

Family Connections Center



Each year, we reflect on the role we play with the families we support. Many families open their homes and share their lives with us. We are grateful to be able to offer ideas, and share our experience with you, in the hopes of inspiring and encouraging you along this journey. Thank you for allowing us to learn from you as well.

To the Families we know well, and those we have yet to meet, we wish you a wonderfully peaceful holiday season.

Sandy, Heidi, Jennifer, Kathleen, Jorge, Ivone

Family Connections Center
109 Fairhaven Road
Mattapoisett, MA 02739
Tel: 508-999-4436



Food for *Thought*

The Power of ONE

Revolutionary Common Sense by Kathie Snow, www.disabilityisnatural.com

Growing up in the 1950s and '60s, I didn't have classmates with disabilities; didn't see children or adults with disabilities at church, in stores, at Girl Scouts, at dance classes, or anywhere else. Like millions of others, I was denied the opportunity to know people with disabilities. Why? Because most people with disabilities were denied opportunities to *be* in any of those places. I didn't know what I was missing.

So when my son, Benjamin, was born prematurely in 1987 and diagnosed with cerebral palsy as a tiny infant, I was – like most parents – unsure of what to expect. Doom and gloom came from most professionals. Luckily, when my son was three, I was in the Partners in Policymaking leadership training, where my classmates were other parents *and* also adults with developmental disabilities. That's when my real education began: learning from people with disabilities (and my own son).

The training was life-changing. I realized my son *could* have a wonderful – a normal – life. He received a good education in general ed classrooms and was included in T-ball, karate, Scouts, and other ordinary activities. He made friends, had sleepovers, and has always been active in our community. He's earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees and is hunting for a job. But we couldn't have done it on our own; it was the power of others who helped shape the successful outcomes for our son and family.

It was the Power of One doctor who allayed a mother's apprehension with a positive outlook (instead of the gloomy prognoses of other doctors, therapists, early intervention personnel, etc.). It was the Power of One coach who welcomed the boy with a disability as a member of the T-ball team. One sensei in the karate class and One Scout leader did the same, even though

they had never done it before. It was the Power of One coach who welcomed the boy with a disability as a member of the T-ball team. One sensei in the karate class and One Scout leader did the same, even though they had never done it before. It was the Power of One elementary school principal who decided that his school would have no special ed room; children with disabilities would be educated in general education classrooms where they were successful

learners. One teacher in first grade, One in second grade, and so forth, welcomed boys and girls with disabilities into their classrooms and then did whatever it took to ensure their success.

It took One boy who used a wheelchair and other assistive devices who wanted to be an actor when he grew up. One set of parents supported that dream and One drama instructor helped hone the boy's skills alongside the other "hams" in the class.

Because of the One T-ball coach, the One sensei, the One Scout leader, the One drama instructor, and the One principal, children with and without disabilities grew up together. Twenty-something years later, some of these children have grown up to become teachers who know that having inclusive classrooms is the right thing to do because that's how they grew up. Some are employed in the human resource departments of businesses, and when a person with a disability applies for a job, the applicant isn't routinely discriminated against because the HR manager grew up with children with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, and others with disabilities; they were her friends and classmates and she knows disability is "no big deal." And 15 percent or so of the hundreds of children who were the beneficiaries of the actions of the Ones described above will become *parents of children with disabilities!* Unlike me, they won't be unsure of

As any change must begin somewhere, it is the single individual who will experience it and carry it through. The change must indeed begin with an individual; it might be any one of us. Nobody can afford to look round and to wait for somebody else to do what he is loath to do himself

Carl Jung

what to expect. Having a friend or a classmate or a T-ball teammate who happened to have a disability taught them that the presence of a disability is not a barrier to a person's success. They will not be afraid for their child's future and they'll reject the doom and gloom they're likely to hear from professionals. They'll know better.

In contrast, it takes One doctor to crush the hopes and dreams of the parents of a child with a disability. It takes One therapist to focus on the child's perceived deficits and to try to "fix" the child, while ignoring the child's abilities. It takes One principal to maintain a school where children with disabilities are not permitted to learn in general education classrooms and where children *without* disabilities are denied opportunities to learn from and about children with disabilities. It takes One teacher to refuse to accept a child with a disability in her general ed classroom. It takes One parent to believe the negative prognoses of so-called "experts," and to accept the second-class treatment of her child. In turn, it takes only this One parent to set her child on the path of helplessness, segregation, dependence on the service system, and a life of poverty.

Too many of us are waiting for positive change, thinking things will get better only when policymakers or bureaucrats generate systems change. "Waiting" seems to be the status quo: parents are told to put their child's name on the "waiting list" for "services" (and most do as they're told instead of looking for alternatives).

But in our family's life, the positive outcomes for our son weren't the result of policies from a committee, bureaucracy, or administrative body; they were the *actions of ordinary people* who challenged the status quo: One principal, One teacher, One doctor, One coach, etc. The principal didn't wait for the school district to change; he changed his school. The T-ball coach didn't wait for the park and recreation department to create an "inclusion policy," he just did the right thing for his players. You get the picture ... So where do we go from here?

First, people with disabilities and their families need to recognize their *own* Power. We have the power to reject negative prognoses, to choose inclusion over segregation, to look to our communities instead of relying only on the service system, and so on.

People with disabilities and families also need to recognize the Power of the One neighbor. One teacher, One principal, One coach, etc. If

we don't *already* have people in our lives who are exerting their power to support our values, hopes, and dreams; to create inclusive opportunities; and to generate other positive changes, we need to use our Power to ask them, "What Will It Take?" (see the article on this strategy:

<https://www.disabilityisnatural.com/what-will-it-take.html>.)

Second, everyone else – friends, neighbors, members of synagogues/churches, people involved in ordinary community activities, educators, and anyone else – consider the Power you can exert! A leader of a church/synagogue could reject "special," separate worship activities in favor of inclusive activities for all, including leadership positions for those with disabilities and/or their families. The owner of a childcare center can welcome and support children with disabilities, including them in chronologically age-appropriate activities. Ditto: the leader of a ballet class, gymnastics program, karate class, drama program, and/or other recreational activities.

A principal can make the executive decision to eliminate self-contained classrooms and welcome all students into general

education classes. A physician, therapist, and/or other healthcare professional can provide support and encouragement by focusing on the strengths and abilities of a person with a disability. A friend or neighbor can agree to provide assistance to a child or adult with a disability when asked to do so, just as they would for a friend or neighbor without a disability. Brainstorm other examples.

What about people who work in the service system? They are, unfortunately, constrained in many ways by the rules and regs of the system. Nevertheless, they can still take actions that generate powerful, positive change. Consider an attitude adjustment, like presuming competence (<https://www.disabilityisnatural.com/presume-comp-1.html>); recognizing "behavior as communication" instead of punishing a person for "inappropriate behavior" (<https://www.disabilityisnatural.com/behavior.html>); or moving away from pity to equality (<http://www.disabilityisnatural.com/position.html>). Put on your thinking-cap and consider other examples.

You possess the Power of One. How will you use this power? To maintain the status quo or to take actions that can make the world a better place for one and all?

In a nation of millions and a world of billions, the individual is still the first and basic agent of change.

Lyndon B. Johnson

Did You Know

Please Help Pass Nicky's Law



This disability protections bill establishes a mandatory registry for those working in DDS funded programs. It requires the state agency (DPPC or DDS) to place the names of any staff person who is the subject of a substantiated abuse report on a registry. DDS and DDS funded providers would not be able to hire someone on that registry. The Arc of Massachusetts is coordinating the efforts to try and get this important piece of legislation passed. Please contact Speaker DeLeo at the Massachusetts State Legislature and let him know this bill needs to be passed. For more information, contact Maura Sullivan, Director of Government Affairs at The Arc of Massachusetts (Sullivan@arcmass.org ph: 781 891-6270 x 113) or go to the Arc website: www.thearcofmass.org. Their action page is www.cqrcengage.com/thearcma/home?0

Southeastern Massachusetts Family Leadership Series Class of 2019

The Southeastern Massachusetts Family Leadership Series has begun! The Family Leadership Series has a three-fold purpose. The first is to offer information about "best practices" for people with disabilities. The second is to assist families in creating a vision for their family member and a process to achieve the vision through leadership and advocacy. The third is to develop family leaders who will advocate at the local and state level to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. Families who have completed the Series have had a tremendous impact on systems change for families and individuals with disabilities in Massachusetts. Family members have been active in policy and decision making locally, regionally and statewide and some have decided to do legislative advocacy work. Some families have been involved in community organizing and advocacy on a local level. Others have used their talents and skills to create change for their child with a disability and/or their families.



Upcoming *Events*



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

Visions of Community 2019

A Conference for Families of Children with Special
Needs and the Professionals Who Serve Them

Saturday, March 9th, 2019

7:30am – 5:00pm

Seaport World

Trade Center (1 Seaport Lane, Boston, MA)

Workshops on: special education, special health care needs, early childhood, transition planning...and more!

- Sessions in English, Español, Português, 中文 (Chinese), Tiếng Việt (Vietnamese), Kreyòl Ayisyen (Haitian Creole), and عربي (Arabic)
- Exhibition hall with vendors and service providers from across Massachusetts

Registration opens on January 1, 2019!

SAVE the DATE

14th Annual!!!

“Focus” on Vision Impairment & Blindness Conference

Meeting the Needs of Individuals with Intellectual Disability & Vision Loss

March 13, 2019

8:00 am - 3:30 pm

Four Points by Sheraton, Norwood, MA

Registration Forms available December 28, 2018:

Registration Brochure and Form, including CEU information, will be downloadable from:

www.focusonvisionandvisionloss.org/conferences--workshops.html

and: www.perkinselearning.org/events-monthly .

Registration needed by February 22, 2019 to attend.





This is series for Parents, Guardians and Support Professionals of individuals with disabilities. The series focuses on providing information that will lead to interdependent full lives in the community for people with disabilities.

*Sponsored by Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change
in partnership with Building Futures Project and
Family Connections Center of the Nemasket Group*

Connect with us on **Facebook LIVE** as we discuss a variety of topics.
Live Stream from the comfort of your home, or on your lunch break.
Like us on facebook to receive notification. **All Live Workshops will begin at Noon**

Find Us: @familyconnectionscenter

December 13th

Family Support: How Family Support can help lead to a Full Life Ahead

January 10th

Widening the Circle of Friendship between people with & without disabilities

February 14th

Creating a Vision: A Person Centered Approach

March 14th

Leaving the School System – What's Next?



the
nemasket
group



SAVE the DATE

The Ninety-Nine Restaurant in Fairhaven has extended their Dining for a Cause fundraiser to The Nemasket Group. On **Tuesday, December 11th** from 5-9pm, the restaurant will donate a portion of proceeds to the organization. You must present the voucher below to your server when you are seated. We will also be selling tickets for our holiday basket fundraiser (flyer attached) at the restaurant on the same date. Please share the attached invitation with anyone that you think would like to participate.

DINING FOR A CAUSE

The Ninety Nine Restaurants
Invites You to a
Fundraiser to Benefit:
Nemasket Group

<u>Date:</u>	Tues Dec. 11, 2018
<u>Time:</u>	5:00pm - 9:00pm
<u>Location:</u>	Ninety Nine Restaurants 34 Sconticut Neck Rd Fairhaven ma 02719

DINING FOR A CAUSE

The Ninety Nine Restaurants
Invites You to a
Fundraiser to Benefit:
Nemasket Group

<u>Date:</u>	Tues Dec. 11, 2018
<u>Time:</u>	5:00pm - 9:00pm
<u>Location:</u>	Ninety Nine Restaurants 34 Sconticut Neck Rd Fairhaven ma 02719

Present the voucher below at this fundraiser and the Ninety Nine Restaurants will donate 15%* of your Guest check to the organization.

clip this voucher

DINING FOR A CAUSE

BENEFITING: Nemasket Group
DATE: Tues Dec. 11, 2018 **TIME:** 5:00pm - 9:00pm
LOCATION: Ninety Nine Restaurants,
34 Sconticut Neck Rd Fairhaven Ma 02719



Coupons, discounts and promotions including "Kids Eat Free" will not be accepted during the fundraiser. Present this voucher to your server when seated as this is required for the organization to receive credit for the sale. *Donation is 15% of sales (excludes tax and gratuity). Only valid on date, time and location stated above.

clip this voucher

DINING FOR A CAUSE

BENEFITING: Nemasket Group
DATE: Tues Dec. 11, 2018 **TIME:** 5:00pm - 9:00pm
LOCATION: Ninety Nine Restaurants,
34 Sconticut Neck Rd Fairhaven Ma 02719



Coupons, discounts and promotions including "Kids Eat Free" will not be accepted during the fundraiser. Present this voucher to your server when seated as this is required for the organization to receive credit for the sale. *Donation is 15% of sales (excludes tax and gratuity). Only valid on date, time and location stated above.

Present the voucher below at this fundraiser and the Ninety Nine Restaurants will donate 15%* of your Guest check to the organization.

clip this voucher

DINING FOR A CAUSE

BENEFITING: Nemasket Group
DATE: Tues Dec. 11, 2018 **TIME:** 5:00pm - 9:00pm
LOCATION: Ninety Nine Restaurants,
34 Sconticut Neck Rd Fairhaven Ma 02719



Coupons, discounts and promotions including "Kids Eat Free" will not be accepted during the fundraiser. Present this voucher to your server when seated as this is required for the organization to receive credit for the sale. *Donation is 15% of sales (excludes tax and gratuity). Only valid on date, time and location stated above.

clip this voucher

DINING FOR A CAUSE

BENEFITING: Nemasket Group
DATE: Tues Dec. 11, 2018 **TIME:** 5:00pm - 9:00pm
LOCATION: Ninety Nine Restaurants,
34 Sconticut Neck Rd Fairhaven Ma 02719



Coupons, discounts and promotions including "Kids Eat Free" will not be accepted during the fundraiser. Present this voucher to your server when seated as this is required for the organization to receive credit for the sale. *Donation is 15% of sales (excludes tax and gratuity). Only valid on date, time and location stated above.

Annual Nemasket Basket Drawing!

8 Themed Baskets worth over \$3000

November 12th thru December 14th
Drawing on December 17th

Tickets may be purchased via:

- ◆ Online at: www.nemasketgroup.org
- ◆ Walk in: M-F 10:00 am—3:00 p.m., 109 Fairhaven Road, Mattapoisett MA
- ◆ Visit us at Fairhaven's Old Time Holiday on December 8th from 10:00—3:00 p.m. Fairhaven Town Hall, 40 Center Street, Fairhaven MA



Cindy Lou Who

- * American Girl WellieWishers Dolls: Kendall, Ashlyn, Willa
- * WellieWishers Cozy Up Cocoa Stand
- * WellieWishers Outfits: Snow Much Fun, Winter Friends Skating, & Casually Cozy

Retail Value \$308

Mayor Augustus Maywho

- * 2 nights & breakfast for two at the Sheraton, The Four Points in Eastham
- * Wine and Spirit tasting for two at Truro Vineyard
- * Guertin Jewelers Starfish earrings
- * 4 passes to the Pilgrim Monument
- * 2 women scarves, wristlet and leggings (one size fits all)
- * 2 passes to the Heritage Museum and Gardens
- * Heart of Stone: 2 bracelets
- * \$50.00 gift card to Fisherman's View Restaurant
- * Cape Cod Long Sleeve shirt (L) and baseball cap
- * I Love Cape Cod Puzzle
- * Cape Cod Magnet
- * \$25 Gift Card to Catania Hospitality Group

Retail Value \$842

Max (Kids 8 to 100)

- * Anki Overdrive Starter Kit
- * Overdrive 2 Expansion Track Speed Kits, Launch Kit, Collision Kit, Corner Kit, Rails Kit, Elevation Kit, Accessory Bank Turn Kit

Retail Value \$295

Tree Trimmer

- * Hearth and Hand Garden Caddy
- * Smith & Hawken Arugula and Green Clover Candle
- * 4 Piece Gardening Tool Set
- * Ball mason jar with Eucalyptus
- * Humble Bumble Hand Salve
- * Smith & Hawken Poppy Grow Bag
- * Smith & Hawken Sweet Pea Grow Bag
- * Gourd Birdhouse from Spring
- * Eden Florist & Garden Shop \$100 Gift Card
- * Smith & Hawken Watering Can
- * Gardening Gloves
- * Garden Markers
- * Friskars Pruning Shears
- * Ceramic Plant Pot

Retail Value \$335

Martha May Whovier

- * Iconic Coach bag
- * Scarf

Retail Value \$350

The Who Feast

- * Restaurant Gift Certificates including Carmine's, Cask & Pig, Destination Soups, DNB, Farm & Coast Market, Gateway Tavern, No Problemo, On the Go, Palace Pizza, Pasta House, Pour Farm Tavern, Riccardi's, The Black Whale, Tropical Smoothie Café

Retail Value \$395

Grinch

- * Nintendo SWITCH Fortnite Double Helix Bundle
- * 1,000 V-Bucks in Fortnite
- * L.L. Bean Backpack

Retail Value \$349

Stu Lou Who

- * Rachel Ray Cucina 12 piece set Pumpkin Orange (pots & Pans)
- * 5 Piece Bake Set
- * Sterling 6 assorted chef knives
- * Oneida silicone oven mat
- * Sunkist non skid cut mats
- * Kitchen towels
- * Castellano: Extra virgin olive oil
- * Dean & Jacobs: Garlic & Himalayan Pink salt
- * Gaucho Ranch: Chimichurri cooking sauce/dip
- * Montosco: Provence blend

Retail Value \$265