



# Spring Newsletter

April–June 2025

We thank Emerson Health and Rep. Simon Cataldo's office for donating 2,710 diapers on March 4! Rep. Cataldo co-sponsored Bill H.220 to establish regional diaper pantries in our state, which passed the Senate and is currently in committee.

## Spring Parent Education Topics



**Introducing Solid Foods for Infants**  
presented by Speech & Language Pathologist  
Julia Hurd  
Thursday, June 12, 10-11:00 a.m.

Julia will present information from a developmental perspective on readiness for solids, and how to progress from simple spoon-fed meals to self-fed pieces of first foods, along with troubleshooting challenges. This program will be offered during our First Year of Life Group. If you are not a regular attendee and would like the link to join us for the presentation, email

[lmattews@jri.org](mailto:lmattews@jri.org)



**Wednesday, May 14**  
Live webinar at 7:00 p.m.

This presentation will address:  
The causes of challenging behaviors  
and the strategies for managing  
behavior.

## Helping Parents Understand and Manage Challenging Behaviors in Young Children

Presented by Concord Children's Center  
Educators Lynn St. Germaine  
and Patricia Collins

Young children often act out for various reasons such as hunger, tiredness, frustration, confusion, or difficulty transitioning between activities. At times, they may not have the words to express what they need, leading to outbursts and meltdowns. These behaviors are not random—they signal underlying needs or developmental challenges, like unmet emotional needs, underdeveloped communication skills or lack of self-regulation. By understanding the root causes of challenging behaviors, parents can respond more effectively and support their children's emotional and social development. By attending this program you will gain and understanding

Lynn has been an Infant/Toddler teacher for 37 yrs; Patricia has been a Preschool Teacher for 25 years.

Email [Imatthews@jri.org](mailto:Imatthews@jri.org) to register.

of why children act out—whether due to unmet needs, frustration, or developmental challenges. You will learn strategies that might include creating predictable routines, reinforcing positive behaviors, and using calm and consistent responses to guide the child through emotional ups and downs.

## Nature Exploration and Learning with Young Children June 6, 7:00 p.m. via Zoom



Time in nature has tremendous benefits for young children, as well as for their caregivers. It can help reduce anxiety and stress, boost confidence and flexibility, offer opportunities to learn science concepts, and increase children's appreciation of the world around them. Caregivers have concerns and questions, though. How do I keep my child safe from things like ticks and sun exposure? How do I encourage my child's curiosity when I don't know anything about nature? I don't have time/energy/resources to take my child on a hike up a mountain or a camping trip.



Join Paul Fenton, Director of Environmental and Outdoor Education at the Discovery Museum, representatives of TimberNook, and Ms. Ellie for a conversation about the benefits of nature play and how to do it. We'll share tips on keeping your child safe outside, how to spend time in nature without spending a lot of money or time preparing, and what safe risky play looks like. Email [Imatthews@jri.org](mailto:Imatthews@jri.org) to receive the link.



### Spring Nature Activities

The weather is getting nicer, and nature is waking up all around us! It's a really exciting time to explore the world around us! Below you'll find activities to encourage your child's innate interest in the natural world that you can do outdoors and some you can do inside.

**Nature walk activities:** *If you're able to get outside for a walk, whether in a conservation area or just around your neighborhood, here are some fun activities to do with your child/children.*

- Visit the same area on a regular basis (your yard, a local trail, or along the walk to the bus stop) and look to see how spring is changing things. Are buds growing on the trees or bushes? Do you see any new plants pushing up from the ground? Then, as the flowers bloom, look inside. What do you see?
- Bring a bucket or bag on your walk for all the treasures your children will want to collect.
- Turn over a log and see what you find crawling around underneath.
- Nature bracelet: put a piece of packing or duct tape on your child's wrist, sticky side out, and let them put their nature treasures there.



**Ellie's list of Spring Nature Activities can be accessed by clicking above.**

### Indoor Activities:

*When it's too wet out, or your allergies are too bad, or you can't or don't want to go outside for whatever reason, here are some activities you can do inside to explore nature.*

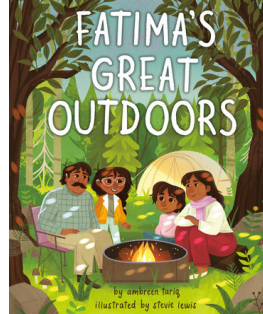
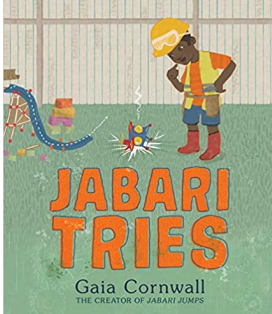
- Put a dried bean and a wet paper towel in a Ziploc bag and tape it to the window. Watch as the bean sprouts!
- Give your child flower or plant catalogs to cut up and create a collage of their dream flower garden.
- Dissect flowers: pick flowers from your garden, or get a bunch at the grocery store, and let your child pull them apart (or, for older children, cut them) and explore them with a magnifying glass.



### Spring Nature Books:

- *Goodbye Winter, Hello Spring*, Pak
- *Mud*, Ray
- *The Hike*, Farrell
- *Hold This!* Scoppettone
- *Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt*, Messner
- *A Seed is Sleepy*, Aston
- *And Then It's Spring*, Fogliano
- *Plant the Tiny Seed*, Matheson

To have the list emailed, [click here](#)



**April 19-29**  
**Cloverdale Conservation Land, 63 Great Rd, Littleton**  
 Read this story set up across the meadow and into the wooded trail. As you walk back to the parking lot you'll cross the wetlands on a new boardwalk! See if Jabari succeeds in building a flying machine!

**June 14-24**  
**Codman Farm, 58 Codman Rd, Lincoln,** is having a "Chili & Camp Out Weekend" in June and has invited us to put up this storywalk about a family camping for the first time. Visit the farm any time this spring to see baby pigs.  
[www.codmanfarm.org](http://www.codmanfarm.org)

StoryWalk was created in 2007 by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT, and is a registered service mark of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library.

StoryWalks promote early literacy, physical activity, and family time together in nature!

## Spring New Parent Support Programs: Prenatal to 12 Months

**FREE** **1<sup>st</sup>**  
**Year of Life Support Group**  
 This group is facilitated by Emily Fiorini, MA, a clinician specializing in the first year of life, with additional guest speakers. Parents in the postpartum year can join this group to get support for their own emotional wellbeing, recovery, and transition into parenthood; baby's development; feeding and sleep support; and community resources.  
**Meets Thursdays, 9:30-11:00 via zoom, with 1 Thursday per month in person.**  
 Email [efiorini@jri.org](mailto:efiorini@jri.org) for a weekly reminder and link.  
 The FYOL group supports all new parents. Whether you are breastfeeding or bottle feeding, parenting solo, partnered, or married, an adoptive or biological parent, have one baby or more, you are welcome here!

First Connections is a non-profit family support program of Baseline Resource Institute, 2025 Parent Groups are funded through the Concord Carle Foundation and NonBorn Family Foundation

The First Year of Life Group is facilitated by Emily Fiorini, MA, a mental health counselor specializing in infant-parent mental health. Parents in the postpartum year can join this free weekly group to get support for their own emotional wellbeing, recovery and transition into parenthood; baby's development; feeding and sleep support; and community resources.

### SPRING SCHEDULE - Thursdays 9:30-11:00

**April 3, May 1, June 5:** In-person group meets at Emerson Wellness Center, Concord  
**June 12, 10-11:00** - Guest Speaker "Starting Solids"  
 (RSVP to [lmattews@jri.org](mailto:lmattews@jri.org))

**April 10, 17, 24, May 8, 22, 29, June 26:** Virtual.  
 Email Emily for the link: [efiorini@jri.org](mailto:efiorini@jri.org)

**May 15, June 19** - No group



### Navigating the 4th Trimester: Supporting Your Postpartum Journey

This workshop offers a supportive place for expecting parents to explore the physical, emotional, and relational challenges that accompany the first 3 months after birth. In this program you will learn evidence-based strategies to support your postpartum journey. You will create a personal postpartum plan that includes practical strategies for adjusting to life with a newborn, coping with challenges related to sleep and feeding, managing changes in your relationships, and nurturing your own wellbeing during this transformative time. Join us for this interactive session facilitated by lactation counselor and infant sleep consultant, Mary Beilman, who draws from over 20 years supporting new parents, and mental health counselor Emily Fiorini, who specializes in infant and parent mental health and is First Connections' program director. Helpful postpartum community resources are included. Birthing person and a support person are welcome to attend free of charge. Register through Emerson Health.

**June 4, 6:30-8:00 pm**  
[Register Here](#)

The above programs are made possible through the generous support of Nordblum Family Foundation and Concord Carlisle Community Foundation. Postpartum Support International-Mass. Chapter sponsored a recent training. Thank you!



## SPRING PLAYGROUPS



First Connections playgroups are free of charge and priority registration is given to families in the towns our CFCE grant includes: Acton, Bedford, Boxboro, Carlisle, Concord, Harvard, Lincoln, Littleton, Maynard, Sudbury, Westford, and Hanscom AFB. If a group is full, you will be put on a wait list. If you remain on the wait list, you will be given priority registration for the next session.

To register, email [lmattews@jri.org](mailto:lmattews@jri.org) with:

**Your First and Last Name**

**Your Child's Name**

**Child's age on April 28**

**The town you live in**

**Name of playgroup you'd like to be in**



### **"On Our Way to School" Playgroup for 4 and 5-year-olds**

**Fridays 10:00-11:00, May 2 thru June 13**

**Held at Village Nursery School in Harvard**

This playgroup will follow a curriculum designed by the Boston Children's Museum to help children get ready for kindergarten or pre-k. Each family will receive a kit of materials and tip sheets put together by the museum to support the activities we do in playgroup and to extend the learning at home. We will meet in a pre-k classroom with lots of fun toys to play with in addition to the weekly activities from the museum. Each meeting will end with a circle time, as usual. Younger siblings welcome, but be aware we will use small toys, scissors and other tools that might not be safe in toddler hands. Families with children entering Kindergarten in the Fall of 2025 will receive an *In-Kindergarten* book with activities you and your child can do throughout the summer.

### **Ages & Stages Playgroup for 24-35 Months**

**Mondays, 10-11:00, April 28 thru June 9**

**Held at Concord Carousel Preschool**

This playgroup will meet in a preschool classroom, where the children can play with toys, as well as engage in activities designed to support 2 year olds in different areas of their development based on the Ages & Stages Developmental Milestones. We will do messy art and sensory activities in this group, so please dress your children in clothes that can get dirty. Each group will end with a circle time with songs and a book. Infant siblings in a carrier are welcome.

### **Little Learners Multiage Playgroup**

**Tuesdays, 10-11:00, April 29 thru June 11**

**Held at Youth Center Gym, Hanscom Air Force Base**

**Ages 12 months and mobile to 5 years**

This group will meet in the Youth Center gym. The children will have a chance to run around, throw and kick balls in the large space, along with Legos, puzzles, and other quieter activities. Children will have time to play with old friends and meet new ones. At the end of each session, we will have a circle time with songs and a book. Open to all families who have access to HAFB.

### **Outdoor Nature Playgroup for 2 and 3-year-olds**

**Wednesdays 10:30-11:30, April 30 thru June 11**

**Held at Sargent Memorial Library in Boxborough**

In this playgroup, we will explore elements of the natural world, enjoy the spring weather, and learn some early STEM skills. This group will be held outdoors (when the weather cooperates) on a large lawn *without a fence* with occasional trips in the adjoining conservation land, and inside the library meeting room in inclement weather. Younger siblings are welcome, but be aware that the space is large and open. Each week we will have our regular circle time with songs and a book.

### **Ages and Stages Playgroup for 10-23 Months**

**Thursdays, 10-11:00, May 1 thru June 10**

**Held at First Connections, Acton**

In this playgroup, babies and toddlers will have the chance to play with some age-appropriate toys and activities to support their development, based on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. Our playroom will offer opportunities to explore art and sensory activities in addition to all our fun toys! We will sing songs and read a short book each week. All caregivers are welcome, but please make arrangements for older siblings to keep little ones safe.

## Mandarin Story Times with Jasmine for ages 2-5

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 years of experience teaching Mandarin, specializing in vocalization, speech, recitation, and debate. This is a Mandarin immersion experience. One-time registration and weekly zoom sign-ins will be used to track attendance. New participants should email Jasmine to receive the zoom links: [xwang@jri.org](mailto:xwang@jri.org).



**Saturdays, 9:00-9:30 a.m.**

## Limited Openings for Ages 18 Mos to 3 Years

### Attention families with toddlers!

#### Who We Serve:

Families with a child 1.5 to 3 years in Acton, Bedford, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Harvard, Hanscom AFB, Lincoln, Littleton, Migrant, Sudbury or Westford.

Priority will be given to immigrant families and those with limited resources or other challenges.



### FREE BOOKS & TOYS

A school readiness program for children 1.5 to 3 years old.

No cost to you!

Apply online: Scan the QR code to submit the registration form or contact Jasmine Wang, Coordinator 978-505-4227 [firstconnections@jri.org](mailto:firstconnections@jri.org)



### ParentChild+ Program includes:

**Home Visits:** A trained home visitor will come to your home twice a week for 30 minutes.

**Fun Learning:** They will bring a book or toy each week and show you how to use it to help your child learn. You keep the books and toys!



Too many children fall behind before they even set foot in a classroom and they struggle to catch up. We see a different path. We help families find the path, set off upon it and succeed together.



### We speak:

English

Spanish/Español

Mandarin/中文

All languages welcome



This free program brings fun and engaging early learning experiences right to your home. 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 18-36 months and is offered for 23 to 46 weeks. 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 other challenging circumstances. If you would like to learn more, contact Jasmine at [firstconnections@jri.org](mailto:firstconnections@jri.org), text/call 978-505-4227 or fill out [this form](#).

## Focus on Child Development

If you would like to know more about your child's development: their strengths, where they might need support, and what to expect at their age, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire is a great tool. It is a caregiver-completed screening that should only take 15 minutes or so and can be done at home with things you have around the house. One questionnaire screens your child's development in areas like communication and motor skills, and the other screens your child's social and emotional development.

### ASQ Developmental/Communication

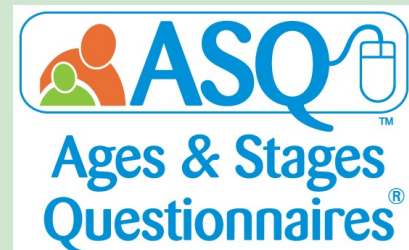
#### ASQ Social Emotional

Questions about the ASQ?

Watch this video

Read this information

or email [Elinor Springer](mailto:Elinor.Springer)



**Early Intervention** screenings do not require a referral from your doctor, and are free of charge or paid thru insurance. They are available to children newborn to age 2.9.

Here are the E.I. programs serving our catchment area:

**Residents of Acton, Bedford, Boxboro, Carlisle, Concord, Lincoln, Littleton, Maynard, Hanscom**

Minute Man Arc Early Intervention



"It's All About Relationships"

Residents of Harvard

Lipton Early Intervention

Residents of Sudbury

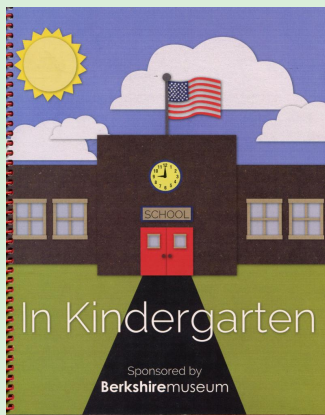
Criterion Early Intervention or MENTOR South Bay

Residents of Westford

Thom Anne Sullivan Center OR BEAM Early Intervention or MENTOR

**Is Your 2025 Kindergarten Student Registered? If not, click for more information:**

- [Acton & Boxborough Schools](#)
- [Bedford Public Schools](#)
- [Carlisle Public Schools](#)
- [Concord Public Schools](#)
- [Harvard Public Schools](#)
- [Lincoln & Hanscom Public Schools](#)
- [Littleton Public Schools](#)
- [Maynard Public Schools](#)
- [Sudbury Public Schools](#)
- [Westford Public Schools](#)



**If you haven't signed up for First Connections' monthly "Getting Ready for Kindergarten" Newsletter yet, you can do so HERE.** Articles and activities are geared toward children who will begin Kindergarten in September 2025.

*In Kindergarten* books will be available for families to use during June, July and August. These books offer gentle transition activities to help you and your child prepare over the summer for this new adventure (going to kindergarten!). If you would like a copy, send your email to [imatthews@jri.org](mailto:imatthews@jri.org) and we will notify you when it's ready for pickup!



**Public School Preschool Screenings**

Public school preschool screenings do not take place over the summer, so if you have any concerns or questions about your currently 2.9-4 year old child's preschool readiness or development, please contact the Early Childhood Program in your town as soon as possible to schedule a screening.

**Acton & Boxborough**

[jgibowicz@abschools.org](mailto:jgibowicz@abschools.org)

978-264-4700 X3948

**Bedford**

[rachel\\_thunberg@bedfordps.org](mailto:rachel_thunberg@bedfordps.org)

**Carlisle**

[lbruce@carlisle.k12.ma.us](mailto:lbruce@carlisle.k12.ma.us), 978-369-3758

**Concord**

[acharles@concordps.org](mailto:acharles@concordps.org), 978-318-1500

**Littleton**

[kfitzpatrick@littletonps.org](mailto:kfitzpatrick@littletonps.org)

**Harvard**

[klancey@psharvard.org](mailto:klancey@psharvard.org)

**Lincoln & Hanscom AFB**

Rose Smart, 781-259-9403 or

Megan Grady, 781-259-9400 x6417

**Maynard**

978-897-8246

**Sudbury**

Fill out this form for a screening

**Westford**

[gcoughlin@westfordk12.us](mailto:gcoughlin@westfordk12.us), 978-692-5560 x2111

## Places to find Summer Camp Information

[Boston Parents Paper Summer Camp Listings](#)

[Special Needs Summer Camps & Fairs](#)

Check your town's Rec Dept, After-school programs, community, nature & arts centers

### Resources for Financial Aid for Town-Specific Summer Camps



Bedford Recreation Summer  
Adventures

[Financial Aid Form](#)

Assabet Valley Boys & Girls Club  
Summer Full Day Camp in Maynard

[Financial Assistance Program](#)

Maynard After-School Summer Camp  
[Tuition Assistance](#) & [accepts vouchers](#)

Kid's League, Westford  
[Accepts Vouchers](#)

Residents of **Acton and Boxboro** can  
apply for a Campership at:  
[Doli Atamian Campership](#)

Concord Residents can apply for  
financial aid for Concord Rec full-day  
summer camps at: [Financial Aid Form](#)

Lincoln Residents & Public School  
Students (including **Hanscom**) can  
apply for financial aid for Parks & Rec  
summer camp. Deadline is April 11!  
[Financial Aid Form](#)

Sudbury Summer Camp has financial  
aid for residents. Camp is ages 5+.  
[Financial Aid Form](#)

Littleton's Camp Tahattawan Weekly  
Camp w/optional field trips.  
[Youth Scholarship Fund Application](#)

## NEW RESOURCES

### Upcoming Professional Parenting Support Programs



#### Creating a Tech-Healthy Family

**June 17, 7:00 p.m. at Harvard Public Library**

Join Andrea Davis, a former teacher, mother of 5, and founder of Better Screen Time, an Anxious Generation-aligned organization, for a free presentation open to all with registration. Andrea will discuss the five steps parents can take to help reduce screen time, restore family time, and feel peace of mind. This will include creating a plan, teaching kids about digital dangers and distraction, and using a slow-tech approach to introduce technology. This program will be recorded and registrants will receive the recording. [Register here](#)

Mass General Brigham  
Mass General for Children

LURIE CENTER FOR AUTISM

Coffee Convo Presentation Series

**Autism Topics for Caregivers**



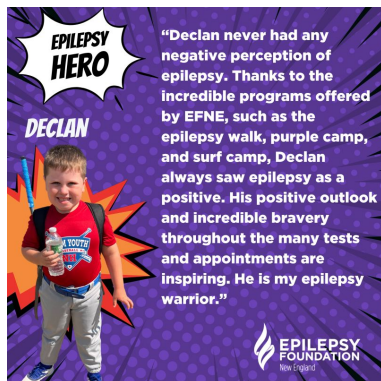
### **Building Skills to Support Social & Emotional Well-Being**

**presented by Rachel Kramer, Ph.D.**

Dr Kramer will discuss ways that parents can support the development of independence, problem solving, flexible thinking, frustration tolerance, and other building blocks of psychological health in your children. She will share actionable family-oriented strategies for maintaining physical and mental health, and will offer many practical tips and tools, including Q&A. \$25 via zoom through Concord-Carlisle

Continuing Education: [Register Here](#)

**April 10, 7-8:30 p.m.**



### **U. Mass. Epilepsy Family Education Conference: April 24, 5:30-8:00 pm**

"Epilepsy & Memory" presented by Neurologist Felicia Chu.

"What Your Provider wants to Know from You" presented by Nurse Practitioner Specialist Dr. Minh Lang

Patients and families impacted by epilepsy are invited to learn, share, ask questions and connect over dinner, with onsite childcare provided. FREE. [Register Here](#)

The Lurie Center for Autism is an integrated and multidisciplinary clinical, research, training and advocacy program dedicated to treating individuals with autism spectrum disorder across the lifespan. We are committed to providing ongoing evidence-based learning and training opportunities for patients, families, and professionals. Our popular Coffee Convo presentation series runs monthly thru the year.

The programs are FREE.

They're held virtually from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

**April 16: Emergency Preparedness & ASD with Julie O'Brien, LMHC**

**May 21: ADHD and Autism with Lurie Center Physicians**

**June 18: Recognizing Autistic Joy with Brett Ulder, Psy.D.**

[Register here](#)



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

*Informing, Educating, Empowering Families*

### **Turning 3 Essentials webinar for parents of children receiving Early Intervention services presented by the Federation for Children with Special Needs**

This presentation explains the differences between E.I and special education services, the transition planning conference, and special education procedures such as referrals, evaluations, team meetings, eligibility determinations, goals, placement, response options, and parents' procedural due process rights for resolving disputes.

**May 9, 1:00-3:00 p.m. FREE**

[Register Here](#)



The Parents  
**Estate Planning**  
Law Firm, PC

Young Families, Single Parents,  
Blended Families

[Paula@ParentsEstatePlanning.com](mailto:Paula@ParentsEstatePlanning.com)

### **FREE Kids Protection Planning Brunch: Estate Planning to Protect Your Kids**

**Saturday, April 12, 9:00-11:00 a.m.**

**Fourth & Field, 302 Boxborough Rd, Stow, MA**

Attorney David Feakes will discuss how estate planning can protect your kids and secure your assets. David will also answer the most commonly asked questions about estate planning. Enjoy brunch while learning how to create an airtight plan for your children, avoid probate court, secure



**RSVP here by April 7**

### Bailey's Autism Family Day at Franklin Park Zoo

Individuals with autism and one family member are admitted free with registration. Other family member admissions will be discounted.

#### **Animals living at Franklin Park Zoo**

African lion & painted dogs, kookaburra, leopard, sloth, camel, tapir, hyena, giraffe, kangaroo, gorilla, hippo, red panda, crocodile, ostrich, giant anteater, more.



**April 26, 9:30-2:30**

[Register Here](#) or  
[sammirobertson@comcast.net](mailto:sammirobertson@comcast.net)

### Foster Family Evening at Discovery Museum

Saturday, May 10  
5:00pm - 8:00pm

Network with other foster families in a welcoming and inspiring environment. Play with interactive exhibits, explore Discovery Woods and participate in hands-on activities. Dinner provided. FREE. Questions? Email

[sheilman@discoveryacton.org](mailto:sheilman@discoveryacton.org)

Pre-registration required here:

<https://bit.ly/FosterEveningMay2025>

## 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution Free Family Events



### Liberty Lawn Party at Alcott House April 19

Join costumed interpreters from 1-5:00 for games, music, "revolutionary selfies" and more.

You can meet a descendant of the Nashoba Praying Indians, Louisa May Alcott and others.

[Website Information](#)

### Fun & Games with Young Minutemen

#### Reenactors at Lincoln Library on April 5

Learn what life was like during the American Revolution and participate in 18th Century fun and games from 2-3:00 p.m. Drop in to 3 Bedford Road. Best for ages 4+



### Concord Museum Activities-April 19

Learn about life and crafts in the colonies, visit the Bedford Colonial Minuteman encampment, and meet a British Army Red Coat. After hours activities include an outdoor concert and food & wine trucks. Free admission to the museum exhibits is available from 10-4:00 on April 19. These two historic events are located an 8 min. walk from each other.

[Website Information](#)

## Take a look at these free weekend activities!

Registration required

Toddler Storytime, Littleton Library, 10:30, Register [April 5, May 3](#)

Comic-Con for All Ages at Lincoln Library, April 26, 11-4, [Register](#)

No Registration - Just drop in



Working Monday thru Friday?

Storytime & Craft for Ages 3+ at Bedford Library, 10:30, April 19  
Weekend Reads for 1 1/5-5 yrs, April 5 10:30, Sudbury Library  
Music Makers for 0-5 yrs, April 12 10:30-11, Sudbury Library  
Yoga Storytime, Ages 2-6, 10:30, Concord Main Lib. 3 wks/mo.  
Musical Morning, Ages 0-7, 1st Sat/Mo. 11-11:45, Fowler Library  
Five & Under Storytime, Fowler Library, 11-11:30, most Saturdays

### Author Saturday Storytimes

April 26, 11-12:00: "Hazel the Handful" & "Oh, Deer!"  
May 17, 11-11:45: "The Great Pollinator Count"  
June 21, 11-12:00: "Tenacious Won't Give Up"  
May 31, 11-11:45: "Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus"  
storytime and songs from the play opening at Theatre III in Acton on June 14 & 15



### Maynard Bookfest 2025 at the Library Saturday, April 5

Meet Bob Shea, the author of "Don't Play with Your Food", "Ballet Cat," and "Unicorn Thinks He's Pretty Great," among other accomplishments. No registration required, 11-12:00

To make a hand puppet before the program (10:10-10:55), [register](#). Geared toward ages 2-10. 77 Nason Street.



Springfield Museum

### Take Your Family to a Museum for FREE

- April 19 Concord Museum
- April 21 Worcester Art Museum
- May 26 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
- June 19 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston & Worcester Art Museum
- 1st Wednesday of Every Month: Springfield Museums (including Dr. Seuss Museum)
- July 11 Discovery Museum, Acton, for Playfest

### Cleaning Out Your Closets? Donate to Bessie's Closet!

If you'd like to help local families in need of gently-used clothing, bring them to the lobby of The Discovery Museum, 177 Main St., Acton between April 1 & 27. They will be given to adults and children in your community free of charge.



### Is Your Family in Need of Spring and Summer Clothing?

Come to Bessie's Closet at the Discovery Museum:  
**Friday, May 2, 3:30-7:30 p.m.**  
(museum open 4:30-8 pm & free)  
**Saturday/Sunday, May 3/4, 10-3:00** (museum not free)



## FREE & LOW-COST CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY

### **Join ABFN for an Egg-Cellent Time!!**

April 12, 10:00, Acton-Boxborough Family Network's **Annual Spring Fling Party at NARA Park** is open to the public with registration prior to 8:30 a.m. April 12. Activities include an egg hunt based on age group (under 2, 2-3 years, 4-5 years, 6+), bounce house, photos with the Easter Bunny, spring-themed crafts, obstacle course and a visit from Zane the Police Dog! Bring a basket to collect eggs, limit of 10 eggs per child. Free for members, \$10/family nonmembers.

**Register Here**

April 12, 5-8:00 pm, **Autism-Friendly Free Evening at Discovery Museum, Acton.** Registration required **HERE**

April 1-16 Mon-Tues-Weds **Free Open Gym** at Roudenbush Community Center, 65 Main Street, Westford. Have fun on the gymnastics mats and meet other families! **REGISTER**

April 27, 1-4:00, **Earth Day Event in Carlisle.** Meet Nibi the rescued beaver who was pardoned by the Governor, and other live wildlife. Get a free bat house while they last and taste delicious low carbon cooking. There will be activities, games, crafts and fun for all ages. 27 School Street, Carlisle Center. **More Info Here**

May 17, **Apple Blossom Festival** in Westford Center. Parade at 10:00. Carnival May 14-18. Fireworks! **More details here.** Stop in to Roudenbush (65 Main St) for free popcorn, activities and giveaways!

### A SAMPLE OF FREE LIBRARY EVENTS FOR CHILDREN

Wednesdays: Maynard library, 77 Nason St., has **Take & Make Kits** available all day, 10-5:00.

April 4, 10:30-11:30: **Alpaca Storytime** on the lawn at Gleason Library, Carlisle. **Register**

April 9, 3-4:00: **Celebrate Eid** at Goodnow Library, 21 Concord Rd., Sudbury. Learn about the Festival of Fast Breaking marking the end of Ramadan. All ages welcome to celebrate with stories, colorful crafts, food and more. No registration required.

April 10, 4-4:45: **Eid Celebration** at Bedford Library. Join parent volunteers and Miss Nicole for stories, crafts and more at this educational celebration. All welcome. Drop in to 7 Mudge Way.

April 12, 10-11:30: **Princess Storytime & Singalong** at Acton Library. Includes time for photos with the Snow Queen. Register **HERE**

April 12, 2:00: **Tanglewood Marionettes present The Fairy Circus** at Harvard Library. Geared toward Pre-K thru grade 2, you can register **HERE**

April 18, 10:30-11: **Spanish Storytime** at Goodnow Library, Sudbury for ages 1 1/2-5. Drop in.

April 22, 2-3:00: **Sprouting Up Storytime** at Lincoln Library for ages 3-8. Library-Lincoln Conservation Trust program includes planting seeds. **Register here**

April 25, 10:30-12:00: The **Snow Sisters Singalong and Storytime** will lead all ages through a magical morning of singing and dancing at Goodnow Library, Sudbury. **Register**

April 26, 11-11:30: **Earth Day Storytime** with Concord Carlisle Green Team at Fowler Library, 1322 Main St, West Concord. Drop in and plant a mini greenhouse in a gallon jug.

May 7, 1:30-2:30: **Owls of the World** intergenerational event with 6 New England Owls takes place at Spalding Field, Church St., Carlisle. Parking and rain date info **HERE**

May 30, 10-11:00: Outdoor **Teddy Bear Concert** with Vanessa Trien & the Jumping Monkeys. Chelmsford Library Greenway, 25 Boston Rd.. Drop in, for all ages 0-5.

June 17, 10:30-11:30: Drop in to **Millie the Duck's Birthday Party** at Concord Library, 129 Main.

June 18, 6-7:00 pm: **Summer Concert for All Ages** with The Party Band. This group plays

New Orleans and folk music and believes it's important to be a force for good in the world. Registration begins May 21. Held at Spalding Field, Church Street, Carlisle. [Register](#)

June 20, 10-12:00: **Crafts on the Lawn** at Gleason Library, Carlisle. Decorate stuffed animal rabbits. [Register](#) for your time slot on the calendar.

### [COMMUNITY SUPPORT & EDUCATION](#)

Chelmsford Mothers' Club **Kids Consignment Sale** at Greater Visions Children's Center, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford will be held on Saturday, April 5, 9-1:00. Admission \$2 cash or 1 non-perishable food item. No strollers or kids, please. CMC is a nonprofit organization. Half price 12:00-1:00! [More info here](#)

#### **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](mailto:kstockman@emersonhosp.org) 617-299-1533 for the connecting zoom link. Free Held on the 2nd Monday of each month, 7:00-8:30 p.m. via zoom. [Details Here](#)

#### **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group**

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 which can provide assistance. If you are interested in joining the Acton-based group, which meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, 11-12:00, 30 Sudbury Rd, Acton, contact Joe O'Leary at 978-760-0360 or [j.j.oleary@comcast.net](mailto:j.j.oleary@comcast.net).

**Navigating Special Education Workshop** (English 4/16 7-9 pm) (Spanish 4/7 6:30-8:30)

**Annual GRG Conference:** May 14, 2025 in Marlborough. Contact [colleen.pritoni@state.ma.us](mailto:colleen.pritoni@state.ma.us), 617-748-2454 to register for either program.



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

First Connections, a program of Justice Resource Institute, Inc, is a Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant recipient through the MA Department of Early Education and Care. We offer free services to families residing in Acton, Bedford, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Hanscom AFB, Harvard, Lincoln, Littleton, Maynard, Sudbury and Westford. In addition to state funding, we rely on the generous support of local partners to fund these programs and to expand the geographic reach of our First Year of Life programs to families in neighboring towns. We are grateful for the financial support of Acton Congregational Church, Concord-Carlisle Community Foundation, Maynard Community Chest, Nordblum Family Foundation, Sudbury Foundation, William E. Schrafft and Bertha E. Schrafft Charitable Trust, and Trinity Congregational Church. We also appreciate private donations from individuals and families that help make this work possible. Thank you for your support!

[Visit our website](#)

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

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