

**APRIL 2025**



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## **APRIL GIVEAWAY**

*Who doesn't love a run to Meijer!  
We will draw two employees at  
random who will receive a \$50  
gift card for Meijer.*



*Stay tuned next month to find  
out who the lucky winner is.*

**Congratulations to March winners  
*Iris Dixon & Kay Binder***

*We hope the Target gift card helps you  
prepare for Spring!*



## Employee Milestone Anniversaries

We would like to recognize and congratulate the employees below for reaching a milestone anniversary in March.



15 Years  
Deward Guyton  
Sanaa Zora



10 Years  
Wanda Mitchell  
Mary-Sunithi Echols

5 Years  
Elizabeth Przytulski  
Mizanul Haque  
Tamatha Robinson  
Vanitra Owens  
Jennifer Dubisky

Thank you for demonstrating a continued commitment to ExpertCare and the clients we service.

You make a difference!



## APRIL IS DOG APPRECIATION MONTH



### HISTORY OF DOG APPRECIATION MONTH

Dogs were the first animals to be domesticated by humans and have been man's best friend ever since. Throughout history, dogs have been used by humans for guarding property, herding stock, and hunting games. Dogs are great companions and are even considered a member of one's family in many parts of the world. Dog Appreciation Month aims to celebrate all our furry friends in any way we can!

Dogs come in all sizes, shapes, and breeds, and there's a dog out there for everyone. However, whether you like big dogs or small dogs, every pup should be celebrated during Dog Appreciation Month. This month is all about celebrating our friends on four legs, drawing attention to the number of dogs in shelters, and encouraging the adoption of those dogs that are out there on the street. During the month, you can also address issues such as animal cruelty, including inhumane practices and conditions affecting companion and farm animals, illegal animal trade, animal slaughter, and the use of animals in research and product testing.

Today, Dog Appreciation Month has grown in popularity and continues to grow every day. During this month, people from across the world celebrate by volunteering at rescue homes, donating to a dog shelter, or giving special treats to their friends along with a big fluffy cuddle. So, no matter what kind of dog you have, make sure you spend this day showing your appreciation and showering your love.

[DOG APPRECIATION MONTH \(nationaltoday.com\)](https://www.nationaltoday.com)



# **HUD APPROVED HOMEBUYER EDUCATION WEBINAR**

**April 3, 2025 • 10AM – 3PM**

Be introduced to professionals from the industry and build your team for success! Presented by OLHSA's HUD Certified Housing Counselors, a local mortgage loan officer, and a Realtor. You will learn about the entire home-buying process - including credit, budgeting, down payment assistance, and mortgage approval & closing.

MSHDA certificate provided at end of class for all who attend the entire 5 hours. Class limited to current Oakland & Livingston County residents.

**Once you register you will receive a confirmation email. Registration will close and you will be sent the Zoom link 2 business days prior to the class.**

**To register for this class please visit**  
[www.olhsa.org/events](http://www.olhsa.org/events)

Questions: contact [housingcounseling@olhsa.org](mailto:housingcounseling@olhsa.org) or call 248-860-7845



VENTURE  
INC.



*A Community Action Agency*





# Money Mastery: Reaching Your Savings Goals

April 10, 2025 • 6-7:30 PM

We all have dreams and goals for our lives. Join OLHSA for a hands-on workshop and realize how to set realistic goals and incorporate **SAVING** into your plan.

- Explore your financial dreams and goals
- Understand what **saving** is, and how to use it to reach goals
- Learn different savings tools
- Practice making **SMART** goals



Workshop offered virtually on Zoom.

Online registration is **REQUIRED**. Must be an Oakland or Livingston County resident.  
Additional details will be emailed to you once you register.

Registration closes April 8, 2025.

To register please visit: <https://www.olhsa.org/events>

Or contact [housingcounseling@olhsa.org](mailto:housingcounseling@olhsa.org)



# SHOW ME THE MONEY DAY

## 2025



SHOW ME THE MONEY DAY

MICHIGAN

### A financial and community resource fair

Community members are invited to participate in a free in person Show Me the Money Day event. Hosted in partnership with CEDAM, Show Me the Money Day promotes access to free financial resources, affordable financial products and services and financial education classes.

## Saturday, April 12

VENDORS

GIVEAWAYS

### 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

VerKuilen Building

21885 Dunham Rd | Clinton Township, MI 48035

### WORKSHOPS

There will be six diverse financial workshops designed to expand your financial knowledge and skills. Engage with industry professionals, gain valuable insights, and develop practical strategies for success!

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

CALL: 586-469-7614

PRESENTED BY



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Extension



Health and Community Services  
Mecomb Community Action

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH





## Smart Money Missions Goosechase Game

### Program Details

This exciting and interactive scavenger hunt game is designed for youth, ages 13-19 years old residing in Michigan, to learn essential money management skills. Powered by the Goosechase app, participants will complete creative missions, answer trivia and solve puzzles to earn points and climb the leaderboard. A total of ten \$50 gift cards will be awarded to top scoring youth.

### Registration

More information and registration at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/smart-money-missions> or

<https://bit.ly/4h7zqji>

Deadline to register: April 28, 2025 at 11:59 PM EST



### Sponsorship

This program is free for participants and is made possible through a generous sponsorship from the Michigan Credit Union Foundation.



Laurie Rivetto,  
[rivettoL@msu.edu](mailto:rivettoL@msu.edu) or 734-727-7234

Kathy Jamieson,  
[jamies13@msu.edu](mailto:jamies13@msu.edu), 586-469-6093

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Game runs April 1- April 30, 2025







**Cost: \$25**

Income-based scholarships are available courtesy of TCF bank. Please contact the class instructor.

**Pre-registration is required**

**Accommodations for persons with disabilities:** Please contact the class instructor to request three weeks prior to the start of the event. Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

**Prefer self-paced?**  
eHome America  
Homebuyer Education

**Cost: \$99**

(Enter MSUE10 at checkout for \$10 off.)

Income-based scholarships are available.)



# Homeownership Education Webinars

## April 2025

- [April 2](#) 1pm - 5pm ET with [Jinnifer Ortquist](#)
- [April 10](#) 9am - 1pm ET with [Teagen Lefere](#)
- [April 15](#) 1pm - 5pm ET with [Carrie Grishaber](#)
- [April 21](#) 4pm - 8pm ET with [Ezra Pompos](#)

## May 2025

- [May 1](#) 9am - 1pm ET with [Jinnifer Ortquist](#)
- [May 7](#) 4pm - 8pm ET with [Dr. Erica Tobe](#)
- [May 15](#) 1pm - 5pm ET with [Teagen Lefere](#)
- [May 22](#) 9am - 1pm ET with [Carrie Grishaber](#)

## June 2025

- [June 5](#) 9am - 1pm ET with [Teagen Lefere](#)
- [June 12](#) 1pm - 5pm ET with [Ezra Pompos](#)
- [June 19](#) 4pm - 8pm ET with [Dr. Erica Tobe](#)
- [June 23](#) 1pm - 5pm ET with [Jinnifer Ortquist](#)

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Contact us for more info or register at [www.MIMoneyHealth.org](http://www.MIMoneyHealth.org)



## Lake Erie Lake St. Clair Fishery Workshop

Wednesday, April 9, 2025, 6-8 p.m.

**FREE!**

Detroit International Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center

**FREE!**

5437 W Jefferson Ave., Trenton, MI 48183

or Zoom

Sea Grant hosts fishery workshops to provide recreational anglers, commercial fishers, charter operators, agency staff, and researchers with a forum to share and discuss Great Lakes fishery management. While each workshop is different, agendas often cover fish populations and angler catch data, forage or prey fish surveys, offshore and open water fisheries, fisheries management activities, citizen science opportunities for anglers, and more.

### AGENDA:

- **6 p.m.** Welcome - Erica Clites and Angela Scapini, Michigan Sea Grant
- **6:05 p.m.** Lake Erie Water Levels update – Mark Breederland, Michigan Sea Grant (virtual)
- **6:15 p.m.** Status of Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair fishery – Todd Wills, MDNR
- **6:35 p.m.** Seasonal walleye migration – Mark Faust, Ohio DNR
- **6:50 p.m.** Yellow perch diet and growth - Andrew Briggs, Michigan DNR
- **7:05 p.m.** Ontario fisheries management in the Lake Erie to St. Clair River corridor - Mike Thorn, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- **7:25 p.m.** Recent NOAA habitat restoration projects in Lake Erie western basin - Ryan Darnton, NOAA
- **7:45 p.m.** Q&A and Wrap-up



This event is free, but registration is required. Use the QR Code or register at

[Event Summary for Lake Erie Lake St. Clair Fishery Workshop | ANR Events Management System](#)



## Detroit Autism Walk

Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup> 12 – 3 pm

Come join us for the Detroit Autism Walk at the **Children's Hospital of Michigan!** This in-person event is a great opportunity to show your support for individuals with autism and their families. Walk with us to raise awareness, promote acceptance, and celebrate the unique abilities of those on the spectrum. Together, we can make a difference in our community. Don't miss out on this meaningful event - register now! For more details visit: [https://](https://www.autisminthed.com/walkday25)

[www.autisminthed.com/walkday25](https://www.autisminthed.com/walkday25)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mothers Connected By Autism Brunch!

Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 11 am – 2 pm located at  
18791 15 Mile Road Clinton Township

Come join us for a morning filled with **cultural resources, support, delicious food, live music, raffles, live speakers** and more. This event is a wonderful opportunity for Mothers of children with autism to come together, share experiences, and build a sisterhood. Our brunch will feature Michigan Alliance resources, inspiring stories, and a chance to bond with other moms who understand your journey. Whether you're seeking advice, friendship, or simply a listening ear, this event is the perfect place to find it.

## Sensory Friendly Storytime

Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 10 – 11 am located at  
Sterling Heights Public Library  
40255 Dodge Park Rd Sterling Heights

This sensory-friendly story time is designed for children with disabilities and adaptive needs. It includes engaging stories, sensory activities, crafts, and adaptive movements tailored to each child. The program encourages creativity, self-expression and provides a supportive environment for all children to thrive. Contact 586.466.2665 for more information

## Wizard of Oz – Sensory Friendly Performance

April 25<sup>th</sup> 10 am at Macomb County Ballet 51504  
Danview Technology Ct Shelby Township  
586.843.3374 All tickets are \$25 Purchase tickets  
at [www.macombcenter.com](http://www.macombcenter.com).

Celebrate the magic of storytelling in this relaxed and inclusive event, perfect for individuals with sensory processing challenges, including autism, or families with young children. Follow Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Cowardly Lion as they journey through the whimsical land of Oz in a performance tailored to create a welcoming theater experience for all. Join us as we create a magical and accessible environment for all to enjoy this timeless classic.

This special performance includes:

- A relaxed entry/exit policy allowing audience members to leave and return as needed.
- Designated break areas offering quiet spaces throughout the Theater.
- Resources like a visual schedule to help audiences prepare for the event.
- Sensory adjustments, such as lower sound levels and softly lit house lights during the show.

Join us for a cast meet and greet following the performance. Performance runtime is approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes, including one 15-minute intermission.

## Sensory Performance: The SpongeBob Musical, Youth Edition

Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> 1 pm Tickets \$10-\$15 including  
fees

Sensory-friendly performances are designed to create a welcoming and comfortable arts experience for people with autism, sensory sensitivities, or other social, learning or cognitive disabilities. This will include house lighting, lower sound levels, and the ability to move around as needed during the performance. Also, a perfect opportunity for young first-time theatre goers to experience a live performance.

Plunge into this stunning all-singing, all-dancing, dynamic stage show! When the citizens of Bikini Bottom discover that a volcano will soon erupt and destroy their humble home, SpongeBob and his friends must come together to save the fate of their undersea world. With lives hanging in the balance and all hope lost, a most unexpected hero rises up. The power of optimism really can save the world! For more information and tickets: [AudienceView Professional](#)

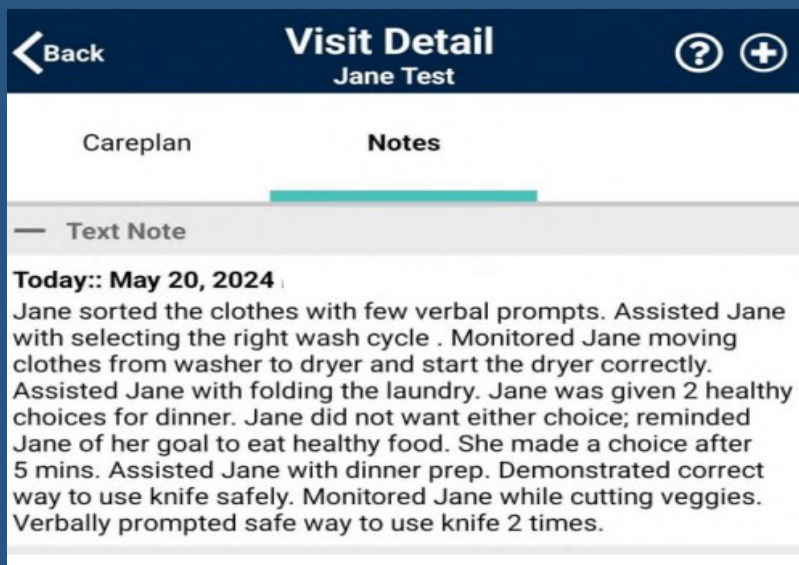
## HHA Tip of the Month

Happy April! For the HHA Tip this month, we wanted to go over what your Visit Text Note should include. Every shift that you work needs to have a text note that gives a detailed summary of what you did with your client during the service you provided. We recommend mentioning their mood, behavior, or trends that you are noticing with your client as well as mentioning the Plan of Care tasks that you mark off. Your note should cover all activities during your shift and any additional information that would be beneficial for us to know.

Below is an example of a Visit Text Note. Please review the example and ensure you are adding required details to your notes after each of your shifts. These notes stand as medical documentation for your client and are the final part of completing your timesheet for payroll processing. As a reminder, all your notes should be added to your timesheets no later than by 8am every Monday morning.

In case you need to find your Notes section, here is a video tutorial of this process: <https://youtu.be/0yIPRuUGgTk?si=Yl87hjDmceffPUmy>

If you have any specific questions on how to add your notes or what should be included, don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to assist you!



## HHA eXchange



Have questions regarding the HHA app? Each month, ExpertCare will be holding open HHA training sessions. If you need any help navigating the app or have questions, please attend one of the sessions listed below.

Wednesday, April 2 at 2pm

Tuesday, April 8 at 10am

Thursday, April 24 at 12pm

Please call our office to get scheduled for a refresher course. If you are unable to attend any of the sessions listed, call the office and we will answer your questions or work to schedule a different time. Keep an eye out for the training sessions for May in next month's newsletter!



# Therapist of the Quarter

We are pleased to introduce Dipal Patel, ExpertCare's Therapist of the Quarter.



Dipal started with ExpertCare in November of 2020 as a Physical Therapist. Dipal has exemplified what it means to be a dedicated and passionate therapist with ExpertCare. She has fostered so much growth within the individuals she works with. We have received nothing but outstanding feedback regarding Dipal and her skills. We are lucky to have her as part of the Therapy Team and are looking forward to many more years with her on the team.

**Thank you for all your hard work, dedication & commitment to help people succeed!**

**ExpertCare: What is the most rewarding experience you have had as a Physical Therapist?**

Dipal: I think the most rewarding part about being a PT is being able to see the progress towards developing new skills, whether that is learning how to roll from side to side or participate in some gross motor activities like kicking a ball, throwing/catching or jumping.

**ExpertCare: What's something you've always wanted to try but never did?**

Dipal: I have always wanted to try deep diving!

**ExpertCare: What are your hobbies outside of work?**

Dipal: I love to travel and try to visit 2-3 new countries every year, reading, watching documentaries and attempting to cook different cuisines.

**ExpertCare: What are three foods you can't live without?**

Dipal: Pizza, any type of curry and dark chocolate.

**ExpertCare: What is the first concert you attended?**

Dipal: Michael Bublé.

**ExpertCare: What is your best piece of advice for other Physical Therapists?**

Dipal: Be open to learning, be flexible and adapt to those that you work with- something that works for one individual may not necessarily work for another! Find a mentor that you can ask questions to and learn from- there is almost always someone with more experience that can provide guidance.

**ExpertCare: What have you learned from your experience as a Physical Therapist that has helped you in other aspects of your life?**

Dipal: I have learned to be so much more patient, a better active listener and definitely more flexible with my time.



April 1<sup>st</sup>: April Fool's Day



April 2<sup>nd</sup>: World Autism Awareness Day



April 18<sup>th</sup>: Good Friday

April 20<sup>th</sup>: Easter Sunday



April 21<sup>st</sup>: Easter Monday, Boston Marathon



April 22<sup>nd</sup>: Earth Day



## Special Education Resource Expo

April 17<sup>th</sup> - 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm FREE

Location: Salem High School Cafeteria, 46181 Joy Rd, Canton, MI

Please join us for our annual Special Education resource expo! Companies and agencies from the city, county and state will be present to share with you're their available supports and services! All families and students are welcome to attend!

## Sensory Friendly Outdoor Adventure Center

April 6<sup>th</sup> 9:30 – 11:30 am at the Outdoor Adventure Center at 1801 Atwater Street in Detroit

Enjoy the opportunity to explore and experience the OAC with building sounds and ambient noises at a lower volume. During your visit, there will be a quiet room with sensory materials available to use. At noon, the building will open to the public, with volumes returning to standard operating levels. All staff are KultureCity-certified to ensure the best possible experience.

In April, join us for a farm day at the OAC. Our archery range will be transformed into a barn, and you will be able to get up close with the animals! Plant seeds to make your very own flower rainbow – when they bloom!

For more information call 844.622.6367



<https://www.bluestonevoicesforautism.com/events>



BLUESTONE VOICES FOR AUTISM  
PRESENTS OUR ANNUAL:

# EASTER EGG- STRAVAGANZA

Month

4

Day

12

Year

25

from 11AM to 2PM

38945 Ann Arbor Rd Livonia, MI 48150

JOIN US FOR:

Egg hunts, games, raffles, food,  
easter bunny pictures, & more!

\$9 presale tickets, \$10 at the door for kids 2+

*\*adults & children under 2 are free\**

*For more information, visit  
[bluestonevoicesforautism.com](https://www.bluestonevoicesforautism.com)*

*\*All proceeds will provide support  
to families with children on the  
autism spectrum\**





DWIHN FIGHTS STIGMA

**Easter Sunday**  
**April 20, 2025**  
**SOULS Chat**  
**1:00 PM-2:00 PM**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://dwihn-org.zoom.us/j/81494929362>

Meeting ID: 814 9492 9362

Passcode: 1234



# MI Car Seat Law Changes

Beginning April 2, 2025



Public Health



Michigan child passenger safety laws are changing. See below for how the law has changed. Remember, safest practice is to always make sure safety belts, car seats, and boosters are snug and not too big.

## Before April 2025

## After April 2025

### Rear Facing



Children have to be in a rear-facing car seat until the child is either:

- At least **1** year old.
- Under 20 lbs.

Children have to be in a rear-facing car seat until the child is either:

- At least **2** years old.
- Over the weight or height limit set by the maker.

### Forward Facing



Children **under 4** years old must ride in a back seat if possible. If all back seats are taken by children under 4, then they may ride in a car seat in the front seat. A child in a rear-facing car seat may only ride in the front seat if the airbag is turned off.

Children have to be in a forward facing car seat, with an internal harness, until the child is either:

- At least **5** years old.
- Over the weight or height limit set by the maker.

### Booster Seat



Children have to be in a belt-positioning booster seat, secured with a lap-to-shoulder safety belt, until the child is either:

- At least **8** years old.
- At least four feet nine inches tall.

Children have to be in a belt-positioning booster seat, secured with a lap-to-shoulder safety belt, until the child is either:

- At least **8** years old.
- At least four feet nine inches tall.

### Back Seat & Buckled



Children, ages **8-15**, must buckle up in any seat in a vehicle.

Age 16 and up, people in front seats, both driver and passenger, must buckle up.

Children **under 13 years old**, must:

- Use a properly fitting safety belt.
- Be in the back seat, if there are back seats that are not all taken by other children.

## Human Resource NEWS!

All ExpertCare employees have access to their payroll information using the PrismHR Employee Portal. We encourage all employees to login to their account using the following link: <https://ser-ep.prismhr.com/>. Employees can also access the Employee Portal through the mobile app. If you don't have an account or forgot your username and password, please contact the Human Resources department at [HR@versicaregroup.com](mailto:HR@versicaregroup.com).

You can find the following in the Employee Portal or App:

- Paystubs and pay history
- Personal contact information
- Benefits summary
- Direct deposit
- Tax information and W2's
- Labor law notices

We want to make sure all employees are receiving important communications and updates so it's critical that we have up-to-date information on file. Please take the time to review your Personal Information menu in the Employee Portal. You can update certain information yourself such as your address, email, phone number, emergency contact, direct deposit, and tax information right from the portal! Alternatively, you can send your new information to [HR@versicaregroup.com](mailto:HR@versicaregroup.com) from the email address we have on file, and we will update your information.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please be sure to contact ExpertCare!



### HOW TO OBSERVE #OTMonth

- Throughout the month, recognize an occupational therapist you know.
- If you're interested in becoming an occupational therapist, explore their educational path.
- Share your experiences as an occupational therapist and why it's the career for you.
- Use #OTMonth to share on social media.

## Partner with Autism in the D Sponsorship & Vendor Opportunities

We're gearing up for A Weekend of Inclusivity this April, featuring our 2nd Annual A Night of Inclusivity Gala (April 5, 2025) and our 5th Annual Autism Awareness Walk (April 6, 2025). This year is especially important as we are actively fundraising to open Detroit's first ASD-adaptive and inclusive play gym in 2026—a space designed to provide sensory-friendly activities, social engagement, and support for families.

We are currently seeking sponsors and vendors who are passionate about making a real impact. This is a great opportunity to connect with over 1,000 attendees, showcase your brand, and directly contribute to creating a much-needed space for our community.

Sponsorship and vendor information can be accessed via the link: <https://www.autisminthed.com/an-inclusive-weekend>



## Team GUTS Summer Camp 2025

Team GUTS is excited to offer a summer day camp experience for children, teens, and adults with special needs. Our Team GUTS Fun & Fitness Camp will include a variety of fitness activities, such as athletic training, sports skills, obstacle courses, martial arts, dance, daily nature walks, and more. Campers will also participate in nutritional activities where they will learn to prepare delicious and healthy snacks. Join us at the Team GUTS Fun & Fitness Camp to make friends and create lasting memories!

Who: Those with special needs ages 7 - adult

When: June 16 - 20, June 23 - 27, July 7 - 11, July 14 - 18

Time: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Where: Hunter Community Center 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, Michigan 48017

Cost: \$275/week

**Attend three (3) weeks and get a fourth (4) week free**

Contact Team GUTS at [info@teamgutsmichigan.com](mailto:info@teamgutsmichigan.com) or if you are current Team GUTS member register online at [www.teamgutsmichigan.com](http://www.teamgutsmichigan.com).



# HOME VACCINATION PROGRAM



## Get Vaccinated in the Comfort of Your Own Home

Routine adult and childhood vaccines available  
including covid vaccines.

### Available for those who have:

- A disability, injury, or illness preventing travel without a supportive device or caregiver
- Medical, financial or transportation barriers
- Higher risk of illness
- Considerable, taxing effort to leave the home

Call Nurse on Call at 800-848-5533 for more information.

*The Health Division accepts most insurances including Medicare and Medicaid.  
No one will be denied services if uninsured or due to inability to pay.*

OakGov.com/Health | Nurse On Call: 800.848.5533 | NOC@OakGov.com |   @PublicHealthOC

The Oakland County Health Division will not deny participation in its programs based on race, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. State and federal eligibility requirements apply for certain programs. 24-118\_4.19.24





# Wellness Wednesdays

Every Wednesday beginning January 15, 2025

**Wednesdays, 10:30am – 12:30pm**

## **Baldwin Center**

212 Baldwin Ave, Pontiac, MI 48342

Enjoy a meal from the Baldwin Center and connect with free health, housing, and employment resources.

## **Resources Available**

- Showers
- Laundry Facilities
- Housing Resources
- Career & Employment Support
- Community Navigation
- Medical Services

*Additional services will be available on a rotating basis.*

## **Open to all Oakland County Residents**

If you are service provider and would like to learn more about getting involved, please contact Genessa Doolittle at: [doolittleg@oakgov.com](mailto:doolittleg@oakgov.com) or Darryl Earl at: [earld@oakgov.com](mailto:earld@oakgov.com)



**BALDWIN CENTER**  
Feed, Clothe, Educate, Empower

[OakGov.com/Health](http://OakGov.com/Health) | Nurse On Call: 800.848.5533 | [NOC@OakGov.com](mailto:NOC@OakGov.com) | [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/PublicHealthOC) [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/PublicHealthOC) @PublicHealthOC

The Oakland County Health Division will not deny participation in its programs based on race, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. State and federal eligibility requirements apply for certain programs. 24-057\_12.12.24

# FREE TAX PREPARATION

Provided in partnership with



**Saturdays, by Appointment Only!**

January 25-April 12, 2025 from 9:30a.m. – 12:30p.m.

**Location:** 196 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, Pontiac MI

**Schedule Now:** (248) 716-3260 or [accountingaidsociety.org](http://accountingaidsociety.org)

## Required documents include, but are not limited to

- ID
- Social Security Card (for everyone in the household)
- Social Security Benefit Statement
- W2 (for every job)
- Property Information (Taxes printed out if owner/Lease agreement if renter, must have landlord's name, address, and amount of rent)
- Last heating bill from December
- Appointment must be scheduled in **legal name of taxpayer**. Use of other names may result in needing to reschedule for a later date.

**Income Guidelines:** Individuals & Families = \$67,000 or less annually

At this time only the **taxpayer**, their **spouse**, or a caregiver (if needed for paperwork assistance) are allowed in the building. **NO Children** are allowed at the tax sites at this time.





# Autism Acceptance Walk

Sunday, April 27 @10AM

Veterans Memorial Park  
207 N Lake Street • Boyne City, MI



The **Autism Acceptance Walk** will be about a half mile in length. All individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, family, friends, and the community are invited to join together to walk in support of Autism Acceptance.

**DRAWING!** All participants will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of many great prizes. Must be present to win.



**\$12**  
Register by April 1, 2025 to receive a t-shirt  
On-site Registration @9AM

*Individuals who would like to participate but not receive a t-shirt may do so by donation*



**NORTH COUNTRY**  
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# I'M SO STRESSED OUT!

From the **NATIONAL INSTITUTE of MENTAL HEALTH**

**Feeling overwhelmed? Read this fact sheet to learn whether it's stress or anxiety, and what you can do to cope.**

## Is it stress or anxiety?

Life can be stressful—you may feel stressed about performance at school, traumatic events (such as a pandemic, a natural disaster, or an act of violence), or a life change. Everyone feels stress from time to time.

What is stress? Stress is the physical or mental response to an external cause, such as having a lot of homework or having an illness. A stressor may be a one-time or short-term occurrence, or it can happen repeatedly over a long time.

What is anxiety? Anxiety is your body's reaction to stress and can occur even if there is no current threat.

If that anxiety doesn't go away and begins to interfere with your life, it could affect your health. You could experience problems with sleeping, or with your immune, digestive, cardiovascular, and reproductive systems. You also may be at higher risk for developing a mental illness such as an anxiety disorder or depression. More information about anxiety disorders is available at [www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders).

## So, how do you know when to seek help?

## Stress vs. Anxiety

### Stress

- Generally is a response to an external cause, such as taking a big test or arguing with a friend..
- Goes away once the situation is resolved.
- Can be positive or negative. For example, it may inspire you to meet a deadline, or it may cause you to lose sleep.

### Both Stress and Anxiety

Both stress and anxiety can affect your mind and body. You may experience symptoms such as:

- Excessive worry
- Uneasiness
- Tension
- Headaches or body pain
- High blood pressure
- Loss of sleep

### Anxiety

- Generally is internal, meaning it's your reaction to stress.
- Usually involves a persistent feeling of apprehension or dread that doesn't go away, and that interferes with how you live your life.
- Is constant, even if there is no immediate threat.





## It's important to manage your stress.

Everyone experiences stress, and sometimes that stress can feel overwhelming. You may be at risk for an anxiety disorder if it feels like you can't manage the stress and if the symptoms of your stress:

- Interfere with your everyday life.
- Cause you to avoid doing things.
- Seem to be always present.



## Coping With Stress and Anxiety

Learning what causes or triggers your stress and what coping techniques work for you can help reduce your anxiety and improve your daily life. It may take trial and error to discover what works best for you. Here are some activities you can try when you start to feel overwhelmed:

- Keep a journal.
- Download an app that provides relaxation exercises (such as deep breathing or visualization) or tips for practicing mindfulness, which is a psychological process of actively paying attention to the present moment.
- Exercise, and make sure you are eating healthy, regular meals.
- Stick to a sleep routine, and make sure you are getting enough sleep.
- Avoid drinking excess caffeine such as soft drinks or coffee.
- Identify and challenge your negative and unhelpful thoughts.
- Reach out to your friends or family members who help you cope in a positive way.

## Recognize When You Need More Help

If you are struggling to cope, or the symptoms of your stress or anxiety won't go away, it may be time to talk to a professional. Psychotherapy (also called talk therapy) and medication are the two main treatments for anxiety, and many people benefit from a combination of the two.

If you or someone you know has a mental illness, is struggling emotionally, or has concerns about their mental health, there are ways to get help. Find more information on the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) website at [www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp).

If you are in immediate distress or are thinking about hurting yourself, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at **988** or chat at [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org).

## More Resources

- NIMH: Anxiety Disorders ([www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders))
- NIMH: Caring for Your Mental Health ([www.nimh.nih.gov/mymentalhealth](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/mymentalhealth))
- NIMH: Child and Adolescent Mental Health ([www.nimh.nih.gov/children](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/children))
- NIMH: Tips for Talking With a Health Care Provider About Your Mental Health ([www.nimh.nih.gov/talkingtips](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/talkingtips))
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Anxiety and Depression in Children ([www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/depression.html](http://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/depression.html))



**NIH** National Institute of Mental Health

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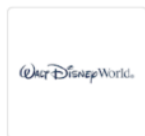
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It's that time of year!  
Taxes are due April 15, 2025

Tax season is a great time to re-evaluate your finances and determine if changes need to be made to your W-4 form for the upcoming year. Unfortunately, Expert-Care cannot provide any guidance or assistance in regard to the completion of your W-4 Forms. We recommend you take advantage of the IRS Withholding Calculator which will factor in all variables specific to your tax liability and provide a recommendation on how to complete your W-4 form. You can access the IRS calculator by going to: <https://apps.irs.gov/app/tax-withholding-estimator/income-and-withholding/>. If you need more assistance or are uncomfortable using the IRS calculator, we encourage you to consult a tax professional.

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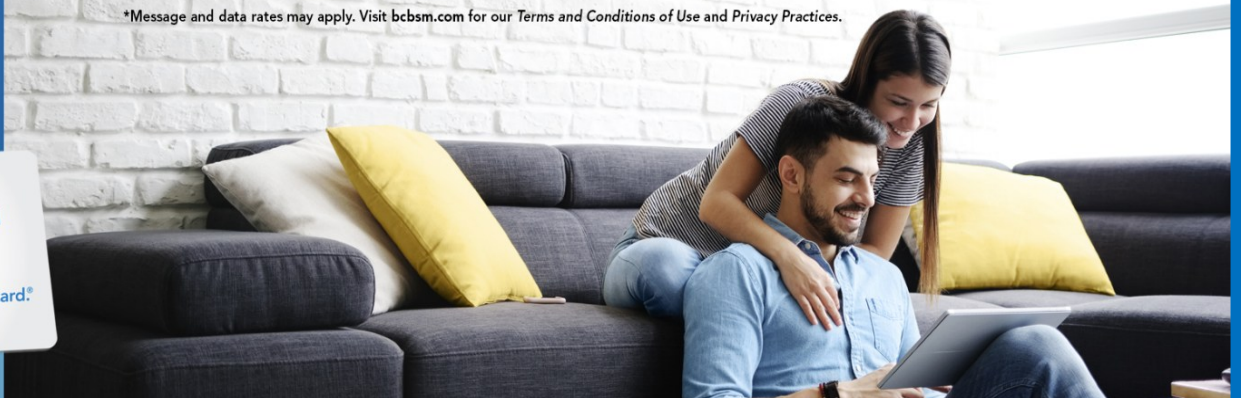
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## GETTING TO KNOW THE EXPERTCARE OFFICE STAFF

### MEET MELISSA BROWNWELL-LAFRAMBOISE

We thought it would be nice to introduce ourselves and tell you a little bit about each of our office staff. Each month we will feature a new interview with someone from our office.

#### **ECare: What is your job title and role at ExpertCare?**

Melissa: I am a Scheduling Coordinator at ExpertCare, primarily for Occupational Therapy. My role is to create meaningful connections between families and the services they need. With care and attention, I match each family with the right therapist, ensuring they receive the support and guidance to thrive.

#### **ECare: How do you enjoy spending your time outside of work?**

Melissa: Outside of work, I enjoy spending quality time with my kids, whether it's playing games or going on adventures. I also love expressing my creativity, whether through arts, crafts, or exploring new ideas and projects.

#### **ECare: Would you rather be a tiny elephant or giant hamster and why?**

Melissa: I'd choose to be a tiny elephant because elephants are intelligent, social, and have an incredible memory. Being small would make it easier to navigate tight spaces, so I would be able to go on far more adventures!

#### **ECare: If you could choose a superpower what would it be?**

Melissa: If I could choose a superpower, I would pick mind reading. It would allow me to understand people's true thoughts and feelings, making it easier to empathize with others and communicate more effectively. Plus, it would help me uncover hidden truths and solve problems faster by knowing exactly what others are thinking.

#### **ECare: Share with us something new that you have learned in the last year.**

Melissa: Over the past year, I've learned that setting clear boundaries between work and personal time is essential for maintaining a healthy work-life balance. It's not just about the hours I have worked but also about how I spend my off time. I try engaging in activities that genuinely recharge me, like spending time with my family, trying new hobbies, and going on new adventures. Additionally, being intentional about "unplugging" from my work-related devices and social media during my free time has a significant impact on reducing stress and boosting my overall well-being.

#### **ECare: What's an accomplishment that you're most proud of?**

Melissa: At work, I am most proud that I play crucial part in helping families navigate their journey toward improved well-being and being a part of making a lasting impact on their lives. Personally, my proudest accomplishments are being a loving and supportive mom, always striving to create a nurturing environment where my children feel safe, valued, and encouraged to grow into their best selves. Watching them thrive and develop their own unique strengths brings me immense joy.

#### **ECare: What's the best advice you have received?**

Melissa: The best advice I've ever received is to focus on living in the moment and embracing what's in front of me. Happiness comes not from chasing distant goals but from fully appreciating the small, everyday experiences. Life's true joy is found in the present, not in the past or future.



## LOOK WHO'S TALKING

### MARCH CAREGIVER OF THE MONTH

#### MELANIE BROWN

**ECare: What made you decide to become a Caregiver?**

Melanie: I enjoy caring for others and giving back to those who can't help themselves.

**ECare: What is your first paying Job?**

Melanie: My first paying job was actually two. I worked at Burger King and at the movie theater in Lincoln Park Michigan.

**ECare: What do you do for fun?**

Melanie: Road trips. I also enjoy being out in nature and yes, I like bugs too. Anything peaceful and sitting by the water reading.

**ECare: Have you ever met anyone famous?**

Melanie: I've met a few famous people in my lifetime. I met Lil' John and the East Side Boys one year at summer jams, my birthday weekend (while pregnant). I sat at the hotel and all of the celebrities were there. Lil' John bought me dinner and Lil' Scrappy gave it to me. My family partied with them for hours, we had a lot of fun!

**ECare: What is your best piece of advise for other caregivers?**

Melanie: My best advice to any caregiver old or new, do it with passion. Always have integrity in this type of field. The definition of a caregiver is one that's trusting, loving, and someone that will go over and beyond for someone else.

**ECare: Would you consider yourself an introvert or extrovert and why?**

Melanie: I consider myself a little of both. With different situations you have to present different abilities and qualifications that you may have. When you sit back and try to understand someone you might have to be a little more introverted, but my personality, being a Gemini that I am, allows me to be an extrovert and enjoy the difference in and of others.

**ECare: What have you learned from your caregiving experience that has helped you in other aspects of your life?**

Melanie: I've experienced caregiving myself with my eldest son at the age of two, who was born with a murmur in his heart which had to be repaired at three years old. He caught Tuberculosis, Meningitis, secondary to Hydrocephalus of the brain, where he had to undergo more than 16 brain surgeries, starting with an emergency surgery with seizure activity. The medication that he was given, he went temporarily blind, which had to get diagnosed by me, so I had to pay close attention. My son was in Children's for 7 1/2 months consistently and I was there every step of the way. Only went home to get clothes, so it became second nature. He had to get a shunt placed in his brain. He's now 23 years old, and I had to teach him how to walk, talk, even eat again, so this is something that I do with everything inside of me for yours and mine!!! It's in me, not on me!



This month, we are honored to recognize Melanie Brown as our Caregiver of the Month for her outstanding dedication, bravery, and unwavering commitment to those she serves.

Melanie recently demonstrated extraordinary courage when her recipient's apartment building caught fire. In a terrifying and high-pressure situation, she acted without hesitation—staying calm, thinking quickly, and ensuring both her recipient and herself were safely evacuated. Her ability to remain composed and take decisive action in such a critical moment is nothing short of heroic.

Beyond this incredible act, Melanie embodies the very best qualities of a caregiver. She is dependable, compassionate, and an exceptional team player. She approaches every shift with a positive attitude, treats her recipients with the utmost care and respect, and provides support as if they were her own family.

Melanie, your dedication and kindness make a profound impact, and we are incredibly grateful to have you on our team. Thank you for all that you do!

Thank you for demonstrating ExpertCare's core values of:  
Helping People Succeed  
Passion for Success  
Can Do Attitude