

# Family Connections Center

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## Governor Baker Releases Budget



Governor Baker's 2017 budget provides a positive start for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Most noteworthy are DDS funding gains in Family Support (\$5 Million increase), Employment (\$12 Million) and Community Residential (\$25 Million) accounts. The latter two account increases are a mix of new dollars and to maintain 2016 spending in areas such as Turning 22. Work begins now among advocacy groups to increase allocations to fully fund services for those Turning 22 in employment, autism omnibus and other areas.

Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change, with Arc Mass and other partners in "SupportingFamilies.org" is pushing for a \$100 Million investment over 4 years for 5700 families in high need in the areas of Family Support, DESE-DDS and Autism Children's Waiver.

## SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, March 9, 2016

10:30am - 12:00pm

The State House  
Boston



You are invited to attend our annual legislative reception on March 9th. This is an ideal opportunity for persons with disabilities, family members, advocates, state agency heads and their staff, and legislators to interact and catch up on legislative priorities and other important issues.

Invited guests include Governor Charlie Baker, State Senators and Representatives, State Cabinet Secretaries and Commissioners.

# Food for *Thought*

## You and I (adult version)

From the [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com) E-Newsletter by Kathie Snow

Other "You and I" comparisons are out there; this is another that can hopefully generate positive change. Not all scenarios apply to all people, but they represent the real lives of too many adults with developmental disabilities.

You're frustrated, sad, scared, or angry. *I'm told I have inappropriate behavior.*

You're addicted to coffee, chocolate, texting, reality TV, and more.  
*I'm told I have obsessions, and others use these as rewards or punishments in my behavior plan.*

You eat what you want, when you want. *I'm told what and when I can eat.*

You protect your personal space and property. *I have no right to personal space and property.*

You speak up and defend yourself. *I'm described as noncompliant.*

You protect your private information. *I have no privacy; it seems everyone knows everything about me.*

You left your parents' home and went off on your own, whether you were ready or not.  
*I'm not allowed to move on until I meet "readiness" standards for "daily living skills" and more.  
(Why didn't my family help me learn these things when I was younger?)*

You live where you choose, with the people you love.  
*I'm "placed" wherever there's an "open slot," with people I don't know.*

You network to find a new job.  
*I'm told I first need pre-vocational training; then maybe someone will try to find a job for me. (Why didn't public school prepare me for a job? And now, why can't others help me to learn to get a job on my own?)*

You get help from co-workers in your new job. *I'm told I need a job coach.*

You fall in love and have intimate relationships.  
*I'm presumed to be asexual; no one seems to care if I'm lonely and have no real relationships.*

You have fun at the mall, shopping for holiday gifts for your family and friends. *I'm taken on an outing to the mall. I have no money to spend of gifts and no one to give them to.*

You're surrounded by family and friends. *I'm surrounded by people who are paid to be in my life.*

You're known by your abilities and interests. *I'm known by my diagnoses and problems.*

You live by your hopes and dreams. *I'm supposed to live by the goals others write for me.*

You live a life of responsibility, inclusion, and freedom.  
*I'm held in a state of helplessness, isolation, and dependency.*

You work to improve your standard of living throughout your lifetime.  
*I'll most likely live below the poverty line for the rest of my life, unless significant changes occur.*

You're included because you're alive. *I'm supposed to earn the right to be included.*

You're presumed to be competent. *I'm presumed to be incompetent.*

# You and I

(child version)

From the [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com) E-Newsletter by Kathie Snow

Other “You and I” comparisons are out there; this is another that can hopefully generate positive change. Not all scenarios apply to all children, but they represent the real lives of too many children with developmental disabilities.

You go to preschool-child care or stay at home with your mom or dad.

*I go to special ed preschool, where I get therapy, work on goals they wrote for me, and more.*

*I have long bus rides. It's hard when you're just a little kid.*

You graduate from preschool. *I'm held back in the special ed preschool; they say I'm not ready for kindergarten, so I'm "placed" in a special education classroom.*

You move as you grow up; you know the difference between first grade and fourth grade.

*I stay in the same special ed classroom for years, so I don't know what grade I'm in, and I don't know how to be a first-grader or a fourth-grader.*

You're frustrated, sad, scared, or angry. *I'm told I have inappropriate behavior.*

You get invited to friends' birthday parties and they come to yours. *I don't get invited to birthday parties; I don't really have any friends. My family and some professionals are at my birthday party.*

You have to do chores, be responsible, make some of your own decisions, and more.

*I want to do these things, but no one will let me try; no one expects me to do what other kids do.*

You play sports and do other fun activities to exercise your body and develop your skills.

*I'm taken to therapy; they say I'm "special" and can't do things that "normal" kids do.*

You speak up and defend yourself. *I'm described as noncompliant.*

You work part-time in high school, and you date and have fun with friends.

*I'm still in a special ed classroom, getting therapy, etc. Sometimes I bag groceries as part of my IEP, but they don't pay me. I have no friends. Will I ever be kissed? And I still don't know what grade I'm in.*

You have big plans for your life: a job, college, your own place, and more. Your parents have big hopes and dreams for you. *I'm going into a transition program for life-skills; then a residential placement; and goals – more goals. My parents are hoping they can get all the services they think I need.*

You'll live a life of responsibility, inclusion, and freedom.

*I'll most likely be held in a state of helplessness, isolation, and dependency.*

You're surrounded by family and friends. *I'm surrounded by people who are paid to be in my life.*

You're known by your abilities and interests. I'm known by my diagnoses and problems.

You're included because you're alive. I'm supposed to earn the right to be included.

You're presumed to be competent. I'm presumed to be incompetent.

# Available *Resources*



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS  
INFORMING, EDUCATING, EMPOWERING FAMILIES

## PARENT CONSULTANT TRAINING INSTITUTE

### *New Bedford Spring 2016*

The PCTI is an intensive training program designed to provide parents and professionals with a solid foundation in special education laws, procedures, and related subjects. The training consists of 40 plus hours of classroom instruction.

**Where:** Family Resource & Development Center (third floor)  
105 William Street  
New Bedford Ma. 02740  
Phone: 508-994-4521

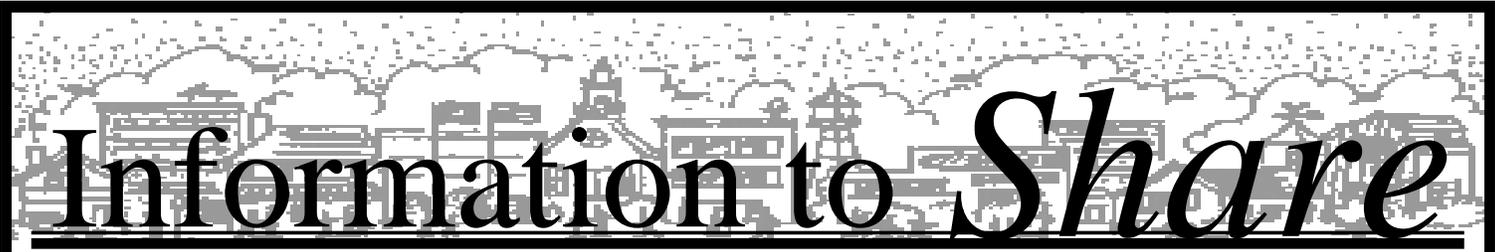
**Time:** 1:00PM to 7:00PM **PLEASE NOTE THIS IS AN AFTERNOON/EARLY EVENING CLASS.**

- Tuesday , April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday April 19<sup>th</sup> NO Class during school vacation week
- Tuesday April 26<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>,
- Tuesday, May 31<sup>st</sup>
- Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>

*Reserve Tuesday, June 14, 2016 in the event of the cancelation of the class due to weather*

**Cost:** \$350.00 for parents

\*\*\*Parents interested can contact the Family Connections Center for information on possible scholarship funds.



# Information to *Share*

*Meeting the*

FEBRUARY 23  
6-8pm

## Mental Health

*Needs of Students in School*

This presentation by the Parent/Professional Advocacy League was crafted to build knowledge around the Special Education and IEP process. Topics include: how to identify, document and communicate concerns with the focus on the student's emotional, behavioral, & mental health challenges and the supports that students may need to access the curriculum and life of the school.

James M. Quinn School  
529 Hawthorne Street, Dartmouth MA  
RSVP to: [dartmouthsepac@gmail.com](mailto:dartmouthsepac@gmail.com)

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### Conquering the Cliff: Autism's Journey into Adulthood Conference

Sheraton Framingham Hotel & Conference Center  
1657 Worcester Road, Framingham, Massachusetts 01701

Thursday, April 14, 2016 from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (LMT)

This full-day conference is an opportunity to network with up to 500 human services leaders, professionals and family members. The conference will feature 21 workshops on a wide variety of topics.

- Employment, Residential and Day Services
- Family and Caregiver Supports
- Clinical Practices
- Safety and Wellness
- Behavioral Interventions including ABA and PBS
- Communication and Technology

Registration is now open. Learn more about the different conference rates for groups, large groups as well as family and student discounts! General Registration: *Registration includes a plated lunch, three workshop sessions, time to explore exhibit space as well as a networking reception.*

**This conference to sell out - register today!**  
<https://conqueringtheclass.wordpress.com/register>

## COME JOIN US AND DEVELOP YOUR PARENT LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY SKILLS...

### ***Parent Leadership and Networking Project:***

Training for parents of children with vision loss or combined vision & hearing loss (deafblind) in the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire

*Presented by the New England Consortium for Deafblind Technical Assistance & Training (NEC)  
In collaboration with the National Association of Parents of Children  
with Visual Impairments of Lighthouse Guild (NAPVI)*



**When:** Kick-Off Parent Luncheon February 25, 2016

**Time:** 10-2:00pm

**Location:** Grousbeck Center – RM N103, Perkins, Watertown, MA 02472

**Purpose:** The purpose of this program is to (1) provide parents opportunities to network and learn from each other, and (2) increase parent use of new tools and strategies to support planning and self-advocacy for their child.

#### **Participants will:**

- Attend training or log into video conference - **three additional group sessions** to be scheduled upon group consensus
- Complete 6-8 hours towards an internship project
- Internship goals to be accomplished by December 15th, 2016

#### **Who we are:**

- The New England Consortium for Deafblind Technical Assistance and Training (NEC) is a “community of practice” focused on combined vision and hearing loss, and serving children and their families in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. The NEC grant is funded by the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), to build local and state capacity to improve outcomes for children who are deafblind through parent and service provider training, and networking opportunities.
- NAPVI (National Association of Parents of Children with Visual Impairments of Lighthouse Guild) creates opportunities for families to gain support through organized meetings and activities. NAPVI provides parent education, leadership and advocacy training opportunities for families who have children with visual impairments.
- Invited speakers include national representatives of parent leaders and disability advocates.
- Parents will create an individual action plan, share ideas and lessons learned.
- Lunch will be provided; Housing and mileage reimbursement available.

For information and application, contact Tracy Evans Luiselli at 617-972-7517 or [tracy.luiselli@perkins.org](mailto:tracy.luiselli@perkins.org)



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS  
INFORMING, EDUCATING, EMPOWERING FAMILIES

## Visions of Community Conference 2016

Registration Now Open!

Saturday, March 5, 2016

Seaport World Trade Center, Boston



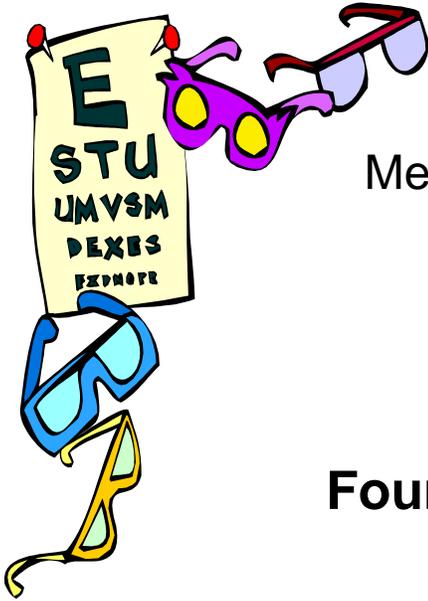
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Josie Badger, Youth Director at the PEAL Parent Center in Pennsylvania. Dr. Badger will present **From Surviving to Thriving: Preparing a Generation for Success**, a presentation that will discuss changing expectations for youth, key skills needed for success, and reflect on her experience growing up with a disability.

The *Visions of Community 2016* conference is sponsored by the Federation for Children with Special Needs, including its projects: the Parent Training & Information Center, Recruitment, Training and Support Center, Family TIES of Massachusetts and Massachusetts Family Voices. In addition, the Federation is proud to have as partners and co-sponsors for the conference the Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project, Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change, and the Parent/Professional Advocacy League. Each year the conference is a fabulous opportunity to:

- Attend your choice of workshops about early childhood, special education, transition to adult life, special healthcare needs, managing challenging behaviors, mental health services and supports, inclusion, autism, fostering friendships, assistive technology, stress management for parents, parent leadership, and more.
- Meet Federation staff and learn about all the projects at the Federation
- Visit our exhibit hall with parent organizations, vendors, and lots of FREE resource
- Network, network, network!

For registration:

<https://fcsn.org/voc/registration>



## **"Focus" on Vision Impairment & Blindness Conference 11<sup>th</sup> Annual**

Meeting the Needs of Individuals with Intellectual Disability & Vision Loss

**March 9, 2016**  
**8:00 am - 3:30 pm**

### **Four Points by Sheraton, Norwood, MA**

Welcome Remarks: Jane Ryder  
Deputy Commissioner, Department of Developmental Services

Keynote Speaker: Randy Pierce  
President, 2020 Vision Quest

"Reaching Our Peak Potential"

Awards at Lunch:

Mark Holt "Gift of Lunch"  
Paul McDade "Focus" Award for Distinguished Service  
Paul McDade "Focus" Award for Distinguished Leadership

"Focus" on Talent!!!  
Special Closing Performance by: "MAI Group Inc."

### **Introducing our Keynote: Randy Pierce**

Randy holds the positions of Founder and President of 2020 Vision Quest, Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of New Hampshire Association for the Blind, and First Vice President of the Hudson, NH Lions Club. The University of New Hampshire's Alumni Association has named Randy as its 2014 winner of the Award of Excellence for Outstanding Achievement. Randy provides motivational speaking presentations to corporations, schools, and non-profit organizations. Some notable presentations, of the hundreds Randy has provided, include Google, TJX, Yankee Candle, and Bank of New Hampshire.

For questions regarding Registration, please contact Donnamaria:  
Donnamaria.Linfield@state.ma.us or phone 508-384-5679.





# A Full Life Ahead

**Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change (MFOFC) in partnership with Building Futures and the Family Connections Center of the Nemasket Group presents**

A series of monthly workshops designed for parents and caregivers as they plan for the future of their loved one with a disability. Various workshop topics such as friendships, transition, employment, housing and financial planning are offered. The workshops and resources provided in this series will help lead to interdependent, full lives in the community for people with disabilities.

***Please join us... Wednesday, February 24, 2016***

**6 – 8 PM**

**The Nemasket Group  
56 Bridge Street  
Fairhaven, MA 02719**

## ***The Alphabet Soup of Resources***

**Kim Thacker**, Benefits Specialist - Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), will explain the Social Security (SSI/SSDI) programs, MassHealth and other benefits including the Section 8 program; who is eligible, how and when to apply. Information on other services that can benefit the individual and families will be provided.

Please RSVP to Amy Cornell @ [amycornell@nemasketgroup.org](mailto:amycornell@nemasketgroup.org) or 508-999-4436

## Two opportunities to hear a dynamic speaker on an important topic...don't miss this!



the  
**nemasket**  
group

# A Full Life Ahead

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***Please join us... Wednesday, March 23, 2016***

**6 – 8 PM**

**The Nemasket Group**

**56 Bridge St.**

**Fairhaven, MA 02719**

### ***Widening the Circle - Expanding Opportunities for Friendships between People with and Without Disabilities***

Building and keeping relationships is an important part of a REAL LIFE. Happiness can come from knowing we have friends - people who care for us. Building relationships between individuals with or without disabilities should be encouraged wherever you live, learn, work and play. Jim Ross, the WTC Coordinator, will lead a discussion with a focus on ways to build relationships between individuals with and without disabilities.

*Widening the Circle, Expanding Opportunities for Friendships between People with and Without Disabilities (formally the Real Friends Project) is a partnership between The Arc of Massachusetts and MA Department of Developmental Services.*

**Please RSVP to Amy Cornell @ [amycornell@nemasketgroup.org](mailto:amycornell@nemasketgroup.org) or 508-999-4436**



*Engaging in relationships that might blossom into friendships can be especially challenging to people of all ages who happen to have disabilities.*



## **WIDENING THE CIRCLE** Presented by Jim Ross

An **ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT** for students to **MAKE FRIENDS** is to have **CONNECTIONS** with other students wherever they **LIVE, LEARN & PLAY**. This is especially true, and challenging, if one of the goals is for relationships between students with disabilities & students without.

The **Dartmouth SEPAC** welcomes all **PARENTS, EDUCATORS, STUDENTS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS** to come explore the benefits of fostering friendships between these students. This workshop is meant to provide information about resources to help interested individuals engage in and sustain those relationships.

**MARCH 31<sup>st</sup> 6~8pm**

**QUINN SCHOOL, COMMUNITY ROOM**

**529 HAWTHORNE STREET, DARTMOUTH**

Rsvp: [dartmouthsepac@gmail.com](mailto:dartmouthsepac@gmail.com)

the  
nemasket  
group

NON PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE PAID  
NEW BEDFORD, MA  
PERMIT NO. 651

**Family Connections Center**

Joint Project of The Nemasket Group and  
DDS (*Greater New Bedford Department of Developmental Services*)  
56 Bridge Street  
Fairhaven, MA 02719  
Phone: 508-999-0077  
Fax: 508-997-9239



Creating a network of family support  
for individuals with developmental  
disabilities and their families

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# Save the Date for our 2016 5K Walk/Run

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# April 30, 2016



Join us for a great morning of fun as we make our way through Fairhaven with family, friends and neighbors while raising awareness and support for The Nemasket Group. For more information please go to our website at [www.NemasketGroup.org](http://www.NemasketGroup.org) and follow us on Facebook.