March 2019

Strengthening the community by connecting and supporting local families with children ages 5 and under since 1988.

Find us at https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org
or via social media: ️ facebook.com/bfctoday ️️ @bfctoday
March is jam-packed with BFC activities for both kids and adults alike! Kids will enjoy celebrating St. Patrick’s Day in the playroom with some festive shamrock shakes, and dissecting flowers in a sensory-friendly event. We will also be getting some physical time in with a free swim at Goldfish Swim School and bowling at Wamesit Lanes. Parents will get to experience a Mom’s Night Out favorite, Cooking with Vivian, and dads can put their knowledge to the test at trivia night at the Friendly Toast. That’s just a glimpse of what’s ahead, so please be sure to check out the calendar and RSVP on Wild Apricot to let us know you’ll be joining us!

April will be here before you know it, and we already have some great things planned, including our annual “The Privates Rule” (formerly “The Talk”) presentation by Nora Shine. We will also have movie theatre rented out for a showing of Toy Story on 4/6 (Toy Story 4 comes out this summer!).

While we have a lot of big events planned, we always welcome more casual children’s activities! If you would like to plan something, let us know and we can get you well on your way! We have a venue (the playroom) and supplies (in the closet in the playroom), so if there is an activity you are planning to do with your child(ren), why not make it event for other BFC kids to enjoy too?

Have a great month!

Erica Hursey & Leslie Savoy

Find us at https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org or via social media: facebook.com/bfctoday @bfctoday
Spring is in the air! There are lots of BFC events to keep you and your little ones busy!

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Spring is in the air! There are lots of BFC events to keep you and your little ones busy!
BFC
Annual New Moms Brunch

Saturday, April 27, 2019, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Have you become a new mother either by birth or adoption since April 1, 2018? Every spring, the BFC welcomes and celebrates all Bedford moms of babes under 1 year (whether it’s your first or tenth!). It’s a great way to meet local moms. All new moms in Bedford are welcome to attend. You need not be a BFC member.

If you know someone with a baby or have had a baby yourself, please email us as soon as possible with your name, address, email, phone number, child’s name and date of birth, so we can mail you the official invitation with details.

newmomsbrunch@bfctoday.com

The Bedford Family Connection provides fun activities and enriching programs for local families with children ages 0 through Kindergarten. If you would like to learn more about the BFC and the services we provide, please visit www.BFCToday.com or email Co-Directors Erica Hursey and Leslie Savoy at Director@BFCToday.org.
The BFC is collecting items for BITS Bags throughout March! Register on Sign-up Genius to help infants and toddlers in need: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080E49AEA72CA6FC1-bits

Donation deadline: Friday, March 29
Items can be dropped off in the BFC Playroom, or at Emily Prince’s house (email ers.stein@gmail.com for address).
The PMC Bedford Kids Ride has a need for a dedicated, core group of leaders to continue the planning of the annual Bedford Ride which raises awareness and funds for Dana Farber and the Jimmy Fund.

The current co-chairs are stepping down due to work and life commitments but several committee members have agreed to stay on and mentor new members. The ride typically takes place in the second week of June and is a wonderful community event that supports an important cause.

Volunteers are needed for the following roles:

Chair/Co-chair: 1-2 people
Logistics: 1 person (current member staying on)
Volunteers: 1-2 people (one current member staying on)
Activities/raffle: 1-2 people
Sponsorships: 2 people (one current member staying on)
Publicity: 1 person
Registration: 1 person

If you (and a friend or two) would like to help out as a lead in any of these positions, please contact us at bedfordpmckidsride@gmail.com. We can share details on the specific roles and will host an introductory information session for those interested.

We need your help to continue the beloved community tradition. Without the necessary lead volunteers, the 2019 Ride may not take place.

Thank you for your continued support and consideration.
SAVE THE DATE: April 9, 2019
Dr. Nora Shine’s The Privates Rule

The TALK workshop will empower you to know that you can be a real part of creating safer communities for all children.

DATE: April 9, 2019
TIME: TBD
FIRST PARISH CHURCH
75 Great Road
Bedford, MA

Dr. Nora Shine, a Child Psychologist and parent of young children, has created this workshop in which she shares realistic strategies that parents (and teachers/counselors) can use to promote the safety of their young children, especially in regards to child sexual exploitation. Dr. Shine draws upon her knowledge as a Child Psychologist, her experience as a parent, and her training as a facilitator in sexual abuse prevention from two nationally renowned organizations (D2L and StopIt-Now), to teach parents what really works in keeping kids safe from harm. In this workshop, Dr. Shine will share research-based information about effective, realistic strategies that can be used to protect the children in your communities.

All are welcome! Bring friends and family - we want as many people as possible to learn how to protect our children.

For further information, visit: drshinethetalk.wordpress.com

It is important that everyone hear the The TALK from the beginning.
The BFC Playroom is open weekdays from 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM. It is located in the lower level of the First Parish Church at 75 Great Road (use the side entrance on Elm Street).

The BFC Playroom offers a warm, welcoming environment where children can play together and parents and caregivers can connect. In addition to various toys, books, and puzzles for children ages 1-5, the playroom offers all kinds of craft supplies and mini-projects, plus a large open floor space for imaginative play. This is a nut-free space. We ask that all visitors refrain from bringing in any outside snacks due to allergy concerns. An individually packaged child’s snack and beverage are provided at 10:30 AM each day.

Enjoy this great opportunity for fun and socializing. The rates are $1.00 per child for BFC members, and $3.00 for non-members. These rates help us cover our annual donation to First Parish for use of the space and the cost of providing snacks. The BFC Playroom follows the Bedford Public Schools calendar.

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If you arrive at the Playroom and nobody is there to open it, you are still welcome to go in and use it!

Find us at [https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org](https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org) or via social media: [facebook.com/bfctoday](https://facebook.com/bfctoday) [@bfctoday](https://@bfctoday)
Play Groups
Would you like your children to play with others their age? Are you interested in connecting with other parents? Join a BFC Play Group! The groups are organized by age of children. Both weekend and weekday groups are available. They will meet either in the BFC playroom or in participant’s homes depending on each individual group’s preference. Please email us at playgroups@bfctoday.com, with the birthdate(s) of your applicable child(ren), available days and times that you would like to meet, and your contact information. Siblings may be welcome to join, also depending on each individual group’s preference.

Adoptive Families
Hello! We are Dawn Mesite and Bethany Slack, two adoptive moms excited to be the Adoptive Families Liaisons for the BFC. We’re looking forward to connecting with other foster, adoptive, or pre-adoptive families in town! We’ve begun compiling a list of resources and events in and around Bedford, and we’ll add them to the newsletter periodically. If you’re a foster or adoptive parent, or interested in learning more about adoption, we’d love to hear from you! We can be reached at adoptivefamilies@bfc.org.

Looking for childcare?
BFC has put together a directory of Bedford’s daycares and preschools. Many have contact information for BFC members that are happy to serve as references. Check it out at https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org/page-1075184

Find us at https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org or via social media: facebook.com/bfctoday @bfctoday
Kids Science Time – Flower Dissection
Monday, March 11, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
BFC Playroom – basement of First Parish Church
75 Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730
Bring in your little scientists to learn about flowery anatomy! We will have real roses for the kids to open up and learn about what’s inside. They can play with the loose petals which proves to be a fun sensory experience! We will share a snack afterward and end with playtime in the playroom.

Register on Wild Apricot:
https://bfctoday.org/event-3290035

St. Patrick’s Day in the Playroom
Thursday, March 14, 9:30 AM – 11:30 M
BFC Playroom – basement of First Parish Church
75 Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730
Join us in the BFC Playroom to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day. The kids will have a chance to collect gold coins, do a Saint Patrick’s Day craft and enjoy a special shamrock shake. Hope to see you there!

Register on Wild Apricot:
https://bfctoday.org/event-3297591

Jam Time Meet-up
Friday, March 15, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Jam Time
86 Powder Mill Road, Maynard, MA 01754
Join us at Jam Time in Maynard at a discounted rate! Mention that you are with the BFC and you’ll pay only $6/child (half the regular price).

You can take advantage of the discount anytime on March 15 during regular business hours - 9 AM – 5:30 PM.

Register on Wild Apricot:
https://bfctoday.org/event-3227081
WEEKDAY CHILDREN’S ACTIVITIES

BITS Bags Assembly Party
Wednesday, April 3, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM
BFC Playroom – basement of First Parish Church
75 Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730

Join us in the BFC Playroom to assemble the BITS bags for The Wish Project. This is an ideal activity for preschool children and their older siblings. Snack will be served.

Register on Wild Apricot:
https://bfctoday.org/event-3298760

Spring Flower Craft
Friday, April 5, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
BFC Playroom – basement of First Parish Church
75 Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730

Let’s celebrate the beginning of spring with a fun and beautiful floral craft with the kids! We will have a nice selection of fabric flowers to create a pretty craft that will be sure to add some springtime cheer to your home.

**Please register only for the number of children attending, e.g. if you are bringing one child, register only for yourself and no guests. If bringing two children, enter yourself with one guest.**

We have to limit registrants to be sure we have enough supplies for each child, so be sure to register early to secure a spot. If you find you can no longer attend, cancel your registration to open your spot for someone else. If you would like to attend this activity, but can’t make it at this time, please email me at erinzk@gmail.com - if there are multiple requests for a different day/time, I will set up another event. Looking forward to a fun time with the kids!

Register on Wild Apricot:
https://bfctoday.org/event-3290020
Kicking Kangaroos Class at Elite Freestyle Karate
Saturday, March 16, 9:30 AM – 10:00 AM
Elite Freestyle Karate
285 Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730

Come join Sensei Ethan at Elite Freestyle Karate in Bedford for a FREE Kicking Kangaroos class. This fun, 30-minute lesson will consist of interactive drills to help children with listening, balance and coordination. This class is ideal for kids preschool age and up!

Please RSVP by Friday, March 15, so the studio knows how many kids to expect.

Register on Wild Apricot:
https://bfctoday.org/event-3292534

LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD PARENTS!
We are still looking for some amazing volunteers to help run the BFC in 2019!
Please email BFCDirectors@gmail.com if you are interested in getting more involved.

OPEN POSITIONS IN 2019
Concerts
Spring Egg Hunt
Playgroup Coordinator

Find us at https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org or via social media: facebook.com/bfctoday @bfctoday
Open Swim at Goldfish Swim School
Sunday, March 24, 3:45 PM
Goldfish Swim School Burlington
10 B Street, Burlington, MA  01803

Join us for a complimentary open swim at Goldfish Swim School for the BFC! Visit with other BFC families, take a dip in the pool and enjoy a snack in the main area!

Register on Wild Apricot: https://bfctoday.org/event-3296165

Family Bowling at Wamesit Lanes
Sunday, March 31, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM
Wamesit Lanes Family Entertainment Center
434 Main Street, Tewksbury, MA  01876

Join BFC friends for a morning of bowling at Wamesit Lanes! The cost is $16 per person, which includes one hour of bowling, shoe rental, 20 minute arcade card and a free bowling coupon to be used at your next visit!

Please RSVP by Friday, March 15, as Wamesit lanes has a minimum headcount requirement.

Be sure to register on Wild Apricot!

Find us at https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org
or via social media:  facebook.com/bfctoday  @bfctoday
RENEW YOUR BFC MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Please be sure to renew your membership so that you don’t miss out on any of the fun events in 2019!

Renew and pay on Wild Apricot:
https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org

BFC Membership Perks:
Learning Express: 10% off classes
Summit Fitness: reduced monthly membership rate of $55

Find us at https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org or via social media: facebook.com/bfctoday @bfctoday
**ADULT EVENTS**

**MNO Fat Tuesday Movie Night, and post celebration at Redstone - “Isn’t It Romantic” (7:10 PM) and “Green Book” (6:50 PM)**
Tuesday, March 5, 6:50 PM – 10:30 PM
AMC Burlington Cinema 10
20 South Ave, Burlington, MA  01803

Come see “Isn’t It Romantic” at 7:10 or Oscar winner “Green Book” at 6:50 at the Burlington AMC! Afterwards, join us at Redstone for drinks, appetizers and a Mardi Gras celebration!

For AMC Stubs members, tickets are only $5 on Tuesday nights at the Burlington AMC. Become an AMC Stubs member online for free: www.amctheaters.com.

An email will be sent to all registrants a couple of days in advance of the movie with the exact show time. Everyone can purchase their own ticket online in advance of the show. We can coordinate via email to ensure we can sit together as a group.

**RSVP on Wild Apricot:**
https://bfctoday.org/event-3290013

**Volunteering at The Wish Project**
Saturday, March 9, 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Wish Project Warehouse
166 Middlesex Street, North Chelmsford, MA 01863

Spend a morning volunteering at The Wish Project in Chelmsford. We will help inventory, sort and organize donations. Note that the warehouse is approximately 20 minutes from Bedford. Participants should plan to arrive at the warehouse a little before 10 AM to complete the volunteer registration form. Space is limited. Register today!

**RSVP on Wild Apricot:**
https://bfctoday.org/event-3247348

Find us at https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org
or via social media: facebook.com/bfctoday @bfctoday
ADULT EVENTS

MNO Fitness Series: Barre3
Sunday, March 10, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Barre3 Studio
158 Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730

The BFC is taking over the Barre3 studio! Join us for a private Barre3 class just for BFC members. Studio owner Natasha Groblewski will lead you through a total-body, low-impact 60 minute workout that will leave you feeling balanced in body and empowered from within. Barre3 is a full-body workout designed with our signature approach of sustained holds, micro-movements, and cardio bursts. From the elite athlete to someone just getting back in the game, Barre3 workouts are designed to equally challenge people of all fitness levels and life stages, connecting where they are with where they want to be. The cost is $10/person, or free for members of the Barre3 studio. Don’t miss out on this opportunity to try out the Barre3 studio at a super discounted rate!

Plan to arrive 15 minutes early to sign a waiver and get set up in the studio. Wear yoga-type clothing and just bring a water bottle. Everything else is provided!

Please register for the class on Eventbrite: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bedford-family-connection-private-barre3-class-tickets-54040431385

Also register on Wild Apricot to ensure you receive all updates about the event: https://bfctoday.org/event-3249228

Dad’s Night Out: Trivia at The Friendly Toast
Thursday, March 14, 6:45 PM – 9:30 PM
The Friendly Toast
75 Middlesex Turnpike, Burlington, MA 01803

Join Bedford dads for Opinionation Trivia game night at The Friendly Toast in Burlington.

RSVP on Wild Apricot: https://bfctoday.org/event-3291917

Cooking Night With Vivian
Thursday, March 21, 7:30 PM – 9:30 PM
First Parish Church kitchen
75 Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730

Cooking night is back by popular demand! Come hang out with other moms and have fun learning how to make some amazing new dinner options from Vivian, our resident cooking expert. She will be teaching us how to make miso soup, dumplings and sushi, including a vegetarian version! This year we are excited to be able to offer this great event to our members for free! Space is limited so register early to reserve your spot.

RSVP on Wild Apricot: https://bfctoday.org/event-3289986

Find us at https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org or via social media: facebook.com/bfctoday @bfctoday
Monthly Planning Meeting  
Thursday, March 28, 7:30 PM – 9:30 PM  
Location TBD

Join us for our monthly planning meeting, where we will discuss the upcoming events for the months ahead! This is a great opportunity to learn about the inner workings of the BFC and to bring us your great ideas for new events and how we can make the BFC the best it can be! Beverages and snacks will be provided.

RSVP on Wild Apricot:  
https://bfctoday.org/event-3294334

Find us at  
https://bedfordfamilyconnection.wildapricot.org  
or via social media:  
facebook.com/bfctoday  
@bfctoday

MNO Spring Floral Arrangement at Craft.ed  
Thursday, April 11, 7:30 PM – 9:30 PM  
Craft.ed  
44 Main Street, Concord, MA  01742

Get ready for spring with your very own beautiful floral arrangement. Hosted by Craft.ed in Concord, join Barbara Rietscha of Field & Vase by Stow Greenhouses as she guides us through creating a spring floral box. We will learn the fundamentals of floral design including flower prep and selection, design and care. You will leave with a gorgeous floral arrangement and the knowledge of how to create one on your own. Cost is $40 per person. Price includes all centerpiece materials, instruction, snacks & non-alcoholic beverages. Note that alcohol is not allowed. For those available, we can meet at Main Streets Café for a bite and drinks beforehand.

RSVP on Wild Apricot:  
https://bfctoday.org/EVENTS
Annual Town Election: Saturday, March 9
Head over to John Glenn Middle School to cast your vote for
town officials between 8 AM and 6 PM!

Town Meeting: Monday, March 25
Time: 7:30 PM
Location: Bedford High School Auditorium

Curious about how decisions impacting Town services,
programs and budget are made? Would you like to be part
of the legislative process?

Book a babysitter, or willing family member to watch the
kiddos and join fellow registered voters at Bedford’s annual
Town Meeting!
LIBRARY PLAYSPACE

Visit to play, any day!

Specially designed for ages 0-5

7 Mudge Way, Bedford, MA
(781) 275-9440 | bedfordlibrary.net
School Snacks for Davis and Lane Schools
We have found there continues to be a need for snacks at Davis and Lane Schools. There are about 100 kids in Davis and Lane Schools who receive free or reduced lunches and often don’t come to school with snacks.

Please drop off non perishable, individually wrapped, NO NUT snacks to the front office of both Davis and Lane. If you can’t get to the school while they are open please feel free to get in touch with Sarah Scoville and she can help you deliver them: sscoville11@gmail.com

AmazonSmile for the BFC
Did you know that when you shop on Amazon, part of the money from your purchase may be eligible for donation to the BFC? Amazon has a program called AmazonSmile through which Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the BFC! When you shop at AmazonSmile, you’ll find the exact same prices as if you shopped on Amazon.com. To shop at AmazonSmile, simply go to smile.amazon.com and select “Bedford Family Connection” in Bedford, MA as your 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Don’t forget to bookmark, or always type smile.amazon.com when shopping on Amazon! For more information about AmazonSmile, visit: https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/about.

Bedford Box Tops for Education
For many of you in the BFC, your children will soon be at Davis School. Did you know that you might be throwing away packages that could be https://fundly.com/sarah-hallett-memorial-fund#used to raise money for Davis, and the rest of Bedford Public Schools? Bedford Public Schools participate in the Box Tops for Education program, which has helped America’s schools raise over $525 million since 1996. Every year, our students and supporters collect thousands of Box Tops, which we redeem for 10 cents each. Last year, we raise $8,500 to fund enrichment programs at Davis, Lane and John Glenn Middle School. We would like to ask for your help in collecting Box Tops. You can drop them off in the container at the BFC playroom, the collection bin at the Bedford Stop and Shop, or mail them to Box Tops Coordinator, 66 Sweetwater Avenue, Bedford, MA 01730.

Caregiver Access to Wild Apricot
In many families, a caregiver such as a nanny, grandparent, or babysitter, often brings a child to our BFC events. The BFC would be happy to provide these caregivers with free access to Wild Apricot as part of your family membership. This will allow the caregiver to access event information and sign a child up for an event without having to share the parent account. If you would like to add a caregiver to the BFC, please send an email to membership@bfctoday.com, with your name, your child(ren)’s name and your caregiver’s name and email address. We will send your caregiver an email invitation to sign up for Wild Apricot with no additional fee.
Emotional Wellbeing After Baby Group
Emotional challenges are the most common complication of pregnancy and childbirth, yet mothers often feel isolated and ashamed if they are struggling. Mothers experiencing anxiety or depression in the postpartum year can come together in this supportive, nonjudgmental, confidential group to share stories and learn from each other. While this is an ongoing, weekly group, before attending for the first time please contact the facilitator, Heather O’Brien, LICSW at hobrien@jri.org or 978-429-8284, ext. 219. Childcare can be provided for older siblings with advance notice. Every Thursday, 10:00-11:30 a.m. at First Connections, 179 Great Road, Unit 104A, Acton.

New Dads Group
This group allows dads to make connections with other fathers, ask questions, and share their experiences of parenthood. Adjusting to the new work/life balance and changes in relationships with friends, family and partners can sometimes be a challenge! Fathers are welcome to attend with/without babies and continue to attend the group for as long as it is helpful. Please email hobrien@jri.org before attending for the first time so we have your contact information in case of any last-minute changes. Tuesdays, January 8, February 12, March 12, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Maynard Public Library, 77 Nason Street.

Working Parents Group
This group is specifically for full-time working parents with babies/toddlers up to 24 months. The group offers a way to stay connected to or find a peer group - something that is especially hard with short maternity leaves, if you struggled with postpartum anxiety or depression, or if your extended family is not close by. Discover ways to manage stress and cope with the challenge of balancing work and family life. Facilitated by First Connections and NAMMA Families staff. Moms and dads welcome! 8-week sessions begin January 5 (full) and March 2. Held at First Connections, 179 Great Rd., Unit 104A, Acton.
**First Connections (continued)**

**Playgroups:**

New playgroups begin the week of January 6. Registration is required for all groups: matthews@jri.org. No fees. Children may be registered for one group. All groups require participation of a parent or caregiver. Registration begins as soon as you receive your newsletter. **Please let us know your child's first name and age, the name of the person who will bring him/her to playgroup, and the town you live in.** **Families from any town may register for Baby Playgroup since it is partially funded through supplemental funding. All other groups give preference to the towns our grant serves:** Acton, Bedford, Boxboro, Carlisle, Concord, Harvard, Hanscom AFB, Lincoln, Littleton, Maynard, Sudbury, Westford.

**Baby Playgroup**
Group includes developmental discussions and handouts, playtime, circle time with finger plays, rhymes and songs. Based on the Ages & Stages Developmental Milestones suggested activities for this age group. Open to parents residing in any town. Appropriate for all babies 3-9 months, and babies 10-11 months who are not actively crawling. Limited to 14 families.

**Held at Roudenbush Community Center, Westford Tuesdays, 1:30-2:30 beginning January 15.**

**Older Baby Playgroup**
This group will have free play time at the beginning, and stories and songs at the end. The facilitator will be available to talk to and answer questions, but we won’t have the same structured adult talking time as in the infant group because the children are starting to move around and sitting still for more than a few minutes is too much to ask! Based on the Ages & Stages Developmental Milestones suggested activities for this age group. **Appropriate for ages 10-17 months if crawling or walking.** Held at Bedford Public Library on Mondays, 10:00-11:00.

**Literacy Playgroup for Confidently Walking One Year Olds**
This group offers free play time in a preschool classroom with specific activities to work on different fine motor, communication, self help, and social skills, as well as a circle time with a book and songs. Every family will get a bag of books to take home each week, along with tips on fostering your child's love of reading. Limited to 12. Due to size and location of room, only infants worn in a sling or carrier may attend with the registered child - no strollers or car seats. **Appropriate for 12-23 Mos. if walking independently. Held at Village Nursery School in Harvard. Fridays, 10:00-11:00 a.m.**

**Art-Literacy Playgroup for Two Year Olds**
In this group children will get a chance to play in a preschool classroom and try out some new art and sensory activities. We will get messy, so don’t wear your best clothes. The group will also include a circle time with book and songs. Limited to 12. Infants worn in a sling or carrier may attend with the registered child - no strollers or car seats. **Held at Bright Horizons in Boxborough Tuesdays. 10:00-11:00 a.m.**
First Connections (continued)

Playgroups (continued)

Multilingual Families Playgroup
A child's primary language and culture are key contributors to lifelong development. This playgroup is specifically for families who are conversing in a language other than English as part of their family culture and daily life. The group will include a Read & Rise monthly parent discussion topic, led by a parent educator, centering on how culture, traditions, and everyday fun family experiences can help parents foster their child's literacy and language development. The group includes a circle time and snack time in addition to free play. During registration please let us know if your child has any anaphylactic allergies to foods. Baby siblings in carriers welcome. If you are registering for the first time, please let us know the language other than English that is spoken at home. Appropriate for Ages 18 Months thru 5. Held at First Connections in Acton on Wednesdays 9:30-11:00

Social and Emotional Skills Playgroup for 2 & 3 Year Olds
This playgroup will use the Mass. Early Learning Standards and Approaches to Play and Learning for Social and Emotional Development. The group will include free play, a weekly learning activity, snack time, story and circle time. Please bring a snack and inform us during registration if your child has an anaphylactic food allergy. Limited to 12 children. - Held at Concord Carousel Preschool in West Concord, Thursdays, 10:00-11:30 a.m. - Held at The Community School in Maynard Center, Mondays, 12:30-2:00 p.m.

Teaching Your Preschooler about Money & Math
You may not realize it, but money is a big part of your preschooler's life. Our children watch commercials, observe adults buying groceries and other things, accompany us to the bank and watch as we slide our bank cards multiple times a day. In this group we will read stories about money, sing number songs, play games, count, and make choices while we pretend to shop or save for a desired item. There will be a weekly handout for parents, a book list, a field trip to Digital Credit Union, and suggested activities you can continue with your child as they grow. Younger siblings must be held in a front carrier or sling since we will be using small items such as coins and game pieces which are choking hazards. Appropriate for ages 3 1/2 thru 5. Held at First Parish Church in Lincoln on Fridays, 1:30-2:30
CIRCLE of SECURITY:

A Parenting Education Series for Parents of Children 0-5 yrs old

8 TUESDAYS: April 2, 9, 23, 30, May 7, 14, 21, 28

Facilitator: Carolinda Sterczala, MSW, LICSW, BCN

Location: First Connections, 179 Great Road, Acton MA

Cost: Free of charge Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED (as spots are limited!): To register, email Linda at LMatthews@jri.org and type “Circle of Security” in the subject line.

Most families seek to promote enjoyable and connected relationships with their kids. But what does that look like? At times all parents wonder what our child might need from us. Imagine what it might feel like if you were able to make sense of what your child was really asking from you. The Circle of Security® Parenting™ program is based on decades of research about how secure parent-child relationships can be supported and strengthened.

Using the COSP™ model, which includes graphics, DVD chapters, handouts and discussion, parents and caregivers work to:

• Understand their child’s emotional world by learning to read emotional needs
• Support their child’s ability to successfully manage emotions
• Enhance the development of their child’s self esteem
• Honor the innate wisdom and desire for their child to be secure

Learning about our children’s needs can be enjoyable as well. Often “the circle” helps us makes sense of the needs that have been “hiding in plain sight”. Other times the needs are known, but it is still nice to be able to put some simple language or visuals on the attachment needs our kids have while they are exploring or coming back to us for comfort.

While COSP™ is designed for parents and caregivers of kids 0-5, the connection and exploration doesn’t go away after that. Carolinda enjoys watching the variations of the circle through kids’ growing up years and beyond.
During the eight-week group we will strive to create a supportive environment for seeking enjoyable and good enough parenting, not perfection! Since the program builds progressively on the prior week's discussion topics, we are asking participants to make a commitment to attend all dates in the series unless unexpected illness interferes with that plan.

**About our presenter:** Carolinda graduated with her MSW in 2000, and since then has had various positions offering outpatient therapy to adults in Massachusetts, including past roles as Clinical Director of an Outpatient Counseling Center and DBT Program Coordinator. She currently has a Private Practice in Concord. She is current President of the New England Society of the Treatment of Trauma and Dissociation.

This 8-part series is free to participants and is offered in collaboration with the Center for Parents and Teachers and First Connections.

**Childcare:** This group is for parents and caregivers only. Experience has taught us that participants don't tend to be able to absorb the material when there are kids of any age in the room with them - whether your own children or someone else's.

If you do not already have child care or a babysitter your child is familiar with (the best option), First Connections' staff can provide childcare in the playroom during the program. Children using this service should be able to successfully separate from their caregiver and families should arrive early to make this a smooth process. Childcare is free of charge, but please let us know the age and first name of children needing care when registering. Childcare providers are CORI'd and you can see your child from the group room. If your child may get hungry during the group, please feel free to bring along lunch for them.

Learn about other programs offered by the Center for Parents and Teachers at [www.centerforparentsandteachers.org](http://www.centerforparentsandteachers.org)

Learn more about other programs and resources offered by First Connections at [https://jri.org/services/foster-adoption-ecs/first-connections](https://jri.org/services/foster-adoption-ecs/first-connections)
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### 2018 – 2019 BFC Committees & Chairs

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