

COMMUNITY GROUPS/WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS

Every Tuesday—Full Circle Recovery Center Learn to Cope. Learn to Cope (LTC) is a support group for parents, family members, spouses, and caregivers with a loved one who is struggling with addiction to opiates, alcohol, or other drugs. Meetings are held Tuesdays from 7 PM to 8:30 PM at Full Circle Recovery Center located at 3261 Georgia Road, Franklin, NC. LTC offers compassionate, experienced facilitators who have been there, support, resources, educational material, and guest speakers who are in long term recovery or professionals in the field. For more information, please contact Stephanie Almeida at 828-475-1920.

Every Thursday—NAMI Connections. Starting at 7 PM at Memorial Methodist Church, located at 4668 Old Murphy Rd, Franklin. This meeting is hosted by NAMI Appalachian South and is for individuals with mental illness and family members with a loved one with mental illness. The group focuses on support, education, resources, and advocacy. For more information contact Donita at dcwithnami@yahoo.com or 828-526-9510.

Every 2nd Thursday—NAMI Family Support Group. Starting at 7 pm NAMI Family Support Group is for the family members/caregivers and friends of those living with a mental illness. Family Support Group meets monthly on the SECOND Tuesday of each month at the Outreach Center at 7p.m. For more information: Matt (828) 349-9252 email: matt@hughtes.net or Ann (828) 369-7385 email: anl@dnet.net.

Every Sunday—Addiction Recovery Program Group Meeting—starting at 6:30 to 8 PM at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints located at the corner of Pine Ridge Drive and 28 N/Bryson City Rd. For more information contact Mary Ann Widenhouse at 828-524-1355.

First Thursday of each month—Caregiver Group Meeting. Starting at 6 PM at Region A Partnership for Children's Murphy far west office located at 141 Peachtree St, Suite 5, Professional Building, Murphy. This group focuses on families raising a child with a special need. Caregivers share their experiences to help strengthen other caregivers. For more information contact Jody at jody@regionakids.org or 828-506-6111.

First Thursday of each month—NAMI Haywood Support Group—Group meets from 6:30 PM – 8 PM at Haywood Regional Medical Center, 2nd Floor Classroom. This is a peer support group for individuals dealing with mental illness (such as depression, anxiety, bipolar, PTSD, schizophrenia, etc) and for family members and friends who have a loved one with these illnesses. Join us in a safe, confidential environment to share concerns, and gain insight, understanding and hope. For further information. Contact Mary Ann @ 828-779-1923.

First Sunday of each month—Macon County Autism Chapter meeting—Provides a place for families of children and adults with autism to meet, share, and learn about autism. Held at Bethel United Methodist Church located at 81 Bethel Church Rd, Franklin. For planning purposes, an RSVP is requested but not required to Melissa Zenz at mzenz@autismsociety-nc.org or 800-442-2762 ext 3030.

Second Thursday of each month—Caregiver Group Meeting. Starting at 6:30 PM at 67 Bryson Ave Bryson City. This group focuses on families raising a child with a special need. Caregivers share their experiences to help strengthen other caregivers. For more information contact Jody at jody@regionakids.org or 828-506-6111.

Second Wednesday of each month—Caregiver Group Meeting. Starting at 6 PM at the Children's Developmental Services Agency Sylva office. This group focuses on families raising a child with a special need. Caregivers share their experiences to help strengthen other caregivers. For more information contact Jody at jody@regionakids.org or 828-506-6111.

Second Saturday of each month—Caregiver Group Meeting. Starting at 10 AM at Longs Chapel located at 133 Old Clyde Rd Waynessville. This group focuses on families raising a child with a special need. Caregivers share their experiences to help strengthen other caregivers. For more information contact Jody at jody@regionakids.org or 828-506-6111.

Fourth Monday of each month—Adolescent Support Group for Chronic Medical Conditions 4 PM – 5 PM. Are you a teenager with a medical condition? Do you wish that you could talk to others in similar conditions? This group will be a welcoming, non-judgmental, safe place for you to share your experiences and struggles, laugh with each other, and build a sense of community. Group will meet in the Reuter's Outpatient Building of Mission Children's Hospital, in the Chapel. Participants must have a current Mission Outpatient provider. For more information contact Sarah Kirkpatrick at 828-213-1869 or Sarah.kirkpatrick@msj.org.

Smart Start (SS) / Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC) Team Meetings—Cherokee County meets the 1st Wednesday of each month starting @ 1:00 PM; Clay County meets the 1st Thursday of each month starting @ 1:30 PM; Graham County meets the 2nd Thursday of each month starting @ 9:30 AM; Haywood County meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month starting @ 10:30 AM; Jackson County meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month starting @ 12 noon; Macon County meets the 4th Thursday of the month starting @ 12 noon; and, Swain County meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month starting @ 1:30 PM. For more details visit: <http://regionakids.org/sslicc>.

February 6, 2018—Resolving Special Education Disputes (webinar)—12 pm – 1 pm--Leigh Mobley, Dispute Resolution Consultant with the Exceptional Children Division of NC Department of Public Instruction, will explain the various options that parents can consider when major disagreements happen during the special education process. Register at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6026046487367597314>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. For more information contact Doreen Byrd at 704-892-1321 ext 328 or dbyrd@ecacmail.org.

February 6, 2018—How Kindergarten May Look for YOUR Child (webinar)—7 pm – 8 pm—Register at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2181918540980060931>. For more information contact Margaret Campbell at mcampbell@ecacmail.org or by calling 1-800-962-6817, ext. 317.

February 8, 2018--Parents Rights in Special Education (webinar)--7:00 - 8:30 pm--Students with disabilities are not the only ones who have legal rights when it comes to special education. Parents also have rights related to consent requirements, notifications, participation in decision making, and resolving disputes. Join us to learn more about what those rights are and why they are important.
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6405169091592740610> Registration links for webinars can also be found on ECAC's Training and Event's calendar. <https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/training-and-events-calendar/> You can also register by sending an email to Margaret Campbell at mcampbell@ecacmail.org or by calling 1-800-962-6817, ext. 317.

February 9, 2018--Inclusion: Everyone Belongs (webinar)--12:00 - 1:00 pm--This webinar will cover what Inclusion is and why it matters. Learn about who should be included, the Least Restrictive Environment, Universal Design, Differentiated Instruction and how inclusion relates to the IEP. <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/976023665790806787> Registration links for webinars can also be found on ECAC's Training and Event's calendar. <https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/training-and-events-calendar/> You can also register by sending an email to Margaret Campbell at mcampbell@ecacmail.org or by calling 1-800-962-6817, ext. 317.

February 13, 2018-- After the Diagnosis: Get Answers, Get Help, Get Going! Please join ASNC Autism Resource Specialist Juliette Heim for this FREE informal workshop for parents and grandparents of children 8 years or younger recently diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. If your recently diagnosed child is older than 8, please contact Juliette to schedule a free appointment. Workshop objectives: to learn how autism may affect your child; to learn options that may help your child; and, to locate resources to support your family. From 10 am to 11:30 am at Autism Society of North Carolina located at 306 Summit St, Asheville.

For more information or to register, contact Juliette Heim at 828-236-1547 or jheim@autismsociety-nc.org.

February 9, 2018—Inclusion—Everybody Belongs! (webinar)—12 pm – 1 pm--A free webinar for Parents and Families of children with special needs, Teachers and other professionals. Please join us on February 9th and learn more about Inclusion . . . What is it and why does it matter? ; Who should be included? ; How does inclusion relate to Least Restrictive Environment? ; How do Universal Design and Differentiated Instruction fit into the picture of inclusive practices? ; and, Where and when does the IEP support Inclusion? Register at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/976023665790806787>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. For more information contact Anne Johnston at 828-255-1972 or ajohnston@ecacmail.org.

February 13, 2018—Setting the Stage Now for Success in Kindergarten (webinar)—7 pm – 8 pm—Register at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2841559546948096003>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. For more information contact Margaret Campbell at mcampbell@ecacmail.org or by calling 1-800-962-6817, ext. 317.

February 14, 2018—Q&A Session on Special Needs Planning-- A free workshop with Ryan F. Platt, MBA, ChFC®, ChSNC™ Special Care Planner allowing attendees to ask those burning questions related to special needs planning on such topics as Special Needs Trusts, ABLE Act, Wills, and Financial Planning. This workshop is open to caregivers, professionals, and everyone interested in learning more about special needs planning. RSVP is required by February 12, 2018. Include any specific topics of interest or any questions currently have. For more information, directions, or to register, please call: Jody Miller @ 828-631-3900 extension 126 or email jody@regionkids.org.

February 14, 2018—Book Babies—9:30 am—parents as teachers and Blue Ridge Books invite you to Join us for fun, interactive reading group while learning about the importance of reading with your baby (Designed for ages 2 and under). Blue Ridge Bookstore 428 Hazelwood Ave, Waynesville, NC 28786. Please RSVP 456-8995 or text Vanessa.

February 15, 2018--Transition to Adulthood (webinar)--7:00 - 8:15 pm--Be informed and prepare now to make a smooth Transition to Adulthood: earn more about effective practices and national trends that impact families and youth as they prepare to make the transition to adulthood; plan and organize for your child's transition; effectively participate in developing appropriate IEP goals for your child; prepare for and set the stage for a meaningful life for your child, including supportive and customized employment; and, learn about the resources available to you! <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2524153629619183617> Registration links for webinars can also be found on ECAC's Training and Event's calendar. <https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/training-and-events-calendar/> You can also register by sending an email to Margaret Campbell at mcampbell@ecacmail.org or by calling 1-800-962-6817, ext. 317.

February 19, 2018--Inclusion: Everyone Belongs (webinar)--7:00 - 8:00 pm--This webinar will cover what Inclusion is and why it matters. Learn about who should be included, the Least Restrictive Environment, Universal Design, Differentiated Instruction and how inclusion relates to the IEP.

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3017230718893270019> Registration links for webinars can also be found on ECAC's Training and Event's calendar. <https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/training-and-events-calendar/> You can also register by sending an email to Margaret Campbell at mcampbell@ecacmail.org or by calling 1-800-962-6817, ext. 317.

February 20, 2018—Autism 101. From 10 am to 11:30 am. This is the perfect workshop for anyone who wants to develop a basic understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This workshop explores the four core areas affected by ASD: communication, social interaction, sensory issues, and how an individual may think and learn. Basic strategies for interacting with individuals with ASD are discussed. Workshop objectives: to build a better understanding of what ASD is; to explore some of the possible reasons an individual with ASD may react differently; to develop a broader understanding of why and how information may need to be presented in a more structured way; and, to review some basic strategies that can be implemented that day. For more information, contact Juliette Heim at jheim@autismsociety-nc.org.

February 20, 2018--Becoming Your Child's Best Advocate (webinar)--12:00 - 1:00 pm--Join us and learn more about the steps to becoming your child's best and most effective advocate, including communicating with your child's school and IEP Team, and tips for handling any disagreements that may arise. <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8223607392305730817> Registration links for webinars can also be found on ECAC's Training and Event's calendar. <https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/training-and-events-calendar/> You can also register by sending an email to Margaret Campbell at mcampbell@ecacmail.org or by calling 1-800-962-6817, ext. 317.

February 22, 2018--Becoming Your Child's Best Advocate (webinar)--7:00 - 8:00 pm--Join us and learn more about the steps to becoming your child's best and most effective advocate, including communicating with your child's school and IEP Team, and tips for handling any disagreements that may arise. <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7278598038953253377> Registration links for webinars can also be found on ECAC's Training and Event's calendar. <https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/training-and-events-calendar/> You can also register by sending an email to Margaret Campbell at mcampbell@ecacmail.org or by calling 1-800-962-6817, ext. 317.

February 27, 2018-- Autism & Genetics: Emerging Tools for Advocacy and Support (English & Spanish)—9:30 am to 12 pm-- The Autism Society of NC invites parents and professionals to a presentation in English and Spanish on Genetics and Autism by Dr. Hunter L Blanton, PhD in Genetics and Molecular Biology. Dr. Blanton has completed a fellowship in Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disorders (LEND) at the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities. While there, she developed a special interest in educating families and clinicians about the benefits of understanding the complex genetic causes of autism. She is a mother and aunt of children with autism. Topics: scientific research shows the primary underlying cause of autism is common genetic differences; genetic testing is recommended for all children with an autism diagnosis and in many cases will be covered by insurance; and, the genetics of autism will be improving the effectiveness of supports and changing the way our community advocates for our family members and ourselves. The ASNC Bookstore and Spanish interpretation services will be available. Certificate of 2.5 hours of participation for professionals. Fees: \$15 parent \$30 professionals \$5 childcare per child under school age More information: Mariela Maldonado, Hispanic Affairs Liaison, 919-302-4625 or mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org

Autismo y Genética: Nuevas herramientas para el apoyo

La Sociedad de Autismo de Carolina del Norte invita a padres y profesionales a capacitarse en Inglés y Español en Genética y Autismo, que será presentado por la Dr. Hunter L Blanton, PhD en Genética y

Biología Molecular. Dr. Blanton se ha graduado del Programa de UNC-Chapel Hill en Genética y Biología Molecular. También completó una beca en Educación de Liderazgo en Desórdenes relacionados con el Neurodesarrollo (LEND) en el CIDD – Instituto de Carolina del Sur para Discapacidades del Desarrollo. Mientras estuvo allí, desarrolló un interés especial en las familias de educación en el ámbito clínico sobre los beneficios de comprender las causas genéticas complejas del autismo. Además la Dr. Blanton es madre de un niño con autismo.

Objetivos; investigaciones científicas muestran que la principal causa del autismo son las diferencias genéticas comunes; recomendación de pruebas genéticas con niños con diagnóstico de autismo y la cobertura de seguros médicos; and, la Genética del autismo mejorará la eficacia del apoyo y cambiará la manera que la comunidad defiende a los miembros de nuestra familia y a nosotros Servicios de interpretación en español

Bookstore. Costo: \$15 para padres, \$30 profesionales, \$5 de guardería por niño. Mas informacion: Mariela Maldonado- Enlace de Asuntos Hispanos – 919-302-4625 or mmaldonado@autismsociety-nc.org.

February 27, 2018—Foster Parent Group Meeting—6 pm to 8 pm at the Community Center meeting room located at 196 Knight St Robbinsville. A support group meeting for foster parents. Joe Barkowitz from Children’s Hope Alliance will be joining the group to help answer questions concerning being a foster parent. RSVP’s are required. For more information or to register contact Jody Miller at 828-631-3900 ext 126 or jody@regionakids.org. Please include your name and phone number when registering.

March 16-17, 2018—Parents as Collaborative Leaders. A Free Training for NC Parents of Little Ones* (up to age 4). Join us to learn and explore: effective ways to impact how things happen for you and your family as well as other families; skills from other families who are navigating on a similar path; and, strategies for engaging families in meaningful dialogues regarding service programs, early intervention and special education. This training will provide you with skills needed to develop collaborative partnerships in your community and to participate in discussions around special needs programs. Hotel, all meals, mileage reimbursement and all materials will be provided at **no cost!!!** Stipends to help with childcare are available. This event is open to ANY NC parent/family member of a child, birth to age 4, currently receiving or recently exited from early intervention services through the CDSA within the past 6 months. Event is being held at Drury Inns and Suites, Charlotte-Northlake, 6920 Northlake Mall Drive, Charlotte NC 28216. Seating is limited!! Register now for Parents as Collaborative Leaders or call for more information. Unlike other events, we are not able to take “walk-ins”. All participants must register in advance. Register by clicking this link <http://conta.cc/2mfsW8r> or by phone 800-962-6817. For more information contact: Aimee Combs ext 325 or acombs@ecacmail.org or Rita Stokes ext 339 or rstokes@ecacmail.org.