



# AUTISM ALLIANCE *at Home*

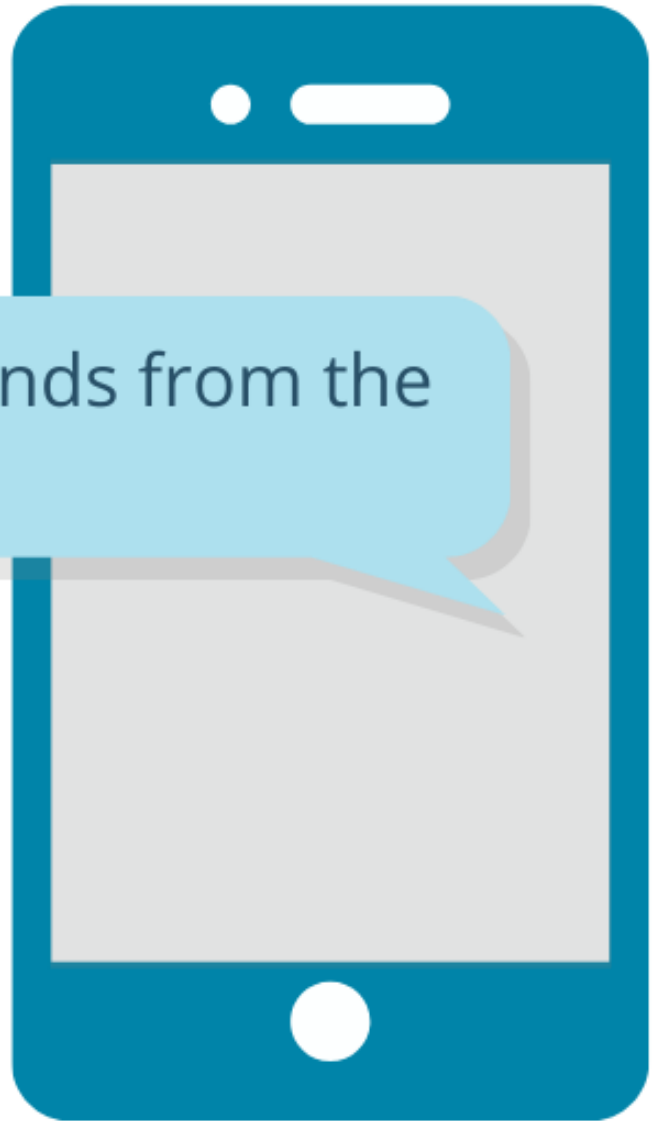


a program of  **Advocates**

## June Newsletter



Hi! It's your friends from the  
Autism Alliance!



We are thinking about ways to improve our communication with families and caregivers. If you would like to receive text messages from the Autism Alliance, please click the below button to sign-up and opt-in. Sign Up for Texts: [CLICK HERE](#)

**Parent Support**



AUTISM ALLIANCE

**SUMMER  
PARENT SERIES**  
*Language & Play*



**Caileen Harvey M.A., CCC-SLP**  
**from Boston Speech and OT**  
**Specialists**

**FREE SUMMER PARENT SERIES**  
**Language and Play Project**  
**Autism Alliance | Boston Speech and OT**  
**6:30pm-7:30pm**

Tuesday, June 27  
Tuesday, July 25  
Tuesday, August 29

***Parents with children of all ages and levels are welcome to attend this series.***

*Throughout this 3-part summer series, we will discuss how to create an accurate profile for your child to understand where they are currently functioning and how to best meet them there. Classes meet monthly (on zoom) from 6:30pm-7:30pm. There will be time for Q & A at the end of each class. For parents who attend all three sessions, you will qualify for a raffle to receive a scholarship for 2 FREE private additional sessions including specific support to your child.*

**Session 1 (6/27): Creating Your Child's Unique Profile: Functional Developmental Level**

Throughout this 3- part speaking series, we will discuss how to create an accurate profile for your child to understand where they are currently functioning and how to best meet them there. This first session will focus on Functional Developmental Levels. This

is the measure of skills we use to assess progress in PLAY Project. Learn where your child falls across the 6 levels, and how to help them grow by playing at just the right level.

### **Session 2 (7/25): Creating Your Child's Unique Profile: Sensory-Motor Profile**

Part 2 of our speaker series will focus on understanding your child's unique sensory profile. We'll look at the 8 (yes 8!) senses and work to understand how each child processes them. Does your child seek out or avoid certain inputs? Are they overreactive or under reactive? We'll discuss how to use sensory input to help them achieve optimal levels of arousal for learning and engagement.

### **Session 3 (8/29): Creating Your Child's Unique Profile: Comfort Zone Activities**

The final part of our speaker series will focus on Comfort Zone Activities. These are the activities which children will engage in deeply and tune out others. Learn how to delve down the rabbit hole with your child and create joyful play opportunities to foster growth of foundational skills such as attention, regulation, and engagement.

[Register](#)

# *"Let's Build a Village"*

## *Mom's Self-Care Group*

### *Summer Edition*



 **AUTISM ALLIANCE**

**NEW Mom's Self-Care Group**  
Thursday, June 15th  
Thursday July 20th

**Thursday August 17th**  
**12noon to 1pm | Virtual**

Our virtual, monthly "Let's Build a Village" program is for MetroWest moms who would like to grow their "village" by connecting with other moms. This program is fun, fabulous, and free and is sponsored by the Autism Alliance. It is an opportunity for moms of children with autism within the MetroWest area to bond with other moms by sharing laughs while lifting each other up. Moms, this is self-care at its very best and is just for YOU!! Our hope is that we can build our village and eventually meet as a group, in person. In preparation for our next get together in June, we'd love everyone to bring their favorite book with them and be prepared to tell us why you love it. Maybe it's a book that was just simple, easy reading or maybe it was life-changing somehow. If you don't have a book, but would still like to join, that's okay too. Just bring yourself. Let's connect!

To Register

## Welcome Summer! Tips for Making The Most It



### Tips for Planning Day Trips with Special Needs Kids

Many families want to go on vacation, but some ultimately opt not to because the amount of preparation feels too overwhelming. We completely understand and appreciate that sentiment. But on the flip side, vacationing with your family can provide tremendous benefits. Things like getting away from the daily grind, giving your family a sense of normalcy and creating memories that will last forever. It does take meticulous planning. But for families who have made it work, they say that it is worth the extra effort to witness the joy on their kids' faces and experience something new together. If you're considering a family vacation, I'd like for families to know just how many resources are available to help navigate the planning process. And that logistically speaking, it is possible for the majority of families to travel with careful planning. So, if you're considering a trip, here are some things to start thinking about.

Learn More



## Places To Go This Summer Autism Welcoming Businesses Sensory-Friendly Hours



[For More Information](#)

Apex in Marlboro hosts a sensory-friendly hour on the **first Sunday of every month** before regular business hours.

Sunday June 4th  
Sunday July 2nd  
Sunday August 6th  
**10:00am - 11:00am**

Enjoy reduced crowds, noise, and dimmer lighting during this time. Stress balls/squishy toys, sunglasses, water toys/timers, and access to quiet rooms will be available.

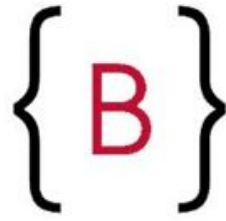
Though the sensory-friendly time is not advertised on Apex website, they are open, and you may pay for attractions your upon arrival.

Burtens in Shrewsbury hosts a sensory-friendly dining time on the **second Tuesday of every month**.

Tuesday June 13th  
Tuesday July 11th

Tuesday August 8th  
3:00pm - 6:00pm

During this time, customer traffic will be light, music will be off, and Burton's staff will apply their knowledge acquired from their Autism Welcoming training and certification process. We have provided them supports to help make visitor experiences more enjoyable. When visiting, ask for a sensory toolkit or a [visual menu](#).



BURTONS  
GRILL & BAR

DAVE &  
BUSTER'S

[Dave and Busters of Braintree](#) now offers a sensory-friendly hour the **first Sunday of every month** before regular business hours.

Sunday June 4th  
Sunday July 2nd  
Sunday August 6th  
9:00am to 10:00am

The large screen TV's will be turned off, there will be a reduced number of people, and a designated "quiet area" with sensory kits will be made available. Be sure to speak to a staff member if you have any questions or need help.

[Dave and Buster's of Natick](#) now offers a sensory-friendly hour the **first Saturday of every month** before regular business hours.

Saturday June 3rd  
Saturday July 1st  
Saturday August 5th

9:30am to 10:30am

The large screen TV's will be turned off, there will be a reduced number of people, and a designated "quiet area" with sensory kits will be made available. Be sure to speak to a staff member if you have any questions or need help.

# DAVE & BUSTER'S



**Autism-Friendly Evenings at Discovery Museum.** Come join in all the fun and explore the accessible Discovery Museum and Discovery Woods during this special evening event for families with members on the autism spectrum. The museum is closed to the general public and headcount is limited. ASL interpretation may be available upon request. Dinner, including a gluten-free option, will be provided.

[Advance registration is required](#)

Saturday, June 3rd  
5pm to 8pm

**Sensory-Friendly Afternoons at the Discovery Museum.** Come explore the accessible Discovery Museum, Discovery Woods, and the giant treehouse! Sensory-Friendly afternoons are all about inclusion. During these events, the museum is open to the general public, but group visits and birthday parties are not scheduled, to avoid crowding and support access to exhibits. You can prepare for your visit by reviewing the [Exhibits](#) section of their website, review their [Tips for Visiting](#), and download their [Access for All flyer](#).



Advance registration is required.

Tuesday, June 6, 2023  
1:30pm to 4:30pm



## PLASTER FUN TIME

The Plaster Painting Place Where Kids Do It Their Way

796 Boston Post Road  
East Marlborough MA 01752  
Ph: (508) 251-1592

Meet New Owner, Maria Melo



**Plaster Fun Time Marlborough** is under new management and now offers a sensory-friendly hour including [visual support](#) the second Saturday of every month before regular business hours as well as **EVERY** Monday morning and Tuesday afternoon:

*Saturday June 10th*  
*Saturday July 8th*  
*Saturday August 12th*  
*9:00am to 10:00am*

*Mondays beginning June 12th 10am to 11am.*  
*Tuesdays beginning June 13th 1pm to 2pm.*

Creativity is fun for all ages. Plaster Fun Time prides themselves on being positive and supportive of everything that kids create there, regardless of what it looks like or how “right” it is. Adults can also get in on the creativity and enjoy the relaxing benefits of painting.

### [Plaster Fun Time Marlborough](#)

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Southwick's Zoo is offering sensory-friendly times **one Friday every month** during the summer season for guests who would enjoy the quiet atmosphere and environment.

Friday June 16th  
Friday July 7th  
Friday August 18th  
Doors Open at 9:00 am

This is an unadvertised event. You will not find this on their website. Tickets may be purchased at the door upon arrival beginning at 9am.

Should you be hungry after your walk through the zoo, feel free to stop by Galliford's restaurant as they will be opening at 11:00am on these sensory-friendly Fridays. The music will be turned down, there will be sensory kits and visual menus available.

### [Accessibility & Sensory Information](#)



2 Southwick St  
Mendon, MA 01756  
Ph: 800-258-9182

[Southwick's Zoo](#)

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Weir River Farm  
140 Turkey Hill Lane  
Hingham, MA 02043

[Sensory-Friendly Programs - The Trustees of Reservations](#)

### **Sensory-Friendly Open Barnyard Series at Weir River Farm**

Saturdays, June 3rd and June 17th  
Saturdays, July 1st, July 15th, July 29th  
Saturday August 12th  
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

A dedicated hour with a reduced number of guests and quieter environment. Any family that would benefit from a limited capacity visit is welcome. You'll have the opportunity to experience life on one of the last working farms on the South Shore. See the ponies, llama, and potbellied pig, goats, sheep, and chickens. Enjoy the beautiful StoryWalk™ while you're there. Pre-registration is required. Children 2 and under are free.

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### **Sensory-Friendly Sunset Picnic Hour at Weir River Farm**

Thursdays, July 6th and July 20th  
5:00 - 6:00pm

Come listen to live music at a decreased volume while enjoying delicious food and drinks from local food trucks and breweries. Pack your picnic blanket and chairs and relax with your friends and family while watching the sun set over the Boston skyline. At 6PM the Sunset Picnic will be open to additional guests and music will be played at a higher volume. Participants are welcome to stay past the sensory friendly hour to enjoy the Sunset Picnic longer! The event will conclude for all participants at sunset. Pre-registration is required for this event. Children 2 and under are free.

July 6th will feature Jessi Kenney, Vitamin Sea, and Mom on the Go food truck.

July 20th will feature Peter Mundt, Barrel House Z, and Lawless food truck.



Weir River Farm  
140 Turkey Hill Lane  
Hingham, MA 02043

[Sensory-Friendly Programs - The Trustees of Reservations](#)

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[Homepage - The Sports Museum](#)

The Sports Museum (located at TD Garden, Boston) is happy to offer Free Sensory VIP times for the months of July, August, and September. These VIP tours are held before regular business hours and will provide 2- 3 families per month with an exclusive private tour guide through the museum. Sensory kits are available and tour guide can support sensory challenges by offering detours to part of the tour with louder sounds. Please email Nick Collins at The Sports Museum, [ncollins@sportsmuseum.org](mailto:ncollins@sportsmuseum.org), to request a slot. Please mention Autism Alliance VIP Tours in the subject line when scheduling.

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In partnership with HMEA's Autism Resource Central, New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill is hosting a Sensory-Friendly Evening to welcome families and individuals seeking a low-sensory, less crowded environment to explore the gardens and trails, as well as enjoy designated quiet spaces, scavenger hunts, art projects, and more hands-on activities for all ages.

Wednesday June 28th  
6:00 - 8:00pm

Admission is free; however, tickets will need to be reserved so they can maintain the capacity for the event.

New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill  
11 French Drive  
Boylston, MA 01505

[Reserve Tickets Here](#)

[Sensory-Friendly Evening Info](#)



New England Botanic Garden AT TOWER HILL

**SENSORY-FRIENDLY EVENING**  
AT NEW ENGLAND BOTANIC GARDEN AT TOWER HILL

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2023 | 6-8PM  
**RAIN DATE: JULY 12, 2023**

In partnership with HMEA's Autism Resource Central, we invite individuals and families seeking a low-sensory, less crowded environment for a night of fun, exploration, and relaxation. Explore the gardens after hours and enjoy designated quiet spaces, art projects, scavenger hunts, and more hands-on activities for all ages.

For more information, please visit <https://nebg.org/sensory-friendly-evening/> or call 508-869-6111

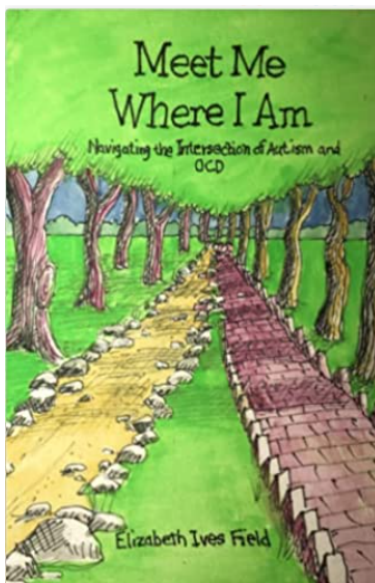
SAVE THE DATE!

The poster features a light yellow background with stylized sunflowers in the corners. At the top right, there is a logo for the New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill and a 25th anniversary emblem. The main text is centered and uses a mix of bold and regular fonts. A circular inset at the bottom right shows a photograph of people in a garden.

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## Summer Reading 2023

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Local author Elizabeth Field's new book is now available from [Amazon!](#) It is the story of her 12-year collaboration with an autistic boy, who also had OCD and significant demand avoidance. His mother created the cover art.

"At age ten, Samuel's considerable intellectual gifts were complicated by autism, obsessive compulsive disorder and the extreme anxiety that accompanies both of these conditions. This book is entirely true, as creative nonfiction must be. It weaves the story of a neurodivergent and neurotypical collaboration with the themes of highly individualized education, the consequences of anxiety, and the benefits of acceptance, trust, innovation, patience, and humor."

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## Sensory-Friendly Events Happening Within the Community

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### Stars of the Spectrum

The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism is celebrating their 25th anniversary with **STARS of the SPECTRUM**, happening on August 24th at Fenway Park!

This concert will be **INCLUSIVE** and **ACCESSIBLE** for people and families with autism. Live music performances by autism self-advocates and special guests including [Kodi Lee](#), winner of [America's Got Talent](#), [Shawn Stockman](#) of [Boyz II Men](#), and of course - [Doug Flutie](#) and [The Flutie Brothers Band](#) AND MORE!

For the past 25 years, the Doug Flutie Foundation has been dedicated to helping families get critical support to care for a loved one with autism. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that all people and families affected by autism will receive **FREE** entry to this event - the largest concert in the nation for autism acceptance. You won't want to miss it!



The first 500 people affected by autism who register will receive an exclusive, commemorative concert poster SIGNED by STARS of the Spectrum performers!

[Get Your Tickets Here](#)

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[For Tickets and More Information](#)

## Immersive Disney Animation Boston

Brought to you by Lighthouse Immersive Studios. Surround Yourself in the Worlds, Music & Stories of Disney Animation. They offer sensory friendly viewings, creating a welcoming and comfortable space. At these special viewings, the sensory input of the show is reduced. **Adaptations include:**

- Reduced sound volume
- Reduced capacity
- Comfortable gallery lighting at all times and no blackouts
- Sensitivity warnings for content
- Quiet Areas outside the gallery

To purchase tickets for these viewings, look for timeslots marked “Sensory Show.”

## Advocates Adult Summer Recreation

### Fun, Friends, & Family Bingo!

Join us for an afternoon of Bingo at Advocates Main Office. Bring your family and friends and win great prizes! Previous prizes have included, but are not limited to: Dollar Store, Dunkin Donuts, and Walgreens gift cards!

Advocates Main Office  
1881 Worcester Road  
Framingham, MA 01701

Saturday June 17, 2023  
12:30pm to 2:00pm

You must RSVP to attend because space is limited, and this event will fill up quickly.



[For More Information & To Register](#)

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RSVP now as this event will fill up quickly!

[For More Information & to Register](#)

## **Fun, Friends, & Family Summer Dance Party**

Grab your flip-flops, shorts, and beach balls – summer is here! Celebrate the season with a fun dance party alongside your friends at Advocates!

Advocates Main Office  
1881 Worcester Road  
Framingham, MA 01701

Friday July 14, 2023  
6:00 – 7:30 PM

Experienced DJ and instructor, Joanne Schmalenberger, will teach fun dance moves and help us dance the night away. All attendees must have a chaperone. You must RSVP to attend as space is limited.



# SafetyNet Federal Grants Available

The Framingham Police Dept. has received a federal grant for SafetyNet and will support any family in Framingham with a child at risk on the SafetyNet program at no cost. Other towns may also apply for grant. Click on the link to learn more.



SafetyNet



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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