



# Fall Newsletter

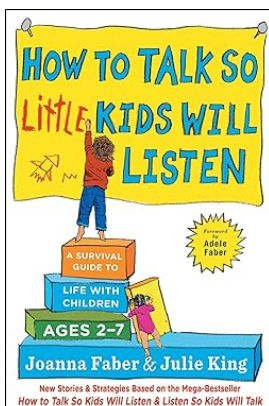
September–December 2025



**One in 31 children are now diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Local Fall Programs are Listed Below**

## Free Fall Parenting Topics

To attend any parent education program, email: [lmattthews@jri.org](mailto:lmattthews@jri.org)



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

In this group, the adults will discuss a portion of the book, ask questions, and get support, while children play amongst us in the playroom. Each session will end with a quick circle time for the children. Caregivers are welcome to attend on their own if their children are in school. 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). Limited to 10 families.

**Thursdays, 10-11:15, October 23-December 11  
Held at First Connections in Acton**

### **Nervous System Care for Parents, Caregivers and Educators presented by Chrissy Dagostino, M.A.**

One of the most important pieces of feedback we received from those who attended Chrissy Dagostino's presentation on the Magic of Co-regulation between parents and children, was that parents would like a follow-up session on self-regulation for parents and caregivers. This is it!! Please join us as we welcome Chrissy back. She holds a M.Ed in Early Childhood & Special Education, and is Certified in Applied Educational Neuroscience and in The Powerfully You Self-Regulation Curriculum.

This workshop is an invitation to re-define "self-care" so we can stop putting it off and start integrating practices that support our nervous systems into the thousands of tiny moments we spend with our children each day. This reflective workshop will take participants through a process of identifying and normalizing the ways our children challenge our ability to remain regulated, and exploring how we can rewire our brains toward new responses that better support connection and emotional intelligence in our homes and classrooms



**Thursday, October 9, 8:00-9:00 p.m.**

This program is being co-sponsored by First Connections CFCE and Northampton Public Schools CFCE. Email Linda ([lmattthews@jri.org](mailto:lmattthews@jri.org)) to receive the link.

The link will be sent to you from Northampton Schools in October!

**Toilet Training  
presented by Occupational Therapist Anna Knox,**



Toilet training can be a loaded topic with many questions! When is the right time to toilet train? Is my child on track? Where do we even start? This presentation will focus on preparing you and your child for potty learning/potty training and supporting individual potty needs. Parents will leave this presentation with a better understanding of what developmental milestones support potty learning and training, how to set up the environment to match your child's needs, what parents can do to help set themselves and their child up for success, and activity ideas to build potty skills. We will review motor, cognitive, emotional, and sensory foundations that support you and your child on the bathroom journey!

**Friday, September 26 live webinar at 1:00 p.m.**

### **Sweet Dreams, Strong Foundations: Helping Young Children (and Parents) Rest Well**

Sleep can be one of the trickiest subjects for families with young children. Join our experienced early childhood educators—who have supported infants, toddlers, and preschoolers through every stage of growth—for a practical, encouraging workshop on creating healthy sleep routines. We'll share research on why good sleep is essential for children's learning, behavior, and overall development, and provide simple, effective strategies to make naptime calmer and bedtimes smoother. From setting up routines that work for your family, to handling common challenges like night waking and transitions, our teachers will offer real-life tips and best practices rooted in both science and years of hands-on classroom experience. Parents will leave with concrete strategies, reassurance, and new ideas to help their children (and themselves!) get the rest they need.



**Thursday, November 13  
7:00-8:00 p.m.**

**Live Webinar Presented by Concord Children's Center Educators**

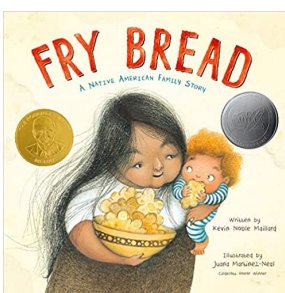
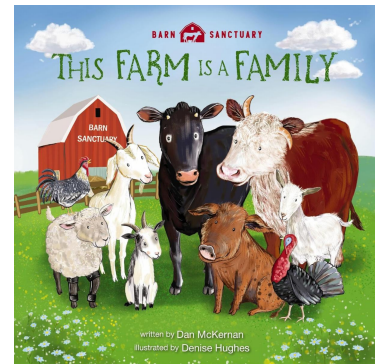


## **Free Fall Storywalks**

### **Celebrate the 19th Annual National Alpaca Farm Days at Harvard Alpaca Ranch, 58 Old Mill Road September 27-28, 10-5:00**

Meet alpacas up close, feel their fleece, tour the farm, view live demos, learn about raising and breeding alpacas, hear music. See what can be made with alpaca wool. Alpaca Day is the perfect combination of raising awareness about the animals and conservation of wildlife as well as spending time with these gentle creatures!

First Connections will debut our new storywalk, *This Farm is a Family*, at the Ranch. This is a true story about sanctuary farm animals welcoming a new member of the family, and will be available for you to visit on **September 25-28 and October 2-5** (Thurs/Fri 11-4:00, Sat/Sun 10-5:00)



**Celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day with *Fry Bread*,**  
written by Kevin Noble Maillard, a member of the Seminole Nation.

The Storywalk will be set up at **Smile Playground, located at 15 Fairbank Road, Sudbury**. Visit this newly resurfaced, completely handicapped accessible playground with recent safety improvements. Restrooms available.

Pending PRC Approval on Sept. 8, the storywalk will be available for viewing from **October 10-21**



## Celebrate Halloween at the Monster Mash and Trunk or Treat in Westford

**October 25, 1-4:00 p.m. Halloween Activities Free & Open to All**

Parade on Main Street, Trunk or Treat at the Town Hall Parking Lot, Touch a Truck at the Fire Station, Crafts and Games at Roundenbush!

Read about these activities & RCC Costume Swap [HERE](#)



Our *Saturday* Storywalk will be available on the trail behind the Town Hall (55 Main St) that connects to Roudenbush Community Center (65 Main St) from **October 25-November 4**. There is a fenced playground behind Roudenbush you can also visit. You can park at either location.

## Fall Nature Play and Exploration

While on your walks, enjoy these activities. It's the last in our year-long series of tips on getting outdoors and exploring nature with young children. This season, we have a fall nature scavenger hunt, a list of activities you can do inside when the weather isn't so great, as well as a list of some recommended books.

[Download a copy here](#)



## First Connections at Nature Linc!

We will be holding a weekend family event at Farrington Nature Linc in Lincoln this fall. It will be outdoors, exploring Nature Linc's beautiful site, and it will be geared toward children ages 2-6, with siblings welcome. The date is not set yet, but it will be on a **Saturday morning in October**. If you would like to get an email with details and the opportunity to sign up, fill out [this form](#). (We will also announce details on social media closer to the date and offer opportunities to register then.)



## Fall Playgroup Schedule



**To register for any playgroup listed below, please email [lmattews@jri.org](mailto:lmattews@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 3-11 Months**  
**Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 at Littleton Library**  
*September 18, 25, October 2, 9, 16*

This group will start with some songs and a book for the babies, and then caregivers will have a chance to check in, ask questions of each other and the facilitator, and share their wins and challenges. All caregivers are welcome, but please make arrangements for older siblings to keep babies safe.

**Ages and Stages Playgroup for 12-23 Months**  
**Wednesdays 10:30-11:30 at Boxborough Public Library**  
*Sept. 17, 24, Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Nov. 5, 12, 19, 26, Dec. 3, 10*

This group will meet in the library's meeting room, and occasionally in their outdoor space, when weather and toddler behavior allows. Children will have the chance to play with toys and activities designed to foster their gross and fine motor development, as well as social-emotional skills, and language development. We will end each group with a circle time with songs and a book. Infant siblings in carriers welcome.

**Ages and Stages Playgroup for 24-35 Months**  
**Mondays 10:00-11:00 at Hunt Recreation Center, Concord**  
*Sept. 15, 22, 29, Oct. 6, 20, 27, Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24, Dec. 1, 8\**

This group will meet in a large multipurpose room with occasional visits to the Emerson playground on site, and we will have activities based on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to help them practice their social-emotional, fine and gross motor, language, and problem-solving 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. 13, Indigenous Peoples Day*

**3-5-Year-Old Playgroup/Caregiver Book Discussion Group**  
**Thursdays, 10:00-11:15 at First Connections, Acton**

*October 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20, Dec. 4, 11*

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).

**Early Math Boston Children's Museum Playgroup for Ages 3-5**  
**Fridays, 10-11:15 at Village Nursery School, Harvard**

*Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 24, 31, Nov. 7, 14, 21, Dec. 5, 12*

In this group, we will have a chance to play in a Pre-K classroom, and each week we'll have an activity designed to support preschooler's early math skills, such as recognizing shapes and numerals, counting, sorting, number sense, and patterning. We will also be integrating activities and materials from a new Boston Children's Museum playgroup curriculum. Each group will end with a circle time with songs and a book.

Younger siblings are welcome, but be aware that we will be using tools like scissors and small parts that could be choking hazards.

*\*Classroom is not wheelchair/stroller accessible. \*This group will NOT meet on Oct 17 or Nov 28*

**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**

*Sept. 16, 23, 30, Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28, Nov. 4, 18, 25, Dec. 2, 9*

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.

*\*This group will NOT meet on Nov 11*

## 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 6 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](mailto:xwang@jri.org)

## New Parent Programs - Prenatal to 12 Months

### First Year of Life Parent Support Group

Free and open to all parents

Parents are  
welcome to join  
us every  
Thursday,

### Navigating the 4th Trimester

Free and open to all expectant parents

Register for  
December 3  
6:30-8:00 at  
Steinberg



9:30-11:00

Click on flyer  
for more info.

Register [HERE](#)



**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 Littleton Library, Concord, MA. 2023 hours: 10:00-11:00am, 1st Thursday of each month. Groups are funded through Littleton Library, Concord, MA. Funding is provided by the Nordblum Family Foundation and the Concord-Carlisle Foundation.

### Fall Schedule (guest speakers)

September 4 - virtual

Sept. 11 - Goodnow Library, Sudbury, in person

**September 18 - Pelvic Health Physical Therapist Noam Eitan - virtual**

September 25 - virtual

October 2 - virtual

**October 9 - Goodnow Library, Sudbury, in-person Infant Massage w/Mary Beilman, CEIM**

October 16 - virtual

October 23 - virtual

October 30 - virtual

**November 6 - Feeding Q & A with Mary Beilman, CLC - virtual**

Nov. 13 - Goodnow Library, Sudbury, in person

November 20 - virtual

November 27 - Thanksgiving, no group

December 4 - virtual

Dec. 11 - Goodnow Library, Sudbury, in person

December 18 - virtual

December 25 - Christmas, no group

Wellness Center  
in Concord

[HERE](#)

or

978-287-3777



**first connections**  
**Navigating the 4th Trimester**  
Supporting Your Postpartum Journey

**Topics to be Discussed:**

- Sleep and Feeding
- Emotional Support
- Postpartum Depression
- Community Resources

**About this program:**  
This 4th trimester workshop is designed to provide parents with evidence-based 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.

**Facilitators:**  
Emily Fiorini, LMHC  
Mary Beilman, CLC

**Register Here:**  
<https://bit.ly/4thtrimester>

### Navigating the 4th Trimester

This quarterly workshop offers a supportive place for expectant 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 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 in-person session facilitated by lactation counselor and infant sleep consultant, Mary Beilman, and Emily Fiorini, LMHC, who specializes in infant and parent mental health. Helpful postpartum community resources included. Birthing person and a support person are welcome to attend free of charge. Register thru the above link.

The 2 above programs are funded by Nordblum Family Foundation and Concord-Carlisle Foundation



### Ages & Stages Playgroup for 3-11 Mos. at Littleton Library



Thursdays, 10:30-11:30  
Sept. 18, 25, Oct. 2, 9, 16  
Email [lmattthews@jri.org](mailto:lmattthews@jri.org) to register

This group will start with some songs and a book for the babies, and then caregivers will have a chance to check in, ask questions of each other and the facilitator, and share their wins and challenges. All caregivers are welcome, but please make arrangements for older siblings to keep babies safe. Facilitated by Early Childhood Educator Ellie Springer.

### Additional Free Community-based Opportunities for Infants & Parents

**Baby Sign Language Class with Sheryl White at Lincoln Library**

Wednesdays, October 8, 15, 22, 29, 10:30-11:30. [Register Here](#)

**Babygarten Program for 0-18 Months at Littleton Library**

Thursdays, October 23, 30, November 6, 13, 20, December 4, 10:30-11:30. [Register Here](#)

**Tummy Time & Socializing at Acton Memorial Library**

Mondays, 9:30-11:00, Drop-in program begins September 8

**Mother Goose on the Loose Early Literacy Program at Harvard Library**

Mondays or Thursdays at 10:30. Drop in program begins September 22

**Acton-Boxborough Family Network New Baby Meet-up at Acton Arboretum, 10 Taylor Rd, Acton  
Wednesday, September 3 at 10:30 a.m.**

Come meet other moms in the Acton-Boxborough area with new(ish) babies. Bring a chair or blanket to sit on in the grassy area, and join the chat over some light refreshments. Looking forward to seeing you there! [Register Here](#)

## 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](mailto:firstconnections@jri.org) or text/call 978-505-4227.

### We're Hiring!

First Connections is seeking a dedicated **Early Learning Specialist** to join our **Parent Child+** team. This nationally recognized, evidence-based program supports parents in fostering their children's early language, literacy, and social-emotional development through home visits and community engagement. As an Early Learning Specialist, you will manage a small caseload of families, provide one-on-one home visits, and model early learning activities that help parents prepare their children for school success. Nine hours a week; training provided; second language proficiency a plus! To inquire, email Jasmine at [xwang@jri.org](mailto:xwang@jri.org).



Diapers are expensive! My family can't afford enough to keep me clean and dry. Can you help?



**Support First Connections' diaper pantry!**



**PROVIDING FREE DIAPERS TO LOCAL FAMILIES IN NEED**

**BUY DIAPERS FROM OUR AMAZON WISH LIST:**  
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/YCWVEF8K](https://tinyurl.com/YCWVEF8K)  
OR DROP OFF AT OUR OFFICE, 179 GREAT RD. ACTON

### First Connections Diaper Pantry - Is Now 100% Dependent on Donations

- Our Diaper Pantry no longer has funding to purchase diapers to assist families with this financial need.
- Since January 2025 we have served 37 families - some once, some every month, who speak 6 different languages and live in 9 of our 11 towns.
- 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.
- We thank Neighborhood Villages for their recent donation!

**All sizes of diapers are needed, as well as pull-ups, and overnights!**

## Fall Community Family Support & Education

**Parenting in America - A Supportive Program  
for Immigrant Families who speak Portuguese**



### **FREE 12-week virtual group for all caregivers**

Join this group designed for parents and caregivers navigating life in the U.S. While honoring your cultural roots, this program helps you build confidence, strengthen parenting skills, and access the resources you need to thrive. Highlights: tools to handle stress and advocate for your family, insight into helpful agencies and how to access them, and greater confidence, resilience and community connection.



**Starts September 22, Mondays 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

**To register, email: [FRC-INFO@waysideyouth.org](mailto:FRC-INFO@waysideyouth.org)**

This is a Family Resource Center program through Wayside Youth & Family Services

### **NEW - Ongoing!** **Grandparent's Support Group** **For those with a grandchild** **age newborn up to age 4**

**When: 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.**

**Where: Online, via Zoom video conferencing.**



Becoming a grandparent is a big milestone and stepping into this new role can bring both excitement and uncertainty. How can we be supportive without overstepping? Curious without being judgmental? What has changed in parenting since we raised our own children and what has remained the same? JF&CS is offering a new, **FREE** support group for grandparents living in Massachusetts. This facilitated group provides a safe, supportive space to ask questions, share ideas and strategies, and connect with others who are on a similar journey. Discussion topics may include providing nonjudgmental support, setting healthy boundaries, connecting with your grandchild, exploring your evolving identity as a grandparent and understanding current parenting trends and practices. (Not intended for grandparents who are the primary caregiver of their grandchild).

**[Register Here](#)**

### **Nurturing Fathers 12-Session Group** **FREE - Virtual - Spanish & English Sessions**

Every child deserves an affectionate parent, someone who provides love, support, and consistent guidance to help them grow and thrive. Nurturing Fathers is designed to help parents reflect, connect, and gain practical tools to become more affectionate while maintaining structure in their parenting in a supportive and confidential space. This is a Family Resource Center program through Wayside Youth & Family Services in an effort to build stronger families by supporting fathers in their most important role.

**Begins September 8 in English, Mondays 1:00-3:00**

**Comienza el 8 de Septiembre en Espanol, Lunes 6:00-8:00**

**Begins September 11 in English, Thursdays 6:00-8:00**



Register: **[FRC-  
INFO@waysideyouth.org](mailto:FRC-INFO@waysideyouth.org)**

### **Free 4-session Facilitated Conversation for** **Parents whose Child's Development is** **Delayed or Atypical**

**Sept 29, Oct. 20, Nov. 17, Dec. 15, 3-4:00 p.m.**

**This program is moderated by Jane Singer, Ph.D.,**



Director of Clinical Training at Brazelton Touchpoints Center and a Clinical Psychologist at Children's Hospital. Explore unique and common experiences of loving and raising children with differences or challenges to their development. Live Spanish translation and captioning available.

**[Learn More or Register Here](#)**

### **Free "Making Home Speech Practice Work" presented by Lisa Ratte, SLP**

Parents and caregivers of children age 4-10 who are working on speech sounds with a speech therapist or at school will learn simple, effective ways to support their child's speech at home. You'll discover how to recognize speech milestones and know when to seek help, make home practice fun and impactful, and gain confidence with easy, everyday strategies. Leave with practical tools you can use right away to help your child make meaningful progress with articulation.

**Roudenbush Community Center, 65 Main St, Westford  
September 15, 7-8:00 p.m. [Learn more and Register Here](#)**



## **FREE Community Support and Education for All Parents**

### **McLean Hospital Webinars for Families this Fall**

Sign up for the connecting link [here](#)

Oct 15: **Helping Kids Thrive Mentally & Emotionally: A Guide for Parents**, 12-1:00. Dr. Jacqueline Sperling

Nov. 18: **How to Help Parents Navigate Their Child's Anxiety** 12-1:00. Dr. Lisa Coyne, Dr. Eli Lebowitz

**Anxiety & OCD in Kids & Teens:** On demand anytime

### **Parent Groups Held by the Center for Early Relationship Support**

If you have any questions, email [lpucker@jfcsboston.org](mailto:lpucker@jfcsboston.org) or [Website Information](#)

**Fragile Beginnings** for parents of babies who've spent time in the NICU

**Parents of Toddlers 1-4 yrs**

**Spanish-Speaking Parents of babies 0-12 months** ([jccaceres@jfcsboston.org](mailto:jccaceres@jfcsboston.org))

**New Mothers with PPD, Anxiety or Emotional Complications**

**Parenting an Adopted Child under 12 months** ([michellekahan@jfcsboston.org](mailto:michellekahan@jfcsboston.org))

**Virtual New Parent Group**

**In-Person New Parent Groups** held in Arlington, Brookline, Cambridge, Jamaica Plain, Watertown

**In-Home Visits for Parents of Babies under Age 1**

### **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**

**Fathers' Group**

**Parenting in Recovery**

**Parenting Preschoolers**

**Parenting Neurodivergent Children**

**BIPOC Parenting**

**Mindful Parenting**

**Parenting Children who Struggle with Anxiety or Depression**

**Parenting through High-Conflict Divorce**

Additional general parenting groups also available. [Registration Page](#)

### **Infant and Pregnancy Loss Support Group**

This ongoing monthly group is for those who have experienced the loss of a pregnancy during the 2nd or 3rd trimester 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) for the connecting zoom link. **Held on the 2nd Mondays on Zoom, 7:00-8:30 p.m. [Information here](#)**

### 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](mailto:jj.oleary@comcast.net). For additional statewide resources & evening groups, contact [colleen.pritoni@state.ma.us](mailto:colleen.pritoni@state.ma.us), 617-748-2454 or visit [GRG Website](#). **Fall Workshop & Event Highlights:** Cartooning with Jarrett virtual workshop for grandkids in October, Lived Experience Grandparent Panel in November, "From Shame to Resilience" virtual in September.

## Free & Low-Cost Community Parent & Child Programs



### Calmer Con Sensory Friendly Comics & Pop Culture Convention

Saturday, September 6, 10:00-5:00

Held at Meadowbrook School, 10 Farm Rd., Weston

**[Register for FREE Admission](#)**

This event is for all ages and includes Jedi or Superhero Training, a Pokemon Club, Artist Workshops, Cosplay and Brick Building.

Geared to children with ASD, sensory processing or anxiety concerns and their families. Questions? [adam@calmpassion.org](mailto:adam@calmpassion.org) or call 978-895-5385. Many activities repeat in morning and afternoon, so you don't need to plan to stay for the whole day.

### Annual ABFN Halloween Spooktacular

Acton-Boxborough Family Network invites you to join them for a fun, family-friendly Halloween event. There will be a sensory-friendly time (10-10:30), entertainment (11-11:45), a family costume contest with cool prizes donated by local businesses, and lots of activities provided by local preschools and businesses. Held at 15 Charter Rd., Acton Junior. H.S.  
Free for ABFN members; \$10 per family for non-members  
Pre-registration required by the morning of 10/25

We will be collecting for A-B Food pantry. Most needed items are: cereal, baby food, healthy snacks, diapers sizes 5, 6, 4T-5T



**Saturday, October 25  
10:00-12:30**

**[PRE-REGISTRATION  
REQUIRED HERE!](#)**

## 10th Annual Stand Up to Stigma Scarecrow Contest



### Make your own scarecrow, or vote for your favorite!

- Visit Cucurbit Farm, 32 Parker St., Acton, to vote for your favorite
- Visit the corn maze while you're there
- If your family would like to make a scarecrow, make a \$25 donation to NAMI Central Middlesex at the farm to reserve your scarecrow frame starting September 1st
- Drop off your scarecrow in October for a month-long display
- Winners announced November 1st with cash prizes.

**[More Information Here](#)**

### Happy Grandparents Day - Sept. 7

Meet Authors Kaija Langley and Temika Grooms who have each written books about grandparents, "***A Century for Caroline***" and "***How Long is Forever,***" 11-12:00.



Author/illustrator Scott Magoon visits the store with his new book, "***There's No Place Like Gnome's***" on September 20, 11-12:00

Meet Erin & Philip Stead, authors of ***A Snow Day for Amos McGee*** and other books! October 4, 11:00-12:00

Meet author Maria Gianferrari, and hear ***Rain and the Reading Horse***, October 11, 11:00

12 Spruce Street, West Acton, 978-274-2757,  
[info@silverunicornbooks.com](mailto:info@silverunicornbooks.com)

### West Acton's Octoberfest - September 27

Join us at Gardner Field Playground to meet the authors of:

11:00 "***The Mouse who Loved Latkes***"

1:00 "***The Book of Fairies***"

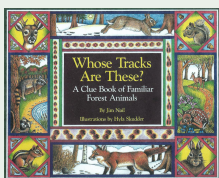
### NEW! Picture Book Club for All Ages

Monthly beginning September 13 with "***The Wild Robot on the Island.***" We'll read the book, discuss it, and do a fun craft related to the book.



Susan Richmond, author of "***The Great Pollinator Count***" will do an interactive reading, review and I.D. pollinators, and do a practice count in the library garden. Saturday, Sept. 20, 11-11:45. [Register](#). Takes place at Fowler Library, 1322 Main Street, Concord

Jennifer Wellborn, author and Rozilla MG, illustrator of "***Dr. Rosie Helps the Animals***" will read the book then show children how veterinarians help sick and injured animals. Bring a stuffed animal with you to the program. No registration required. Saturday, Oct. 18, 2-2:45. Takes place at Main Library, 129 Main Street, Concord



### NEW COMMUNITY STORYWALK!

This new storywalk, *Whose Tracks are These?*, will be displayed at Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge thru September, and is a guessing game describing 6 common forest creatures, their habitats and eating preferences. [Information Here](#). Located on Winterberry Lane at 680 Hudson Road, Sudbury.

### Concord Conservatory of Music's Discovery Day Open House - Saturday, Sept. 6, 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 (ages 3-6), Group Keyboard and more. [Register HERE](#)

### Free Family Days Art Projects at The Umbrella

Saturdays, **September 13, October 11 & November 8**, 2:00-4:00

Also from 1:00-4:00 on **December 6 & 7** during Winter Market

40 Stow Street, Concord. Drop in any time for seasonal and creative crafts led by an art teacher.

Registration (not required) and information [HERE](#)

### Free Open Farmyard Activities at Lands Sake Farm in Weston continue through October 29.

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. 20 at Stony Brook Middle

School, Westford. Touch a truck, carnival games, face painting, trackless train, D.J. & more. Benefits Westford Education Foundation. [Website for 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 Evening** - Saturday, September 20, 5-8:00 p.m.

**Families with Deaf, low vision, hard of hearing, Blind, or KODA Family Members, or those who are learning ASL** - Interpreters available. Saturday, October 4, 5-8:00 p.m.

### SPECIAL LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

**Sept. 6, Oct. 4, Nov. 1: Ricardo's Bilingual Spanish/English Musical Morning** at Fowler Library, 1322 Main St., Concord, 11-11:45. Drop in program for ages 7 & under.

**Sept. 17: Littles & Letters Alphabet Storytime Begins for Ages 4+** with storytime and a craft focused on a different letter each week at Littleton Library. **Register** for each week.

**Sept. 18: Books with Bunnies at Good Pickin' Farm** thru Westford Library, 1-2:30. Cuddle the bunnies and listen to an interactive storytime with a friendly farmer. **Register**

**Sept. 23: Winnie the Pooh Storytime at The Winnie the Pooh House**, 39 Main St., Westford thru Westford Library. Based on the original A.A. Milne books, with coloring pages and a swag bag to take home. **Register** beginning Sept. 2.

**Sept. 29, Oct. 27, Nov. 24, Dec. 22:** Busy Bees Preschool-age Playgroup at Littleton Library held on Mondays, 10-11:30. **Register** for each date on calendar.

**Oct. 7-29 Adopt a Reading Pal Series** at Concord Library, 129 Main Street Drop-in Series

- Oct. 7, 4:15-5, Meet Michelle Kreeel from Baypath Humane Society and learn all about pet adoption.
- Oct. 14, 4:15-5, Meet Veterinarian Jennifer Wu from Great Road Vet Hospital to learn what she does and how she helps animals.
- Oct. 18, 2-2:45, Meet the author and illustrator of "*Dr. Rosie Helps the Animals*", listen to the story, watch a demonstration of how to help sick and injured animals. Bring a stuffed animal with you.
- Oct. 21, 4:15-5, Face Painting and an Explore-the-Library walk with your reading pal
- Oct. 29, 4:15-5, Adopt a Reading Pal Graduation!!

**Oct. 8: The Caterpillar Lab** visits Harvard Library, 12:30-3:15. Drop in to see a huge variety of N.E. caterpillars munching on their food plants. Educators will help you see, touch & learn about them and their adaptations. **Register**. All curious families welcome!

**Oct. 9: Chats with Chicks at Good Pickin' Farm** thru Westford Library, 1-2:30. Cuddle baby chicks and listen to an interactive storytime with a friendly farmer. **Register** beg. Sept. 18.

**Oct. 29, 3:30-4:30, Pumpkin Decorating Party** for all ages at 129 Main St., Concord **Register here**. Arrive at 3:30 - spaces will be given away to wait list at 3:40.

**Nov. 8 Nutcracker Preview** at Lincoln Library, 3 Bedford Rd, 10:30-11:30. Drop in to hear the story read (geared to young children) with dancers from Commonwealth Ballet acting out some of the parts. Meet the dancers after the story.

**Nov. 12: Storytime with The Book Princess** at Roudenbush Community Center thru Westford Library, 4-5:00. The Princess will graciously read us a story and regale us with her princess ways. Time for photos and a scavenger hunt. **Register** beginning Oct. 22.

**Dec. 6: Nutcracker Preview** at Carlisle Library, 10:30-11:30. A special performance sample of the Commonwealth Ballet holiday show and reading of the story geared to ages 4-10. Q & A with dancers, and photos followed by refreshments and a craft. **Register** beg. Nov. 8.

**Dec. 15 Gingerbread House Workshop**, Carlisle Library, 4:00 or 5:30 **Register** beg. 11/17.

**Dec. 17 Strega Mama reads the story of Frozen**. A Westford Library program held in Room 105 at Roudenbush Community Center, 4-5:00. **Register** beginning 11/26.

### Autism Resources in the Community This Fall

**The Lurie Center for Autism Coffee Convo  
Fall 2025 Topics**



### [Register for the Link](#)

These virtual presentations take place on Wednesday evenings, 6:30-7:30. Free and open to all.

**Sept. 17:** Improving Executive Function Skills for Individuals with Autism

**Oct. 22:** Behavioral & Medication Approaches to Sleep Challenges in Autism

**Nov. 19:** Obsessive Compulsive Disorder in Autism

**Dec. 17:** Research Update on Leucovorin for ASD, and Mirtazapine for Anxiety in ASD

## A Conversation about Applying to DDS for Parents of Children with Autism

Have you found the application for the Mass. Dept. of Developmental Services overwhelming? Are you unclear what the benefits would be? If you have questions about eligibility, reasons for denial, documentation needed, what the steps are and how long it takes, join this FREE webinar with the Intake & Eligibility Manager for DDS. [Register Here](#)

**September 9, 6:30-7:15 p.m. via Zoom**



**Tuesday, September 30  
6:00-8:00 p.m.  
1245 Worcester Rd., Natick**

## Demystifying Insurance for Autism and Behavioral Health

The Project Director of the Insurance Resource Center for Autism & Behavioral Health at U. Mass. Chan Medical School will speak about how to get coverage from employer or MassHealth insurance for children with autism. This program takes place at Autism Alliance of Metrowest in Natick. Limited to 25 people. [Register Here](#)

## Autism-Friendly Evening at the Discovery Museum in Acton

This special FREE evening for visitors on the autism spectrum and their families includes dinner with a gluten-free option, and having the museum closed to the general public. Enjoy a fun, friendly experience in a universally-designed museum with interactive exhibits and hands-on activities. **September 20, 5-8:00 p.m.** [Register Here](#)



## *Sometimes It's Hard*, a sibling book event

Join an inclusive book signing event to celebrate this children's book written especially for siblings of children who have autism or other disabilities. It's a story of patience, big feelings, and understanding, and it gives a voice to siblings who may sometimes feel overlooked. Author Kayla



**Saturday, October 18, 11-1:00**  
201 W. Boylston St., W. Boylston

Paquette is a certified autism travel professional and an ABA therapist. Drop in, no registration required.  
[Information here](#)

## Autism Resources: Before & After an Autism Diagnosis

Join the Mass. Family Coordinator at The Federation for Children with Special Needs to help you understand what supports and services are available before and after an autism diagnosis. The presentation is meant to help you develop a basic understanding and comfort using these services that could be helpful to your family and child.  
**September 9, 6:00 p.m. via Zoom [Register Here](#)**



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

## Additional Resources in the Community

### Sudbury Community Food Pantry is Moving! Now located at 534 Boston Post Rd, Wayland

The Sudbury Community Food Pantry offers food assistance to those in need with no pre-requisites or geographic boundaries. We provide food and personal care items that promote healthy living, in a welcoming environment that respects our clients' dignity and privacy. For first-time visitors, please email [registration@sudburyfoodpantry.org](mailto:registration@sudburyfoodpantry.org) or go to the website: <https://www.sudburyfoodpantry.org/pick-up-food>  
**Open Tuesdays and Fridays, 12:00-2:15.**



### SEPTEMBER 20 - Save some money!! Kids Consignment Sale

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](http://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.



**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, Buxborough, 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 program. We are grateful for the financial support of Acton-Buxborough United Way, Concord-Carlisle 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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