

LURIE LINKS

The Newsletter of the Lurie Center for Autism at Massachusetts General Hospital / MassGeneral Hospital for Children

January 2017



How to Prepare for February School Vacation

By Kirstin Birtwell, PhD

School vacation weeks are often a welcome respite for students, teachers, and parents. However, some parents of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) dread when these "vacations" grow near, as both children and parents view school vacation as an acute disruption to an otherwise manageable schedule. Many individuals with ASD have trouble with changes in routines. [\[Read more\]](#)



About the Lurie Center for Autism

[About the Lurie Center](#)

[Visiting the Lurie Center](#)

[Research opportunities](#)

Save the Date For Our Meet the Experts Forum

April 25, 2017, 6:00-8:30PM

Please email fdl@partners.org

to receive an invitation.

Reservations are required

Lurie Land Party

Lurie Land is a holiday party for all our patients and families (from toddlers to 50 year olds) and this year we had over 150 people join us to celebrate on December



13th. The Lurie Center 'elves' transform the Center with holiday decorations throughout the Center. We offered many activities in different themed rooms - or "lands" throughout the Center. This year attendees were able to line dance, play games like Apples to Apples™ and Poppa's Pizza Topple™ game, decorate cookies and get their face painted! As always, the famous Mr. Vic livened up the event with his singing and instruments and somehow managed to encourage even some of our most hesitant attendees to begin banging drums, shaking castanets, march, and sing-along. "Snack Land" drew many guests but Santa and Mrs. Claus appeared to be the highlight for many. For some, this was their first time meeting Santa because it can be overwhelming, but at Lurie Land, Santa and Mrs. Claus talk with participants in a quieter, slower paced setting that allows kids (and adults) to interact comfortably.

One mom of a patient said "*This was even better than we expected!*" We couldn't agree more - but it is seeing all the families enjoying themselves that made the Annual Lurie Land party the favorite event of all of our staff.

Visit [Facebook](#) to see the pictures from the event!

Meet our new Director of Research, Staci Bilbo!

An internationally renowned neuroscientist, Dr. Bilbo's research focuses on the immune and central nervous system during early development. Dr. Bilbo will work alongside Lurie Center Director, Christopher McDougle, MD, to hasten the pace of discovery and translate this knowledge into better treatments for patients. [\[Read More\]](#)



Come hear Dr. Bilbo speak about the latest updates on the groundbreaking research helping to define a sub-type of autism!



February Coffee Convo:

Stop by the Lurie Center on Feb. 15 from 6:30 -7:30 PM! The topic will be "Helping your child manage anxiety", presented by Scott McLeod, PhD, Director of Aspire. RSVP: Luriecenter@partners.org



**January 18
6:30-7:30 pm
Lurie Center for
Autism, Lexington**

**RSVP: Reply to this
email or call:
781-860-1700**

Children's Autism Metabolome Project (CAMP)

By Elizabeth Masterman, LICSW

Imagine if diagnosing autism spectrum disorder (ASD) was as simple as a blood test. At the Lurie Center for Autism, research is being done to determine whether a blood test can do just that through the Children's Autism Metabolome Project (CAMP).



Dr. Ann Neumeyer, child neurologist and Medical Director at the Lurie Center for Autism, is the doctor leading the CAMP study at the Lurie Center. "We don't yet have any blood test for autism," she said. "This study is investigating whether a new blood test can diagnose ASD." [\[Read More\]](#)

Caregiver Workshops

NEWLY DIAGNOSED

Monthly, 3rd Tuesday, 12-1:00 pm, Free

BEHAVIOR BASICS

Monthly, 4th Tuesday, 11:30-1 pm, \$20/Family

GUARDIANSHIP 101

Monthly, 1st & 3rd Fridays, 12-1:00 pm, \$20/Family

GUARDIANSHIP 102

Monthly, 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 11-12:30 pm, \$50/Family

[Read the complete descriptions by clicking here.](#) Registration is required by calling 781-860-1700.