

Island County Parent to Parent Newsletter

May
2025

Are you anxious about meeting new people? Me too. Join us and engage as little or as much as you want. Check us out. No pressure.



2025

Summer Events & Activities

Island County Parent to Parent: All Ages, All Abilities Welcome!

Sunday
June 1



Sound of Music: Sensory Friendly at 2:30pm

Low sound, low music, low lights, & family friendly showing of Sound of Music at the Whidbey Playhouse. Enjoy the delightful blend of music & comedy. We encourage guest to dress up and sing along to the songs.

Eagle Wings
RSVP
(360)658-6093

Kiwanis RSVP



Tickets: 2 options

Eagle Wings is offering free tickets for one adult with disabilities and one caregiver, plus dinner.

Kiwanis is offering at reduced rate of \$15 per person for families with children. No tickets will be available at the door for purchase.

Thursday
June 26



Picnic in the Park at Freedom Park on Camano Island Noon-1:30pm

Grab your lunch, the family, something to sit on and enjoy the afternoon with Parent to Parent. Meet us over by the playground. Look for the sign. Meet other families, set up playdates, and learn out more about Parent to Parent.

**2 Dates to be
Announced**

Bowling Fun for the Whole Family Oak Bowl Noon-1:30pm

Oak Bowl in Oak Harbor. RSVP will be required. Great fun for all ages and all abilities. Bring the whole family. \$8 for 90 minutes and shoe rental. Special: slice of pizza and a soda for \$5. Dates and times will be updated in our next newsletter and posted on our Facebook page.

**2 Dates to be
Announced**

Movie Fun! Sensory Friendly! At Oak Harbor Movie Theater. Watch a movie with others that will understand if your kiddo/adult doesn't sit still, makes some noises, etc. Be around others that "get it". Lowered sound, lights on low, warning for any flashing lights, staff is aware & trained, intended to make the experience less overwhelming for all. Movie titles and dates have not been released yet. Will update as we get closer to the date. Updates will be posted on our Facebook Page and will be updated in our next newsletter as information becomes available.

Tuesday,
July 8

Picnic in the Park at Fort Nugent Park in Oak Harbor Noon-1:30pm

Grab your lunch, the family, something to sit on and enjoy the afternoon with Parent to Parent. Meet us over by the playground. We will have a sign. Meet other families, set up playdates, and learn out more about Parent to Parent.

Monday,
July 28

Picnic in the Park at South Whidbey Community Park aka Castle Park

Langley. Noon-1:30pm Bring your own picnic and enjoy the outdoors. Meet us over by the playground. Bring a chair/blanket to sit on. Meet other families, set up playdates, and learn out more about Parent to Parent.

Wednesday,
August 13

Windjammer Splash Park, Oak Harbor Noon-1:30pm

1600 S SW Beeksma Dr, Oak Harbor Bring your sunscreen, lunch and a blanket/chair. We will be on the grass mound near the splash park. Enjoy the sunshine and the beautiful view.

Questions? Contact Tiffany with Island County Parent to Parent Support & Resources for Special Needs Families. <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent> (360)632-7539 call/text or email t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountywa.gov All events are subject to change/cancellation.

Check our Facebook Page for up to date info. All Events are All Abilities, All Welcome!

Helpful Resources

Parent to Parent:

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>

Informing Families:

<https://informingfamilies.org/>

DDA:

www.dshs.wa.gov/dda

DVR:

Mt Vernon (360) 429-3097
Everett: (425) 339-4880
www.dshs.wa.gov/dvr

PAVE:

(800)5-PARENT
<https://wapave.org/>



Want to know more about Parent to Parent? Check out our website and Facebook page.

(360)632-7539 Call/Text



My Mental Health: Do I Need Help?

First, determine how much your symptoms interfere with your daily life.



Do I have mild symptoms that have lasted for less than 2 weeks?

- Feeling a little down
- Feeling down, but still able to do job, schoolwork, or housework
- Some trouble sleeping
- Feeling down, but still able to take care of yourself or take care of others



If so, here are some self-care activities that can help:

- Exercising (e.g., aerobics, yoga)
- Engaging in social contact (virtual or in person)
- Getting adequate sleep on a regular schedule
- Eating healthy
- Talking to a trusted friend or family member
- Practicing meditation, relaxation, and mindfulness

If the symptoms above do not improve or seem to be worsening despite self-care efforts, talk to your health care provider.



Do I have severe symptoms that have lasted 2 weeks or more?

- Difficulty sleeping
- Appetite changes that result in unwanted weight changes
- Struggling to get out of bed in the morning because of mood
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of interest in things you usually find enjoyable
- Unable to perform usual daily functions and responsibilities
- Thoughts of death or self-harm



Seek professional help:

- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)—virtual or in person; individual, group, or family
- Medications
- Brain stimulation therapies

For help finding treatment, visit www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp.

If you are in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or text the Crisis Text Line (text HELLO to 741741).



www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp

Anxious Stomachaches and Headaches

Physical symptoms are often the way children experience anxiety

All kids get headaches or stomachaches sometimes, but when it happens often, they might have anxiety. For example, kids with anxiety might get stomach pain or a headache before going to school or a birthday party. Kids who feel this way may not know they're anxious. Kids with anxiety aren't inventing these symptoms or trying to get out of things. A headache or stomach pain can happen when the child's body reacts to something the child feels is dangerous or scary. The first step to helping your child is to check with your doctor to make sure there's no medical reason for their pain. If your child's anxiety makes daily life hard, they might have an anxiety disorder. In that case, a therapist can help. The therapist will likely use cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to help your child identify their anxiety and learn skills to reduce it. https://childmind.org/article/anxious-stomach-aches-and-headaches/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=pub-ed-nl-2025-04-01&utm_content=anxious-stomach-aches-and-headaches-read-more

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Know when to seek help for you or others, know your resources and be prepared.



Ready, Set, KNOW...

Mental Health Resources



Mental health varies from person to person and encompasses a wide range of conditions. It has been reported that adults with disabilities experience mental health distress almost five times more frequently than adults without disabilities. As a family member, friend, or professional, it is important to learn the signs and educate yourself about the resources available to those who struggle with mental health issues.

You Are Not Alone. You and your loved ones are not alone in experiencing distress, anxiety, depression, or any other mental health challenge. There are resources available to help you learn healthy coping mechanisms and to collaborate with medical professionals in managing your mental health.

Know the Signs. It is important for family members, caregivers, and loved ones to learn the warning signs of mental illness, as they can be difficult to distinguish. Visit <https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/warning-signs-and-symptoms/> to learn about common signs of mental illness in adults and children.

Stay Educated. Many organizations offer trainings, classes, and webinars on mental health topics. The Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities National Training Center provides learning modules on co-occurring disabilities and mental health. Visit https://www.mhddcenter.org/learn-now/?tx_posttag=training

Be Prepared. It is important to know whom to call in case of a crisis. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline provides 24/7 free and confidential support for people in distress, along with prevention and crisis resources. Visit the [988 website](#) for specific support resources. For more information on crisis resources and information in Washington State visit <https://informingfamilies.org/crisisresources/>.

In case of immediate danger, call 911.

Finding Help When You Need It. It is important to learn about finding quality treatment and what is available to you. [Findtreatment.gov](#) offers a search engine to locate treatment centers in your area. It provides resources for understanding the cost of treatment, payment options, different types of treatment, and gaining insight into mental health.

The National Alliance on Mental Health provides an information webpage that identifies the intersection of disabilities and mental health while offering resources. Visit <https://www.nami.org/Your-Journey/Identity-and-Cultural-Dimensions/People-with-Disabilities/> to learn more.

Island County Behavioral Health Resource Directory

****For a life-threatening emergency -- always call 911****

Crisis Line 24-hour Mental/Behavioral Health Hotline 800-584-3578

(Island, Skagit, Snohomish & Whatcom

Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault 24-hour Island County Crisis Line (CADA)

360-675-2232 or 800-215-5669

-Suicide Prevention

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 24/7 1-800-273-8255 or text HOME to 741741 (no text messaging charges apply)



Crisis Connections in WA State Phone/Text/Chat Options- Confidential and anonymous help line for teens in WA **866-833-6546**

Veteran Suicide Hotline **800-273-8255** press 1, text 838255, or chat online



LGBTQ+ Suicide Hotline (Trevor Project) **866-488-7386** or Text START to **678678** If you're thinking about suicide, you deserve immediate help.

Hear Me WA **888-537-1634** or text "HearMeWA" to **738477**

National Domestic Violence Hotline **800-799-7233**

Call 911 if in immediate danger. Call hotline if abused by an intimate partner.

Hospitals-Inpatient Behavioral HealthCare

- **Providence Hospital Behavioral Health** Watch for Providence Hospital Inpatient Unit for Behavioral Health on Everett Colby Campus (opening Summer 2021) <https://washington.providence.org/locations-directory/b/behavioral-health-urgent-care-everett> <https://www.heraldnet.com/life/urgent-mental-health-care-clinic-a-rarity-opens-in-everett/>
- **Skagit Valley Hospital Behavioral Health** **360-814-2422** Mount Vernon
- **Seattle Children's Hospital Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine** **206-987-2164** Non-emergency visits, need referral by child's doctor. * [Contact crisis lines in emergency](#)
- **Fairfax Behavioral Health** **425-296-0019**, a private, free-standing mental health hospital with locations in Kirkland, Everett & Monroe

Island County Behavioral Health Stabilization Center/Substance Use Disorders in Oak Harbor [Ituha Stabilization Center: \(360\)499-7011](#)

A voluntary sub-acute detox short-term residential facility for people experiencing a mental health crisis or substance use issues. Pioneer Human Services, a Seattle-based nonprofit, operates the facility. The 10-bed facility serves Island, Skagit and San Juan Counties. <https://pioneerhumanservices.org/about/news-events/new-stabilization-center-whidbey-island-helps-client-mental-health-crisis>

Non-Emergency-Outpatient Behavioral Healthcare

Note: Recommended you first contact your insurance company to locate nearest provider

- Island County Outreach Behavioral Health **360-678-2346** M-F
<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/176/Behavioral-Health>
- Washington's Mental Health Referral Service for Children and Teens **833-303-5437** Maintained by Seattle Children's Hospital <https://www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics/psychiatry-and-behavioral-medicine>
- Island Hospital Behavioral Healthcare **360-299-4297** Anacortes Open M-F
- Compass Health- (Medicaid Only)
Oak Harbor **360-682-4100**, Coupeville **360-678-5555**, Mount Vernon **360-419-3500 or 360-419-3555**
- didgʷálič Wellness Center, Anacortes **360-588-2800**
- Sea Mar Oak Harbor (Medicaid Only)
360-679-7676, Anacortes **360-293-8007**, Mount Vernon **360-419-3555 or 360-542-8810**
- Sunrise Behavioral Health (Medicaid Only) Mount Vernon/Anacortes/Concrete **360-336-3762**
Sunrise Oak Harbor **360-544-3806** (Medicaid only) Outpatient Clinic Mount Vernon **360-848-8500**
- Island County Early Childhood Behavioral Health Support **360-678-2346**
providing resources and one-to-one coaching for parents of children aged birth-5 Mon-Fri
<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/177/Early-Childhood-Parent-Support>
- Locating a Therapist <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/wa/island-county>
- Providence Hospital Behavioral Health Urgent Care (not inpatient care) - Everett **425-261-4210**
offering virtual appointments for those unable to come in person.

Substance Use Services

- Needle Exchange Locations in Island County Camano Island: **360-387-0184**
Whidbey Island: **360-221-6626**
- Washington Recovery Helpline: 866-789-1511 (24/7) Anonymous/confidential help for problems with substance use disorders <http://www.warecoveryhelpline.org/>
- Island County Opioid Outreach **360-678-8295**
- didgʷálič Wellness Center Anacortes **360-588-2800**

NAMI Basics OnDemand: Online Education Program for Parents, Caregivers, and Other

Family Members. NAMI Basics OnDemand is here to help. This free, online program – available 24/7 – is designed to empower parents and caregivers of young people (ages 22 and younger) with the tools, knowledge, and support needed to navigate the challenges of youth mental health.

<https://www.nami.org/support-education/mental-health-education/nami-basics-on-demand/>

Birthday Club



My kid does not get invited to much. He is an introvert like me, so there aren't many playdates or birthday parties, but occasionally he will get an e-vite to a neighbor's birthday. The other day he received an invitation to a classmate's birthday in the mail, and he has carried it around all day and is currently sleeping with it next to his pillow.

If you are able, please invite them.



What do you think about a "Birthday Club"?

Many of our kiddos/adults aren't invited to birthday parties or may not have one themselves due to a variety of reasons, including limited friends.

We could gather once a month and celebrate birthdays. Nothing fancy, just gathering and celebrating. We could play music, maybe someone can bring a cake/cupcakes/dessert and if the kiddo/adult wants, we could sing them happy birthday.

What do you think? I want your input and ideas. Help make this happen! Email us! t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountywa.gov

Island County Accessible Communities Committee

WHO WE ARE:

A sub-committee operating under the Governor's Disability & Employment Committee tasked with helping our communities be more welcoming and inclusive for persons with disabilities. *We're seeking self-advocates, family members, providers and community members to join our committee.*

OUR MISSION:

To identify barriers that people with disabilities, or at risk, experience while living or visiting Camano and Whidbey Islands.

<https://accessiblecommunities.wa.gov/>

EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS COMPLETED IN YOUR COMMUNITY:

Island Transit Bus Stop Seats Total: 42 installed on Whidbey and Camano Islands as of 2023.

Island County Behavioral Health Resource Guide: resources for behavioral health services and support in Island County and beyond.

Langley Accessible Sidewalk: At Wishing Whale- Provides a 69-foot concrete accessibility sidewalk connecting First Street in downtown Langley—
Giaus enjoying the accessible sidewalk.

Ferry Medical Disability Pass decal for  preferential medical pass users. To identify why drivers are passing others to go to toll booth. Driver must show your preferential medical pass at toll booth, decal does not replace or substitute the medical pass. If you would like a decal/magnet, email us. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/travel/washington-state-ferries/rider-information/medical-preferential-loading>



Adaptive and Sensory Summer Friendly Camps

Camps fill up quickly, don't wait! Most accept DDA respite funds.

<https://arcwa.org/info-resources/camp-resources-2/>



Tips for Choosing Camps for Kids & Adults with Special Needs/Disabilities

Summertime is here, and school is out -- which means it's time to make arrangements for your child's summer fun. One great way to ensure that your kid has a great time, stays occupied and makes new friends this summer is by sending him to camp! While this may present more of a challenge than sending a typical child, summer camp and kids with special needs are particularly well suited for one another. Here are some tips that can help your child have an excellent time at camp this summer even with the added challenge of social, behavioral or other neurobehavioral issues.

- **Choose the Right Camp**

Many camps exist for children both with and without special needs, and choosing the right program for your child can help ensure he has a positive experience. You might want to consider a camp that is specifically tailored to children with special needs, particularly if your child has a hard time integrating into a large group of children. Alternatively, you might consider a regular camp that features a subject or skill your child is particularly good at or interested in -- like art or horseback riding -- if your child thrives when focused on something he is passionate about.

- **Communicate with Your Child About Camp**

Your child might be nervous about getting through required tasks, or simply spending the day away from you (or the night away, if it is a sleep-away camp). Thus, you should talk openly with your child about what they can expect at camp and address any fears he or she might have. Help your child figure out what goals he might want to get out of a camp experience, and set up a plan for contacting you or expressing himself should he feel uncomfortable or unhappy in his situation.

- **Communicate with Camp Staff About Your Child**

The most important thing you can do for your child once you choose a camp is to communicate with the camp's staff. You should be very open and honest about the needs of your child and any struggles he might have. Summer camp and processing disorders can present challenges to your child, and you will want to give the right staff members at the program any medical information or sensory tools that are relevant to avoid any unpleasant situations. You will also want to share information about what your child wants and needs from camp, as well as any concerns he might have about being there. The more knowledge the staff is armed with, the better chance they will be able to effectively handle any situation that arises.

Local Camps include: Camp Korey in Mt Vernon for families and specific diagnoses, Lions Camp Horizon in Ferndale (just north of Bellingham) ages 12 & up, Kiwanis Camp Casey is now held at Lions Camp Horizon ages 6-17 with physical disabilities, Camp Beausite NW in Chimacum Ages 10 & up (25 minutes off Coupeville ferry), Camp Killoqua at Lake Goodwin (Snohomish County) up to age 21.

Have you checked out our website recently?

Oh boy, there is lots of new content, resources, information and more.

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>

Hard copies of these resource guides, Family Toolkits and “Island County Transition: School-age to Adulthood In Depth Guide: English” are also available. Email t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountywa.gov. Provide your contact information to ensure a reply.

Island County Disability Resources

- ◆ Island County Disability Resource Guide: English and Spanish
- ◆ Island County Autism Resource Guide: English and Spanish
- ◆ Island County Autism Spectrum Disorder website.
- ◆ Island County Behavioral/Mental Health Resource Guide: English

Other resources: Ages & Stages

- ◆ P2P Resource Birth to Three
- ◆ P2P Resource Three to Six
- ◆ P2P Resource Six to Fourteen
- ◆ P2P Resource Fourteen to Twenty One
- ◆ P2P Resource Twenty One-Adulthood

Transition Support & Resources

- ◆ Transition Packet Info, Timelines and Checklists
- ◆ Transition IEPs, Services, Planning
- ◆ Transition DDA
- ◆ Transition Employment Support
- ◆ Transition HS vs College
- ◆ Transition Advocacy and Social Emotional
- ◆ Transition Resource Federal State Local
- ◆ Transition Legal and Financial Planning
- ◆ Transition Healthcare
- ◆ Transition-Toolkit PAVE

Island County Parent to Parent

Support & Resources for Special Needs Families in Island County

Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson ,Coordinator

105 NW 1st Street Coupeville, WA 98239

(360)632-7539 call/text

Email: t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountwa.gov



**Check us out on Facebook for up-to-date resources, information and activities **

www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent



We have resource guides on our website:

*Island County Parent to Parent Disability Resource Guide

*Parent to Parent Autism Spectrum Disorder Resource Guide

*Island County Behavioral Health Resource Directory

*Island County School Age to Adulthood Transition Guides

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>

All events are subject to cancellation or rescheduling. Check our Facebook Page before you head out to the event