



## Western Regional Support Groups

Support groups come in many sizes and forms, and their primary goal is the same. That goal is to provide comfort and/or assistance through the gathering of two or more individuals with a common concern. Support groups vary in their approach to fulfilling this goal. Some support groups strive to assist through education by hosting speakers on various issues. Others strive to provide comfort through the sharing of mutual experiences. It is important to find a support group that meets your specific needs. Keep in mind that just like a good pair of jeans; it may take several tries before you find a good fit. Once you find the right fit, a support group can become a comfortable and indispensable resource.

The support groups listed below are just a sampling of the groups available in the area. If you would like more information about a support group listed here, please call the specific support group contact. These groups do change so we suggest that you call and confirm the meeting time and place before attending a meeting.

Last Updated 7/14/17

**To update or add a new support group to this Regional Support Group list, please call the Family TIES Western Regional Coordinator, at 413-586-7525, Ext. 3178 or 800-905-TIES. THANK YOU.**



Family TIES of Massachusetts is a project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs, funded by and in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Family Health & Nutrition, Division for Children & Youth with Special Health Needs.

## **FAMILY TIES** of Massachusetts



Together In Enhancing Support

**1-800-905-TIES (8437)**  
**www.massfamilyties.org**

**Family TIES of Massachusetts** is a state-wide information and parent-to-parent support network for families of children with special needs or chronic illness. Parent coordinators work in the state regional health offices, providing support to families in their regions. Family TIES is a project of the Federation for Children with Special Needs, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Family Health & Nutrition, Division for Perinatal, Early Childhood & Special Health Needs.

### ***Information and Referral***

- Toll-free, state-wide phone line (1-800-905-TIES) and regional offices make calling convenient.
- The program offers an opportunity to speak with a parent who can connect families with resources and the next level of services, if needed.
- Information can be shared on a wide variety of topics, including diagnoses, community resources and services, and support groups.
- Resource packets can be prepared on public benefits and other support services.

### ***Early Intervention***

- A central directory of Early Intervention (EI) programs throughout the state is maintained.
- Contact information for referrals is available by phone and electronically on our website.

### ***Parent-to-Parent Connections***

- Parent-to-parent matching is offered by health concern, special need, or area of interest.
- Connections can be facilitated with additional support networks for parent-to-parent support.
- Support Parents are offered our “*Listening and Learning*” training and receive continued support.

### ***Resource Directory***

- The Family TIES Directory of Resources for Families of Children and Youth with Special Needs is produced annually.
- On-line access is available on our website: [www.massfamilyties.org](http://www.massfamilyties.org)

### ***Website***

- **www.massfamilyties.org** offers information for parents and providers on subjects related to Early Intervention and other services and supports for children with special needs and their families.
- On-line forms are available for Family TIES Advisors – in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

### ***Workshops and Trainings***

- Staff participate in the annual conference of the Federation for Children with Special Needs.
- “Let’s Get Organized” workshops focus on building organizational skills and strengthening community connections—now available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.
- “Emergency Preparedness” materials are available from the staff and on our website.
- “Listening and Learning” trainings help to enhance listening skills for volunteer support parents.
- Contact your Regional Coordinator to make arrangements for local offerings.



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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## **ADOPTION**

**Adoptive Families Together Worcester:** Offers parent-run confidential groups for education, advocacy, support, and more. We also welcome adopted individuals, birth parents, foster parents and all those with a connection to adoption. Meetings are held monthly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday from 7-9PM at Worcester MSPCC Office, 335 Chandler Street in the Nu Café Conference Room. Call for more details.

**CONTACT:** Lori Baeumler, (857) 728-2157 or Ashley Pepoli, (617) 587-1554 **E-MAIL:** lbaeumler@mspcc.org or apepoli@mspcc.org

**WEBSITE:** [www.mspcc.org/aft](http://www.mspcc.org/aft)

## **Adoption Journeys**

Post Adoption Support Services for adoptive parents, children, and adolescents in Western Massachusetts. Support groups are held in Florence, Worcester, Needham, Merrimack Valley, and Fall River. Please call for more information.

**CONTACT:** 413-320-4680 at the Florence, MA number

**EMAIL:** [lmintz@cfservices.org](mailto:lmintz@cfservices.org)

Adoption Journeys can also be found Statewide if you call: 1 (800) 972-2734

## **ADVOCACY**

**United ARC:** For over 60 years, the United Arc has been serving citizens with disabilities in Franklin and Hampshire Counties and surrounding communities, providing an array of flexible services for individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities and their families. See website for complete listing of support groups.

**CONTACT:** 413-774-5558 **EMAIL:** [info@theunitedarc.org](mailto:info@theunitedarc.org)

**WEBSITE:** [www.unitedarc.org](http://www.unitedarc.org)

## **ASTHMA & ALLERGIES**

**Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter:** Metro-Boston Area support group meetings, educational programs and events are run by AAFA New England and held at various sites, including Newton-Wellesley Hospital, 2000 Washington Street, Newton. Sign up for e-mail announcements, check the website schedule, or call for dates and topics.

**CONTACT:** AAFA New England - 781-444-7778

**E-MAIL:** [aafane@aafane.org](mailto:aafane@aafane.org)

**WEBSITE:** [www.asthmaandallergies.org](http://www.asthmaandallergies.org)

**Pioneer Valley Asthma & Allergy Educational Support Group:** Meets periodically at St. John the Baptist Pastoral Center, 200 Groton Road, Ayer and in Ludlow, MA. The group is sometimes inactive so please call for more details.

**CONTACT:** Nicole Sweeney, Lucy Saloio, or Lisa Holloway, 781-444-7778

**E-MAIL:** [aafane@aafane.org](mailto:aafane@aafane.org)

**WEBSITE:** [www.asthmaandallergies.org](http://www.asthmaandallergies.org)

**Adult & Teen Services Group:** Community Resources' Adult Services Group meets monthly at Community Resources for People with Autism, 116 Pleasant Street, Suite 366, Easthampton, MA, to discuss topics important to teens and young adults with Autism and their families. We will concentrate on one topic and get updates on ongoing concerns. All parents are welcome. Refreshments are served; please RSVP.

**CONTACT:** Iris Scott, 413-529-2428 or 800-892-7003

**E-MAIL:** [iris.scott@theassociationinc.org](mailto:iris.scott@theassociationinc.org)

**WEBSITE:** <http://theassociationinc.org/index.php?section=autism-resources-info>

**Asperger's Syndrome:** AANE Support Group for Adults (25+) who have Asperger's Syndrome meets twice per month in the Northampton area. There is no charge for the group. Please email to confirm, as we occasionally have to meet on a different night. **CONTACT:** Trish Huff

**EMAIL:** [trishaane@comcast.net](mailto:trishaane@comcast.net)

**WEBSITE:** [http://www.aane.org/aane\\_services/aane\\_support\\_social\\_groups.html](http://www.aane.org/aane_services/aane_support_social_groups.html)

**Asperger's Syndrome/Autism Spectrum Disorder:** Support Group for Parents Whose Adult Children (18+) have Asperger's Syndrome, Social Communication Disorder, or are on the higher end of the Autism Spectrum. We meet quarterly on varying dates at Abby Jaffe's office, Communication Therapy Associates, 2 Bay Road in Hadley. There is no charge for the group. If you are interested, please email [abby@comtherapy.com](mailto:abby@comtherapy.com) to have your name added to our email list. You will then receive an email invitation 2-4 weeks before we meet and an RSVP will be required to attend.

**CONTACT:** Abigail Jaffe

**PHONE:** 413-586-1945

**EMAIL:** [abby@comtherapy.com](mailto:abby@comtherapy.com)

**Community Resources for People with Autism:** support group will be held the **2nd Wednesday** of each month at Multicultural Community Services (MCS) 260 Westfield Rd in Holyoke from 5:30-7:30pm. Free childcare is available by request, call CRPA at 413-529-2428 to arrange childcare. This is a great place for parents to connect with others, share resources and gain support.

**CONTACT:** Iris Scott, 413-529-2428 or 800-892-7003 or Linda Wynne

**E-MAIL:** [iris.scott@theassociationinc.org](mailto:iris.scott@theassociationinc.org) or [wynne92@aol.com](mailto:wynne92@aol.com)

**WEBSITE:** <http://theassociationinc.org/index.php?section=autism-resources-info>

**Jericho's Family Support Group:** Parents, caregivers and friends of people with all disabilities come together for monthly meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday at Alleluia House at JERICHO, 537 Northampton Street, Holyoke. NOTE: Two sessions are offered for your convenience, 11AM-Noon and 6:30-7:30PM. RSVP is a must so we can plan accordingly.

**CONTACT:** Laura (se habla español)

**PHONE:** 413-538-7450, Ext. 107

**EMAIL:** [dawn@jerichobeca.org](mailto:dawn@jerichobeca.org)

**WEBSITE:** [www.jerichobeca.org/](http://www.jerichobeca.org/)

**GRUPO DE APOYO EN ESPAÑOLA:** Por favor llame para más información.

**CONTACT:** Katie Drumm, 413-529-2428, Ext. 111

**EMAIL:** Katie.drumm@TheAssociationInc.org

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.theassociationinc.org/index.php?section=autism-resources-about-us>

## **BRAIN INJURY**

**Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts:** Meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 4PM at the Center for Rehabilitation-5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Medical Arts Building at Berkshire Medical Center, 777 North Street, Pittsfield. The oldest support group for people with brain injury in Massachusetts, BBISG is open to individuals with brain injury, family members and interested community members, ages 16 and above. Speakers, social-recreational activities, and related events are part of the group's community outreach, as well as monthly meetings.

**CONTACT:** Helen Stewart or Jeff Robinson, 888-554-5553

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.biama.org/groups.html>

**Brain Injury Helpline:** 800-242-0030

**Pittsfield- Berkshire Brain Injury Support Group (BBSIG):** Meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 4:00PM at Berkshire Medical Center, Center for Rehabilitation, 5th Floor Medical Arts Building, 777 North Street, Pittsfield. Correspondence should be sent to BIA-MA Western Region Office, 180-C Elm Street, Pittsfield, MA 012101.

**CONTACT:** Helen Stewart, Western Regional Mgr. 413-443-0200

**Pittsfield- "Tea and Talk" Adult Women with Brain Injury:** Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month from 1-3at BIA-MA Western Region Office, 180-C Elm Street, Pittsfield. CALL BEFORE FIRST MEETING.

**CONTACT:** Helen Stewart, Western Regional Mgr. 413-443-0200

## **DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING**

**Hear My Dreams Support Group, for parents of children with hearing loss:**

Meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of odd numbered months from 7-9PM at HearSmart Audiology, 435 King Street, Suite 2, Littleton. All are welcome, regardless of where child receives audiology services.

**CONTACT:** Megan Ford, Au.D, 978-952-2500

**EMAIL:** [hearmydreams@gmail.com](mailto:hearmydreams@gmail.com)

**WEBSITE:** [www.hearmydreams.com](http://www.hearmydreams.com)

## **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

**Jericho Family Support Programs:** Offers several opportunities for connections and conversations for various members of families, friends, and caregivers:

- **Parent Support Group:** Meets monthly Alleluia House at Jericho, 537 Northampton Street, Holyoke. Dates TBD so please call ahead at 413-538-7450.
- **Mom's Night Out:** Support group for moms with children with different abilities. A great opportunity to be with other women who "get it." We share information, laugh a lot and help each other through life's challenges. Meets at 6:30PM at Jericho on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month, 537 Northampton Street, Holyoke.
- **Teen Dances (ages 16-22 years) for individuals with/ without disabilities and their friends and/or family members:** Takes place several times a year from 6:30-8:30PM at the Celebration Center at Jericho, 537 Northampton Street, Holyoke. \$3 per person; staff and family are free. Includes a light meal. Dates TBD so please call ahead to register at 413-538-7450. Adult dances also take place bi-monthly.
- **Faith and Light, a gathering of people with disabilities, their families, friends, and caregivers:** A monthly mass is offered on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday at Celebration Center at Jericho, to pray, share, and celebrate together as a community. If you are interested, please contact Sr. Joan: 413-538-7450 or srjoan@jerichobeca.org

## **DOWN SYNDROME**

**BCARC Down Syndrome Family Group:** Group meets periodically and hosts a variety of social events throughout the year.

**CONTACT:** Stephanie LaDue, 413-464-7262 x 14 or 413-499-4241

**EMAIL:** [sladue@bcarc.org](mailto:sladue@bcarc.org) or [bcarc@bcarc.org](mailto:bcarc@bcarc.org)

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.bcarc.org/down-syndrome-family-group/contact-dsfg/>

**Down Syndrome Resource Group of Western MA :** Provides a variety of events for families with children of all ages.

**CONTACT:** Joanne Charland 413-977-6445

**CONTACT:** Laura Kazeroid 413-388-8420

**Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress:** MDSC is a statewide organization that provides information, networking opportunities, and advocacy for people with Down syndrome and their families, educators, health care professionals, and the community-at-large. The Parents First Call program provides new and expectant parents the opportunity to connect with a trained parent mentor and to receive accurate, up-to-date information.

**CONTACT:** 781-221-0024

**E-MAIL:** [mdsc@mdsc.org](mailto:mdsc@mdsc.org)

**WEBSITE:** [www.mdsc.org](http://www.mdsc.org)

## **EATING DISORDERS**

**Friends and Family:** Please see website for specific meeting dates and times. Location is at 100 University Drive, Amherst.

**CONTACT:** 413-582-0100

**EMAIL:** [stwiss@waldenbehavioralcare.com](mailto:stwiss@waldenbehavioralcare.com) or [hconvertino@waldenbehavioralcare.com](mailto:hconvertino@waldenbehavioralcare.com)

**WEBSITE:** [www.waldenbehavioralcare.com](http://www.waldenbehavioralcare.com)

## **EDUCATION**

**What is a SEPAC?** Massachusetts Special Education Regulations state that each school committee shall establish a Parent Advisory Council on Special Education (called “SEPAC,” or “PAC” in some districts). A SEPAC is a formally organized group of individuals, parents, and professionals committed to the best possible services for children with special needs. Generally, SEPACs or PACs meet once a month.

### **How do I find out about my SEPAC?**

- ♦ Call the Special Education office at your child’s school and ask who the contact is and when they meet.
- ♦ Talk with other parents in your child’s school and ask if they are involved with the SEPAC.
- ♦ If there is not an active SEPAC, ask the school or other parents how to get one started!

**Hampden/Wilbraham Special Education Parent Advisory:** Presentations will be held at Minnechaug Regional High School, located at 621 Main Street in Wilbraham. In December and January: Our SEPAC will announce a date and time for a parent meeting. These can be found on our website: [HWRSD.org](http://HWRSD.org), Parents, SEPAC

**CONTACT:** William Michels, [michelsw@charter.net](mailto:michelsw@charter.net)

**NAMI-Berkshire County Education-Related Group:** Families gather to support educational issues for families of children with mental health concerns at 2 locations:

Pittsfield: Monthly meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at Berkshire Medical Center (private dining room next to cafeteria), 725 North Street, Pittsfield at 6:30PM.

Williamstown: Monthly meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at St. John’s Episcopal Church, 35 Park Street at 6:30PM.

**CONTACT:** 413-443-1666

**EMAIL:** [namibc@namibc.org](mailto:namibc@namibc.org)

## **FAMILY & PARENT SUPPORT**

**Berkshire Children & Family Resource Center:** Offers parent support and education groups and interactive play groups. Groups meet in Pittsfield. Call for more information.

**CONTACT:** Brett Westbrook, 413-422-5333, Ext. 266

**EMAIL:** info@bershirechildren.org

**Parents Helping Parents:** Parent Support Groups meet weekly in many locations throughout Massachusetts, including in Middlefield on Wednesdays from 6-7:30PM, all at no cost.

Exact locations are not listed due to our anonymity policy.

**CONTACT:** 617-926-5008 or 800-632-8188 for group locations

**WEBSITE:** www.parentshelpingparents.org

**SC@N360 Parents with Special Needs Children:** Springfield Community Access Network (SC@N360) is a one-stop family center that offers assistance to families who have a member with a developmental disability. Staff helps families with information and support through a network of human service agencies and community service providers. Support group meetings are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday monthly from 10AM-Noon at 11 Wilbraham Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Springfield. All parents are welcome to join our support group, regardless of diagnosis of child; supporting English and Spanish languages.

**CONTACT:** Caroline, 413-731-3110

**WEBSITE:** <https://scan360.org/parent-support-groups/>

## **FOOD ALLERGY: See ASTHMA AND ALLERGY**

## **GRANDPARENT SUPPORT**

**Berkshire Children & Family Resource Center:** Groups meet in Pittsfield and North Adams. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren offers support and assistance. Call for more information.

**CONTACT:** Brett Westbrook, 413-442-5333, Ext. 266

**EMAIL:** info@bershirechildren.org

**Grandparents of Children with Down Syndrome (Western Mass):** Regional meetings for grandparents of children with down syndrome. Please call for more information about dates, times, and locations.

**CONTACT:** Sue Laing 413-519-2777



## **GRIEF AND HEALING**

**Compassionate Friends:** If you are a member (or a friend) of a family that has suffered the death of a child, The Compassionate Friends is here to help you.

**CONTACT:** National Office, 877-969-0010 or 630-990-0010

**EMAIL:** nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

**Springfield MA Chapter:** Meets on 1st Wednesday of each month from 7-9PM at Baystate Medical Center, 3300 Main Street, Springfield.

**CONTACT:** Beth-Ann, 413-687-1073 or Walter, (413) 210-2556

**EMAIL:** FTBMBeth@aol.com

**Online Support Network for Parents of Children with Serious Illnesses:** “It’s 3:00 in the morning. I can’t sleep. My grief and fear are overwhelming...The doctor suggested a support group, but I don’t have time. There is not enough of me... .. I know there’s help out there, but it’s all so overwhelming... How can I get the information I need to make good decisions, support in dealing with my fears, and explanations for my feelings of grief and anger?” --Michelle, Emily’s Mom

**CONTACT:** www.partnershipforparents.net

**Rick’s Place Inc:** Providing Support to Grieving Children and Their Families, Rick’s Place children and teen support groups (ages 5-18) meet every other Tuesday evening at 6:30PM in Wilbraham. All group services are free of charge. A designated caregiver is required to attend with the child/teen. Groups are divided by age, with four separate groups meeting concurrently. In each group, facilitators include games, activities, and crafts to facilitate expression of feelings about grief and bereavement. Group participants are encouraged to commemorate and remember special people in their lives who have died. There is an intake process for joining the group and new members are welcomed in September and January. We have a new early childhood (3-5 yrs) group that meets one time each month. Please call for more information or to schedule an intake appointment.

**CONTACT:** Diane Murray, Program Director (413)348-3120

**EMAIL:** [Diane.ricksplace@gmail.com](mailto:Diane.ricksplace@gmail.com)

**WEBSITE:** [www.ricksplacema.org](http://www.ricksplacema.org)

## **HOME SCHOOLING SUPPORTS**

**Hilltown Families:** Hilltown Families (“HF”) is a grassroots communications network of homeschool and after-school families with children from Kindergarten to 6<sup>th</sup> Grade and living in the rural hilltowns of Western Mass. Members share and organize events and activities to supplement their children’s education, while offering support and opportunities to socialize. HF moderates a private email listserv for families to communicate and facilitate discussions, and offers free news feed service providing news and updates posted to Hilltown Families website.

**EMAIL:** [info@hilltownfamilies.org](mailto:info@hilltownfamilies.org)

**WEBSITE:** [www.hilltownfamilies.org](http://www.hilltownfamilies.org)

**Pioneer Valley Homeschoolers:** This is an inclusive, eclectic support group for homeschooling families in Western Massachusetts. Meetings and/or field trips are scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All are welcome!

**CONTACT:** Lisa, [aiken251@gmail.com](mailto:aiken251@gmail.com) or Karen, [ktwilrainbow@gmail.com](mailto:ktwilrainbow@gmail.com)

**WEBSITE:** [www.pvhg.net](http://www.pvhg.net)

## **HYDROCEPHALUS**

**Hydrocephalus Association Boston Community Network:** This group provides support, education, and empowerment through community for individuals and families impacted by hydrocephalus. Meetings are typically held at Children's Hospital, 9 Hope Avenue, Waltham. Call for details.

**CONTACT:** Jennifer Miles or Sue Wiegers

**EMAIL:** [BostonCommunity@hydroassoc.org](mailto:BostonCommunity@hydroassoc.org)

## **MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

**Amputee Support System in Step Together:** A peer-level support, education and advocacy group for individuals and their families who have experienced amputation. Group meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday each month at 6:30 PM at Mercy Medical Center's Deliso Conference Center, 299 Carew Street, Springfield.

**CONTACT:** Ray Morin, 413-748-6892

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.mercycares.com/rehab-support-groups> Check out this site for various support groups: Cancer, Aphasia, Brain Injury

**Children's Hemiplegia and Stroke Support of Western Massachusetts:** We are an active support group of families that have all been impacted by infant or pediatric stroke. We meet the first Monday of every other month at Thom Infant Toddler Family Services in Springfield. In addition to meeting every other month in Springfield, we maintain a private group on Facebook and plan family friendly activities throughout the year.

**CONTACT:** Eliza and Kevin Maltby (413) 567-2909

**EMAIL:** [childhoodstrokeawareness@gmail.com](mailto:childhoodstrokeawareness@gmail.com)

**Crohn's and Colitis Foundation Parent Support Group:** This group meets monthly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday from 6:30-7:30PM at Mass. General Hospital, Yawkey Building, Room 4-4820, 55 Fruit Street, Boston. For details, call or visit: [www.ccfa.org](http://www.ccfa.org)

**CONTACT:** Melissa Murphy, 781-449-0324

**E-MAIL:** [mmurphy@ccfa.org](mailto:mmurphy@ccfa.org)

**Diabetes Support Group:** A support group for individuals with diabetes who are interested in learning more about managing their diabetes. Family members and friends are welcomed. Call for more details.

**CONTACT:** 508-852-6175

**Eosinophilic Gastrointestinal Disorders Support Group:** Provides support to parents and opportunities to meet and share for young adults and adults affected by EGID. Educational speakers arranged for monthly meetings, held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday at Children's Hospital Lexington, 482 Bedford Street from 7-9PM. Call for meeting details and RSVP.

**CONTACT:** Dianna Queheillalt

**EMAIL:** dianna@EGIDBoston.org

**WEBSITE:** www.EGIDBoston.org

**Western Massachusetts Fragile X:** Our group is LINKed (NEFAC, New England Fragile X Advisory Council) with the Boston Children's Hospital Fragile X Program, which evaluates patients with Fragile X. They have Genetics, Developmental Pediatrician, and OT services and with our input, hopefully more services in the future. The group joins together semi-annually for parent support, events, and activities. Please join our email list to get information on programs in the area and the latest information available about Fragile X.

**CONTACT:** Denise, 413-584-1859

**EMAIL:** westernma@fragilex.org

**WEBSITE:** <https://fragilex.org/community/community-support-network/northeast/western-massachusetts-fragile-x/>

**Multiple Sclerosis Support Group:** Call for date and times of groups. We meet at AdLib Center for Independent Living at 215 North Street, Pittsfield.

**CONTACT:** 413-442-7047

**Prader-Willi Syndrome Association of New England:** Provides information and support, quarterly parent support groups, family recreation events, conferences every other year, parent to parent support, and informational newsletter. Call for details.

**CONTACT:** Mary Raymond, 978-207-1185

**E-MAIL:** murphyno7@aol.com

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.pwsausa.org/new-england-chapter/>

**Scleroderma Syndrome Support Group:** Worcester Area Group meets monthly on a Sunday at 2PM at 640 Lincoln Street, Worcester. Please call for specific dates.

**CONTACT:** Nancy Velleco, 508-869-2997

**Spina Bifida Association of Greater New England:** The Spina Bifida Association serves individuals living with Spina Bifida along with their families and caregivers located in MA, NH, VT, and ME. Programs and services have included Education Days, Financial Benefits, Social Events, Get Active, and Outreach with newsletters social media.

**CONTACT:** 888-479-1900

**Spinal Cord Injury Support Group:** The Spinal Cord Support Group provides information and support to people with spinal cord injury and their families. Group meets monthly at Mercy Medical Center, 271 Carew Street, Springfield on the last Tuesday in the Ohara Conference Room (basement level) from 6-8PM.

**CONTACT:** Sharon Abdala, 413-748-6892

**EMAIL:** Sharon.Abdala@sphs.com

### **New Tourettes**

Christine Joyal, Support Group Coordinator

If you are interested in starting up a support group in your area, please contact

Christine Joyal [cjoyal@tsa-ma.org](mailto:cjoyal@tsa-ma.org)

### **Steve & Barbara Johnson, MetroWest Tourettes and OCD Support/Encouragement Group**

This group is open to parents of children with OCD/Tourette Syndrome and adults with OCD/Tourette Syndrome. They will usually meet quarterly in Ashland, MA from 7:30-9PM.

Check out our events calendar for upcoming events/meetings.

For more information, Steve and Barbara can be contacted via email at [sbddt5@verizon.net](mailto:sbddt5@verizon.net).

**Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance of New England:** TSA is dedicated to finding a cure to the condition while improving the lives of those affected. TSA is committed to family and patient support, education and research, offering resources and referrals. Call to learn about activities.

**CONTACT:** Allyson D'Amario, Karin Sullivan, or Marlo Schepper

**E-MAIL:** [mrsqumby56@comcast.net](mailto:mrsqumby56@comcast.net) or [allyson.damarico@gmail.com](mailto:allyson.damarico@gmail.com) or [marloschepper@gmail.com](mailto:marloschepper@gmail.com)

**WEBSITE:** [www.tsalliance.org](http://www.tsalliance.org)

**Turner Syndrome Society of America:** Peer- or professional-led groups, offering resources, emotional support, and social interaction to people with Turner Syndrome.

**CONTACT:** Patricia Collins

**E-MAIL:** [ptkccollins@gmail.com](mailto:ptkccollins@gmail.com)

**WEBSITE:** [www.turnersyndrome.org](http://www.turnersyndrome.org)

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

**NAMI-Berkshire County:** Groups to support the needs of families of children with emotional challenges. Call for more details. Our support groups are run by trained co-facilitators who have a loved one with mental health challenges. We talk about the stages of emotional response and share coping strategies. In addition, we utilize a practical problem-solving model so that everyone walks away with information and ideas to try. A lot of tears and laughter...and ALWAYS hope.

**Pittsfield:** Meetings on 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at Berkshire Medical Center, (private dining room next to cafeteria), 725 North Street, Pittsfield at 6:30PM.

**Williamstown:** Meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at St. John's Episcopal Church, 35 Park Street at 6:30PM.

**CONTACT:** Deb Sadowy, 413-443-1666

**EMAIL:** namibc@namibc.org

**WEBSITE:** namimass.org

**NAMI-WM Peer Education Groups:** Support groups for families and friends of people with mental illnesses. Staff who have had years of experience with mental illness, either directly or as family members of an ill person, facilitate the group. Groups are intended to offer emotional support and information. Call for details of meeting times and locations.

**CONTACT:** NAMI-Western Mass., 413-786-9139

**EMAIL:** information@namiwm.org

**WEBSITE:** <http://namiwm.org/support.html>

**Support Network for Families and Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PAL):** Support groups (English and Spanish) provide resources, trainings and parent to parent support and friendships for families with children/adolescents who have mental, behavioral, or emotional health care needs. Check website for details of support groups throughout the region.

**CONTACT:** 413-536-2401, Ext. 3007

**EMAIL:** [clambert@wmtcinfo.org](mailto:clambert@wmtcinfo.org) or [info@wmtcinfo.org](mailto:info@wmtcinfo.org)

**WEBSITE:** <http://wmtcinfo.org/programs/support-network-of-families-of-wmass/>

**The Support Network for Families of Western Mass.:** Meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month from 12:30-1:45PM at Scan360, 11 Wilbraham Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Springfield (Mason Square Neighborhood Health). Our family support specialists are parents who have children with special mental health needs. We have walked in your shoes. We offer support groups, assistance with problem solving, negotiation and mediation skills, advocacy assistance, information and referral. We also have an extensive lending library.

**CONTACT:** Jan Lamberg, 413-387-7161

## Stroke

Infant and Pediatric Stroke Support of Western Massachusetts: Has your child been diagnosed with stroke, hemiplegic cerebral palsy or hemiplegia? You are not alone. We are a local support group for parents whose children have been diagnosed with stroke, hemiplegic cerebral palsy or hemiplegia. Our group meets every other month. We also have a private Facebook page for families to connect, share stories and ask questions.

For more information, please contact Eliza at (413) 567-2909 or [childhoodstrokeawareness@gmail.com](mailto:childhoodstrokeawareness@gmail.com). For general information about infant stroke or hemiplegic cerebral palsy, please visit the Children's Hemiplegia and Stroke Association (CHASA).

**WEBSITE:** [www.chasa.org](http://www.chasa.org)

## TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

**Making Healthy Connections:** This 12-week program for youth ages 14-22 covers a range of topics, including disability pride, independent living, transportation, relationships, sexuality, healthy cooking, and mental health. They meet every other Saturday from 1-4PM in Springfield. The schedule a brief check-in, guest speaker on the week's topic, snack break, and some form of recreation. The program is open to youth with any disability who is able to sit for at least 45 minutes at a time. There is also an optional parents group that runs at the same time. Fees, dates, and locations are to be determined. Making Healthy Connections is a program in collaboration with Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD), with peer leaders, ages 16-24. A simultaneous and separate group is also available for group members' parents.

**CONTACT:** 617-556-4075

**E-MAIL:** [dchinappa@pyd.org](mailto:dchinappa@pyd.org)

**WEBSITE:** [www.mercycares.com/](http://www.mercycares.com/)

Check out this site for various support groups: Cancer, Aphasia, Brain Injury