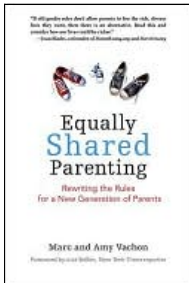


**“Equally Shared Parenting”  
Authors to Visit First Connections**



For most people, equally sharing the rewards and challenges of being a working parent is a goal to strive for. As children grow and jobs evolve, couples make many small decisions that can affect each other's ability to enjoy the experience of raising children or pursuing individual interests. Marc and Amy Vachon

have written a book about the process it took for them to achieve “the wonderful, challenging, uncommon, and oh-so-rewarding journey of truly equal parenting.” They have been featured on The Today Show and NPR, been the topic of conversation in the N.Y. Times and The Boston Globe, as well as many other media venues. We invite parents, expectant parents, couples and singles to hear about this concept of living and raising children in such a way that each parent's fulfillment is recognized and honored by the family unit.

In practice what this lifestyle choice looks like is each parent working approximately equal hours per week, spending equal time caring for the children and tending to household chores. The result is that each partner then also has a set amount of time each week to take care of themselves by pursuing outside interests, hobby's, and activities.

What sounds like a simple division of labor, however, is not so easily put into place. Statistically, “two-thirds of women work outside the home and usually spend an additional 30 hours per week on childcare and housekeeping,” says Bonnie Eaker, Ph.D. a family therapist and author of *Make Up, Don't Break Up*. At the same time, the most recent figures from the Univ. of Wisconsin's National Survey of Families and Households show that the average husband only does 14 hours worth! The lopsided ratio holds true however you construct and deconstruct a family: working class, middle class, upper class, it stays at two to one.\* “Establishing the principle that the work at home is just as valuable, just as hard, and just as worthy of time off as the work outside the home” is essential in working

*(continued on page 2)*



New England  
Aquarium

Protecting the blue planet

**Tidepools for Tots  
Family Program**

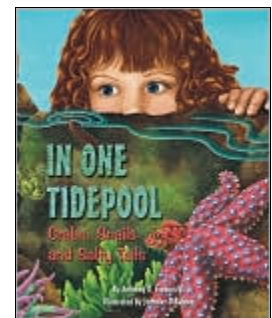
First Connections is very excited to be able to bring this quality program to our families with children aged 2-5. This is a hands-on program, so we request that at least one adult accompany each child attending. The program can serve up to 72 children, so please be sure to register each child attending, rather than registering by family unit. During your visit, you and your child will:

Visit the Tidepool  
Tank and learn about the  
animals from the N.E.  
Aquarium Staff



Paint an  
“Under the Sea”  
Suncatcher  
to take home

Choose from among 21  
different titles of new books  
relating to tidepools, beaches  
and aquariums. Each child  
chooses a book to take home.



**Call 978-287-0221 or  
email [imatthews@jri.org](mailto:imatthews@jri.org) to register. No fee.**

**Saturday, May 15  
10:30, 11:30 or 12:30**

**Hosted by Sargent Memorial  
Library, Boxborough**



This program was made possible by a grant from the Walmart Foundation

## Post-Adoption 1st Connections Programs

### Adoption Learn and Play

Meets Wednesdays, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Learn and Play is an opportunity for adoptive parents of young children to meet with each other and participate in an educational discussion on a different topic each month. Topics are directed toward families with children aged 0-5. Children play in our playroom, which is adjacent to the room where parents meet, cared for by our child-care provider. No fee. Please email: [Imatthews@jri.org](mailto:Imatthews@jri.org) to be added to the reminder list.

**April 14:** Transitions and Changes in Your Child's Life

**May 12:** Growth and Development of the 2 & 3 Year Old

**June 9:** Establishing Non-Holiday-Related Family Traditions

### "We Are Family"

WAF is a monthly support group for parents who adopted children who were age 3 or older. Adopting an "older" child can sometimes have behavioral and emotional repercussions that are challenging. Being part of this group of parents who can share information and resources, and offer understanding, is invaluable. This group is facilitated by our Adoption Support Specialist, Mary Rowlinson, R.N. For more information, please contact [mrowlinson@jri.org](mailto:mrowlinson@jri.org) or call 978-287-0221.

Meets Thursdays, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

April 15, May 20, June 17, July 15, August 19

## Post-Adoption Community Programs

### Identity in Adoption: Glimpses Beneath the Masks

Presented by keynote speaker and author of "Beneath the Mask: Understanding Adopted Teens",

**Debbie Riley, M.S.**

At Adoption Community of New England's 37th Annual Adoption Conference

Saturday, April 17, 2010 at Bellingham High School

This yearly event has 85 workshops, dozens of exhibitors, and a bookshop. For more information: [www.adoptioncommunityofne.org](http://www.adoptioncommunityofne.org)



### Parenting Strategies for Facilitating Attachment and Sensory Integration

The Spiral Foundation presents clinical psychologist and author Daniel Hughes, and Jane Koomar, founder of OTA-Watertown, for two programs on April 15 (Waltham) and 16 (Bedford). These

classes are applicable to children who are adopted, or have a trauma background including hospitalizations, as well as those who have difficulty bonding due to sensory processing disorder.

To register: 617-923-4410 [www.thespiralfoundation.org](http://www.thespiralfoundation.org)

(continued from page 1)

toward equality in parenting, according to Francine Deutsch, professor of psychology at Mt. Holyoke College and author of *Halving It All: How Equally Shared Parenting Works*. She goes on to say, "Even when men and women start off with equal jobs, they make decisions along the way—to emphasize career or not, to trade brutal hours for high salary or not." In her study she "was struck by how often the wife's job was seen by both spouses as being more flexible than the husband's."



Marc Vachon was raised in a working-class Massachusetts town, one of 6 children of a breadwinner dad and at-home mom. Before marrying and having children, he

paid his way through U. Mass. Lowell, earned an M.B.A. and was working 60 hours a week, only having time to drive his fancy sports car to & from work.

After her college professor father committed suicide when she was 8, Amy watched her mother go to work and assume full responsibility for the household every day. Amy also paid her own way through college, at the U. of Michigan, and became a clinical pharmacist.

When Marc and Amy's first child was born, they both negotiated part-time schedules, decided in advance who would do drop-off and pick-up at a nearby family daycare, and who would take off work if their child was sick on a particular day. Less easy was the division of household and childrearing tasks since standards often differed. "Learning to give each other the freedom to do things the *wrong* way (i.e. not *my* way)," caused a fair amount of tongue biting to begin with, as did deciding how often the lawn needed mowing, the rug needed vacuuming, the dishes needed washing, the litter box needed emptying, etc. Slowly, each decision led to consensus and an acceptable plan emerged.

If you are curious about how equality in parenting works day-to-day, would like some ideas on how to begin this journey one step at a time, or would just like to meet others who have made the transition, please join us for an interesting presentation and discussion by calling 978-287-0221 to register.

Friday, May 21, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Concord Children's Center, 1300 Main St., W. Concord  
Childcare will be provided, if requested in advance, for \$5/child  
Books will be available at cost (\$15) if interested.

\*\*When Mom and Dad Share It All\*\*, by Lisa Belkin, *The New York Times*, 6/15/08

# Spring Schedule for First Connections Educational Programs

**Please Note:** All First Connections programs listed in this newsletter require prior registration by calling 978-287-0221 or emailing [imatthews@jri.org](mailto:imatthews@jri.org).

Space may be limited, so registering sooner rather than later is recommended. You are expected to cancel your reservation if unable to attend, to accommodate a possible waiting list. Children over 6 months may not attend adult seminars unless stated. If you are attending a program that takes place on the Emerson Hospital campus, hospital parking fees are \$6.00 for 1-2 hours, \$7.00 for over 2 hours, and \$5.00 for unlimited valet parking. If parking fees are financially difficult, please speak to your program facilitator about validation. Suggested donations for seminars can be mailed to our office, are voluntary and tax deductible, and should not prohibit anyone from attending a First Connections program.

**Pediatric CPR** (\$35) American Heart Association curriculum, taught by a registered nurse, includes one-rescuer CPR techniques appropriate for children 0-8. Obstructed airway management and child safety issues are also included. This class is for parents and babysitters who do not require certification documents.



**Saturday, May 1 or June 5**  
9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

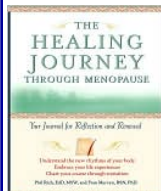
**Pediatric First Aid** (\$40)

AHA class covers management of shock, bleeding, wounds, burns, and accidental poisoning, as well as bone and joint injuries in children from birth to age 8.

**Saturday, May 15, 9:00 to 12:00**

## “Managing Menopause While Raising Young Children”

Discussion led by Frances Mervyn, Ph.D.



The reasons for entering motherhood later in life vary widely. Becoming a mother at age 40, whether for the first time or fourth, brings with it more wisdom, experience, and stability, than doing so at 22. Brian Powell, a Sociology Professor at Indiana University, concluded in his study of families whose children were born to parents in their 40's, that they generally spent more time with their children and had a closer connection to the children's friends than younger parents did.

Biologically, however, women are closer to menopause when they become parents later in life. Dr. Frances Mervyn is the Dean of Students at Mass. School of Professional Psychology where she has been a faculty member since 1978. She has been concerned with health psychology issues over the lifespan for many years including pregnancy, parent development, menopause and loss. Dr. Mervyn is the co-author of The Healing Journey through Menopause, and will speak to moms who gave birth or adopted children later in life. She will share her expertise, and welcomes your questions (emailed to Linda ahead of time if possible).

**Wednesday, June 2, 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

**Held at First Connections**

## Helping Children with the Grief Process

All children will encounter loss at some point in their young lives, whether it is the death of a grandparent, an unexpected passing of a close family friend, or losing a beloved pet. Common questions for children include:

- Why did she die?
- What's it like to be dead?
- Is she coming back?



The answers to these questions will be different for a 4 year old than they will be for a teenager, but what we say now should be consistent with what we will say years from now, clearly understood, and reassuring. There are many good books on this subject for adults and children, but it's often not a subject we gravitate toward until it happens.

Kerry Healy is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor with advanced training in grief. At this seminar she will present information that will be helpful to parents, as well as answer your questions, and distribute a resource list to participants.

This program is made possible through The Noah Thompson Memorial Fund.

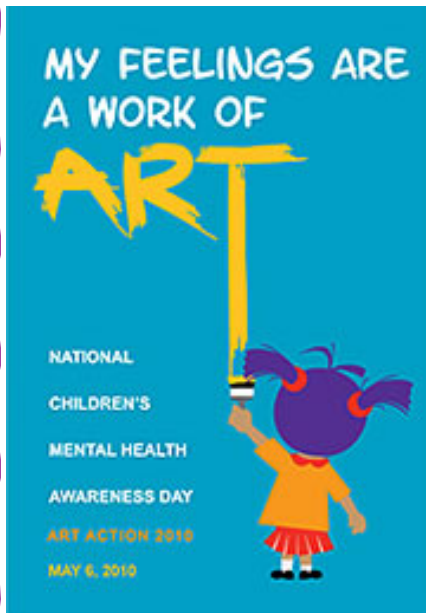
**Thursday, April 8**  
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

**Held at Harvard Public Library**

## First Connections Spring Office Hours

|                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Mondays</b>    | <b>9:30 to 2:00</b>    |
| <b>Tuesdays</b>   | <b>9:30 to 5:00</b>    |
| <b>Wednesdays</b> | <b>9:30 to 2:00</b>    |
| <b>Thursdays</b>  | <b>9:30 to 2:00</b>    |
| <b>Fridays</b>    | <b>vary—call first</b> |





“Research has found that core brain development, 85% of which occurs in the first three years of life, shows differences in brain structure and function based on the child’s experiences in relationships with others and with their social context”

From *Neurons to Neighborhoods*, 2000

See more about the early childhood focus of this year’s National Mental Health Awareness Day at [www.samhsa.gov/children](http://www.samhsa.gov/children)

## SING AND PLAY IN SPANISH

For Ages 6 Months thru 3 Years with a Parent

This lively, fun group is for families with children who are living in bilingual Spanish-English settings, or have knowledge of Spanish and show interest in interacting with other children in Spanish. Children learn and improve upon cognitive and linguistic abilities as well as identify with diverse cultures as they sing songs and hear stories in Spanish sourced from a wide range of countries in Latin America and Spain. The group’s aim is to contribute to the development of bilingual children in a fun and natural setting. Facilitated by Ibeliza Tovar and Anabel Diaz (both natives of Venezuela) and their children. We are registering 6 additional children. Free.

Held Wednesdays, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

April 14, 28, May 12, 26, June 2, 16

**\*\*All conversations, stories and songs will be in Spanish\*\***



## Toddler Playgroups

Facilitated by Mary Beilman, M.A. Special Education



### 14-23 Mo. Playgroup

Toddlers will play with the same group of friends each week, be introduced to a circle time, have a special activity available, and play outdoors when the weather cooperates. Children in this group should be walking since the woodchip covering

on the playground is not conducive to crawling. \$50\*

**Meets Tuesdays, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.**

### 24-36 Month “Lunch Bunch”

Our preschooler group will begin with lunch, followed by free play indoors, story time and an indoor activity or outdoor play (weather dependent). Bring lunch and have lots of fun. \$50\*

**Meets Tuesdays, 12:00-1:30 p.m.**

**Both groups meet on April 13, 27, May 4, 11, 18, 25, and June 1, 8, 15 and 22**

### Registration Information:

Now that our newsletter is being distributed via email and we are no longer relying on the timing of bulk mail delivery, you may register for playgroups as soon as you receive your newsletter. Please speak to someone in our office to register, rather than emailing or leaving a message. You will receive written confirmation as a follow-up to your phone registration. \*Written confirmation forms will allow individuals who cannot afford full playgroup or parking fees to ask for a reduction or waiver.

All First Connections playgroups meet at our offices on the Emerson Hospital campus in Concord. Our safety policy states that infants attending toddler or lunch bunch groups must be kept in a front carrier at all times. Older siblings are not allowed in baby or toddler groups to insure the safety of the younger children.

If your child has been diagnosed with an anaphylactic allergy to certain foods, please notify us when you register for playgroup so that we can notify other parents about any food restrictions in their written confirmation.

Playgroups will not meet on public school vacation week, April 19-23.

# Ongoing Monthly Support Groups: Spring Schedule

New members always welcome. All groups meet at First Connections.

## We Are Raising Challenging Children meets Fridays, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., April 30, May 28 and June 25

Our group is off to a great start with 8 parents registered so far. If you have “graduated” from the 8-week “Raising Challenging Children” group or your child age 3-10 has received an emotional, behavioral, learning or mental health diagnosis, and you would like to meet on a monthly basis with other parents of challenging children, we invite you to join this group held at First Connections. This group will be facilitated by Linda Jensen, LSWA, whose college-age child was diagnosed with OCD at age 7 and nonverbal learning disability at age 16. The group’s purpose is to provide understanding and ongoing support to parents whose day-to-day parent-child interactions can be unpredictable, as well as to share resources and strategies that may be helpful to peers.

## “40 Somethings” meets Wednesdays, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., April 7, May 5 and June 9

40 Somethings Moms delivered or adopted their first baby at age 40 or more. Members are supportive of each other, while having a collective sense of humor about having children later in life. Moms in the group are at home full time, working full time, or a combination of both. Co-facilitated by long-time members Marge Heckman and Carla Bradford.



**StrongMoms** is an online support network that you can now sign up for through First Connections. Prenatally you will receive weekly information about the developing fetus. After birth or adoption of your baby, you can receive monthly developmental milestone updates. You can also look up information on breastfeeding, formula, the transition to solids, and more. One benefit of joining is that you can receive coupons and samples from Similac, Pampers and Beechnut. Just fill out the form at First Connections, or call us and we can fill it out for you over the phone.

\*\*\*See special program for moms on June 2, listed on page 3 of this newsletter\*\*\*

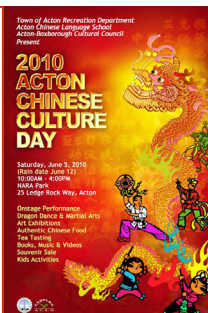
## Moms of Multiples meets Wednesdays, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., April 28, May 26, June 23

This busy group of moms has an abundance of topics to discuss each month! All moms who are raising multiples are welcome, including expectant moms. Share and gather tips and strategies to ease day-to-day challenges, and enjoy some uninterrupted adult conversation. You deserve it! Facilitated by Risa Goldman and Helen Shaw, moms of 5 year old twins.

## Young Parent Program meets every Thursday, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

“YPP” is a group of interesting young women age 26 and under who meet each week to support and get to know each other. Moms in this group are married, single, at home, working or in school, and come from a variety of towns. Pregnant moms are definitely welcome! Free childcare is provided during the group (infants can stay with mom), which is facilitated by Sue Green, M.Ed. Parking fees validated. If you’d like to join us, give Sue a call on Thursdays @ 978-287-0221.

Don't miss this free event at Nara Park in Acton on Saturday, June 5, 10:00-4:00. Kids' activities, dance, martial arts, art exhibition, books & authentic food!



## Multicultural Moms Group meets Wednesdays, 7-8:30, April 21, May 19, June 16

Were you raised in another country and are now parenting your own children in the U.S.? Well you're not alone. Each month this group of moms meet to share their unique perspectives, observations, humor and thoughts on the ever-evolving role of raising a bi- or tri-cultural child. We discuss all kinds of topics including (but not limited to) personal language barriers, language choices for our children, immigration and visa issues, traditional vs American roles of women, and cultural customs. Currently there are women in the group from Peru, Venezuela, Brazil, China, Russia, Spain, Holland, Greece, and Hungary! New members are always welcome. Facilitated by Ellen Weisstein, M.S.

First Connections' support groups, while therapeutic, are not therapy groups. Their purpose is to provide an opportunity for parents to share and support each other in their common experiences. There are no fees charged to attend monthly support groups. To join a group, please call 978-287-0221 or email [lmattews@jri.org](mailto:lmattews@jri.org). The group facilitator will contact you and, if desired, add you to an email reminder list. Group members are expected to notify the group leader if unable to attend a particular meeting date. Multicultural Moms, Moms of Multiples and Adoption Learn & Play meet Sept. through June. If parking fees are a barrier to group attendance, please ask for validation.

# First Year of Life Programs

## 8-Week First Time Mother's Group

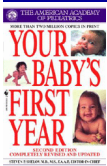
For a new mom there are many changes, many questions, and often a feeling of isolation. A small group setting facilitated by a parent educator can be the ideal format for new mothers to share ideas and experiences, ask questions, and meet other first-time moms. Our 8-week groups are educational and supportive, focusing on a different topic each week after checking in with everyone. Typical topics include:

- Adjusting to your new role as a mother
- Infant care concerns such as feeding, crying, sleeping and development
- Making the return-to-paid-employment or stay-at-home-mom decision
- Changes in relationships with your spouse, family, friends and community.

The same 10 moms attend each week, and babies are all 6 months old or less. Groups are facilitated by Mary Beilman, M.A.S.E. Please call 978-287-0221 to register for a group. You can also email Mary with questions: [mbeilman@jri.org](mailto:mbeilman@jri.org). There are no fees associated with this group. Hospital parking fees apply unless validation is requested.

**Mondays, 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.**

**April 12, 26, May 3, 10, 17, 24, June 7, 14**



All new parents attending a program at First Connections will receive a free copy of this book courtesy of Abbott Industries. Similac samples will also be available free of charge to those who may need it.

## 4-Week "Mom's Going Back to Work" Group



Moms returning to work shortly after giving birth are becoming a more frequent scenario in our community. This short-term group is specifically for moms who will be encountering the additional adjustment issues required when mom returns to work in 3 months or less. Issues we will cover will include, but not be limited to:

- Adjusting to your new role as a mom who works
- The logistics of feeding, sleeping, and daycare
- Bonding techniques for working moms
- Stress and the relationship with your partner

We will register up to 10 moms for each group, which will be facilitated by Laura Gerson, LICSW. Groups that would like to continue to meet on a monthly basis after returning to work, will be provided a time and space at First Connections if needed. No fee. Call 978-287-0221 to sign up for one of the following sessions:

**Thursdays, 1:00-2:30**

**April 8, 15, 22, 29**

**May 6, 13, 20, 27**

**June 3, 10, 17, 24**



## 10-Week Playgroup for 6-13 Months



Infant playgroups are equally important for parents and children. Babies get used to being around people other than mom and dad. Adults have a chance to meet, share stories and trade tips on feeding, sleeping, teething, playing, and community activities.

Our playroom space has plenty of age-appropriate toys, books, space to crawl or learn to walk, and child-size tables and chairs. We ask parents to separate any toys that have been in their baby's mouth so that we can clean them before anyone else uses them. This group is facilitated by Sadie Simone, M.P.H. \$50 for a 10-week session. Please call 978-287-0221 to register for this group.

**Held Mondays, 10:00-11:30 a.m.**

**April 12, 26, May 3, 10, 17, 24, June 7, 14, 21 and 28**

## Postpartum Adjustment Services

At least one in 10 women experiences varying degrees of anxiety, depressed mood, inability to sleep or other difficulties as they adjust to motherhood. When these feelings persist beyond the typical several weeks of "baby blues," moms may find it hard to talk about them or, if they do, may not feel understood. First Connections has reevaluated the way we support moms with postpartum adjustment issues, and will now offer home visits to moms in our catchment area who are feeling challenged with the postpartum experience, supplemented with telephone and email contact. Laura Gerson, LICSW, will help moms assess their functioning, and provide referrals either to formal psychological services, or informal programs to help moms find support and connections within their own communities, including a PPD group if enough moms are able to attend at the same time. Contact Laura on Thursdays at 978-287-0221, or email [lgerson@jri.org](mailto:lgerson@jri.org).

## Local Parent Association News

Parent Associations are local groups that help families connect with their communities thru activities such as book groups, babysitting co-ops, playgroups, field trips, mom's night out, and more.

Visit the listed website or call 978-287-0221 for a contact person in your town.

### Parent Association Websites

www.actonfamily.org  
 www.bfctoday.com (Bedford)  
 www.boxboroughfamilynetwork.org  
 www.carlisleparentsconnection.org  
 www.concordfamilynetwork.org  
 www.harvardfamilyassociation.com  
 www.lincfam.org (Lincoln)  
 www.littletonparents.org  
 www.maynardfam.org  
 www.sapn.org (Stow Area)  
 www.sudburyfamilynetwork.org

### Do You Know about Future Kindergarten Classmate Groups?

These groups plan activities and playgroups to periodically get children together who will be entering kindergarten at the same time. Siblings are often welcome, though the planned activity focuses on the age of the future classmates. Seeing familiar faces is a great way to ease the transition of children entering kindergarten, thus groups are organized by age of kindergarten admission in each town, i.e. "Class of 2010 with birth dates 9/1/04-8/31/05." The following Parent Associations have future classmate groups you might want to join:

**Concord, Stow  
 Boxborough  
 Littleton  
 Carlisle, Bedford  
 Sudbury**



### Maynard Family Association Tag Sale

Too Many Toys? Need New Baby Gear?  
 Kids switched from soccer to hockey?

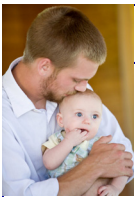
**Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 5!**

MFA's first *Recycle, Reuse, Resell* tag sale will be held at the Main Street parking lot of Clock Tower Place in downtown Maynard from 8:00 to noon. Reserve your spot (\$15 members, \$20 non-members) to sell by contacting tagsale@maynardfam.org. See the website for details, or just come by to shop!

### Acton Family Network Tag Sale

Do you have some spring cleaning to do? Let this be your motivation to clean up and turn those gently used kid clothes (size 0-12), toys, baby equipment, books, sporting goods and maternity items into cash. If you're interested in selling, contact tagsale@actonfamily.org (\$20 members, \$30 non-members). Bake sale & table fee profits will be donated to Hope for Children of Haiti. Shoppers welcome 8:00-12 at the Parker Damon Building upper lot.

**Saturday, May 15, 11 Charter Rd., Acton**



### Concord Family Network

Concord will be holding their **New Baby Brunch in May**. This is a great opportunity for new parents to get to know others in their own community.

There will also be an **Ice Cream Social held in June**. Details will be on the CFN website listed above.

## Community Parenting Education Programs



**Lowell General Hospital**  
 295 Varnum Avenue, Lowell  
**Free Spring Parenting Programs**

Please register online ([www.lowellgeneral.org](http://www.lowellgeneral.org)) or call 877-544-3955  
 Both programs presented by Parent Educator Marianne Blanchet, M.A.

### Potty Training with Less Stress

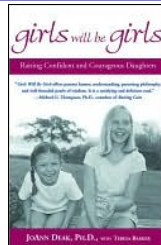
This workshop will review the importance of potty training, the 4 basic potty training methods, and common problems that you can expect.

**Tuesday, June 1, 6:30-8:00 in Clark Auditorium**

### Biting and Other Aggressive Behaviors

When your children bite or hit, you may worry that these aggressive behaviors will continue or worsen. This workshop discusses the normal tendencies for these behaviors, and teach parents how to identify triggers, & use specific techniques to help deal with these incidents.

**Thursday, April 22, 6:30-8:00 p.m. in Clark Auditorium**



### Girls Will Be Girls: Raising Confident and Courageous Daughters

Preventive psychologist & author JoAnn Deak will describe the emotional & physical challenges faced by girls, as well as insights into the latest male/female brain research. Held at Newman Elementary School, 1155 Central Ave., Needham

**April 13, 7:00 book signing, 7:30 to 9:30 lecture**  
**\$20 advance tickets at [www.parenttalk.info](http://www.parenttalk.info)**

### Positive Discipline

This program, presented by Patricia Marquis, LICSW, is for parents of children preschool age thru 5th grade. Parents will learn to understand the developmental framework that drives their children's behavior and feelings. The goal of discipline will be identified, and practical strategies given. Free program. No registration.

**Wednesday, April 7, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Held at A Place to Grow, 402 Concord Road, Bedford**

## Community Parenting Education Programs, continued

First Connections serves families with at least one child under age 6 in Acton, Bedford, Boxboro, Carlisle, Concord, Harvard, Lincoln, Littleton, Maynard, Stow, Sudbury, and Hanscom AFB. We're on the web:

[www.firstconnections.org](http://www.firstconnections.org)

Parents may receive our quarterly newsletter via email by sending their name, address and month/year of children's birth to [Imatthews@jri.org](mailto:Imatthews@jri.org)

### Summer Camp Programs For Children Age 5 & Under

Summer camps and programs for children often require early pre-registration. If you would like to receive a list of summer programs within our catchment area specifically for this age group, please email [Imatthews@jri.org](mailto:Imatthews@jri.org). The list includes swim lessons, arts & enrichment, sports, nature programs, and traditional camps.

### Conscious and Creative Parenting

Parenting can be one of the most humbling experiences known to otherwise competent and intelligent adults. Each stage of development brings a whole new set of issues. Christine Gerzon, M.Ed., will lead this workshop, which will help you to deal more effectively with the challenging issues of parenting children of all ages. You will learn how to respond to your children's behavior by transforming your unconscious parenting habits into opportunities for self-awareness, balance your needs with your children's, and manage conflict and anger as a way to teach your children the vital skills of emotional intelligence. Free. No registration required.

**Wednesday, May 5, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Concord Children's Center, 1300 Main St**

### The Transition Experience: From Preschool to Kindergarten



The Acton-Boxborough-Littleton Early Childhood Council invites all interested parents to an open forum led by council members, many of whom are directors of preschools. The council hopes to explore questions parents may have about the transition process from preschool to public school kindergarten. They will share tips and activities that will help ease the stress around leaving the familiar and going off into "the unknown."

Free. No registration needed.

**Tuesday, April 27, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Parker Damon Building Library**  
**11 Charter Rd., Acton**

## Community Parent-Child Activities



### The Little Mermaid

Wheelock Family Theater  
 Fri-Sun., April 16-May 16

Our tale follows a young mermaid through her quest to find love while unconsciously developing a better understanding of herself, the unknown world she longs to be apart of and the true significance of what it means to love and be loved in return. Recommended for ages 3 & up.

Tickets \$15-25. 7 p.m. or matinee.

ASL/AD show on May 16

617-879-2300 or [tickets@wheelock.edu](mailto:tickets@wheelock.edu)

### Toddler Thursdays at Fruitlands Museum

Explore art, nature and history with your toddler/preschooler. Programs may include stories, art projects, gallery visits & outdoor exploration. Each week is a new adventure! Register ahead or drop in for this parent/child program. \$4 per non-member parent/child pair.

978-486-3924, x 227

**Thursdays 10-11:00**  
**102 Prospect Hill Rd**  
**Harvard**



The classic story of a beautiful princess, handsome prince, good natured fairies and evil witch. You will fall in love with our characters as they do their best to keep the princess safe from all the spinning wheels in the kingdom as the wicked Evilena tries to foil the prince on his quest to awaken the sleeping princess. \$13 ea. May 7-16. 978-371-1482

### SLEEPING BEAUTY



**Concord Youth Theatre**  
**[www.concordyouththeatre.org](http://www.concordyouththeatre.org)**

### Easter Egg Hunt for Toddlers Open to All with Pre-registration by April 7



My Moms Group's 3rd Annual Easter Egg Hunt will include eggs, pizza, & juice boxes. RSVP with # of children "hunting" to [mymomsgrouppillerica@yahoo.com](mailto:mymomsgrouppillerica@yahoo.com). Sign in and mingle at 10:00, hunt begins at 10:30, pizza arrives at 11:30. \$5 per child, \$10 max family rate. Held at Kohrausch Park in Billerica on Friday, April 9. Bring a basket. Bikes, strollers, wagons and ride-on toys can be used on the park's paved track.

### Free Family Music Programs

**April 30, 6-7:30 p.m. FAMILY BEACH PARTY** for newborns thru age 7. Bring a towel and escape into fun musical activities.

**May 14, 6:30-7:30 p.m. PAJAMA JAM** for families with young children. Wear PJs and have fun at this musical story hour. Sing, dance, play instruments and hear stories. Indian Hill Music, 36 King St., Littleton, 978-486-9524.



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