

# Support and Resources for Special Needs Families

August 2018

## ISLAND COUNTY PARENT TO PARENT NEWSLETTER



## PARENT TO PARENT END OF SUMMER BBQ

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 19TH**  
**RHODODENRON COUNTY PARK**  
**502 W PATMORE RD, COUPEVILLE**  
**Noon-2:00PM**



**GRILL MASTERS MIKE AND ROB WILL SUPPLY AND COOK THE  
HOTDOGS AND HAMBURBERS. PARENT TO PARENT WILL PROVIDE THE  
CONDIMENTS AND WATER. THE SIDES AND GOODIES WILL BE  
POTLUCK STYLE. WE HOPE TO SEE EVERYONE THERE.**

There is a small playground, baseball fields, trails and far off the street. Make sure you enter on Patmore, just North of OLF from the highway. Do not enter the camping entrance off of Highway 20. We have the sheltered picnic area reserved and we will be playing baseball. If it rains, it may be postponed. Keep up to date on our Facebook Page. [www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent](http://www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent) For more info, contact Tiffany at Parent to Parent (360)632-7539 [t.wheeler-thompson@co.island.wa.us](mailto:t.wheeler-thompson@co.island.wa.us)

## Mark Your Calendars.... More Events



**End of Summer BBQ Sunday, August 19th, Rhododendron Park Noon-2pm.**

Grill Masters Mike and Rob will be grilling burgers and hot dogs, the rest will be potluck style. Baseball fun, playground, trails and good people. One of our most attended events.

**Outdoor Swimming at Fort Casey Pool, Monday, August 20th Noon-2pm.**

Bring your swimsuit, towel, sunscreen and a picnic. Enjoy summer as it comes to an end. \$5 per swimmer. Lifeguards on duty



**Transition Resource Fair, Tuesday, October 9th at Coupeville High School 5:00-7:00pm.**



Everyone welcome. Geared towards Middle Schoolers on up through Adulthood. More details in next newsletter. Over 20 resource booths and various presenters such as a mini presentation from Seattle Disability Attorney Christy Thompson Ibrahim. (She will be doing a longer, in-depth presentation on Saturday, October 20th regarding Guardianship and Special Needs Trusts October 20th with Parent to Parent).

**Whidbey Family Connections, Thursday, October 18th at Aptitude Habilitation Services, 6-8pm.** Tips and resources for back to school and holiday stress. Childcare available with RSVP [smartin@aptitudehabilitationservices.com](mailto:smartin@aptitudehabilitationservices.com)



**Guardianship, Alternatives to Guardianship and Special Needs Trusts: Saturday, October 20th**

**11:00am-1:00pm.** Presented by Seattle Disability Attorney Christine Thompson Ibrahim on County Commissioner's Hearing Room, Coupeville. Great information for now or future planning. Get one on one time with a disability attorney that can answer your questions. So many different options available so loved ones don't lose benefits.



**Halloween Dance Party, our favorite event of the year. Saturday, October 27th at Coupeville Rec Hall. Noon-2pm.** Wear your favorite costume, dance the day away, arts & crafts, Potluck. Nothing scary please and you are not required to wear a costume. The kids of all ages have a great time.



**Holiday Party: Saturday, December 22nd Noon-2pm.** Rumor has it that Santa will be making an appearance. Nice celebration of the holidays. Arts, crafts, dessert potluck, and as always, some dancing. Coupeville Rec Hall. More details to follow.

\*Just a friendly reminder that National Night Out is Tuesday, August 7th at Fort Nugent Park. 3:30-7:30pm Emergency Vehicles, Community Resources, Interactive Displays, Food Booths, Music

## Back-to-School Tips for Students with Special Needs

Back-to-school means back to schedules, back to learning, and sometimes back to stress. With new supplies and clothes, plus new classrooms and teachers, sending your child back to school can often feel like walking into a war zone.

But it doesn't have to be so. With a bit of planning, and keeping your child's sensory needs as well as special learning needs in mind, you can provide your child with a smooth transition back to one of the most positive experiences possible.

### Stay Organized

The most important thing is to get organized! If you are a less-than-organized parent, start early getting schedules, clothes, and school supplies in order, not only for your child but for yourself as well. You may need to reorganize the school supply list to minimize shopping excursions.

Do you want your child with you selecting from a plethora of supplies or might it be better to head out on your own? Does your child need to take in 50 pencils the first day, or can it be one or two to get started? More is not always better.

**If your child is has an IEP, be sure you've scheduled a meeting with teachers so everyone is clear as to expectations and goals, including your child.** \*One suggestion I have, that I have done every year for my child, email the teacher as soon as I know who they will be for the next school year. General Teacher, Special Ed, new therapists, etc.. I email them directly and introduce myself before school starts. Give them my contact info, what my daughter has done/accomplished/challenges over the summer. Tips and tools that can help them be successful with my daughter.

### Be Positive

Children pick up on your mood, expectations, frustrations, and disappointments. Of course, they also pick up on your excitement, pleasure, anticipation, and gratitude. Be sure you are starting the year off in a positive manner.

If you do have concerns, take them to the school, not to your neighbor or friend, and definitely not to your child. Clear, articulate, and kind communication skills are learned at home and will help your child self-advocate from an early age.

### Dress for School Success

Is your child a sensory seeker, or in need of special clothing? New is not always a great way to start off. Be sure clothing is soft, comfortable, and provides pressure if needed to calm and comfort. Tagless shirts, compression vests, and other sensory-savvy clothing items can help kids adjust and perform at their best. By applying compression to the joints, a compression shirt or garment can provide an all-day hug to calm, engage, and help with focus.

### Weight Them Down and Let Them Move

If your child has a hard time sitting still, try a wiggle seat, weighted vest, or lap pad. Your student might also like a wiggle cushion or ball chair for school or during homework at home. Sensory filters such as weight and movement can really help children transition well to school and not lose touch with their physical needs.

### Behavior and Rules

Talk to your child about school expectations—and yours as well. Be sure your kids know the rules. Have them repeat those rules back to you, so you are clear that they are aware and understand. Give them space to voice any concerns as well.

If your child needs assistance with emotional intelligence, regulation, or social communication, be sure to discuss this with the teacher and to give your child ample opportunity to express himself or herself.

### Eat Well

Providing a healthy breakfast, lunch, and snack can make a huge impact on how kids perform, as well as on how they feel as they manage their day. Be sure to stock up on easy-to-access fruits and vegetables. In addition to edibles, some students can benefit from a chewy or fidget to have throughout the day to help ease stress.

Keep in mind that your child's well-being is the most important back-to-school preparation. Addressing sensory, physical, and psychological needs as kids head back to school can help ensure that everyone has a great back-to-school experience. **Be sure to address your own as well!**

WRITTEN ON AUGUST 21, 2017 BY: Ilana Danneman





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CHECK OUT OUR RESOURCE GUIDE ON OUR  
 WEBSITE [HTTPS://  
 WWW.ISLANDCOUNTYWA.GOV/HUMANSERVICES/  
 PAGES/PARENT-TO-PARENT.ASPX](https://www.islandcountywa.gov/humanservices/pages/parent-to-parent.aspx)



CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK FOR UP-  
 TO-DATE INFORMATION, RESOURCES, EVENTS,  
 ACTIVITIES ISLAND COUNTY PARENT 2 PARENT

## Support Groups will be starting up again in September

Call to verify dates and times.

Coffee & Conversations: North: **1st Wednesday** of the Month at Whidbey Coffee next to Wendy's 11am-Noon, South: **2nd Thursday** of the Month at SW Commons CoffeeHouse 11-Noon Tiffany(360)632-7532

PAMI - Padres Apoyando Motivando Informando—Spanish Support Group **1st Tuesday** of the month at Aptitude Services in Oak Harbor Laiza (787) 529-6788. Childcare available with RSVP

Whidbey Functioning Autism Social Group: Geared towards teens and adults on the spectrum and their families. Business meetings and social events. Contact Todd and Evelyn for dates, details. [fineart@whidey.net](mailto:fineart@whidey.net) (360)221-7785

## Great Resources and Websites to Check Out

**Informing Families** [informingfamilies.org](http://informingfamilies.org) Supporting real lives across the real life course. Ages birth to forever, in collaboration with DDA and DDC to produce information and resources to families in “parent speak”

**Arc of Washington State** [arcofwa.org](http://arcofwa.org) The *Arc of Washington State* works for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The ARC of WA holds Parent to Parent. Resources and advocacy.

**Children with Special Healthcare Needs** [cshcn.org](http://cshcn.org) Selected tools and resources for parents and caregivers who support children with special health care needs. Resources include the Resource Guide for children with Medical, Developmental, Mental or Behavioral health. Every March they produce a summer camp directory.

**WA Autism Alliance and Advocacy** [washingtonautismadvocacy.org](http://washingtonautismadvocacy.org) A personal advocate and legislative champion for children and adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) & other developmental disabilities.

**Washington PAVE** [wapave.org](http://wapave.org) PAVE is a parent directed organization that works with families, individuals with disabilities, professionals and community members in all walks of life and with all types of disabilities. As a Parent to Parent Coordinator, I use Jen Cole our regional WA PAVE coordinator, for special education information.

**Wright's Law** [wrightslaw.com](http://wrightslaw.com) Parents, educators, advocates, and attorneys come to Wrightslaw for accurate, reliable information about special education law, education law, and advocacy for children with disabilities.

**Understood** [understood.org](http://understood.org) Web Resource Helps Parents of Kids with Learning and Attention Issues

## **Accessible Communities Committee Opportunities**

Would you like to be a part of a committee that identifies barriers and inaccessibility in our community? As a sub-committee for the Governor's Office, we as a group identify issues, propose solutions/projects and submit for a funding request through the Governor's committee. We have a committee on Whidbey and Camano. We are looking for Island County residents that are self-advocates, family members, providers, and community members that identify or work with individuals with disabilities. Disabilities include, but not limited to, developmental, behavioral health, physical limitations, at risk (such as seniors and veterans). Camano Island: 3rd Wednesday of the Month, Camano Center 11-Noon. Whidbey Island: 3rd Tuesday of the Month, Island County Human Services 105 NW 1st Street, Coupeville 9-10am. For more information, contact Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson [t.wheeler-thompson@co.island.wa.us](mailto:t.wheeler-thompson@co.island.wa.us) (360)632-7539.