

https://www.bgdailynews.com/community/walk-for-autism-april-has-multiple-events/article_f0dab844-2484-51d4-99a3-04455ae3f29a.html

Walk for autism April has multiple events

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The Suzanne Vitale Clinical Education Complex at WKU is a place where families are accepted and supported while navigating unique challenges that others may not understand. The CEC enhances socialization and communication skills while enriching the quality of life for individuals and families impacted by autism, developmental delays and disabilities. The CEC is comprised of the Renshaw Early Childhood Center, the Communication Disorders Clinic, the Family Resource Program, the Kelly Autism Program, and LifeWorks at WKU.

For the past 15 years the CEC has hosted the Annual Run/Walk for Autism, which has been sponsored by LifeSkills. This year, it is scheduled to be held on Saturday, April 15, at the Bowling Green Ballpark, with “day of” registration beginning at 7 a.m. For complete registration options and details, visit the website at: <https://www.wku.edu/runforautism>. There is an early bird rate that ends March 10.

Volunteers are needed to hold directional signs and cheer on the runners during the race. Anyone interested in volunteering can email runforautism@wku.edu.

According to Mary Lloyd Moore, executive director of the CEC, this year's event includes something for everyone:

- A 4-Mile Run (begins at 8 a.m., timing stops at 9 a.m.) A Bowling Green Road Runners Grand Prix Event.
- A 1-Mile Kid's Run (begins at 9:05 a.m.) – for children up to age 12
- A 1-Mile Fun Walk (begins at 9:30 a.m.)

and,



- A 1-Mile Fun Run (begins at 9:30 a.m. and will not be timed) – for all ages

Moore also wants to remind everyone that T-shirts are available, but the supply is limited, so register early. In order to be guaranteed a T-shirt, registrations must be received by March 24.

As an added bonus this year, LifeSkills is teaming up with LifeWorks to sponsor the screening of a documentary film entitled “In a Different Key,” which will be shown at 2 p.m. at the Capitol Arts Theatre at 416 E. Main Street in downtown Bowling Green on Saturday, April 15, the afternoon of the Run/Walk for Autism.

David Wheeler, executive director of the LifeWorks program, said this is definitely something worth watching on the big screen. “It is the story of the first person ever diagnosed with autism,” said Wheeler. “A man named Donald Triplett, who is now elderly and living in rural Mississippi. This documentary encompasses the history of autism and explores what acceptance truly looks like.”

“We’d like to feature this as a community service,” said Wheeler. “It is fascinating and moving and although it explores some dark parts of history, it is also relevant today and offers us hope and light.”

There is no charge for admission. LifeWorks WKU is a transition academy for young adults with low support need autism. The focus is to help them gain independence and employability. LifeWorks participants develop crucial skills in the areas of career-readiness, self-reliance, and social interaction. This is Kentucky’s only living/learning transition program for individuals with autism. It is a 24-month program and participants live independently on site. Find out more at <https://www.lifeworksatwku.org>

Maureen Mahaney coordinates public information for LifeSkills, Inc., a non-profit, behavioral health care corporation that plans for and serves the people of southcentral Kentucky in three main areas: mental health, addiction, and developmental disabilities. Her column appears monthly.

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