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Connections

Issue: August 2025

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 [Send This To A Friend!](#)

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Please take our Survey!



*Informative  
Articles*

“This list of toy suggestions is for any child that may be developmentally delayed, visually impaired or other disabilities.” To read more, please click the article below.

[50 Best Toy Ideas for Kids with Autism or Developmental Delays \(including non verbal\)](#)

“It’s important for kids to learn patience as it can benefit their health, relationships, and success in the long-term.” To read more please click the link below.

[10 teaching patient activities for kids](#)

“A new school year is a great time to take a fresh look at your student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). If your student doesn’t have an IEP and you wonder if a disability might be impacting your student’s learning, this is a good time to learn about the special education process.” To read more please click the link below.

[Get Ready for School with IEP Essentials](#)

*Book of the month:*

[Meet August](#)

“In this story, August celebrates the end of summer with friends and gets ready for a new school year. He picks out new school supplies, gets a new backpack, and even gets a cool new haircut too!”





For our Parent Connections Calendar please click [here](#).



# JOIN US IN CELEBRATING WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK



FRIDAY, AUGUST 1 | 2-4 PM  
MCCOSH PARK, MOSES LAKE  
(COVERED PAVILION)

Learn about breastfeeding and community organizations that support breastfeeding families in Grant County. This event will feature activities and information presented by our community partners.

- Breastfeeding education
- Community resources
- Activities for kids
- Prizes
- And much more!



BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE GRANT COUNTY  
BREASTFEEDING COALITION



 MOSES LAKE  
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

 **GCHD**  
GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT

 **SAMARITAN**  
HEALTHCARE



A free virtual event for high school students with disabilities

# Youth Empowerment Summit

WASHINGTON STATE

AUG. 1, 2025  
1 to 4 p.m.

## It's free!

This event is made possible by the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues & Employment and the Employment Security Department.

## What is it?

A workshop to learn about self-advocacy, disability pride and combating ableism.

## Why?

Learn about disability justice. Speak up for you and your friends! Your voice is your superpower.

To register, contact:

**Elaine Stefanowicz**  
Governor's Committee on Disability Issues & Employment  
[elaine.stefanowicz@esd.wa.gov](mailto:elaine.stefanowicz@esd.wa.gov)  
360-890-3774



Join us and [register](#) today!



ASL interpreters and CART captioning will be provided. Please contact us if you need other accommodations.



# reminder



¿Te estás perdiendo nuestros mensajes sobre reuniones o eventos? ¡Mantente al tanto descargando nuestra App de Recordatorios! No te pierdas ninguna reunión ni evento importante. Recibe notificaciones a tiempo y mantente conectado con todo lo que está sucediendo.



# SHARE YOUR STORY! INSPIRE OTHER PARENTS!

Your journey could give hope to another parent just starting theirs!



Have you benefited from the Parent to Parent program?  
Has a Helping Parent made a difference in your life?

Your experience could encourage, uplift, and guide another parent who is looking for support.

Write your story! Share how Parent to Parent helped you.

No need to be a writer—just be yourself!

*Where to submit:*

Email: [p2p@mlchc.org](mailto:p2p@mlchc.org)

Facebook: send us a direct message



### What to expect:

- Before MDT: Referral is made via phone/website, referent is contacted by Outreach Care Specialist within 1-2 business days, appointment is set up, parent/guardian discuss concerns, history.
- During MDT: Youth centered, referent and/or family provides history of concerns, strengths, team discusses, recommendations based on referral/needs. Recommendations followed up with family within 72 business hours.
- After MDT: Outreach Care Specialist provides recommendation letter to referent/family. Outreach Care Specialist walks alongside family to put resources in place.



Creating a stronger safety net for youth experiencing behavioral health challenges

### How to Refer:

- Referent may complete a referral through NC Kids Mental Health website <https://kidsmentalhealthnc.org>
- Community partners and families may also call us at (509)557-5644 (English) OR (509)668-3707 (en Espanol)

### CONTACT US

[info@kidsmentalhealthnc.org](mailto:info@kidsmentalhealthnc.org)

10116 36<sup>th</sup> Ave. Ct, SW,  
Suite 304  
Lakewood, WA 98499



## NORTH CENTRAL WASHINGTON YOUTH NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

### What is the Youth Behavioral Health Navigator Program?

- In partnership with the Health Care Authority (HCA) and Carelon Behavioral Health, the Youth Navigator Program was developed as a single point of contact for individuals concerned about a school aged youth in emergency department settings experiencing emotional/behavioral health challenges or crisis.
- Is a community collaborative in Okanogan, Chelan, Douglas and Grant counties which work together to achieve our community-wide goal of improving children's mental health services.

### CORE COMPONENTS:

- Providing immediate support and walking alongside youth & families in crisis, while resources
- Convening Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT) to facilitate community solutions & referrals for complex needs.
- Resource connection through cross-systems collaboration.
- Kids Mental Health North Central website, centralizing where and how to access local and statewide resources <https://kidsmentalhealthnc.org>



### Vision

Our vision is to create a safe, welcoming, equitable, and valued resources for the most vulnerable youth in our region and ensure that access to appropriate behavioral health services is prioritized.

### Mission

Our mission is to ensure service recommendations and resources align with family values and goals, are youth centered, promote increased health and address generational trauma and community healing.



GREAT new info from OSPI promoting inclusive practices in Washington Public Schools:

Video: <https://youtu.be/nmrRBs8a-wQ>

Facts and Myths About Inclusive

Practices: <https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2022-12/Myths-Facts-Inclusionary-Practices.pdf>

Inclusive Education Practices

Manual: <https://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2024-10/comprehensive-inclusive-education-washington.pdf>



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## PEOPLE FOR PEOPLE

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Ericka Warren is a Travel Trainer at People for People. You might be wondering what a Travel Trainer does. The Travel Trainer helps the elderly or disabled people learn how to use public transportation. This gives them more independence.

The Travel Trainer can help you with these things:

- Planning trips and teaching you how to use bus services
- Rider etiquette and personal safety
- Scheduling and transferring buses

She would be happy to meet with you and help you become comfortable using public transit services. This service is free for anyone who would like to use it, and you can choose to participate in the training program.

For more information or to enroll please contact,  
Ericka Warren  
Mobility Coordinator / Travel Trainer  
509-793-1906 Extension 495  
People for People  
843 Kittleson Rd. Moses Lake, WA98837  
(509) 765-9249

**WADDC**



# 5 Year State Plan Survey

2027-2031



**We're Listening: Share Your Vision for a Better Future**

## **The Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council wants to hear from you!**

Share your thoughts, concerns, and ideas about the challenges and barriers faced by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families in Washington State.

Your feedback will help shape the Council's priorities for the next five years.

***Let's work together to build a more inclusive and supportive community!***

### **Take the Survey Today**

Visit [bit.ly/WADDCSurvey](https://bit.ly/WADDCSurvey).



**SCAN**



Have questions or need assistance? Reach out to the Council at [info@ddc.wa.gov](mailto:info@ddc.wa.gov)



SPECIAL NEEDS  
**CREATIVE**  
**DANCE**  
**CLASS**

*Every Tuesday 4:00 - 5:00 pm*

*Taught by Kerry Aronsohn*

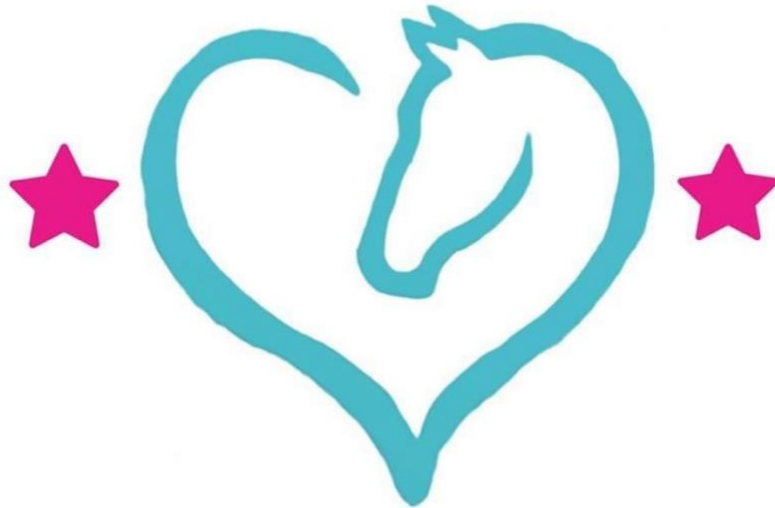
Kerry has a B.A. in Dance, 30 yrs of  
teaching experience,  
**coaches special olympics, 10+yrs of  
serving the disability community**

*Questions: Call or text Kerry 509-855-2152*

REGISTER @ *balletacademymt.com*

*230 W 3rd Ave, Moses Lake*

# Kindhearted



# Mini Therapy

Connecting Hearts Through Therapy

Experience the healing power of miniature therapy horses and let us bring smiles to your day. Join us for a heartwarming encounter to uplift spirits and create joyful memories.

Book a visit with us now! Please click the link [here](#)

For more information  
on any of our upcoming events, please email us  
at [p2p@mlhc.org](mailto:p2p@mlhc.org)





# Informing Families

Today and Tomorrow

A Partnership for Better Communication  
on Developmental Disability Issues in Washington State

## Applying for Developmental Disability Services in Washington State

### DDA: The Door to DD Services



The main door to services for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities in our state is the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). It's where people go to get help for in-home, out-of-home, and community-based services. Learn more about DDA services here: [dshs.wa.gov/dda](https://dshs.wa.gov/dda).

Important: Most services are not an entitlement, which means that being eligible for DDA does not automatically result in enrollment for services. There can be a long wait, but it's important to take the first step, which is applying for a determination of DDA eligibility.

### #1 To apply for DDA eligibility, you must:



#### Be a resident of the state.

- If DDA does not consider you a state resident, your application will be denied.
- If you live in another state, your eligibility for services will not transfer.



#### Have a qualifying condition.

DDA's qualifying conditions for developmental delay and intellectual/developmental disability are used to determine eligibility. You can find them here: [dshs.wa.gov/dda](https://dshs.wa.gov/dda) (click on Eligibility).

### #2 How to apply for a determination of DDA eligibility at different ages:

#### Birth to Three

Apply for Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT). A Family Resources Coordinator (FRC) will help you obtain screenings, services and supports. Learn more here: [del.wa.gov](https://del.wa.gov) (click on ESIT).



DDA requires a re-determination of eligibility at age 4, so you will need to re-apply for DDA services *before* that happens. DDA will send a notice 6 months prior to your child turning 4.

#### Age Three and Older

Request a determination of eligibility from your local DDA office (or online). Find the office nearest you: [dshs.wa.gov/dda](https://dshs.wa.gov/dda).

You will be asked for documents to verify identity, residency, disability, consent, and (where needed) guardianship or adoption records. Visit [dshs.wa.gov/dda](https://dshs.wa.gov/dda) for an application packet (click on Eligibility).

### #3 It's up to you to request to be assessed for services.

**You must call to request services after you have been determined eligible for DDA.** Some services are entitlement, such as personal care through Community First Choice; however, most DDA services are provided through a waiver program, which is not an entitlement. Enrollment in waiver programs are filled based on assessed need when there is available funding. Once you have been enrolled in services, you will be assigned a case manager and service planning will begin. *It's very important to request the services you need, so that you can be contacted when there's an opening for that program or service.*



# The Washington State Governor's Office of the Education Ombuds: Strategic Plan

(August 2023-2026)



**VISION:** We envision a public education system that dismantles racism, ableism, and other marginalization to support every student's dreams for the future.

We value our independence, anti-racist values, and responsiveness to communities. We will learn as a team from families, students, and communities and promote this vision.

## MISSION

We work with families, communities, and schools to address problems together so that every student can fully participate and thrive in Washington's K-12 public schools.

## OUR ROLES

Listen to concerns and address questions about the K-12 public education system

Use informal conflict resolution tools to support collaborative problem-solving and promote education justice

Provide coaching, facilitation, and training about family and community engagement and systems advocacy

Collect data and identify trends to guide our education policy recommendations



## Strategic Priorities

### Informal Conflict Resolution

OEO assists anyone with questions or concerns about Washington's K-12 public schools. We can provide you with information, referrals, toolkits, and other resources.

OEO's legislative mission is to reduce opportunity gaps. Our strategic plan priorities concentrate on education justice, especially for communities most affected by COVID-19. We are focusing our limited conflict resolution resources, such as informal mediation and coaching, on K-12 students who are:

- Out of school, including students with disabilities receiving partial school days
- People of color, Black, or indigenous
- Experiencing homelessness
- In kinship or foster care
- Involved with the juvenile justice or juvenile rehabilitation systems
- Immigrant, refugee, asylee, or migrant, or students or families whose primary language(s) is not English, or
- Receiving Wraparound with Intensive Services (WiSe) or Children's Long Term Inpatient Programs (CLIP) supports

### Strategies:

*Proactively build relationships with families, students, and communities seeking education justice in schools to listen and learn from their experiences and strengths*

*Create more online tools to answer common questions outside our direct intervention priorities*

*Identify opportunities to create systemic change through the individual concerns brought to us*

### Outreach

Our outreach priorities reflect the communities prioritized in our conflict resolution. We will also create materials and tools for issues outside our strategic plan to empower families, students, and educators in collaborating.

### Strategies:

*Collaborate with community, family, student, and educator organizations, as well as government agencies, to co-host events and workshops*

*Deepen ongoing relationships with organizations and family and student groups, while also increasing statewide awareness about OEO*

*Use powerful storytelling to share family and student experiences with educators, policymakers, and other families and communities*

### Policy Advocacy

We will identify and create opportunities to promote racial justice, disability and mental health justice, and language access in the school system. We will bring student, family, and community perspectives and concerns to policy discussions and decisions.

### Strategies:

*Collaborate with community organizations, families, and students to combat racism, ableism, and other forms of oppression*

*Learn from and be led by the community, family, and student perspectives most often left out of policymaking*

*Use our leadership roles on workgroups to advocate for family and student voice*

For more information, please click the link [here](#).

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**LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS**

Autism Support Group of Grant County

For more information check out:

Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ASGofGC>

Email at

[grantcountyautism@gmail.com](mailto:grantcountyautism@gmail.com)

Website with live chat option at

[www.grantcountyautism.org](http://www.grantcountyautism.org)

Down Syndrome Society of Grant County

For more information check out their

website at: [www.DSSGC.org](http://www.DSSGC.org)

Email: [cbuddywalk@gmail.com](mailto:cbuddywalk@gmail.com)

Or call: Denise Ketola at 360-903-3201

## Inter-agency Coordinating Councils

Grant County:  
Meets monthly via Zoom  
For more information please contact:  
509-664-3781

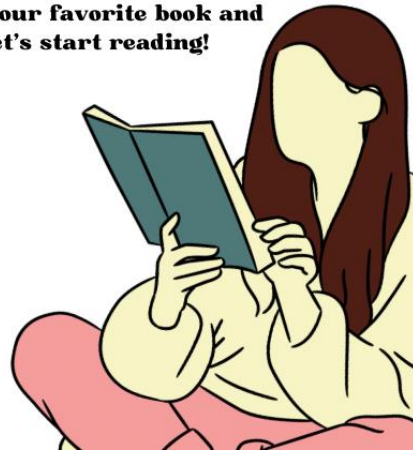
Adams County:  
Meets bi-annually, for more information please  
contact:  
Columbia Basin Health  
Association at:  
509-488-5256

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Our Lending Library is  
available!

**Get your favorite book and  
let's start reading!**



[Lending library](#)

Please click the link [here](#)

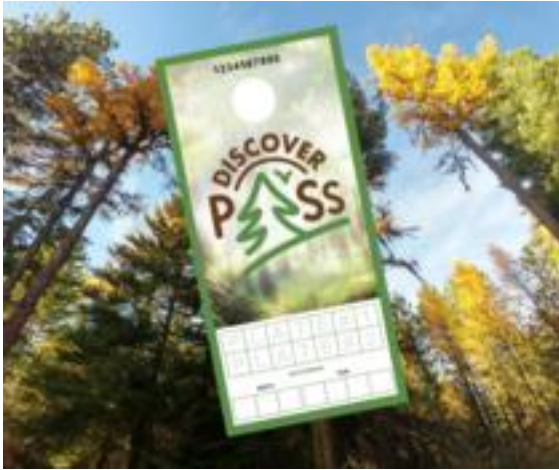
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“Take a deep breath  
& try all over again.”

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**2025 Discover Pass free days announced!**



The Washington State Discover Pass Program has designated the Discover Pass free days for 2025. On these days, visitors will not need a [Discover Pass](#) to park at [Washington state parks](#) and on recreation lands managed by [Washington Department of Natural Resources \(DNR\)](#) and [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife \(WDFW\)](#).

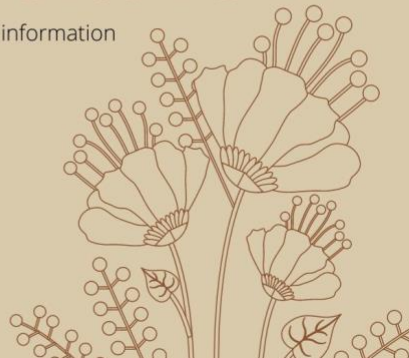
The 2025 Discover Pass free days are:

- Jan. 1 — First Day Hikes; New Year's Day
- Jan. 20 — Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- March 9 -- Billy Frank Junior's Birthday
- March 19 — State Parks' Birthday
- April 22 — Earth Day
- June 7 — Free Fishing Weekend
- June 8 — Free Fishing Weekend
- June 19 — Juneteenth
- Aug. 9 — Smokey Bear's Birthday
- Sept. 27 — National Public Lands Day
- Oct. 10 -- World Mental Health Day
- Nov. 11 — Veterans Day

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## WEBSITES & RESOURCES

Places to visit for information



Washington State Governors Office of the Education Ombudsman

**Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)**

**The Individuals With Disabilities Act (IDEA)**

**Developmental Disabilities Administration**

**Department of Early Learning (ESIT)**

**Washington State Parent to Parent**

**Washington State Fathers Network**

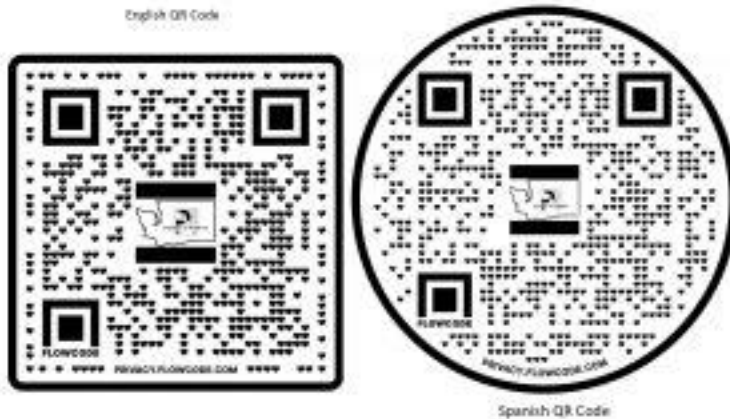
**Social Security Administration (SSI)**

**DDA OMBUDS Washington state**

**Special Olympics Washington**

**Informing Families**

**Wishing Star**

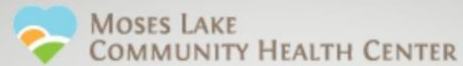


***Please take our survey!  
It helps us with our  
grant funding. Thank  
you!***



The Parent to Parent Support Programs provide emotional support, education and information to families of children with special needs and/or disabilities.

Personal support from another parent, who has a child with similar needs, can be helpful in coping with many challenging experiences and feelings. Helping parent volunteers have completed a training program and are available to provide support and information to other parents. All information will be kept confidential. There is no cost for this service.



Moses Lake Community Health Center is the Grant/Adams Parent to Parent lead agency.

(you do not have to be a patient of Moses Lake Community Health Center to use

Parent to Parent services, they are open to all in our communities)

Moses Lake Community Health Center is committed to providing high quality, compassionate and comprehensive primary health services for the entire family, with a special focus on the underserved and migrant farm worker in our community.

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**Our mailing address is:**

605 Coolidge Street  
Moses Lake, WA 98837

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