for him. We never

My Three Sons by Kelly Carey

thought (shame on us) he could pass the state testing to qualify for a diploma. Low and behold Gage graduated with a full-blown High School Diploma in May. Gage's next goal is to become a Teacher's Aide. He will move on to a program called Evolution in the fall to participate in Community Based Work Experiences, possibly attend college classes and catch-up on essential Life Skills. We knew when we agreed to let him follow an academic path, his after high school path would be a Life Skills program. He hopes to have a wife and four children someday. We have no doubt he will work hard to achieve his dreams.

Joel is as close to Neurotypical as you can get. He is still in High School and just completed his sophomore year. Joel's path is different as he is incredibly bright but struggles with sitting a classroom all day. Joel would rather work with his hands so he attends one of the technical high schools in the area. His concentration is Metal Fabrication. When we made this decision with Joel my husband and I were very skeptical. On the other hand, we knew that our local high school was way too big for him (over 2,000) students and he really would not thrive in a traditional academic

environment. He would be lost. Joel has had amazing success attending the tech school. He loves his trade concentration. He participates in JROTC and has achieved the rank of Sergeant Carey. Joel also ran for Sophomore Class President and won! He hopes to attend college after high school to pursue an Engineering Degree.



The Carey' Men Now
L-R Joel, Gage & Wayne

The Carey Boys run the gamut of the ASD Spectrum regarding challenges, and behaviors. Each one of them have their own individual needs, levels of therapy and support that they need. It has always been this way. Unique challenges, behaviors and personalities.

have written enough IEP's for a dozen lifetimes. My home will forever be graced with strange eccentric interests, echolalia, game shows, Dragon Tales, Caillou, repeats of Full House and talking about our neighbor's mailbox over and over again. Stimming behaviors and me answering the same question 1,000 times a day. The list is endless. We embrace it as it is all normal to us. In my home this is all OK, this is where they feel safe to be themselves and I let them live their lives out loud.

My husband and I are very lucky to be a part of the journey of Wayne, Gage and Joel's lives and share in their small successes and their big successes. Although our life has been turbulent, we have been blessed with these three gifts. We will never stop in our pursuit of setting them up for success.

I have introduced you to three children with Autism not three Autistic children. First and foremost, they are my children. You have just met three children with autism, but you have also just met three unique individual young men capable of great success.



712 Plantation Street
Worcester, MA 01605

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

Email: autism@HMEA.org

www.autismresourcecentral.org

HOURS

Monday through Thursday 9 AM – 5 PM

Wednesday 9 AM -9 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.

Advisory Council

Chair

Christopher Sharry Esq.

Vice-Chair

Yvette Prayor RN

Secretary

Debra Beauregard M.Ed. (Worcester)

Lisa Thompson M.Ed. (West Boylston)

Mia McDonald (Worcester)

Herb Cabral (Bolton) AFAM Liaison

Katie Shea (Lancaster)

Reggie Williams (Worcester)

Jaya Pandey (Franklin)

Kelly Carey (Shrewsbury)

Kristen Bogosian (Worcester)

Jackie Pugllisis (Leominster)

Joyce Rosenfeld MD (Shrewsbury)

Kelly Charlebois (TechAccess)

Mary Loughlin M.S. OTR/L (Auburn)

Robbie Papazian (Shrewsbury)

STAFF

Sue Loring RN

Director of Community and Family Affairs

Kristen Cariglia

Director of Operations

Cid DeLeo

Autism Activities Coordinator

Dianne Crossley LICSW

Autism Adult Services Specialist

Deb Henderson

Bethany Jensen

Lissa Jakusik

Autism Waiver Support Brokers