



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

in partnership with



Spokane County
Parent Coalition



ONE SIZE FITS SOME

by April Paccarelli, Parent to Parent Coordinator of the Tri-County Area

When I was a child there were many times that I tried to exercise like everyone else, keep up with expectations that were not made with my body in mind and there were times when I achieved personal goals that to most looked minuscule. I never knew why my body couldn't keep up with the 'norm'; I couldn't comprehend why simple things like pushups and pullups were difficult for me, why I couldn't touch my toes like my peers or why I would feel nauseous or faint during and after being active. I can vividly recall the feelings of embarrassment, failure, and despair brought on by my inability to perform to standard. It wasn't laziness or a lack of commitment on my part, but limitations placed upon me by my own body's uniqueness. Exercise was not something we participated in as a family, and everything I knew to be "normal" about it, I learned from PE class where it was assumed to be one size fits all rather than the reality that one size fits some.

For most, exercise is key to a healthy lifestyle, but for others, exercise means exclusion, anxiety and depression, or even paralyzing fear and risk of injury or death. After my family was diagnosed with a rare genetic condition, I had to explain to my children they should not (not to be confused with could not) participate in competitive sports such as team basketball and football or intense activities like weightlifting and cheer. It was dreadful; I recall many looks of devastation as they watched their peers from afar do what they longed to do. It did not make one bit of difference to them that they knew why they couldn't do those things (the risk of bodily harm and/or death), all they cared about was how it felt to be left out because exclusion feels the same whatever the reason.

Even within our own blended family, my children pushed themselves to keep up with their siblings and fought through others' ideas of ableism. When my boys were in Scouts together, my youngest son would push himself to

the extreme to keep up with his stepbrother and their fellow Scouts, which often ended in other injuries that furthered those feelings of exclusion and isolation. It seemed everywhere we went activities were planned for people that weren't like us and it became evident to me that my kids needed to see firsthand that exercise could look like many things and that there were many ways to enjoy being active within their own abilities. Our family adapted to our various limitations by doing inclusive activities together such as walks with the dogs, family swimming days, ADA accessible hiking trips, and more as a way of re-learning what society taught us was "normal" exercise.

While in the process of adaptation, our family faced further barriers in balancing one sibling's limitations with another's. One child has physical limitations affecting where our activity takes place or what it involves, one has major difficulties with sleep and may be exceedingly tired during an activity if extra sleep hygiene steps are not taken prior to, and all of them have gastrointestinal issues with major dietary restrictions all of which collectively make it nearly impossible to take part in spontaneous activities like other families. While parents and friends of children without disabilities are usually unaware of the effort it takes to participate individually or as a family, those facing these struggles are keenly aware of them. Despite these obstacles and a great many more those with limitations face, accommodations and inclusive activities enable those of us with these barriers to exercise successfully within our own body's limitations.

National Exercise with your Child(ren) Week is August 6-12. Regardless of your our own individual ableness, I encourage you to participate in an all-inclusive activity with your child(ren) (or a niece/nephew, grandchild, friend, etc.) and help educate them on the importance of being mindful of others' limitations and how our accommodations of such can have a positive impact for them, and for us, when we all participate together.



INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS DAY

by Blaine Huizinga, Sexual Abuse Awareness and Response Trainer

August 29th is Individual Rights Day, a day to celebrate the rights of all people including individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This year's theme is "My Rights, My Voice, My Future." People with IDD have the same rights as everyone else, including the right to live in the community, to be educated, to work, to have relationships, and to make their own decisions. However, these rights are often not respected. People with IDD may be denied access to services, segregated from society, or forced to live in institutions.

Individual Rights Day is a time to raise awareness of these issues and to demand that people with IDD be treated with dignity and respect. It is also a time to celebrate the achievements of people with IDD who have fought for

their rights.

Here are some ways to celebrate Individual Rights Day:

- Learn about the rights of people with IDD.
- Talk to your friends and family about the importance of these rights.
- Support organizations that are working to protect the rights of people with IDD.
- Get involved in advocacy work to promote the rights of people with IDD.

Self-determination is a fundamental human right, and it is essential for people with intellectual disabilities to live full and meaningful lives. When people with IDD have the opportunity to make their own choices, they are more likely to be happy, healthy, and productive members of society.

There are many ways to support self-determination for people with IDD. We can provide them with opportunities to learn about their rights, to develop their decision-making skills, and to access the supports they need to make choices independently. We can also challenge the stereotypes and assumptions that limit people with IDD's ability to make choices. On Individual Rights Day, let's recommit ourselves to supporting the self-determination of people with IDD.

Here are some specific ways to support self-determination for people with IDD:

- Provide information about rights. Make sure that people with IDD know about their rights, including the right to make choices, the right to privacy, and the right to be free from abuse.
- Help people develop decision-making skills. Teach people with IDD how to gather information, weigh options, and make decisions.
- Provide supports to make choices independently. This could include providing access to assistive technology, helping people to develop relationships with supportive people, and providing training on how to access services and resources.
- Challenge stereotypes and assumptions. Help to change the way people think about people with IDD, and challenge the idea that they are not capable of making their own choices.

Every person, regardless of their abilities, has the right to live a full and meaningful life. On Individual Rights Day, let's come together to ensure that people with IDD have the same opportunities as everyone else.

Here are some specific examples of how individual rights are important for people with IDD:

- The right to live in the community means that people with IDD can have homes, jobs, and relationships in the same way that everyone else does.
- The right to be educated means that people with IDD can have access to quality education that meets their individual needs.
- The right to work means that people with IDD can have meaningful jobs that contribute to society.
- The right to have relationships means that people with IDD can have close relationships with family, friends, and partners.
- The right to make their own decisions means that people with IDD can have control over their own lives, including their healthcare, finances, and housing.

These are just a few examples of how individual rights are important for people with IDD. By celebrating Individual Rights Day, we can raise awareness of these issues and demand that people with intellectual and developmental

disabilities be treated with dignity and respect. Let's work together to create a world where everyone has the opportunity to live a life of their own choosing.

SENSORY DAY AT THE FAIR AND DISCOUNTED FAIR TICKETS

We are partnering with the Spokane County Interstate Fair along with the Isaac Foundation and Project I.D. to present a sensory day at the fair!

**Tuesday, September 12
11 a.m.-5 p.m.**

Spokane County Fair and Expo Center
404 N Havana St.
Spokane Valley, WA 99212

We have a limited amount of discounted general admission tickets for sale that are good for **any day** at the fair.

The carnival rides wristband is sold separately.

**Tickets are \$7 each (normally \$13
weekdays, \$15 weekends)
On sale now and close on September 4th**



[TICKETS](#)



BACK TO SCHOOL ADAPTIVE KITS

The Arc of Spokane and Meta want to help your students start the school year off in style with **FREE** kits containing adaptive tools for student success!

Each kit includes:

- Calm strips (sensory sitckers)
- Chair bands (fidget bands that provide flexible sensory seating)
- Chewable clear toppers for pens and pencils
- Easi grip scissors
- Flexible no-break ruler
- Pencil grips
- Pencil supply pouch
- Quiet fidget toys

One per household, please.

You will receive the date and place to pick up after registering.

RESERVE MY KIT

This event is brought to you by [Spokane Parent to Parent](#), the [Spokane County Parent Coalition](#) and in partnership with Meta.

Questions? Contact advocacy@arc-spokane.org



SUMMER WITH A PURPOSE

Summer With a Purpose (SWAP) hosts a range of exciting activities and outings around the Spokane area to provide social engagement, personal enrichment, life skills development, and of course, fun for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) ages 12-21!



Check out the range of activities currently available at www.arc-spokane.org/swap, and don't forget to come back often as more are added throughout the summer!

JIM-ISAAC CHUA BENEFIT CONCERT

The Arc of Spokane is excited to welcome internationally-renowned pianist Jim-Isaac Chua to Spokane to host a benefit concert on **Friday, September 22 at 7 p.m. at the Bing Crosby Theater**. Chua will be performing masterpieces by well-known composers such as Chopin, Liszt, Beethoven, and Rameau. All proceeds from the concert will benefit The Arc of Spokane.

Chua is a Filipino-American pianist who was raised in Richland, Washington, and made frequent trips to Spokane to perform. He participated in MusicFest Northwest for a number of years, and this will be his fifth time performing at the Bing. He has performed extensively in the USA, Canada, Austria, France, Italy, Poland, Taiwan, and South-East Asian countries. Chua has been awarded in numerous international competitions in the USA, Austria, and France.

TICKETS

 A promotional poster for a piano benefit concert. The background is dark with a close-up of a man's face (Jim-Isaac Chua) looking down. The text is white and orange. At the top right is the logo for 'The Arc of Spokane' with a stylized orange 'a' and the text 'The Arc of Spokane proudly presents'. Below that, 'JIM-ISAAC CHUA' is written in large orange letters. A quote in white says '"INCREDIBLE FEAST FOR THE EARS..."' with 'Radio Szczecin' in smaller white text below it. At the bottom, 'PIANO BENEFIT CONCERT' is written in large white letters. Below that, 'BING CROSBY THEATER | SEPTEMBER 22, 2023' and '901 W Sprague Ave | 7:00-9:00 P.M.' are written in white. At the bottom, 'Purchase tickets online at www.bingcrosbytheater.com' is written in white. At the very bottom, a small white line of text reads 'Proceeds will benefit The Arc of Spokane, which promotes independence and choice and enhances the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families.'

[Learn More About Parent to Parent Resources](#)

Parents may have questions and concerns as they learn about services that can help their child and family and often need time and support to navigate their own emotions and adjust to raising a child with special needs.

Personal support from fellow parent can help with:

- Emotional support for parents
- Information and referrals to community resources
- Connecting you to Trained Helping Parents
- Social and recreational events
- Current information on disabilities, medical conditions and community resources
- Training for parents who would like to become Volunteer Helping Parents
- Public awareness and outreach to the community regarding individuals with disabilities

Learn more about Parent to Parent resources [here](#).

Find local resources for the help you need!

Did you know The Arc of Spokane has a digital resource guide? Click [here](#) for information on a variety of different resources!

If you want a more comprehensive and personalized list of resources for your specific situation, please contact our Individual Advocacy Team at advocacy@arc-spokane.org or call (509) 789-8327. They will help you untangle complex issues and the service is free. The Individual Advocacy team is ready to help!

Contact Us

Contact the Advocacy and Family Support Team by emailing us at advocacy@arc-spokane.org.

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The Arc of Spokane

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