

Washington State Family to Family Health Information Center



Newsletter #13 – March 2022

Easing of Mask Mandates

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has changed its' recommendations about masking in public to reflect community disease transmissibility and local hospitalization rates. Data is used to rate every county in the nation with a low, medium, or high-risk designation. Washington state currently has a mix of high (masks needed), medium (masks optional), and low (masks not needed) counties. It is possible to review any county in the nation at the new CDC [COVID-19 County Check](#) page. In

a similar vein, the Washington Department of Health announced people are [no longer required to wear a mask at large, outdoor events](#). These updated recommendations do not change the requirement for all individuals to wear masks on public transportation or at transit stations.

Progress on COVID is mixed. The [COVID case rate in Washington](#) it has decreased sharply from its high in January, but the death rate is still near the all-time high set in August 2021. As of February 28th, the CDC reports that the percentage of Americans aged 5 and up that have had at least [one vaccination shots stands at 81.1%](#). Washington is on par with that average.

Youth Voice, Youth Choice

The Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston, created for youth with disabilities. The goal of the project is to educate young people with disabilities about their rights and options as they become adults. They focus on guardianship and its alternatives: "[Guardianship](#) is just one option. With guardianship, the guardian makes decisions for you. We are here to talk about [alternatives to guardianship](#). Alternatives to guardianship are other ways you can get support in life after you leave high school." Their [Guardianship Alternatives](#) resource list is a great place of young adults and their parents or caregivers to review the many options available to them as adulthood approaches.

For young adults with disabilities who want to do more, they offer a [Youth Ambassador program](#). After completing a [16-week training curriculum](#), that teaches youth about advocacy, leadership, their rights, and how to make decisions for themselves, youth can share what they learn with other young people and their families. They have fifteen trained ambassadors so far. They do not yet have any Youth Ambassadors from the state of Washington, so young self-advocates from our state are encouraged to apply!

March 2022 Calendar

All events are free and on-line

[Up Your Parenting Game](#) – March 2

[Pediatric Complex Care Seminar: Poly-pharmacy](#) – March 10

[Preparing for Life After School](#) – March 10

[Sharing Down Syndrome in Pierce County](#) – March 11

[Calling Autistic Parents](#) – March 13

[Tools 4 Success Conference Day 1](#) – March 22

[Familias Resilientes](#) – March 22

[STOMP Brunch and Learn](#) – March 25

[Tools 4 Success Conference Day 2](#) – March 29