



Fall Newsletter

September–December 2024

Recycle & Save Money! Details:

[Goodnow Library, Sudbury](#)
[Roudenbush CC, Westford](#)



Congratulations Emily and Jasmine!

We are pleased to announce some changes in leadership at First Connections. Debbie Werneberg, who has served as Program Director for the past 4 years, will be stepping down from her role. She will continue to support community-based programs like ours at JRI through her new position as Agency Grant Writer. We want to express our sincere gratitude for her dedication, hard work, and countless contributions to First Connections during her tenure. We wish Debbie all the best in her new role.

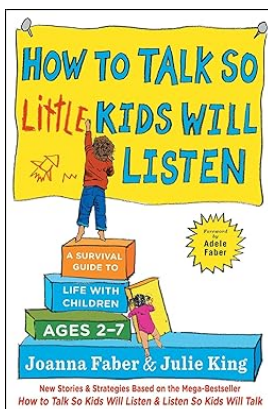
We are delighted to announce **Emily Fiorini** as our new Program Director and **Jasmine Wang** as our ParentChild+ Coordinator. As valued members of the First Connections team, Emily and Jasmine are well positioned and *very excited* to step into these roles.

In addition to her clinical expertise at Metrowest Behavioral Health Center, Emily brings 8 years of management experience to this position, has a wide range of experience supporting families, and has successfully led non-profit business ventures. She will continue to facilitate our Emotional Wellbeing After Baby group and to collaborate with Mary on the First Year of Life Program.

After finding First Connections as a parent, Jasmine served on our team as a volunteer for over a year. She attended the Parent Ambassador Program, where her leadership skills began to shine. In addition to serving as a PC+ Early Learning Specialist home visitor, Jasmine has supported and facilitated many playgroups, including launching our popular Mandarin Storytime. During the past year, Jasmine completed *Futures*, a JRI leadership training program, and received the DEI Champion Award. Next month Jasmine will complete the ParentChild+ Coordinator training and she will lead the PC+ program in collaboration with Ellie Springer, who also received the DEI Champion Award. Jasmine will continue to work as a home visitor and facilitator of the Mandarin Storytime.

Free Fall Parenting Topics

To attend any parent education program, email: imatthews@jri.org



How to Talk so Little Kids Will Listen Playgroup & Parent Education Program For families with children age 3-5

In this group, we will read a portion of the book before each group and then have a chance to talk about key points with each other, ask questions, and get support, while children play amongst us in the playroom. Families with multiple children, including siblings under 3, are welcome. Infants should be held or in a carrier to keep them safe. All parents will receive a copy of the book (also available on Audible and through libraries as an audiobook, but we recommend using a hard or electronic copy due to images that would be hard to translate via audio). There will be a circle time with story and songs included at the conclusion.

Limited to 10 families.

Wednesdays, 10-11:15, Sept. 18-Dec. 11
Held at First Connections in Acton

The Magic of Co-Regulation and How it Wires Developing Brains for Resilience presented by Chrissy Dagostino, M.A.

In recent years, self-regulation has become widely recognized as one of the critical "soft skills" associated with emotional and social wellbeing for humans at all ages and stages of development, but how do we help kids to develop it?! Join Chrissy for a workshop exploring the magic of co-regulation, a prerequisite for self-regulation, and learn how providing consistent and effective co-regulation for our young children lays the very foundation for their own self-regulation to develop. We will explore the science behind this relational process, as well as practical examples for co-regulating with our young ones, even in the trickiest of moments. **Part 2, "The Foundations of Self-Regulation in Young Children"** will be presented January 23rd.

How co-regulation helps children handle emotional distress



Thursday, November 21
Live webinar at 8:00 p.m.
This program will not be recorded.



Choosing a Child Care or Preschool presented by Ellie Springer, M.Ed.EC

If you are planning to enroll your child in preschool in 2025, or are looking for child care, you may have questions about how to find a program that will be a good fit for you and for your child. In this virtual meeting, we will discuss what options are available in the area, and what questions to ask schools when visiting. Handouts and an up-to-date listing of local schools and child care providers, as well as information on child care subsidies and preschool scholarships will be provided. Ellie's teaching degree is in Early Childhood Education and she has worked in numerous early childhood education settings.

Thursday, December 5
Live webinar 7:00-8:00 p.m.

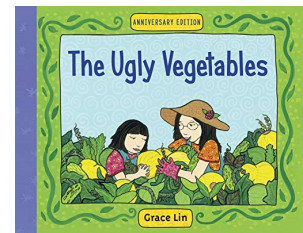


Fall Storywalk

The Ugly Vegetables by Grace Lin Bedford Public Library, 7 Mudge Way September 9 thru 23

If you visit on **September 21st**, watch Bedford Day Parade (10:30) and visit the Fair (10-2:00)! Pick up a coloring sheet at the end of the storywalk! This is a bilingual English/Chinese book.

[Parade & Fair Info](#)



Know Before You Go this Fall!

Free COVID Tests available in September

Check this website at the end of the month to order 4 free tests that will detect current variants. The website also has information and links about what to do if you test positive, why vaccination is the best defense, and where to get more tests if you need them.

Fall Playgroup Schedule



To register for any playgroup listed below, please email lmattthews@jri.org. If this is the first time you are registering, please let us know what town you live in. We appreciate your respecting the minimum and maximum ages for groups on the date they begin.

Ages and Stages Playgroup for 12-23 Months
Fridays 10:00-11:00 at Village Nursery School, Harvard
Sept. 20, 27, Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25, Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22, Dec. 6, 13*

This group will meet on a fenced-in playground as much as long as weather permits, and at First Connections in Acton when it is raining and/or cold. Children will have a chance to play with balls, dig in the sand, and "cook"

in the mud kitchen. Each week we will also have other activities designed to foster the children's gross motor development, as well as their social skills, confidence in taking appropriate risks, fine motor and language development. We will end each group with a circle time with songs and a book. Infant siblings in carriers welcome. **This group will NOT meet November 29*

Ages and Stages Playgroup for 24-35 Months
Mondays 10:00-11:00 at Concord Carousel Preschool
*Sept. 16, 23, 30, Oct. 7, 21, 28, Nov. 4, 18, 25, Dec. 2, 9**

This group will meet in a preschool classroom, where the children will have a chance to play with their toys and activities based on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to help them practice their social, fine motor, language, problem-solving, and other skills as they interact with each other and the materials. Each group will end with a circle time with songs and a book. Infant siblings in carriers welcome.

**This group will NOT meet on Oct. 14 and will meet at First Connections on Nov. 11.*

3-5-Year-Old Playgroup/Caregiver Book Discussion Group
Wednesdays, 10:00-11:15 at First Connections, 179 Great Rd., Acton

For families with children age 3-5, this group will integrate play for the children with support and conversation for the caregivers (see full description in the "Parent Education" section above).

Outdoor Science Playgroup for Ages 2-5 Years
Thursdays, 10-11:00 at Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge, 680 Hudson Rd, Sudbury
Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Nov. 7, 14, 21

In this group, we will explore the trails and natural wonders of the wildlife refuge, read books about nature, and do some nature-themed activities. Not all trails are stroller-accessible, so children should be able to walk or be worn or carried. In case of inclement weather, we will meet at First Connections in Acton.

Hanscom Little Learners Playgroup for Ages 6 months through 5 years
Tuesdays 10:00-11:00, at Youth Center Gym for those with access to Hanscom AFB
Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Nov. 5, 12, 19, 26, Dec. 3, 10

This group will provide opportunities for children to play with peers, learn or practice new skills, and explore different toys. Caregivers will have the chance to play with their children and to connect with other families on the base. Each group will include a circle time with songs & a book. Come see old friends & meet new ones!

Infant siblings in carriers welcome.

Mandarin Story Time with Jasmine

Saturday Morning Mandarin Story Times for Ages 2 thru 5

Virtual Groups meet 9:00-9:30 via Zoom

Occasional In-Person Meet-ups: 10:30-11:30



Ms. Jasmine's popular program includes read aloud stories, language facial exercises, introduction to Chinese characters and pronunciations, and virtual activities. Jasmine Wang graduated from Communication University of China with a Master's Degree in Language Arts and a Certification of Mandarin Grade A. She has 5 years of experience teaching Mandarin, specializing in teaching vocalization, speech, recitation, and debate. She is currently First Connections' ParentChild+ Coordinator This is a Mandarin immersion experience with one-time registration and weekly zoom sign-ins.

If you would like to be added to this group, email Jasmine: xwang@jri.org

New Parent Programs - Newborn to 12 Months

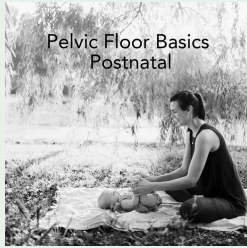


New Mothers Group - Every Wednesday, 1:00-2:30

Anyone who identifies as a mother with a pre-walking baby is welcome to attend this ongoing weekly virtual group facilitated by Early Childhood Educator, Lactation Counselor, Infant Massage Teacher and Pediatric Sleep Consultant Mary Beilman. This open discussion group is a forum for you to share experiences and resources, connect with other new mothers, learn

about your baby's development, and seek guidance about any concerns you might have. Currently held virtually, with an in-person meeting one Wednesday of each month thru RSVP. Email mbeilman@jri.org for the zoom link. Email imatthews@jri.org to attend the in-person group.

Meets in person on September 11, October 9, November 6 & December 4 at Littleton Library
Meets via Zoom on other Wednesdays.



Pelvic Health Presentation by Emerson Therapists Wednesday, September 4 at 1:00 via Zoom

Do you leak when you laugh, cough or sneeze? Have you had trouble lifting or getting back into exercise? Do you have pain with intercourse? If so, join the pelvic health physical therapists to learn more about pelvic floor dysfunction and pain, and how it can be treated. If you are attending New Mothers Group you will automatically receive the link to this webinar. If you are not and would like to join us for this discussion, email imatthews@jri.org and we'll be sure you receive the link.

Emotional Wellbeing After Baby

Emotional challenges are the most common complication of pregnancy and childbirth, yet parents often feel isolated and ashamed if they are struggling. Parents experiencing anxiety or depression in the postpartum year can come together in this supportive, nonjudgmental, confidential group to share stories and learn

from each other while receiving coping strategies and skills. Before participating for the first time, please contact the facilitator, **Emily Fiorini, M.A.**, so she can send you the connecting zoom link. Our office maintains an extensive list of mental health providers and support groups for postpartum depression and anxiety. For assistance in finding a counselor or a support group that fits your schedule, or to speak with Emily about specific concerns related to postpartum depression or anxiety, email efiori@jri.org

This group meets every Wednesday, 9:30-11:00 via Zoom.

Funding for this group provided by Emerson Health and The Nordblum Family Foundation

Postpartum Depression

COMMON SYMPTOMS

Changes in sleep patterns	Anger/Rage	Weepiness or sadness
Difficulty concentrating	Change in appetite	Anxiety

ParentChild+
Equal Possibilities From The Start



First Connections' ParentChild+ program brings fun and engaging early learning experiences into your home at no cost to you! Each week an Early Learning Specialist visits bringing a high-quality book or toy that you keep. The specialist models reading, conversations, and play activities for parents, which are designed to promote language, literacy, and school readiness. The program is designed to begin with children ages 18-24 months and is offered for 23 to 46 weeks to families within our 11-town catchment area. Bilingual Spanish and Mandarin specialists are available. The program is especially helpful for families who cannot easily attend our playgroups due to lack of transportation, a language barrier, having multiple children under age 6, single parenting, or who are experiencing financial or other challenging circumstances. If you would like to learn more, contact Jasmine at firstconnections@jri.org or text/call 978-505-4227.

National Diaper Need

AWARENESS WEEK

***** 09.23.24-09.29.24**



How you can help: Consider a diaper drive through your business, school or group. Or you can ship to our office, or send a check for us to purchase needed diaper sizes tax-free.

First Connections Diaper Pantry Critical Need thru December

- Since January, we have assisted 29 families with their need for diapers; they can visit the pantry once a month.
- Our funds to purchase needed sizes are currently very low, and a new round of grants will not begin until January
- Families must register with us and qualify for WIC, SNAP, childcare subsidy, subsidized housing, or have other circumstances that make their financial situation unstable.
- As part of the registration process, we refer families to other benefits programs they may be eligible for.
- Some of our diaper pantry clients have enrolled in our PC+ home visiting program for more parent support and early learning activities for their children.
- Current pantry users live in 10 of our towns, speak 8 different languages and include 49 children.

"I would like to appreciate you and first connections and all donors. We have successfully potty trained and we won't be needing diapers any more. Thank you for your support, patience and time. May God reward you abundantly."

Working mom who found us thru Emerson Hospital and a Town Social Worker during the first summer of the pandemic

Fall Community Parent Support & Education

"Wise Parenting Practices: Raising Children with Mutual Respect and Cooperation", a **FREE 3-Part Workshop**

This series is ideal for parents of children ages 3 to 10 years old. Parents from any towns in the region are welcome to participate, space permitting.

Description: Weaving strategies and guidance from the Positive Discipline approach to parenting, drawn from the research and insights of Drs. Alfred Adler, Haim Ginott, Dan Siegel & other giants in parenting education. Parents will gain a better understanding of:

- How to Respond to Challenging Behavior with Encouragement, while Maintaining Firmness, Dignity and Respect
- How to Build a Relationship with Your Children Based on Connection, Cooperation and Mutual Respect
- How to Foster Resiliency and Support the Building of Authentic Self-Esteem

Parents will learn practical techniques to use right away in their own relationships with their children (as well as with the adults in their lives - it's all about healthy, respectful relationships!).

Our Presenter: Sally Quinn Reed, M.S., brings over 20 years' experience in Parenting Education and Support services. She is a certified Positive Discipline trainer, a Parenting Journey facilitator and a grandmother (and caregiver) of two young children.

Pre-registration is required by emailing communityallianceforchildren@gmail.com and noting "Registration for Oct series" in the subject line of the email. Spaces are limited so sign up soon!

Please be willing to commit to all three sessions. Location details will be shared upon registration.

This program is being sponsored by the Carlisle Board of Health and was funded through a grant by CHNA 15. It was made possible by Determination of Need funds received from Lahey Hospital & Medical Center and Winchester Hospital. There is no fee due to this final generous CHNA 15 grant.

**This parent education series takes place in Carlisle on Wednesday evenings
October 9, 16 and 23 from 7:00 to 8:30**



Improving the Odds for Our Kids

with Leonard Sax, PhD, MD

FREE topic-based sessions open to all on
Friday and Saturday, Sept. 27 & 28
at Mt. Calvary Church, Acton

- Evidence-based Parenting
- Cancel the Playdate
- Girls on the Edge
- Boys Adrift
- Why Gender Matters



- Beyond Resilience: Why Have Kids Become so Fragile?

Read more about Dr. Sax and save your spot at any or all of these sessions.

[Details and registration information](#)

FREE Fall Virtual Support Groups thru Brazelton Touchpoints Center (BTC)

BTC is based in the Division of Developmental Medicine at Boston Children's Hospital.

Connect with other parents of children with differences through your unique and common experiences of loving and raising a child whose developmental process and journey is delayed or atypical. Through 5 guided conversations learn how to best support and advocate for your child, your family and community. **Sept. 9, 23, Oct. 21, Nov. 4 & Dec. 16, 3-4:00.** Live Spanish translation and closed captioning available.

Moderated by Jayne Singer, Ph.D.



[Register Here](#)



Esta serie de conversaciones virtuales gratuitas de 5 episodios ofrece un espacio seguro y acogedor para mantener conversaciones por, para y con las familias latinas. Explore lo que significa ser padre o madre como parte de la comunidad Latinx, criar hijos Latinx mientras navega por las culturas dominantes de EE.UU. y conectar las identidades culturales Latinx con el bienestar físico y mental. Únase a nosotros para crear una comunidad de padres latinos de aprendizaje y apoyo mutuo. **Sept. 30, Oct. 28, Nov. 18 & 25, Dec. 2, 3-4:00.**

[Register Here](#)

Free Monthly Class on Collaborative Proactive Solutions (CPS) Strategies

Join us to learn strategies to reduce challenging behaviors, improve connection and practice new ways of using the CPS model with your children.

"Help kids solve the problems that are causing their concerning behaviors...without shame, blame, or conflict." Read more about CPS, developed by Dr.

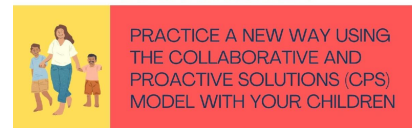
Ross Greene

<https://livesinthebalance.org/our-solution/>

Email **Jill_Lofchie@waysideyouth.org**

to sign up. This class is held virtually on Thursdays, 11-12:00. Registering with Jill will give you the link

JOIN US TO LEARN STRATEGIES TO **REDUCE CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS AND IMPROVE CONNECTION WITH YOUR CHILDREN**



Developed by Dr. Ross Greene

"Help kids solve the problems that are causing their concerning behavior... without shame, blame, or conflict."

<https://livesinthebalance.org/our-solution/>

VIRTUALLY THURSDAY, AUGUST 8TH FROM 11-12

Email Jill_Lofchie@waysideyouth.org to sign up

Class is held virtually o Thursdays, 11-12

and date each month.

Free Virtual 8-Week Circle of Security Parenting Group

JF&CS
Early Connections/Conexiones Tempranas
Circle of Security Parenting Group
The Center for Early Relationship Support

Does your child (0-5 year of age) sometimes behave in ways that make you feel angry, sad, ashamed, or uncomfortable? Do you feel at times lost or without a clue about what your child might need from you?

Circle of Security is a free parenting support group that can help you better understand what your child needs in these moments and how to best respond.

About the Group

- The group meets via Zoom once a week, on Thursdays, for eight weeks.
- Participants receive a \$20 gift card at the end of the group after completing an evaluation.
- This group is being offered in English. Just for Massachusetts residents.
- RSVP required.

Now Accepting Families

Dates: 9/19 - 11/7, Thursdays
Time: 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Location: Online via Zoom

To register for the group or to learn more, please contact us at CERSintake@jfcsboston.org or 781-693-1200.

jfcsboston.org | 781-647-JFCS (5327)
WALTHAM HEADQUARTERS | BOSTON | CANON | NORTH SHORE

NCTSN
The National Child Traumatic Stress Network
SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Through the Center for Early Relationship Support at JF&CS in Waltham

Does your 0-5-year-old child sometimes behave in ways that make you feel angry, sad, ashamed or uncomfortable? Do you feel at times lost or without a clue about what your child might need from you? Circle of Security can help you better understand what your child needs in these moments and how best to respond. Receive a \$20 gift card after completing an evaluation at the end of the group.

September 19-November 7

7:00-8:30 p.m. via ZOOM

RSVP to cersintake@jfcsboston.org or 781-693-1200

There is a 2nd group for parents in recovery.

FREE Community Support and Education for All Parents

Turning 3 Essentials - Leaving Early Intervention: Webinar Sept. 20 or Dec. 6

Join the Federation for Children with Special Needs to hear about the differences between E.I. and public school special education, transitional planning conferences, procedures, evaluations, team meetings and eligibility determination, placement, response options & more. **Register Here** or call 800-331-0688

Autism Monthly Coffee & Convo Virtual Topics with the Lurie Center, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Preparing your Child with ASD for Medical Procedures- October 16

Picky Eating in Individuals with Autism - November 20

Fever and Autism - December 18

To receive the link, **subscribe** to registration reminders here

McLean Hospital Webinars for Families this Fall

Sign up for the connecting link **here**

Addressing Bullying in Kids & Teens: Sept. 25, 12:00

Perfectionism & Related Disorders in Kids & Teens: Oct. 17, 11:00

Teaching Age-Appropriate Healthy Coping Strategies to Children & Adolescents: Dec. 18, 12:00

Anxiety & OCD in Kids & Teens: On demand anytime

Parent Groups Held by the Center for Early Relationship Support

If you have any questions, email cersintake@jfcsboston.org or **Website Information**

Fragile Beginnings for parents of babies who've spent time in the NICU, Thurs, 10:30-11:30 **Register Here**

Parents of Toddlers (1-3 yrs) meets from 1-2:30 on Wednesdays **Register Here**

Spanish Speakers with 0-12 Mo. babies: Mondays 9-10:30 **Register Here**

In-Person Weekly New Parents Group held in Arlington on Fridays 10-11:30 **Register Here**

Parents Helping Parents Virtual Support Groups

Facilitated virtual groups allow parents to get advice, give feedback, and find resources to help you manage day-to-day parenting challenges. Specialty groups include:

Single Parents Group on Wednesdays, 7-8:00 pm

Fathers' Group on Mondays at 12:00 noon

Parents in Recovery on Tuesdays, 4:00 or Thursdays, 1:00 (wait list)

Parenting Preschoolers 3-6 yrs on Thursdays at 11:00

Parenting Highly Sensitive Kids on Mondays at 8:00 pm

BIPOC Parenting on Sundays, 9-10:00 pm

Additional general parenting groups also available. **Registration Page**

In-person Supportive Parent Solutions Group in Westford

A family support group for parents from any town who are parenting children with behavioral health challenges takes place on 2nd Thursdays, 10 am or 7 pm co-sponsored by the Community Wellness and Health

Departments of Westford. No registration is necessary. Held at St. Catherine's Parish Center A safe space to receive caring support, learn coping skills, and find supportive resources. Contact is: Nicole Laviolette, nlaviolette@westfordma.gov or 978-399-2503.

Infant and Pregnancy Loss Support Group

This ongoing monthly group is for those who have experienced the loss of a pregnancy at any stage or infant loss shortly after birth and are looking for support from others with shared experiences. The group is facilitated by an advanced practice nurse with experience supporting families whose pregnancies have ended unexpectedly or whose infants have died. Individuals are encouraged to contact the facilitator, Katie Stockman, NP, at kstockman@emersonhosp.org or 617-299-1533 for the connecting zoom link.

September 9, October 14, November 11 and December 9, 7:00-8:30 p.m. [Information](#)

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support

Come share the rewards and challenges of raising your grandchildren. Learn from and support others in similar circumstances. Discover ways to relieve stress. Benefit from the resources available from the Commission on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, and hear about State agencies that can provide assistance. If you are interested in joining this group, which meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, 11-12:00, at 30 Sudbury Road (Acton Senior Center), contact Joe O'Leary at 978-760-0360 or jj.oleary@comcast.net. For additional statewide resources & evening groups, contact colleen.pritoni@state.ma.us, 617-748-2454 or visit [GRG Website](#). **Fall Workshops include: Understanding Grief, Building Resiliency in Grief, From Shame to Resilience: Healing Pathways in Kinship Caregiving, and Yoga Nidra Guided Meditation.**

Free & Low-Cost Community Parent & Child Programs

Concord Conservatory of Music's Discovery Day Open House - Saturday, Sept. 7, 1-3:00

FREE event offers a fun, interactive way for kids to explore various instruments and enjoy 30-minute demo classes like Music & Movement, Group Keyboard. Geared toward children newborn to age 11. [Register HERE](#) **Free Trial Group Class Week** is Sept. 9-14. Register at www.concordconservatory.org

Free Family Days at The Umbrella - Weekends from 2:00-4:00, Sept. 14, Oct. 5, Nov. 16, Dec. 7 & 8. 40 Stow Street, Concord. Drop in any time for seasonal and creative crafts led by an art teacher. [Register](#) at the beginning of each month.

Free Author Storytimes This Fall at Silver Unicorn Bookstore in West Acton

Sat., Sept. 14, 11-11:45: *Rollin' on Down the Line* and *The Oddball book of Armadillos*

Sat., Sept. 21, 11-11:45: *One Light*, you're never too small to make a difference!

Sun., Sept 29, 2-2:45: *Eighteen Flowers for Grandma*: a gift of Chai

Sat., Oct. 19, 11-11:45: *We Celebrate the Light* with Jane Yolen & her daughter, Heidi Stemple

[The Silver Unicorn Bookstore | Events](#)

Free Kids' Concert with Mr. Vic at Nara Park, 71 Quarry Rd, Acton, Sept. 29, 3-4:00 pm

Free Open Gym Play Group at Roudenbush Community Center, Westford

Mondays, Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 1-3:00. [Please RSVP](#)

Free Open Farmyard Activities at Lands Sake Farm in Weston continue through October 30.

Wednesdays 3-5:00 & Sundays 9:30-11:30 for ages 2 1/2-7. Educator-led stories, picking, planting, chicken coop & more. [Registration](#) encouraged but not required.

WestFest Family Fun Food Truck Festival - Saturday, Sept. 28 at Stony Brook Middle

School, Westford. Touch a truck, games, face painting, inflatable park, petting zoo with Good Pickin' Farm, more. Benefits Westford Education Foundation. [Website for details.](#)

See Elephant & Piggie's "We are in a Play!" at Concord Youth Theater, December 7 & 8

Based on Mo Willem's book, the afternoon presentations are a great intro for young kids [Details](#)

All-Access Discovery Museum [Free Visits for Families with a child with special needs.](#)

[Registration Required](#) for All-Access visits as space is limited. Dinner is provided at evening programs with a gluten-free option. Fall schedule:

Autism-Friendly Evenings - October 5 & December 7, 5-8:00 p.m.

Families with Deaf or Blind Family Members - November 23, 5-8:00 p.m.

HALLOWEEN ACTIVITIES

September 14 (9-3:00) & 15 (10-12:00): The Concord Players Tag Sale, 51 Walden Street

Costumes, props, fabric, arts and crafts to help you with your Halloween costumes this year [Details here.](#)

October 24: Downtown Maynard Trick or Treat - Thursday, 4-6:00 p.m.

Downtown roads will be closed, and kids & their parents can visit stores and organizations for old-fashioned trick or treating. Rain or shine. Open to all. FREE. [Info on Facebook](#)

Halloween Costume Swap at Roudenbush Community Center, 65 Main St., Westford. Drop off gently used costumes between Sept. 10 & Oct. 4 (9-4:00), then come back on October 5 to find your new costume for this year! Any costume not used will be donated. [Details here.](#)

Kids & Teens Halloween Costume Swap at Goodnow Library, 21 Concord Rd. Sudbury.

All welcome at this Good Neighbor Day activity. Sept. 28 (12-2:00), Oct. 5 & 12 (2-4:00) & 19 (11-1:00) [Details](#)
You do not need to donate to pick up a costume if you need one.

October 27: Halloween Parade in Westford - 12-1:00. Park at Roudenbush, 65 Main St. Parade will leave from the Frost Building and end with crafts, pumpkins & goodie bags for the first 100 costumed cuties. FREE, but please [RSVP here.](#) **12th Annual Carve for Carson Fall Fest** at Roudenbush from 1-4:00, with inflatables, face painting, raffle and pumpkin carving. This is a fundraiser for the Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood Foundation (tickets are \$6-7/person depending on number of family members). [Tickets](#)

Trunk or Treat at the Beede Center, 498 Walden St, Concord, October 27, 2-3:30

FREE. You only need to [register](#) if you're decorating your car and handing out candy.

SPECIAL LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

September 4, 11, 18, 25, 10:30-11:30: Baby Sign Language Class at Lincoln Library

Instructor Sheryl White teaches you with your pre-verbal baby 2 mos. & older. Learn 60 signs [Register](#)

Sept. 6 & 20, Oct. 4 & 18, Nov. 1 & 15, Dec. 6 & 20, 11:30-12: Sensory Storytime at Acton

Library with quiet books, activities & tactile toys. No registration. 486 Main Street.

September 7, 10-11:00 for ages 3+: Grandparents & Kids Storytime Breakfast at Carlisle

Library. Bring your special someone for storytime, fun, songs and waffles held at the library [Register](#)

September 11 & Every Wednesday, 10:30-11:30: Toy Time for Ages 1-5 at Maynard

Library. Drop in for fun playtime and activities for caregivers & kids with Mr. Mark. No registration required.

September 18, 12:30-3:30 for all ages: The Caterpillar Lab visits Harvard Library

[Registration required.](#) Learn about and watch a huge variety of caterpillars up close!

Sept. 18, 10:30-11:15: Preschool Concert with Steve Blunt at Westford Library, 50 Main

St. Outside, or meeting room if rain. Dance, sing & play along with the music. No registration.

September 20, 10:30-11 for ages 1 1/2-5: Bi-lingual Spanish Storytime at Sudbury Library

No registration required, Goodnow Library, 21 Concord Rd., Sudbury

September 21, 10:30 for ages 3-8: Lindsay and Her Puppet Pals at Harvard Library

[Registration required.](#) Outdoors on the pavilion - funny & interactive program!

September 25, 3-4:00, for ages 4 & older: Musical Petting Zoo with Springfield

Symphony Orchestra at Goodnow Library, 21 Concord Rd., Sudbury. No registration required

October 1-29, Adopt a Reading Pet Pal Program at Concord's Main Library

Check out the October calendar for special programs all month related adopting a (stuffed) cat, adopting from a shelter, veterinarian care, and even hearing a veterinarian/author reading a book, "Dr. Rosie Helps the Animals." [October Calendar](#) (all programs are FREE, drop-in and do not require registration)

October 3, 10, 24, 31, Nov. 7 & 14, 10:30-11:30 for 0-18 Mo: Babygarten

[Register](#) on the Littleton Library calendar for this caregiver/baby program that incorporates child development, pre-literacy skills, a craft, rhymes & songs, and free play time.

October 17, 5:30-6:30 for ages 5+: Nature's Real Vampires at Boxboro Library

Learn about real animals that scare and spook us - creatures that don't just come out on Halloween. Then make a Halloween craft. [Register](#) on calendar beginning Sept. 19.

Oct. 28, Nov. 18 & Dec. 16, 10-11:30: "Busy Bees" Preschool-age Children & their

Caregivers Playgroup at Reuben Hoard Library, Littleton. Open to all. [Register](#) on each month's calendar.

November 2, 10:30-11:30 for all ages: Nutcracker Reading & Ballet at Lincoln Library

November 9, 10:30-11:30 for all ages: Nutcracker Reading & Ballet at Boxboro Library

December 7, 10:30-11:15 for all ages: Nutcracker Reading & Ballet at Maynard Library
Commonwealth Ballet ballerinas visit. Come and see dancers as they dance along to a reading of the story; perfect for introducing children to this magnificent ballet. Meet the dancers, ask questions, take pictures and see costumes up close. All dates are "drop-in", no registration required.

December 16, 4:00 or 5:30 for families: Gingerbread House Workshop at Carlisle Library
Everything is provided for your family to make a gingerbread house. [Register](#) beginning November 18

December 19, 4-5:00 for all ages: Storytime with Santa at Littleton Library.
He will also pose for photos. [Register](#) beginning November 1st.

Resources in the Community

Every Kid Sports Fall Pass

Grant funding is available for children age 4-18 who would like to participate in a sport, or dance, swimming, gymnastics, martial arts or skating class and cannot afford the fee. If your child is currently enrolled in Medicaid (MassHealth), SNAP or WIC and the class lasts for at least 4 weeks, you can apply for a grant for them. Limited applications for Fall sports are being accepted each day at the link above.

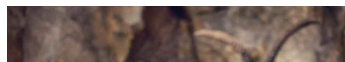
<https://everykidsports.org/>



NEW: Inclusion Sports

Non-competitive, 8-week soccer or baseball for children of ALL abilities using innovative behavior methods to teach sports, fitness and social skills. The program was designed by physical education, behavior and inclusion experts for small-group classes for ages 2-4, 5-7 and 8-10 on Sunday mornings.

Offered this fall through [Westford Recreation Dept.](#)



10 BEST TIPS FOR VISITING A MUSEUM WITH KIDS



[Click for Tips](#)

Most museums have low-cost ways to visit including by using a library pass, WIC/EBT card, military discounts, teacher discounts, reciprocal membership deals, etc.

Here are some Fall Specials

- *Museum of Fine Arts - Free Oct. 14, 10-5:00
- *Worcester Art Museum - Free Oct. 14, Nov. 3, Dec. 8
- *Harvard Art Museums - Free, 10-5:00 Tues-Sundays
- *Harvard Science & Culture - Free Sundays 9-12:00
- *Discovery Museum - Free 1st Fridays 4:30-8:00
- *Boston Children's Museum - \$1 on Sundays 1:00-4:00
- *Museum of Russian Icons - Free 1st Sundays
- *Fitchburg Art Museum - Free 1st Thursdays, 12-7:00
- *Institute of Contemporary Art - Free Sept. 2, Oct. 14
- *Springfield Museums - Free 1st Wednesdays, 10-5:00
- *Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum - Oct. 14, 11-5:00

Concord Memorial Walk for Infant Loss October 19, 9:00 Walk with Memorial to follow 90 Stow Street, Concord

Angel Dash is held across the country during October, which is recognized as Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month.



[Register Here](#)

Registration fees (\$25-35) benefit Rachel's Gift, which collaborates with hospitals to provide specialized bereavement care for patients who lose a child to miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death, such as this group at Emerson Hospital [Pregnancy & Infant Loss Group](#)

"Explore Adoption" Fall Webinars: Navigating the Process to Adopt from Foster Care in Mass.

[Dates, times & link requests from MARE here](#)

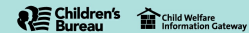
30-minute presentation that covers everything you need to know, followed by a Q&A session.

"Weekend Family Connections" for Kids in Foster Care
[Information](#) on hosting a youth (age 10+) from foster care just 2 weekend nights a month, incorporating them into your family's community and family life so they meet a wider network of adults. These activities have been shown to increase the child/teen's chances of adoption.

NOVEMBER 15

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

childwelfare.gov/adoptionmonth



Adoption Support Group



Post-Adoption Support Resources

[Adoption Journeys](#) has a free monthly support group for parents of adopted children that meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 6:30 virtually. They also provide parent-and-child activities and home-based family sessions. To get more information about these programs, contact Kimberly Calvin, kcalvin@cfsservices.org or 978-687-5852

[The Center for Early Relationship Support](#) meets the 1st & 3rd Friday, 10-11:30 at First Church Belmont for parents of adopted babies under one year. You can register [Here](#).

[Boston Post Adoption Resources](#) is currently providing virtual support groups for children aged 8+, adoptive parents, and adult adoptees. Groups are \$30-35/session. [More Info Here](#)

SEPTEMBER 14 - Save some money!!

Greater Visions Children's Center
180 Old Westford Road, Chelmsford
9:00-12:00, then 12:00-1:00 is half price
\$2 admission OR 1 canned food donation

www.kidstagsale.com



Gently used clothing sizes 0-14, shoes & boots, baby equipment, toys, books, Halloween costumes. No strollers or children allowed at sale - bring shopping bags or bins.

9th Annual Stand Up to Stigma Scarecrow Contest

Make your own scarecrow, or vote for your favorite!

- \$25 donation to NAMI Central Middlesex will reserve your scarecrow frame starting



- Sequent 1st at Cucurbit Farm, 32 Parker St., Acton.
- Drop off your scarecrow in October for a month-long display.
- Visit the farm to vote for your favorite.
- Corn maze and Jack O'Lantern Glow By Event on Halloween Weekend.
- Winners announced November 1st with cash prizes.

[More Information Here](#)

Do you need a Car Seat Check?

Search for a Nationally Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician [HERE](#).

A Spanish-speaking technician is available in Dunstable & Framingham.

An ASL-speaking technician is available in Framingham.

An Arabic-speaking technician is available in Burlington

Interested in Becoming a Nationally-Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician?

Join a team of over 30,000 technicians and be that community advocate and resource in your community. As a CPS Tech you

will put your knowledge to work through a variety of activities including community presentations and/or child seat safety checks. A local firefighter/technician is available to mentor you through the process. Training costs \$95.

More information [HERE](#)



Denotes funding for this program provided by Mass. Dept. of Early Education & Care CFCE Grant

First Connections, a division of Justice Resource Institute, is one of 84 Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) programs in the state of MA, funded in part by the Department of Early Education and Care and offering regionally specific family support services. Our CFCE funded programs extend to families within our 11-town catchment area including Acton, Bedford, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Hanscom AFB, Harvard, Lincoln, Littleton, Maynard, Sudbury, and Westford. We also rely on the generous support of local partners who help fund these programs and expand the geographic reach of our First Year of Life & EWAB programs. We are grateful for the financial support of Acton-Boxborough United Way, Concord-Carlisle Community Chest, Emerson Health Determination of Need Mental Health Grant, The Sudbury Foundation, Maynard Community Chest, Nordblum Family Foundation, William E. Schrafft and Bertha E. Schrafft Charitable Trust, Acton Congregational Church, Concord Trinitarian Congregational Church and individuals like you. Thank you for your support!

Donate

Visit our website

First Connections | 179 Great Road Unit 104A | Acton, MA 01720 US

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