



## Parent/Guardian Support & Resource Pages

Week Ending of February 12, 2021 



### CASE Collaborative Community News

Dear CASE Families & Guardians,

We had a great turnout at last night's workshop on Public Benefits for Children with Special Medical Needs with over 60 RSVPs! Gail Havelick, Benefits and Policy Specialist at the Department of Public Health and Kayla Buchanan-Craig, Director of the PCA program at United Cerebral Palsy delivered an informative and comprehensive overview on various benefits and resources. Copies of the slide presentations and contact information will be available on the CASE Collaborative website under the Parent Resources tab for your reference. Upon request, I can also email you a copy of the recorded Zoom session. I want to thank Gail and Kayla for their time and expertise in sharing information about SSI, MassHealth/CommonHealth, Premium Assistance, PCA program, and other important resources that provide much needed support and relief to families of children with special needs. In addition to special education services, families can tap into these resources to create wrap-around supports that subsidize financial burdens, give access to in-home services and therapies, facilitate your child's transition into adult services, and create opportunities to network and learn from other families who have successfully pieced together benefits to create comprehensive support for their loved ones.

Our next workshop is scheduled for March 11<sup>th</sup>. We have invited Meredith H. Greene, a former CASE parent and a Special Needs Attorney and chair of the Special Needs Practice Group of Fletcher Tilton PC. Meredith will provide an overview of the legal consequences of reaching the age of emancipation at 18, guardianship, the powers and duties of a guardian, the procedure of initiating a guardianship, and substituted judgement. Discussion will also include a description of the range of decision-making options. We hope you will join us! More information will be sent out shortly.

Lastly, I want to remind you that the deadline to submit your recipes and/or child's illustrations for the CASE Community Cookbook is February 26<sup>th</sup>. This can be a fun activity for you and your child and an opportunity to share your favorite recipe! The categories in the book are: Breakfast, Appetizers, Soups, Entrees, and Sweets & Snacks. Delicious gluten-free recipes are also coveted so PLEASE SHARE! I have included more information about this in the section below.

Wishing all of you a peaceful and safe February vacation!

Sue

*Happy Valentine's Day*





## COOKING WITH CASE!

We are trying a new project this year as a way to bring our community together. We wanted to create a cookbook - a collection of recipes that are a favorite in our kitchen.

The categories in the book are: Breakfast, Appetizers, Soups, Entrees, and Sweets & Snacks.

There are two ways in which you can contribute -

1) You can share a recipe that is a favorite in your house.

**Recipe:**

**From the Kitchen of:**

**Ingredients:**

**Directions:**

**Why is this your favorite recipe?**

AND/OR

2) You can have your child illustrate a favorite recipe or a cookbook category from above. These can be sent back as a picture or a scan whichever is easier for you.

Please send these back to Sue Campbell by February 26th - [scampbell@casecollaborative.org](mailto:scampbell@casecollaborative.org)

Thank you for your participation and we look forward to sharing the finished product with you.

HAVE FUN! 



## Community Workshops and Conferences



### You're invited

Interested in learning more about the COVID-19 vaccines?  
You're invited to our free webinar, "COVID-19 vaccines: Answers for families"

Friday, February 19, 2021, at 3:00 p.m.

You'll learn:

- Which vaccines have been approved so far and how they work
- What families should know about the vaccine roll out
- What the vaccines mean for the "new normal"
- And much more!

With special guests:

**Thomas Sandora, MD, MPH**, Boston Children's Division of Infectious Diseases »  
**Ana Vaughan, MD, MPH**, Boston Children's Infection Prevention and Control »  
**Eleanor Menzin, MD**, Longwood Pediatrics »

If you'd like to submit questions in advance, please email  
[answers@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:answers@childrens.harvard.edu).

We hope to see you there!

**Register now »** [https://bostonchildrens.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_3T5VMh\\_8TDuluuv3vPX47w](https://bostonchildrens.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3T5VMh_8TDuluuv3vPX47w)

Virtual ASC ACADEMY

# Autism Parent Training



IEP / SPECIAL EDUCATION / ADVOCACY

## How to Prepare for an IEP Meeting

**FEBRUARY 24 at 6:30PM**

- *Understanding your child's unique needs.*
- *Documenting and organizing your concerns.*
- *Developing a Parent Statement for the IEP.*
- *Communicating more effectively.*

Please RSVP [ASC@ne-arc.org](mailto:ASC@ne-arc.org) for Zoom meeting link

NortheastArc  
Autism Support Center

The Arc.



Friends of Lurie presents



## LURIE CENTER FOR AUTISM



MASSACHUSETTS  
GENERAL HOSPITAL



MassGeneral Hospital  
for Children

Join us Virtually

**February 24th, 6:30-7:30 p.m.**

for a discussion with  
Renee Green, PhD and  
Michelle Palumbo, MD

### **Managing Mood and Depression: The Winter Blues**

Depression disproportionately affects individuals with autism spectrum disorder. The Lurie Center for Autism invites you to join Renée Green, Ph.D. and Michelle Palumbo, M.D. for a presentation and dialogue around recognizing depressive symptoms in your child and current strategies and interventions to help.



*Renee Green, PhD  
Lurie Center for Autism*



*Michelle Palumbo, MD  
Lurie Center for Autism*

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#### **Registration is Required for this Virtual Event**

Email: [LurieCenter@partners.org](mailto:LurieCenter@partners.org) or call: 781-860-1700

Event link will be emailed to participants one day before event





### **Planning for Two Generations**

**When: February 24, 2021 | wed 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm**

**Format: Webinar**

Special Needs Financial Planning is financial preparation for two generations. Many children with a disability must be supported their entire lives, even long after their parents have died. Our approach reaches beyond the limited boundaries of Wills and Trusts to provide you with a road map to address your own family's Special Needs. Planning for Two Generations centers upon our Special Needs Planning Timeline™. The timeline highlights the various planning pressure points where parents/guardians should be aware of changes relating to their child's benefits, legal and financial issues. The primary focus is to help parents avoid common mistakes and pitfalls in their own planning. We will also talk about the need for having people in your child's life who will assist in securing the well-being of your loved one when you are no longer able to do so. Additionally, the ABLE account and its potential role in planning for your child will be discussed. John and Alexandria Nadworny are Certified Financial Planners™ from the Special Needs Financial Team, a specialty practice of the Affinia Financial Group. Their workshops reflect not only their vast financial planning expertise but their every day understanding and involvement of having a family member with Down Syndrome. For more information on Affinia or John and Alex:

<https://specialneedsplanning.com/john-nadworny/> , <https://specialneedsplanning.com/alex-nadworny-2/>

To register for this workshop, R.S.V.P. by Monday, February 22nd to

Jenny Mell: [jmell@minutemanarc.org](mailto:jmell@minutemanarc.org). Please include your town, phone number and e-mail when registering.

(We will send you the Zoom link following registration)



### **Sharing Space for Adult Siblings**

**When: February 24, 2021 | Wed 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm**

**Format: Webinar with the Massachusetts Sibling Support Network**

Register for the Massachusetts's Sibling Support Network's next virtual Sharing Space gathering to share joys and concerns related to having a brother/sister with disabilities.

\* This virtual space will be run by MSSN Executive Director and Licensed Social Worker, Emily Rubin.

\* Pre-registration is required with link below and space is limited.

Find registration info at this link,

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ehh5icyy16f42c76&oseq=&c=af28d1ec-258f-11ea-b285-d4ae528ed502&ch=af5c835c-258f-11ea-b285-d4ae528ed502> or contact 617-807-0558,

[admin@masiblingsupport.org](mailto:admin@masiblingsupport.org) \*information found at [www.spedchildma.com](http://www.spedchildma.com)



### **Creating your Family Portfolio**

Join MassFamilies (formerly Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change) and Multicultural Community Services for a free interactive multi-session training designed to help families develop a vision for a good life. This training will help families organize their ideas, vision, and goals for their current life situation and their future life, concentrating on building a life of inclusion and productivity. Families will be introduced to a user-friendly framework and visual tools to help present and future problem solving, navigating systems, and advocating for support.

Find out more and apply here [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSchsWn904cMUIAjZ\\_wKaWK-Md\\_AWtzmZFOZPgnB750Xpwm3Q/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSchsWn904cMUIAjZ_wKaWK-Md_AWtzmZFOZPgnB750Xpwm3Q/viewform)



### **Strengthening Your Student's Executive Function Skills and Independence with Sarah Ward**

**When: February 25, 2021 | Thu 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm**

**Format: On-line Event**

Hybrid? All remote? In the classroom? Regardless of the environment the demand on children's executive function skills is greater than ever. More and more independence is required of students to navigate school schedules, assignments and due dates as well as manage the workload. Sarah will share many practical executive function based interventions families could implement to improve organization, task and time management. Simultaneous ASL and Portuguese Language Interpretation will be provided at this event. Learn more and register here

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/strengthening-your-students-executive-function-skills-and-independence-tickets-135546556399>



### **Applications Now Available – Advanced Family Leadership Series**

**When: March – June 2021**

**Format: Virtual via Zoom**

MassFamilies invites you to apply to participate in the Advanced Family Leadership Series, a four month-long intensive study of leadership, innovative and emerging best practices, strategies for peer support and community organizing.

Don't wait! Applications due February 20! Learn more and apply at

[www.massfamilies.org/training/advanced-family-leadership-series/](http://www.massfamilies.org/training/advanced-family-leadership-series/)



### **Virtual NAMI Family-to-Family classes are now enrolling!**

NAMI Family-to-Family is a free program for family members of people diagnosed with mental health conditions. The program is designed to help participants understand and support their loved one, while maintaining their own well-being!

**\*NAMI Boston/Cambridge Family-to-Family class (all Massachusetts participants welcome)**

When: Starting March 9, 2021 | Tue 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

contact for registration: Dominique at [dzarrellaa@gmail.com](mailto:dzarrellaa@gmail.com) or 508-662-9214, Francis at [francis\\_burnett@yahoo.com](mailto:francis_burnett@yahoo.com) or 781-724-65

**\*NAMI Metrowest Family-to-Family class (all Massachusetts participants welcome)**

When: Starting April 15, 2021 | Thu 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

contact for more information: Mary at 508-581-0874 or [novmam55@yahoo.com](mailto:novmam55@yahoo.com)

**\*NAMI Newton-Wellesley Family-to-Family class (all Massachusetts participants welcome)**

When: Starting March 4, 2021 | Thu 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

contact for registration: Suzi at [Suzinewman@verizon.net](mailto:Suzinewman@verizon.net) or 781-724-2709 , or Ruth at [RutheK12@gmail.com](mailto:RutheK12@gmail.com) or 617-852-3612





## Transition and Beyond (ages 14-22)

### Youth Forum for Students Ages 14 - 26

Students and young adults (ages 14-26) have a unique opportunity to attend a statewide conference with sessions just for them! On Saturday, March 6th, FCSN will host our 6th Youth Forum at the Visions of Community Conference with two different tracks. The Youth Self Advocacy track will focus on self-determination, health, creativity, and, most importantly, having fun and making new friends. The Youth College Navigator track is designed for students ages 14 to 22 who are on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 plans and plan to graduate with a high school diploma with the vision of going to college. Both tracks will participate in the Disability History Game and three Mini Youth Sessions in the afternoon.



PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP:

FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

easterseals Massachusetts

# VISIONS OF COMMUNITY

## CONFERENCE

### MARCH 6, 2021

#### YOUTH FORUM FOR YOUTH 14-26

#### PRE-CONFERENCE

YOUTH FORUM MEET AND GREET	WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021 7PM-8PM	We invite youth to join us for a meet and greet evening session. Please bring your questions and meet some new friends!
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#### YOUTH SESSIONS MARCH 6, 2021

YOUTH SELF-ADVOCACY 10:30 AM- 12PM	YOUTH COLLEGE NAVIGATOR 10:30 AM- 12PM	DISABILITY HISTORY GAME 1:00 PM
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MINI YOUTH SESSIONS 20 MINUTE FUN SESSIONS!  
2:00 PM

- Martial Arts with Easterseals Massachusetts
- Service/Support Animals with NEADS World Class Service Dogs
- Mindfulness with FCSN/Andrea Parker and Pauline Merchin

**REGISTER: [FCSN.ORG/VOC](https://fcsn.org/voc)**





## **New Self Advocacy Group**

**Join us for our first official meet up!**

***Thursday, February 11th, 6 - 7pm***

Self Advocacy Group for Ages 18ish – 35ish

**Join us to:**

*Speak up!*

- \* *Meet new people!*
- \* *Hear motivational speakers!*
- \* *Share what's working!*
- \* *Share what's not working!*

*Be heard!*

**Meets the second Thursday of the month**

**Register at the link below:**

[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcqcuntqj4uHNBORoTXd2EgDJzr\\_JF4iU1\\_](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcqcuntqj4uHNBORoTXd2EgDJzr_JF4iU1_)

*For more info: Barbara Pandolfi, 978-373-0552 x206 or [Barbara.Pandolfi@thearcofghn.org](mailto:Barbara.Pandolfi@thearcofghn.org)*



## Community Support



### **Congress Must Prioritize Funding for Students with Disabilities in the Next COVID Relief Bill**

Congress is drafting and will soon vote on a new COVID-19 stimulus bill, done through Budget Reconciliation, that will provide necessary funding for schools and universities to reopen and support students and families. Currently, the House's proposal does not include specific funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and does not ensure support for our most marginalized students. There's still time for us to rally support for targeted funding for students with disabilities! We urge YOU, our parents, students, and advocates, to reach out to your Senators and House Representatives and tell them: Include in your emergency relief package expanded education funding for IDEA and other marginalized students. We cannot leave our students behind during this pandemic. Please visit the action center to submit a precomposed letter of support regarding this legislation. It only takes a minute! Visit <https://www.votervoice.net/NCLD/campaigns/80361/respond>



### **2021 Supporting Families Annual advocacy Day - Keeping Families Strong and Resilient!**

**When: February 17, 2021 | Wed 10:00 am to 11:00 am**

**Virtual via Zoom**

Over 20,000 families are caring for loved ones with intellectual & developmental disabilities, including autism. Most of these families have been caring for their loved ones at home since March 2020 & remain vigilant on providing optimal care and comfort. However, Families are EXHAUSTED and need continued SUPPORT!

\*Event guest speaker: Representative Denise Garlick, Vice-Chair of House Ways and Means

\*Featured family keynote speakers: Sue Crosby & Sagrario Desire Guerrero, Parent Advocates

Registration Link: <https://arcmass.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwpd-qsqDMjGdByP4l7d22AaDB8yzKkr-x>

Upon registering, you will receive an email containing a link to join. Since it is school vacation, have the whole family attend! Share your photos, videos, successes, and challenges of this past year, due to COVID! This is a virtual event and will be broadcast to the public; portions will be recorded and photographed.



### **Become a Special Education Surrogate in MA – Orientation Training Part 1**

**When: February 16, 2021**

**Format: Webinar with the Federation for Children with Special Needs of Massachusetts**

If you are interested in supporting students in your community, consider volunteering to become a Special Education Surrogate Parent (SESP) for a student in state care that requires special education supports and whose parents are unknown or unavailable.

\* These children depend on SESP's to protect their legal right to a free and appropriate education.

\* SESP's serve as appointed decision makers that have the legal authority of a parent or legal guardian to attend and participate in special education team meetings, approve or reject Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and if necessary, file complaints or appeals. On average, the time commitment is only 30-40 hours a year.

\* The Recruitment, Training and Support Center (RTSC) hosts these free Orientation Trainings throughout Massachusetts, where you will learn about the role of an SESP, how traumatic experiences can impact learning and how to incorporate the appropriate supports into the IEP. Registration is required to <https://fcsn.org/rtsc/orientations/> or contact Ivone Rego, [irego@fcsn.org](mailto:irego@fcsn.org), 617-399-8342 – be sure to your contact number. \*information shared by [www.spedchildma.com](http://www.spedchildma.com)

## Pediatric Palliative Care Network (PPCN) Evaluation

# Call for Focus Group Members

**WHAT:** The PPCN provides home based palliative care to children with life limiting conditions and their families. UMass Medical School is looking for **parents and caregivers of children with life limiting illness or conditions to volunteer and participate** in a group discussion about whether and how PPCN can improve the quality of life of children and families. Each discussion, led by meeting facilitators, will be about 1.5 hours or in two 45-min breakout sessions if needed. Interpretation service offered as needed.

**WHEN:** **Between February and April 2021.** Flexible scheduling to offer.

**WHERE:** Zoom, unless **phone** participation is preferred. Assistance with Zoom use will be provided, if needed.

**HOW:** Seats are limited. To sign up, please fill out the [form here](#) or email/call using the contact information below.

Participants will get a \$50 gift card.

Please email [PPCN-Eval@umassmed.edu](mailto:PPCN-Eval@umassmed.edu) or call 508-856-3268 for any question or assistance with sign-up!



**Commonwealth  
Medicine**



Department of Public Health (DPH) | University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS)



## Fun Activities and Recreation



### **40 Funny Things To Ask Alexa (Kids Edition) - 2/4/21 - By Meghan Rose**

Jokes are the best. Knock knock jokes, silly jokes, pretty much any joke will make a kid roar. Even the bad ones. Especially the bad ones! But parents run out of jokes to tell kids (even dad jokes) well before kids get sick of hearing them. You know who never runs out of jokes, wordplay, silly answers, and entertaining games? Alexa. The next time you need a minute to yourself, teach the kids a few things from this list of funny things to ask Alexa, the Amazon virtual assistant that plays on smart speakers. Go ahead and crack open a book you've been dying to read or sneak away to watch an episode of Bridgerton. Because Alexa time can equal me time. Check out the list of questions here!  
<https://mommypoppins.com/kids/funny-things-to-ask-alexa>



### **Accessible Martial Arts Virtual Classes**

**When: February 10, 2021 – May 26, 2021 | Wed 5:00 pm**

**Format: Virtual via Zoom**

The Accessible Martial Arts Program is for people with and without disabilities who want to learn and practice self-defense, stretching, exercise, and relaxation techniques. Open for all ages. Every Wednesday at 5:00pm we will hold a full LIVE class for you to join. Can't make it? View our playlist of virtual classes that include all the elements of in-person classes that you can follow along with. Registration is required to participate in the classes to [youth@eastersealsma.org](mailto:youth@eastersealsma.org) or call us (508) 751-6417 or visit [www.easterseals.com/ma/our-programs/recreation/accessible-martial-arts.html](http://www.easterseals.com/ma/our-programs/recreation/accessible-martial-arts.html)



### **Art for Special Needs Children – Kandinsky-inspired Compositions**

**When: February 18, 2021 | (Additional Dates Available)**

**Format: On-line**

This class is a one-hour session, designed for children ages 10-15 with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Fees apply. The project is based on Wassily Kandinsky's Squares with Concentric Circles. Class begins with introductions and an ice breaker. (I will mail the ice breaker before class so that students have time to process responses at their own pace.) Then, we briefly discuss Wassily Kandinsky's Squares with Concentric Circles. After that, we create our own Kandinsky-inspired pieces! Students will be given step-by-step instructions but will make the composition uniquely their own by their decisions about color, circle sizes, and the arrangement of colors and shapes on the paper. Students will learn what abstract art is, how the placement of color and shape affects composition, and that there is not one right way of creating an attractive piece but many equally interesting approaches. In the process of creating their compositions, students will be:

- increasing hand strength and dexterity
- improving hand-eye and bilateral coordination
- developing planning and organizing abilities
- working on problem-solving and decision-making
- honing observation skills
- sharpening visual-spatial skills
- enhancing self-expression through verbal and non-verbal communication
- connecting with other creative individuals

To enroll visit <https://outschool.com/classes/art-for-special-needs-children-kandinsky-inspired-compositions-1StXSPik/>



## Family Support & Special Interest



### Epilepsy Community Groups

Building a Community of Hope - Group connections have been shown to be a powerful force in helping people with epilepsy and caregivers. Our SHARE (Support, Hope, Advocacy, Resources, Educate) groups offer an excellent opportunity to connect, share, and learn. Epilepsy Foundation New England has an ever-evolving series of groups for those of all ages and capabilities. Due to recent circumstances all of our groups have gone virtual. By doing so, we have been able to increase the amount of unique groups offered to over 35 a month. Whether you are looking to learn, find a support group, or be social and hang out with others, there is something for you. Learn more and view groups currently being offered here

<https://epilepsynewengland.org/programs/resource-and-support-center/support-center-basic>



### Weighted Vest FAQs

Weighted vests are often recommended for children with autism. Usually they are recommended by a therapist to help a child focus in the classroom or calm down and sometimes to help with stereotypical behaviors, or stimming. Below are the answers to the most common questions our customers ask us about weighted vests. Click on the follow link to learn more

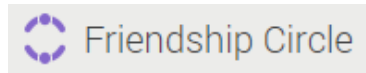
[https://nationalautismresources.com/weighted-vest-faqs/?goal=0\\_3107990f2b-bcc30cb3b6-107459153&mc\\_cid=bcc30cb3b6&mc\\_eid=10e8772587&blm\\_aid=34829](https://nationalautismresources.com/weighted-vest-faqs/?goal=0_3107990f2b-bcc30cb3b6-107459153&mc_cid=bcc30cb3b6&mc_eid=10e8772587&blm_aid=34829)



### Best Virtual Party Performers and Kids Birthday Parties to Celebrate Online

Make your child's birthday special even while staying at home with virtual parties offered by top performers and kids party providers. Social distancing doesn't need to be socially isolating. Take advantage of technology to help your birthday boy or girl celebrate with friends and family. Many favorite party providers are transitioning their acts to digital platforms like Zoom or Google Hangouts so kids and their friends can still have all the great group activities of a traditional birthday party. As an added bonus, these virtual parties are often much more affordable than their in-person alternatives. Read on for our suggestions on some of the best virtual party providers to try, and get more parent-tested resources for this period of social distancing in our Stay-at-Home Guide here

<https://mommypoppins.com/family/coronavirus-pandemic-update-indoor-activities-resources-kids> .



### 5 Resources for Supporting Social Skills of Kids and Teens with Special Needs

Individuals with autism and various other special needs often need extra help and resources dedicated to helping them learn social skills. If making friends seems like an intimidating challenge, don't worry. There are tools available to help teach your child or teen strategies for practicing their social skills. Read more here to find books, games and activities that will help your child improve their social skills and behavior <https://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2021/01/22/5-resources-for-supporting-social-skills-of-kids-and-teens-with-special-needs/>



**Nike Unveils Hands-Free Sneakers For Those With Special Needs by Shaun Heasley | February 3, 2021**

With an eye toward making shoes even more accessible to people with disabilities, Nike is introducing a sneaker that can be taken on and off completely hands-free. The shoe known as the Nike GO FlyEase is part of Nike's FlyEase collection of adaptive styles. Read on here <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2021/02/03/nike-unveils-hands-free-sneakers-for-those-with-special-needs/29179/>



**Community Film Viewing: Oliver Sacks' Tells the Compelling Story of the Life and Work of a Brilliant Neurologist.**

**When: February 24, 2021 | Wed 4:30 pm to 6: 30 pm**

**Format: Virtually via Zoom**

Each month, 3LPlace hosts a community film viewing followed by a brief discussion. Currently, these are happening online. This month's film is "Oliver Sacks: His Own Life," a documentary by acclaimed filmmaker Ken Burns. Burns sat down with Sacks for a series of interviews after the neurologist had received a fatal diagnosis of cancer. Said The New York Times: "Critic's Pick! Illuminates details of what can only be called an extraordinary existence. Beautifully presents a portrait of his compassion and bravery." There is no charge to participate. For more information or an invitation, you can email Katie Wilson at [kwilson@3LPlace.org](mailto:kwilson@3LPlace.org).



***Please Note: These resources are provided for informational purposes only.  
Please do your own due diligence and research.***