



of Western Massachusetts

Life without limits for people with disabilities

Pittsfield December 2023

Family Support Center Central County Offerings

Please remember that unless otherwise indicated, you must RSVP to all events AT LEAST 2 days prior.
For more information, or to RSVP for events, please contact Cindy at (413) 664-9345, ext. 200.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
The country of the month is Canada 					1	2 
3	4	5 Caregiver Coffee Hour 12:00PM-1:00PM	6 Drop In 6:00PM-8:00PM Cost- See Description	7 Pepperoni Bread 4:00PM-5:00PM Cost- See Description Open Swim 6:00PM-7:00PM	8	9 Holiday Shindy 10:00AM-3:00PM Cost- See Description
10	11 Self-Advocates 5:00PM-6:00PM Cost- \$2	12	13 Holiday Trivia 6:00PM-8:00PM Cost- See Description Caregiver Coffee Hour 5:30PM-6:30PM	14 Open Swim 6:00PM-7:00PM	15	16
17	18	19 Joint Women's & Men's Group 6:00PM-8:00PM Cost- See Description Emily's Workshop 10:00AM-7:00PM	20 Ornament Making 6:00PM-8:00PM Cost- See Description	21 Open Swim 6:00PM-7:00PM Parent Advisory Group 5:30PM-6:30PM	22	23
24 	25 UCP will be closed in observance of Christmas! 	26	27 Movie Night 6:00PM-8:00PM Cost- See Description	28 Open Swim 6:00PM-7:00PM	29	30 
31						

Funding support for the UCP programs and services are provided under the Department of Developmental Services Family Support Center, Northern Berkshire and Berkshire United Way, Williamstown Community Chest, MassMatch, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation, Berkshire Bank Foundation, Rotary Club of Pittsfield, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, City of Pittsfield and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts DHCD with funds made available by the City of North Adams.



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PLEASE SIGN UP TWO DAYS PRIOR TO ALL UCP EVENTS!

Events for December 2023!

Please sign up for each event by calling

(413)-664-9345 ext. 200

**For Zoom events, the link will be sent out after you sign up and
give your email!**

Canada is the country of the month!



Monday's

• **Meditation Monday (North Adams)**

- ❖ Stretching, meditation, self-reflection, and movement are crucial for our physical and mental health. Join Jen Ross in a class that features improv dancing, yoga, and fun meditation techniques to feel the best you ever have! **This event is held on Monday, December 4th and 18th from 4:00PM-5:00PM in the North Adams Office.**



Wednesday's:

• **Drop-In! (North Adams and Pittsfield)**

- ❖ COME ONE! COME ALL! Stop in to the UCP Offices and say hello! Come and learn all about Canada which is the country of the month! Did you know that Canada produces about 80% of the world's maple syrup? Join us to learn more fun facts and trivia! This is a great opportunity to meet new people and explore what the UCP Family Support Centers have to offer! **For dinner, feel free to bring money to order out, eat beforehand, or bring your dinner with you! If you choose to order out, please bring at least \$25. This event will be held Wednesday, December 6th from 6:00PM-8:00PM.**



• **Holiday Trivia (North Adams and Pittsfield)**

- ❖ Do you know where Christmas and Hanukkah originated from? Join us and learn all about the holidays! Pasta with marinara sauce and garlic bread will be served for dinner. **This event will be held on Wednesday, December 13th from 6:00PM-8:00PM and cost \$8.**





- **Ornament Making (North Adams and Pittsfield)**

- ❖ Everyone loves a homemade ornament as they make great keepsakes! Join us in making a present for all to enjoy before the holidays! Open faced roast beef sandwiches and mashed potatoes will be served for dinner. **This event will be held on Wednesday, December 20th from 6:00-8:00PM and cost \$15.**

- **Movie Night (North Adams and Pittsfield)**

- ❖ The holidays are over, and everyone needs to rejuvenate before the New Year! Join us for a relaxing movie night! The movie will be voted on by all of you! Pizza will be served for dinner! **This event will be held on Wednesday, December 27th from 6:00PM-8:00PM and cost \$8.**



Thursday's

- **Open Swim (Pittsfield)**

Pre-registration is required each week! Please contact Cindy Poirier at (413)664-9345 ext. 200 to sign up! Open swim is back for all UCP members and families! **This program is free and will be offered every Thursday in November from 6:00PM-7:00PM at the Gladys Allen Brigham Center.**



- **Pepperoni Bread (North Adams and Pittsfield)**

- ❖ Are you in the mood for a tasty treat? Join Robin and learn how to make your very own pepperoni bread that everyone will enjoy! **This event will be held on Thursday, December 7^h from 4:00PM-5:00PM on Zoom and cost \$5.**



ATTENTION! WEEKEND OFFERINGS!



Sunday's

- **Holiday Shindy (North Adams and Pittsfield)**

- ❖ Come support the building of a local skating rink at the Cheshire Annual Tree lighting and Festival of Trees! There will be food, hayrides, a craft fair, as well as seeing the locally decorated trees! **This event will be held Saturday, December 9th from 4:00PM-7:00PM. Please bring \$30+ for food as well as spending money. You could even do holiday shopping for your family!**



Rejoin some pastime favorites!



❖ Parent Advisory Group:

Your input is vital! HELP! HELP! HELP! UCP is looking to create an active Parent Advisory Group to help choose family trainings, events to enhance programming, and a chance to share your thoughts about what the future holds for your member, for the agency, and your options through Department of Developmental Services! **This event will be on Thursday, December 21st from 5:00PM-6:00PM via Zoom.**

- ❖ Joint Women's Group: Tuesday, December 19th from 6:00PM-8:00PM at the North Adams Office. Come have a girl's night out with UCP! This month for Women's Group, the ladies are welcome to bring gifts to the office and staff will be available to help wrap! A variety of finger foods will be served for dinner. **The cost of the event is \$15.**



- ❖ Joint Men's Group: Tuesday, December 19th from 6:00PM-8:00PM at the North Adams office. Men's Group wants you to join! The guys of UCP are back and want you to join! The guys are welcome to bring gifts and staff will be available to help wrap! A variety of finger foods will be served for dinner. **The cost of the event is \$15.**

- ❖ Self-Advocates: We need you!! The Self-Advocates group is BACK! Join your peers on **Monday, December 11th from 5:00PM-6:00PM via Zoom** and catch up, chat, and brainstorm new ideas and innovations! Self-advocates is always looking for new members, so join a meeting and see what we are all about! **This event costs \$2.00.**



- ❖ Caregiver Coffee Hour: You bring the coffee; we will bring the conversation! Join Care Manager Meghan Robertson-Hayes to talk about issues, current events, or any other topic ideas you may have! This is also a great time to brainstorm ideas to enhance programming! All ideas are welcome! **This event will be held Tuesday, December 5th from 12:00PM-1:00PM via Zoom, as well as Wednesday, December 13th from 5:30PM-6:30PM via Zoom.**



If you have not already and want to be on our email list for calendars, activities, and special events, please call (413) 664-9345 ext. 200 to get your name and email on our electronic list!



Please join us for our Caregiver Coffee Hour

This will be offered Virtually

November 9th 2023 12:00 PM

November 13th 2023 5:30 PM

December 5th 2023 12:00 PM

December 13th 2023 5:30 PM

Hosted By: Meghan Robertson-Hayes and other select AFC Staff

You bring the coffee, we will bring the conversation!

We will use this time to talk about issues, current events or any other topics that come to mind.

We will also be offering training credit to any caregivers that come and discuss the chosen topic that month.

Please bring any ideas you have for future events!

To sign up please call Cindy Poirier at the North Adams office (413) 664-9345 ext 200

She will need your name and email and you will be sent a zoom link the week of the event.

We hope to see you there!



WESTERN MASS FAMILY LEADERSHIP SERIES 2024

A FREE training that guides parents and family caregivers to imagine better and be effective leaders at the local level and beyond

The Family Leadership Series consists of two half-day workshops, plus three weekend sessions for family caregivers of people who are eligible for Massachusetts DDS Services. Families are expected to participate in all sessions.

Dates:

February 24 (Half day virtual)

March 2 (Half day, in person)

March 22 -23 (Weekend 1, in person)

April 12-13 (Weekend 2, in person)

May 3-4 (Weekend 3, in person)

Location:

Lenox, MA

Topics Families Learn About:

- History of the Family Leadership Movement
- Leadership and Advocacy
- Creating a Vision
- Policy-Making
- Self-Care

The Family Leadership Series provides:

- Information and tools to effectively advocate for change
- Support in developing the vision and leadership skills needed to support your family
- Opportunities to meet other families, share experiences & ideas, and practice newly acquired skills in a supportive environment

More Information

Sue Crosby, susancrosby@mcsnet.org



**SPACE IS
LIMITED –
CLICK HERE
TO APPLY**

**"The Family Leadership Series
literally has given me more
confidence in myself
than any other experience."**

- Family Leadership Series Graduate

Presented By



MassFamilies

EMPOWERING families with high quality
training & advocacy for

25+

years



OUR VISION

Our vision is one of empowerment for individual and family support that includes planning, choices and decision-making.

OUR MISSION

To provide sustained advocacy and leadership training in pursuit of high quality, individualized community support and service options, including family support, for people with disabilities and their families.

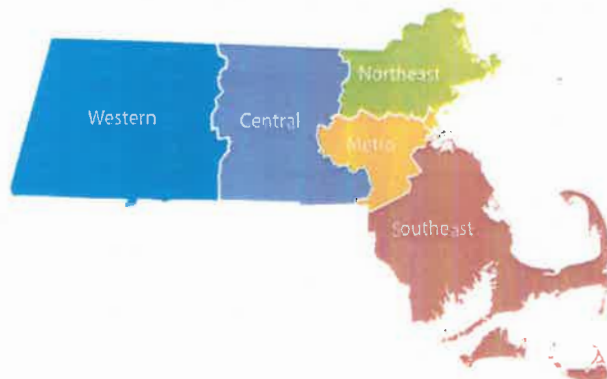
OUR VALUES

The possibilities for individuals with disabilities are infinite when we "Imagine better." Individuals with disabilities and families are the ultimate decision makers in all areas of supports and services that are appropriate for all members of their family.

Individuals with disabilities and families benefit from advocacy and leadership training to access and procure supports and services responsive to their ever-changing, life-long needs.

The uniqueness of every family is honored and respected. Individuals with disabilities and families living in our communities have access to the wide array of opportunities and resources available to all community members.

Contact massfamilies.org



**Massachusetts Families
Organizing for Change Statewide**
774-855-6001 • hello@massfamilies.org

Sue Crosby, West Coordinator
Multicultural Community Services
(413) 782-2500 ext. 5007
sue@massfamilies.org
Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden Counties

Lauri Medeiros, Metro Coordinator
Riverside Community Care
(339) 224-8866 • lauri@massfamilies.org
West Region includes, Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden Counties



MassFamilies

*leadership training for a world
where everyone belongs*

Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change

Leadership

*Offering training in
family leadership, rights,
and more.*

Advocacy

*Making our voices heard
and making a difference for
families across the state.*

Resources

*Creating and sharing tools
and resources to help you
navigate life.*

www.massfamilies.org

Our Advocacy



CHAPTER 171

An Act Providing Support To Individuals With Disabilities And Their Families:

Signed into law in 2002 after 11 years of hard work by MFOFC and our allies, this legislation expanded the array of supports available to keep families intact and increased access to life in the community.

MA21

Massachusetts Alliance For A 21st Century Disability Policy:

A collaborative effort of the state's leading disability advocacy organizations whose mission is to advance full community participation for individuals with disabilities. Members of the MA21 Alliance produced a comprehensive, essential guide for the implementation of policies and practices to support this mission.

CHAPTER 255

An Act Relative To Real Lives:

A signature accomplishment of MA21, this bill's passage in August of 2014 empowered individuals and families with the option to direct their own public funds. It also requires the Massachusetts administration to implement new policies and procedures to increase the flexibility with which these funds are used.

Our Trainings

ADVOCACY BOOTCAMP

For primary caregivers of young children (birth to 10) with developmental disabilities, chronic illnesses, and/or complex medical needs:

Content focuses on building foundational advocacy skills so participants can empower their children to lead rich and meaningful lives.

A FULL LIFE AHEAD

A series of monthly workshops for parents, decision-supporters, guardians of transition-age youth, and adults with disabilities:

Topics include employment, housing, friendships, financial literacy and more that will lead to independent and interdependent lives in the community.

COMMUNITY INCLUSION SERIES

Cultural and linguistic programming for families statewide. This series builds on the uniqueness and abilities of each family member enrolled in the training.

Some of the topics explored in this series are the history of disability advocacy, what is self-advocacy and how to create a vision for your family. Families are encouraged to explore inclusive community options for their loved one to help them create access, equity and belonging.



FAMILY LEADERSHIP SERIES

Since 1990, we have provided this training to empower families and their loved ones to live and engage in their communities:

This training has a three-fold purpose:

1. To offer information about best practices for people with disabilities.
2. To assist families in creating a vision for their family member and a process to achieve this vision.
3. To develop family leaders who will advocate to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities.

The Family Leadership Series focuses on:

Initiative & Leadership:

Background of the Family Support Movement: leadership, advocacy, and the significance of self-advocacy. How to effectively advocate for change. Ways to influence funding and delivery systems.

Creating A Vision:

Families are supported to imagine better and create a vision with and for their family members that will guide their leadership and advocacy.

Policy-Making:

How to develop networks with professionals and families. How to use legislative change to procure resources and enact system-wide change.

