

A PUBLICATION OF THE SEVEN HILLS FAMILY SERVICES
MAKING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



In the photos on this page, two of our supported individuals, whose friendship has been fostered by their DSPs, enjoy community outings together during their 1:1 hours.



Direct Support Professionals: Champions of Community Inclusion

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) play a vital role enriching lives and strengthening communities. DSPs are on the front lines of caregiving—and the lifeline that extends far beyond, empowering individuals with disabilities to live independently, achieve goals, and engage meaningfully in daily life.

The Community Connections program of Seven Hills is profoundly grateful for the companionship component DSPs provide in their role as caregivers. Supporting primarily people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and survivors of Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), Community Connections depends on DSPs to remain with the people supported to ensure optimum participation and enjoyment. Opportunities fostered by DSPs include:

- Volunteering at businesses such as AIS Leominster and area food pantries
- Performances at NE Botanic Garden at Tower Hill and other local venues
- Walking clubs, nature trails, and recreation areas where all can walk and roll
- Learning a new skill or engaging in self-expression through the ARTS
- Creating social outings to strengthen friendships
- Assisting Family Support Center staff at local fairs and tabling events

Whether engaging in the community, setting and achieving goals, or building daily living skills, DSPs champion opportunities that foster dignity, connection, and growth. Their dedication transforms lives—one person, one moment, one community at a time.



CELEBRATING
Direct Support Professionals

September 7-13, 2025

ALL YEAR LONG



Family Support Center Directory

Seven Hills Family Services

85 Prescott Street, Worcester, MA 01605

Leslie Courtney, Vice President
lcourtney@sevenhills.org

Gina Bernard, Assistant Vice President
gbernard@sevenhills.org

Noreen Alves, Regional Grant Coordinator,
nalves@sevenhills.org

Dawn Varrichio, Administration Manager
dvarrichio@sevenhills.org

Sarah Khan, Administration Assistant
skhan@sevenhills.org

Denise Rickett, Administration Assistant
dricketts@sevenhills.org

Amber Wongbay, Regional Program Manager
awongbay@sevenhills.org

Recreation Department

Jayne Bowler, jbowler@sevenhills.org

Christopher Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org

North Central Family Support Center

1460 John Fitch Highway, Fitchburg, MA 01420

Jackie Edmands, Director Sr Support Specialist
Jedmands@sevenhills.org

North Quabbin Family Support Center

2280 Main Street, Athol, MA 01331

Tonya Lanpher, Director Sr Support Specialist
tlanpher@sevenhills.org

South Valley Family Support Center

5 Optical Drive, 2nd Floor, Southbridge, MA 01550

Elizabeth Carroll, Director Sr Support Specialist
ecarroll@sevenhills.org

Greater Lowell Family Support Center

7 Technology Drive, Suite 103, Chelmsford, MA 01863

Kristen Tower, Director Sr Support Specialist
ktower@sevenhills.org

Information Reminder

For **in-person events**, masks and social distancing are recommended. **Virtual events** may be attended outside your typical geographic region.

In-Person Events Icon



Virtual Events Icon



Hybrid Events Icons



ASD-Only Events Icon



Registration is required for most events.

A minimum number of participants will be necessary to host some events. For others, particularly in-person events, space is limited. Therefore, unless otherwise specified, registration will be required and the contact information included for each activity.

Stay Social, Stay Connected, and Stay Up to Date!

Remember to check our Events Calendar, Facebook Page, and your email for social media posts and e-communications on events! Stay connected for the latest on your favorite activities, especially when there are reports of inclement weather!



Events Calendar:

sevenhills.org/whats-happening/calendar



FSC Facebook Page:

facebook.com/SHFFamilySupportCenters





Caregiver Resources Facebook Page:



facebook.com/seven.hills.caregiver.resources


FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER TRAININGS


REGISTRATION: Click on the ZOOM link or contact the staff person provided. Virtual events may be attended outside of your typical geographical region. For questions, please contact our Family Support Transition Specialists, Malissa Wilson, mwilson@sevenhills.org, or Cheri Brown, cbrown@sevenhills.org.

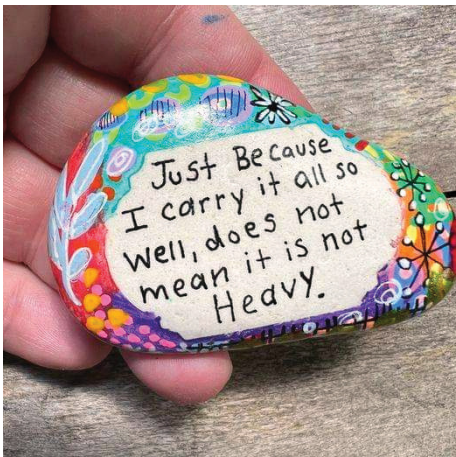
  **ESTATE PLANNING, TRUSTS & WILLS:** Monday, September 8, 5:30-7pm, Free. Host: Moody Street Group. Join us for an informative session on estate planning, including how to create trusts and wills that protect individuals with disabilities and their families, special needs trusts, and planning for future care and financial stability. In addition to the presentation, attendees can sign up for a complimentary 30-minute, one-on-one consultation with an attorney to discuss their individual questions and concerns. **Format:** In Person Watch Party or Virtual. **Watch Party locations:** NQFSC, GLFSC, NCFSC, SVFSC. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Cheri Brown, cbrown@sevenhills.org, 802-302-9682. **Virtual:** Zoom link will be shared upon registration.

 **CIBERSEGURIDAD PARA TODOS:** 17 de septiembre, 5-7pm, SVFSC, 5 Optical Drive, 2nd floor, Southbridge.

  **LONG-TERM PLANNING/SSDI:** Monday, October 6, 5:30-7pm, Free. Host: Moody Street Group. Join us for an informative session on Social Security and Long-Term Care. Learn valuable information to help you plan for the future, understand available benefits, and make informed decisions about long-term-care options. In addition to the presentation, attendees can sign up for a complimentary 30-minute, one-on-one consultation with an attorney to discuss their individual questions and concerns. **Format:** In Person Watch Party or Virtual. **Watch Party locations:** NQFSC, GLFSC, NCFSC, SVFSC. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Cheri Brown, cbrown@sevenhills.org or 802-302-9682. **Virtual:** Zoom link will be shared upon registration.

 **ABLE ACCOUNT TRAINING:** MEFA Director of Attainable Outreach Adam Hartwell, presenter; Wednesday, November 5, 5:30pm. The "Stephen Beck Jr. Achieving a Better Life Experience" Act was signed into law in 2014, establishing what are referred to as ABLE Accounts. These tax-advantaged accounts allow individuals with disabilities and their families to save for short- and long-term qualified disability expenses. Each State administers its version of ABLE within certain guidelines. An ABLE Account in Massachusetts is called an Attainable® Savings Plan, professionally managed by Fidelity Investments. It may be used without affecting other disability-related federal benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) (for account balances under \$100,000), SNAP, HUD, and others. Earnings in an Attainable® account are federally tax-exempt and qualified distributions are not federally taxed. MEFA serves as the state sponsor. **Format:** In-Person Watch Party or Virtual. **Watch Party locations:** NQFSC, GLFSC, NCFSC, SVFSC. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Cheri Brown, cbrown@sevenhills.org or 802-302-9682. **Virtual:** Zoom link will be shared upon registration.

 **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION LAW WITH JOHANNE PINO:** Monday, November 10, Noon. In this important training session, Johanne Pino explains about Massachusetts anti-bullying laws, protections, and insights into recognizing and preventing bullying and issues that affect people of all ages. **Please note:** This a recorded training. Questions will be answered as needed following the presentation. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Cheri Brown, cbrown@sevenhills.org or 802-302-9682. **Virtual:** Zoom link will be shared upon registration.



RECREATION DEPARTMENT HAPPENINGS

IN-PERSON EVENTS

BALLROOM DANCE: Wednesdays, October through December, 6-7pm, \$25 Registration Fee. Dust off your dancing shoes; tap, step, and turn with the Seven Hills Dance Group for a spectacular display of elegance in motion. Bring a partner and learn or perfect how to twirl and boogie around the floor together. **Location:** ASPIRE!, 150 Goddard Memorial Drive, Worcester. **Contact:** Christopher "Chris" Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org.

JUST US WOMEN: One Friday per month from September 2025–May 2026, 6:30-8:30pm. \$300 for the entire year. An extension of our very popular Just Us Girls program, Just Us Women is designed to create new friendships, and learning about important topics while enjoying each other's company during dinner. The group's interests drive the topics and event-planning, and include self-determination, goal setting, healthy relationships, personal wellness, and community engagement. **Location:** ASPIRE!, 150 Goddard Memorial Drive, Worcester. **Contact:** Noreen Alves, nalves@sevenhills.org. *Please Note: Limited space is available. A commitment to the entire year is required. Open enrollment begins July 11.*

JUST US GIRLS: Two Saturdays a month from September 2025–May 2026. Ages 10-14 meet from 10am-Noon. Ages 15-19 meet from 1-3pm. \$50 fee for the year, due at registration. Join this unique and fun skills-development program for adolescent girls interested in creating new friendships while learning important topics such as self-awareness, self-determination and goal setting, building healthy relationships, encouraging healthy behaviors and lifestyles, personal health and safety, and participating in a community service project. The goal of Just Us Girls is to build, strengthen, and support the development of healthy, confident girls. **Location:** ASPIRE!, 150 Goddard Memorial Drive, Worcester. **Contact:** Noreen Alves, nalves@sevenhills.org. *Please note: Limited space is available. A commitment to the entire year is required. The program is funded primarily by the United Way's Women's Initiative grant. Open enrollment begins July 11.*

CREATIVE MINDS AT WAM: Every 2nd Saturday, September 13, 2025–June 13, 2026, 10am-Noon, ages 18+ with ABI/TBI. Immerse yourself in the art experience with us at the Worcester Art Museum: 10-10:30am, Meet & Greet Brunch; 10:30-11am, Museum walk-through; 11am-Noon, Creative Process, where we interpret our experience into our own masterpiece. Three special outings are being planned, TBA. **Location:** Worcester Art Museum, 55 Salisbury St. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Noreen Alves, nalves@sevenhills.org.

S.O. FLAG FOOTBALL: Sunday practices, games TBD. August – November, 10am-Noon. \$25 Registration Fee. We are very excited for the upcoming Flag Football season and adding new athletes and partners. Come tackle a new challenge and join us for a team journey of personal growth, fun, and friendships. Attendance and participation in league games are required for the possibility to play at Gillette Stadium for States. **Location:** Worcester Parks, TBD. ****Pre-registration Required**** **Contact:** Chris Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org.

FLAG FOOTBALL SKILLS AND DRILLS: Sunday practices, August – November, 10am-Noon. \$25 Registration Fee. In connection with our Unified team, we are offering a non-travel option for those who want to learn how to play flag football—beginners or those who wish to practice football skills in a fun environment with options to move into our competition team. **Location:** Worcester Parks, information to come with registration. ****Pre-registration required**** **Contact:** Chris Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org.

S.O. SOCCER: Sunday practices, games are TBD, September – November, 10:30am-Noon. \$25 Registration Fee. Promoting health and wellness, soccer can be a great way to learn how to collaborate with a team, build friendships, and compete with vigor. We offer multiple levels of competitive team play. **Location:** Worcester Parks, TBD. ****Pre-registration is required**** **Contact:** Chris Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org.

Just Us Girls

**A SOCIAL SKILLS GROUP TO
SUPPORT AND EMPOWER GIRLS**



WHO

Differently abled girls, ages
10–14 & 15–19

WHAT

Create new friendships while
learning self-awareness, self-
determination, and skills for
life. Opportunities for
parents, guardians, and
caregivers to network.

WHEN

Two Saturdays per month,
from September–May

WHERE

Local Worcester area
locations

 **Seven Hills**

Family Services

An Affiliate of Seven Hills Foundation

Funded in Part by



REGISTER TODAY!

Noreen Alves
Regional Recreation & Grant Coordinator
774-688-4095 • nalves@sevenhills.org



Community Connections for People with Brain Injury

CREATIVITY & CONNECTIONS

Creative Minds at WAM Adults 18+ with ABI/TBI

Every 2nd Saturday, 10am-Noon
September 13, 2025 - June 13, 2026

- 10-10:30am Meet & Greet Brunch
- 10:30-11am Museum Walk-Through
- 11am-Noon Creative Process

Three outings are being planned; dates TBA.
Worcester Art Museum (WAM)
55 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA 01609

To register, contact Noreen Alves
nalves@sevenhills.org or call 774-688-4095.

Funded by The Statewide Head Injury Program (SHIP), a program of
MassAbility (formerly Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission).

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

GET A JUMP START ON WINTER 2026 ACTIVITIES! Join our NEW Special Olympics Bowling Team, shoot hoops, make a splash in Aquatics, and more! Space is limited. Contact Christopher "Chris" Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org.

★**NEW**★ **S.O. BOWLING:** Every other Tuesday, December–March, 6-8:30pm, \$40 Registration Fee. Grab your bowling shoes, a bowling ball, and get ready to knock down some pins! Welcome to the Seven Hills Competition Bowling team with Special Olympics. **Location:** Auburn Bowlero, 101 Southbridge St. ****Pre-registration is required**** **Contact:** Chris Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org.

BASKETBALL SKILLS AND DRILLS: Sunday practices, January–March, Noon-4pm, \$25 Registration Fee. For beginner athletes or athletes looking to practice their basketball skills and basics. Develop and perfect the fundamentals, process, and teamwork needed for on-court play. **Location:** Worcester State University Gymnasium, 486 Chandler St., Worcester. **Contact:** Chris Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org.

S.O. BASKETBALL: Sunday practices, games TBD by SOMA. January–April, Noon-4pm, \$25 Registration Fee. Shoot, pass, dribble, and drive your way to the basket. Slam dunk your skills with a team full of passionate, hard workers, and a commitment to teamwork. Attendance and consistency is important in all sports. We are looking to put together a traditional team; no partners necessary. **Location:** Worcester State University Gymnasium, 486 Chandler St., Worcester. **Contact:** Chris Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org.

S.O. AQUATICS: Sunday practices, meets TBD by Special Olympics. March–June, 1:30-2:30pm, \$50 Registration Fee. Athletes on this S.O. traditional competitive swim team practice swimming skills, reach new goals, and win medals! This team requires a commitment to weekly practices, assessment rounds, and competitions set by SOMA. S.O. Summer Games is our end-of-season meet. An overnight stay is a possibility and independence a necessity. As a courtesy, priority is given to the previous year's team members. **Location:** Clark University, 57 Downing St., Worcester. Space is limited. ****Pre-registration Required**** **Contact:** Chris Ritter, critter@sevenhills.org.

NORTH CENTRAL FSC EVENTS

1460 John Fitch Highway, Fitchburg, MA • 978.632.4322

Contact: Jackie Edmands, 978.602.8692, jedmands@sevenhills.org

IN-PERSON EVENTS

OPEN MIC NIGHT: Tuesday, September 16, 5-7pm, Free. We are looking for the next Seven Hills Idol—could it be you? Join the NCFSC staff as we sing our hearts out, show our best dance moves, and wow the crowd. Whether you're a star performer or just starting out, this is your moment to shine. Are you ready to take the stage? Light refreshments will be served. **Location:** Leominster Veterans Center, 100 West St., Leominster. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, jdugas@sevenhills.org.

THE SOCIAL SPECTRUM: Third Wednesday of the month, September 17, October 15, November 19, December 17, 5-7pm. Free to attend, activities may have costs to be covered by the individual or family. A peer group for people on the autism spectrum who are seeking a low-pressure space for social connection, not services, who are learning to navigate the world independently. We will be meeting up monthly within the community for fun social activities. **Contacts:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org; Jess Dugas, jdugas@sevenhills.org; Malissa Wilson, mwilson@sevenhills.org.

THURSDAY: SOCIAL COOKING FUN: Thursdays, Sept 4, Oct 2, Nov 6, Dec 4, 5-7pm, Free. Chop, stir, and sauté your way through a hands-on cooking experience. Then sit back and enjoy the flavors of your creation with friends. Mix, mingle, and make memories, one bite at a time! Who is ready to get cooking? **Location:** NCFSC. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, jdugas@sevenhills.org.

IEP CHECK-IN: Thursdays, Sept 4, Oct 2, Nov 6, Dec 4, 5-7pm, Free. Check in with the IEP Support Navigator for ideas on partnering with your school district. Learn how to manage your IEP in a collaborative way. **Location:** NCFSC. **Contact:** Dina Hammad, dhammad@sevenhills.org.

SOCIAL SQUAD: Thursdays, Sept 11, 25, Oct 9, 23, Nov. 13, Dec. 11, 11am-2pm, Free. Sign up to connect with friends during this 3-hour block of time, 2x per month at the NCFSC. Enjoy activities of interest to all. **Location:** NCFSC. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, jdugas@sevenhills.org.

THURSDAY SOCIAL: GAME/TRIVIA: Thursdays, Sept 11, Oct 9, Nov 13, Dec 11, 5-7pm, Free. Get ready for a fun-filled game night where the only rule is to have a blast! Whether you're a game master, a card shark, or just in it for the laughs, there is something for everyone. Let the games begin! **Location:** NCFSC. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, jdugas@sevenhills.org.

TRANSITION TALKS: Thursdays, Sept 18, Oct 16, Nov 20, Dec 18, 5-7pm, Free. Check in with the Transition Navigator at the NCFSC to review the timeline for transitioning to adult services for your loved one, aged 16-22. **Location:** NCFSC. **Contact:** Marci Haneisen, mhaneisen@sevenhills.org.

THURSDAY SOCIAL: MUSIC: Thursdays, Sept 18, Nov 20, Dec 18, 5-7pm, Free. Get ready to tap your feet, hum along, and immerse yourself in the world of music. **Location:** NCFSC. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org.

THURSDAY SOCIAL: EXPLORING THE ARTS: Thursdays, Sept 25, Oct 23, 5-7pm, Free. Join friends and explore your creative inner self. Share your love of the ARTS with others. **Location:** NCFSC. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org.

MARVEL/DC PARTY: Thursday, Oct. 16, 5-7pm, Free. Calling all heroes from the Marvel and DC Universe! Join our action-packed night of fun, laughter, and super-powered celebration! Dress as your favorite superhero or come as you are! Everyone is a hero in our book. **Location:** NCFSC. **Contacts:** Marci Haneisen, mhaneisen@sevenhills.org; Jess Dugas, jdugas@sevenhills.org.

FRIDAY MOVIE CLUB: Fridays, Sept 12, Oct 10, Dec 12, 5:30-8pm, ages 16+, Free. Friends can enjoy a night out for fun and a movie. What is a movie night without pizza and popcorn? **Location:** NCFSC. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Malissa Wilson, mwilson@sevenhills.org.

HALLOWEEN DANCE: Friday, Oct. 24, 7-9pm, Free. Sing, dance, and enjoy the night with friends in your Halloween "look." **Location:** Leominster Veterans Center, 100 West St., Leominster. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org/

HOLIDAY FAMILY DINNER: Friday, November 14, 5:30-7:30pm, Free. Come share a favorite holiday dish and enjoy a slideshow as we celebrate the year with thanks. **Location:** Leominster Veterans Center, 100 West St., Leominster. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org.

JOHNNY APPLESEED FESTIVAL: Saturday, September 20, 9am-5pm. Free to attend; activities may have costs to be covered by the individual or family. Visit our Seven Hills table at the Johnny Appleseed Festival, open from 9am-5pm in the heart of downtown Leominster. There will be resource tables, food vendors, entertainment, music, and many friendly faces in the crowd. Will you be able to find us? **Location:** Downtown Leominster. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org

FAMILY RC DAY: Saturday, October 25, 10am-Noon. Get ready to rev your engines and unleash your inner speedster! Join us for a high-octane group event at RC Excitement, the ultimate indoor race track experience. **Location:** RC Excitement, 208 Bemis Rd., Fitchburg. ****Limited space available, registration required**** **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org.

HYBRID EVENTS

TUESDAY MORNING TRANSITION TEA TIME: 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, Sept 9, 23; Oct 14, 28; Nov 11, 25; Dec 9, 23; 10-11:30am. Training and support sessions for caregivers and individuals in the transition years, suggested ages 14-22. ****Registration Required to obtain materials and link**** **Contact:** Marci Haneisen, mhaneisen@sevenhills.org. **In-Person Location:** NCFSC. **Virtual:** Receive the link upon registration.

TUESDAY EVENING TRANSITION TEA TIME: 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, Sept 9, 23; Oct 14, 28; Nov 11, 25; Dec 9, 23; 5:30-7pm. Training and support sessions for caregivers and individuals in the transition years, suggested ages 14-22. ****Registration Required to obtain materials and link**** **Contact:** Marci Haneisen, mhaneisen@sevenhills.org. **In-Person Location:** NCFSC. **Virtual:** Receive the link upon registration.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

MANAGING ANXIETY AND COPING SKILLS: Monday, September 8, 5:30-7pm, Free. Join Allison, Social Coach, to practice and learn ways to figure out challenging times. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org. <https://sevenhills-org.zoom.us/j/92694307173>

SELF-ADVOCACY SOCIAL: 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, Sept 2, 16; Oct 7, 14; Nov 4, 18; Dec. 2, 16; 10-11am, Free. Learn how to advocate for your beliefs and goals. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org. bit.ly/SelfAdSocial

LUNCH BUNCH: 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, Sept 10, 24; Oct 8, 22; Nov 12, 26; Dec 10; Noon-1pm, Free. Hang out with friends and chat about your monthly activities, current events, and share your talents or jokes. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org. bit.ly/ZOOM-LunchBunch

LUNCH BUNCH: FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE: Wednesdays, Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, Dec. 10, Noon-1pm, Free. Successfully Social's Allison teaches skills to build meaningful friendships and relationships. **Contact:** Jess Dugas, Jdugas@sevenhills.org. bit.ly/ZOOM-LunchBunch

BOOK CLUB WITH MARCI: Fridays, Sept 5, 19, 26; Oct 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; Nov 7, 14, 21; Dec 5, 12, 19; 1-2pm. Marci will read aloud from our book club choice, beginning with *Harry Potter*. Future choices to be decided by the group. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Marci Haneisen, mhaneisen@sevenhills.org. bit.ly/MarciBookClub

SOUTH VALLEY FSC EVENTS

5 Optical Dr., 2nd Fl., Southbridge, MA • 774.241.2500 • **Contact:** Elizabeth Carroll, 774.241.2504, ecarroll@sevenhills.org

IN-PERSON EVENTS

PARENT MEET-UP GROUP: Mondays, 5-6:30pm, Free. Held during our Activity Nights at the SVFSC. Join us for this informal group to discuss your successes and concerns.

CORNHOLE: Mondays, 9/8, 9/15, 9/22, 9/29, 5-6:30pm, Weather Permitting. Free. Cornhole is back! Join your friends at the SVFSC to play everyone's favorite outdoor picnic game! **Location:** SVFSC, outside on the green. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Liz Laplante, ellaplante@sevenhills.org. *Space is limited. This is not a drop-off event; caregivers must remain on site.*

NATURE CRAFTS: Mondays, 10/6, 10/20, 10/27, 5-6:30pm, Free. Lisa, our resident All-Things-Outdoorsy Lady, will help you make fun crafts using items she gathered from nature. **Location:** SVFSC. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Lisa Morgan, lmorgan@sevenhills.org. *Supplies are limited. This is not a drop-off event; caregivers must stay on site. Doors open 15 min before event starts.*

GO GREEN: Mondays, 11/3, 11/10, 11/17, 11/24, 5-6:30pm, ages 16+, Free. We will discover new eco-friendly ways to care for ourselves and our homes. Learn about how essential oils work, pet care, organic skin care, and more. **Location:** SVFSC. **Contact:** Myriam Lugo Gonzales, mlugogonzales@sevenhills.org to register or if you have any questions. *Space is limited. This is not a drop-off event; caregivers must remain on site. Doors open 15 minutes before event start time.*

ALL THE FUN THINGS! Mondays, 12/1, 12/8, 12/22, 5-6:30pm, suggested ages 16+, Free. Mondays are for All the Fun Things! Mix and match music, karaoke, and trivia! **Location:** SVFSC. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Paige Willard, pwillard@sevenhills.org. *Space is limited. This is not a drop-off event; caregivers must remain on site.*

REUNIÓN DE NETWORKING EN ESPAÑOL: lunes, 8 de diciembre, de 17:00 a 19:00 h. Gratis, pero por favor, traiga un plato de comida o un refrigerio para compartir. Únase a nosotros y a otras familias hispanohablantes locales para disfrutar de la amistad, el apoyo, la comida y el networking. Myriam, nuestra guía bilingüe, facilitará esta reunión informal para descubrir qué necesitan las familias y cómo acceder a esos recursos. Dirigido a cuidadores de seres queridos con discapacidad. Ubicación: SVFSC. Para inscribirse o hacer preguntas, contacte a Myriam Lugo González, mlugogonzales@sevenhills.org.

CAFE CHATS: Thursdays, 9/11, 9/25, 10/2, 10/23, 11/6, 11/20, 12/4, 12/18, 10am, Free. Join us for our new biweekly support group dedicated to building a supportive community for caregivers. We aim to create a space to share information, connections, and an opportunity to enhance your network and contribute to a caring and informed community. **Location:** Sawdust Cafe in Sturbridge. **Contact:** Liz Laplante, ellaplante@sevenhills.org with questions or to register.

LEGO WORKSHOP: Thursday, November 13, 6-7:30pm, all ages, all abilities, Free. Join us for a fun night of Lego free play! All the supplies are here to make amazing creations! Lego creations/supplies will need to be returned at the end of the event. **Location:** SVFSC. **Please register with Jodie Krueger,** jkrueger@sevenhills.org. *Space is limited. This is not a drop-off event. Doors open 15 minutes before the event starts.*

WOODWORKING WITH RICK AND JUDY: Saturdays, 9/13, 10/15, 11/18, 12/6, 10am, \$25. Join us for a fun and challenging woodworking craft with our friends Rick and Judy West. **Location:** SVFSC. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Jayne Bowler, jbowler@sevenhills.org. *Space is limited. Doors open 15 minutes before the event starts.*

HOLIDAY PARTY: Saturday, December 6, 6pm, Free, but snacks and water will be available for purchase. Our annual Holiday Party is our most favorite event of the year! Join us for music, fun, dancing, and a woodworking craft! Holiday attire is encouraged. **Location:** The Hayloft Barn in Sturbridge.

HYBRID EVENTS

BRAVE YOGA WITH A TWIST! Thursdays, 9/18, 10/2, 11/20, 12/8, 6:15-7pm. Join your friends online or here at the SVFSC to practice yoga moves. The fully adaptive session includes warm up, breathing and mindfulness, yoga poses, and a relaxing power down. Please bring your yoga mat and water bottles. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Liz Laplante, ellaplante@sevenhills.org for info. and to register and receive the link to the virtual option. *Space is limited. The virtual waiting room/doors for in person open 15 minutes before the activity starts. For in-person attendees, this is not a drop-off event; caregivers must remain on site and relax in our lobby.*

VIRTUAL EVENTS

MONDAY FUNDAY WITH MIKE LEO & HIS UNIQUE RHYTHMS: Mondays, 9/15, 10/27, 11/10, 12/15, 3-4pm, Free. Join us for a fun and interactive music experience with Mike Leo. During each session, we will explore different music genres through art & creative writing. Please remember to bring paper & pencils to each session. ****Registration required**** **Contact:** Liz Laplante, ellaplante@sevenhills.org. bit.ly/SV-MondayFun

MARVEL, DC, AND DISNEY: Wednesdays, weekly, Sept 3, 10, 17, 24; Oct 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Nov 5, 12, 19, No session on Nov 26; Dec 3, 10, 17, No session on Dec 24, Dec 31; 6-7:30pm, Free. Love superheroes? Join SVFSC and GLFSC for a fun trivia night, episode watches, comic book culture, and good friends! Zoom registration is required to join, all ages are welcome. Please contact Kristen Tower, ktower@sevenhills.org with questions. bit.ly/MarvelDCDisney

ITS A WRAP: Fridays, 9/12, 9/19, 9/26, 10/3, 10/17, 10/24, 11/7, 11/21, 12/5, 12/12, 12/19, 3-4pm, Free. Time to wrap up our week and focus on the weekend and our plans, ending our session with everyone's favorite game, Jeopardy. **Contact:** Liz Laplante, ellaplante@sevenhills.org for more information. bit.ly/Zoom-ItsAWrap

ASD-ONLY EVENTS

ASD ONLY: DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS: Thursdays, 9/4, 10/2, 11/6, 12/4, 6:30-8:30pm, ages 16+, Free. Learn how to play this action-adventure fantasy game with the help of a DungeonMaster! Please bring a brown bag dinner (no nuts please!). **Location:** SVFS. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Jodie Krueger, jkrueger@sevenhills.org. *This group is specifically for folks on the Autism Spectrum. Space is limited. Please respect the flow of the game by arriving on time. Doors open 15 min before event starts.*

NORTH QUABBIN FSC EVENTS

2280 Main St., Athol, MA • **Contact:** Tonya Lanpher, 413.418.8702, tlanpher@sevenhills.org

IN-PERSON EVENTS

KIDS MEDIA GROUP: Mondays, weekly, 11/3, 11/10, 11/17, 11/24, 12/1, 12/8, 6-7pm, Ages 17 and under. Lights, camera, action! Become part of a creative team making a movie with professional guidance from Greenfield Community Television. Learn about video production, create a storyline, and assume different roles in front of and behind the camera. This hands-on experience encourages teamwork, creativity, and self-expression in a supportive, inclusive environment. The group will end the last day with a special Live Movie Premiere for families to see the finished film on the big screen! **Location:** NQFSC. Space is limited. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Penny Boutin, pboutin@sevenhills.org, 508-816-2057.

SELF-ADVOCACY MEDIA GROUP: Mondays, weekly, 11/3, 11/10, 11/17, 11/24, 12/1, 12/8, 5-6pm, Ages 18+, Free. Become part of a creative team that will produce a documentary about you and your peers with professional guidance from Greenfield Community Television! This hands-on program is designed for individuals who want to explore media, storytelling, and self-expression in a supportive, inclusive environment. The group will end on the last day with a special Live Premiere for families to see the finished film on the big screen! **Location:** NQFSC. Transportation is not available for this group. Space is limited. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Penny Boutin, pboutin@sevenhills.org, 508-816-2057.

HEALTHY HABITS GROUP: 2nd Tuesday of the month, 9/9, 10/14, 11/11, and 12/9, 10am-Noon, All ages, Free. Join us for a fun, supportive, and inclusive group focused on healthy living for the whole family. Each month, we will explore simple, practical ways to build healthy habits including nutrition, stress relief, gardening, and self-care—all in a welcoming and judgement-free environment. **Location:** NQFSC. Space is limited. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Tamara Vivas, tvivas@sevenhills.org, 978-906-4711.

★**NEW**★ **COOKING IN THE GARDEN:** Thursdays, 9/11, 10/9, 5:30-7:30pm, all ages, Free. Discover the fresh flavors of the season in our Garden Cooking Class. In this interactive workshop, participants will use fresh herbs and vegetables from the garden to prepare a simple, delicious dish together. You will learn basic cooking skills, explore new flavors, and enjoy the sensory experience of chopping, mixing, and tasting fresh ingredients. **Location:** Pleasant Street School Community Garden, 1060 Pleasant St., Athol. Space is limited. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Penny Boutin, pboutin@sevenhills.org, 508-816-2057.

BOWLING GROUP: Tuesdays, 9/16, 9/23, 9/30, 10/7, 10/14, 10/21, 4:30-6pm, all ages, Free. Join us for a fun and social evening. Whether you are a pro or just want to play for fun, bowling is a great way to connect, laugh, and cheer each other on. A bowling ramp is available upon request. **Location:** Gardner Candlepin Bowling, 123 Main St., Athol. Space is limited. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Penny Boutin, pboutin@sevenhills.org, 508-816-2057. *Caregivers must remain with their family members for the duration of the event.*

GARDENING GROUP: Tuesdays, 9/23 and 10/28, 10am-Noon, all ages, Free. Gardeners of all skill levels are encouraged to join. Learn ecological and affordable gardening practices while growing your own vegetables, herbs, and flowers. This opportunity is a great way to become part of a community of gardeners. **Location:** Pleasant Street School Community Garden, 1060 Pleasant St., Athol. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Penny Boutin, pboutin@sevenhills.org, 508-816-2057.

CAREGIVER COFFEE HOUR AT OVER THE TOP BAKERY! Thursdays, monthly, 9/25, 10/23, 11/20, 12/18, 10-11am, Free. Unwind, connect with others, and enjoy a supportive environment during this opportunity to share experiences, gain insights, and recharge while enjoying a cup of coffee and a sweet treat on us! No registration required. **Location:** Over the Top Bakery, 90 New Athol Rd., Orange. **Contact:** Kendra Steucek, ksteucek@sevenhills.org. 508-454-2619 with questions.

FAMILY FUN DAY AT TULLY LAKE RECREATION PARK: Saturday, September 6, 1-4pm, Free. Join us for a fun-filled day to enjoy the outdoors, connect with others, and make lasting memories. Please bring a dish to share for our Potluck Lunch. Spend time with gentle horses and experience the calming benefits of equine interaction. Give Disc Golf a shot on Tully's scenic course! **Location:** Tully Lake Recreation Park, Royalston, MA. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Tamara Vivas, tvivas@sevenhills.org, 978-906-4711. *Caregivers must remain with their family members for the duration of the event.*

FAMILY DAY AT RED APPLE FARM: Saturday, October 4, 1-4pm, Free. Join us for a fun-filled Family Adventure Day! Your Red Apple Farm ticket includes a delicious meal, relaxing hayride through the orchard, trail walk, and a bag to pick your own fresh apples. **Location:** Red Apple Farm, 455 Highland Ave., Phillipston. Space is limited. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Tamara Vivas, tvivas@sevenhills.org, 978-906-4711. *Caregivers must stay with their family members for the duration of the event.*

FAMILY FIND A FOREST PRIZE-TRAIL ADVENTURE WITH ED THE WIZARD: Saturday, November 1, 10am-12:30pm, Free. Step into a day of magic, exploration, and fun. Join Ed the Wizard for an enchanting experience filled with mind-bending magic tricks. Then, we will set off on our Prize-Trail Adventure! With scavenger maps in hand, you will search the forest for hidden treasures—and with the trail-guiding assistance of the North Quabbin Trails Association, you will have friendly support along the way. Complete the trail and receive a special prize bag to take home. **Location:** Cutthroat Brook Tree Farm, 586 Briggs Rd., Athol. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Penny Boutin, pboutin@sevenhills.org, 508-816-2057.

FAMILY HOLIDAY FAIR & YEAR-IN-REVIEW CELEBRATION: Saturday, December 6, 10am-Noon. Celebrate the season at our Holiday Fair filled with shopping, prizes, giveaways, and memories! A special video presentation by the North Quabbin Trails Association will highlight the fun programs and adventures we shared this year. Then, get into the holiday spirit, shopping for unique gifts from local vendors. Prizes will be awarded throughout the event, so stay and enjoy the festivities! **Location:** NQFSC. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Tamara Vivas, tvivas@sevenhills.org, 978-906-4711.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

WRESTLING CLUB: Mondays, 9/8, 9/15, 9/22, 9/29, 10/6, 10/20, 10/27, 11/3, 11/10, 11/17, 11/24, 12/1, 12/8, 12/15, 12/22, 12/29, 7-8pm, all ages, Free. Do you enjoy watching WWE wrestling? Our friend, Kevin, invites you to join him on Zoom to share your favorite wrestling moments, watch matches, and test your knowledge with wrestling trivia. No registration required. **Contact:** Tamara Vivas, tvivas@sevenhills.org, 978-906-4711 with questions. bit.ly/ZOOM-WrestlingClub

ASD-ONLY EVENTS

★**NEW**★ **ASD ONLY: HARVEST VEGETABLE TEXTILE PRINTING: 2nd Thursday of the month, 9/11, 10/9, 11/13, 12/11, 3-5pm, Free.** Celebrate the beauty of the harvest season with this hands-on textile printing workshop designed especially for individuals 18+ on the Autism Spectrum. In this fun and creative session, we will use fresh-cut vegetables — like corn, peppers, and squash — as natural stamps to create unique, colorful patterns on fabric. Participants will learn simple printing techniques, explore textures and shapes, and take home their own beautiful harvest-inspired textile. **Locations: First 2 classes:** Pleasant Street School Community Garden, 1060 Pleasant St., Athol. **Last 2 Classes:** Launch Space in Orange ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Penny Boutin, pboutin@sevenhills.org, 508-816-2057.

GREATER LOWELL FSC EVENTS

7 Technology Dr., Ste. 103, Chelmsford, MA • **Contact:** Kristen Tower, ktower@sevenhills.org

IN-PERSON EVENTS

CAREGIVER COFFEE HOUR: Mondays, twice monthly, 9/1, 9/15, 9/29, 10/6, 10/20, 11/3, 11/17, 12/11, 12/15, 12/29, 9:30-10:30am, Free. Informal support meeting/community get-together for caregivers. **Location:** Pressed Cafe, 330 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford. No registration required. **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org with questions.

WALKING CLUB: Mondays, if the weather permits, 9/1, 9/15, 9/29, 10/6, 5:30-7pm, all ages, Free. Let's go outside, move our bodies, and enjoy the beautiful fall weather! Open to individuals and caregivers alike. **Location:** GLFSC. Registration is not required. **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org with questions.

GAME EXPLORERS: Mondays, twice monthly, 10/20, 11/3, 11/17, 12/1, 12/15, 5:30-7pm. Ages 12+, Free. Are you a gamer? Do you like having fun? If your answer is "Yes!" this may be the event for you! Each session we will offer 2 game options—from classic board games, card games, and video games—based on a theme (you may want to play both!). **Location:** GLFSC **Contact:** Mercedes Vega, mevega@sevenhills.org. *This is not a drop-off event; caregivers must remain on site.*

CAREGIVER CRAFT & CONNECT: First Tuesday, monthly, 9/2, 10/7, 11/4, 12/2, 5:30-7pm, Free. Join us for a relaxed and supportive evening. Connect with other caregivers during our informal networking support group. Share experiences, ask questions, and enjoy a cup of coffee in a welcoming space. If you require care for your loved one, they can participate in a supervised activity in the next room while you chat. **Location:** GLFSC. Space for loved ones is limited. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org.

FUN TUESDAY KARAOKE: 2nd Tuesday, monthly, 9/9, 10/14, 11/11, 12/9, 5:30-7pm, all ages, Free. Join GLFSC staff to promote friendship, social skills, and fun. Come sing your favorite song solo, with a partner, with a group, or we can play a song you enjoy, and we can listen together. **Location:** CCA 1-1A North St., Chelmsford. No registration required. **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org with questions.

FUN TUESDAY BINGO NIGHT: 4th Tuesday, monthly, 9/23, 10/28, 11/25, 12/23, 5:30-7pm, all ages, Free. Join GLFSC staff to promote friendship, social skills, and fun. Play lively games of music, seasonal/holiday-themed, charades bingo, and more for fun, sometimes silly, prizes. **Location:** GLFSC. No registration required. **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org.

HOLIDAY RE-GIFT SWAP: Tuesday, December 30, 5-7pm. Got a gift under \$20 that is just not quite you? Bring it along and see if you can swap your way to a gift that "fits," you! Enjoy delicious, sweet treats; festive drinks; and plenty of laughs as we trade, steal, and surprise our way through the evening. **Location:** GLFSC.

JUNIOR EXPLORERS: Wednesdays, monthly, 9/10, 10/8, 11/12, 12/10, 4-5pm, ages 10 & under, Free. Make friends, practice social skills, learn new things, and have fun! **Location:** Local playground, weather permitting, or GLFSC. Space is limited. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org. *Caregivers are asked to stay and assist when necessary.*

MASSHEALTH CONSULTATIONS: Last Wednesday of the month, 9/24, 10/29, 11/26, 12/31, 9am-Noon, Free. Join a family support specialist at the MassHealth Enrollment Center in Tewksbury to meet with a MassHealth representative to ask questions and discuss special circumstances or issues you may be experiencing with MassHealth enrollment and/or benefits. **Location:** 367 East Street, Tewksbury. **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org, with questions.

GARDENING GROUP: Fridays, Sept 5, 19, 26; Oct 3, 10; 9:30-11am, ages 18+, Free. We have acquired a garden plot at Sunny Meadow Farm in Chelmsford and will plant and tend to the garden throughout the season. **Location:** 168 Robin Hill Rd., Chelmsford. Space is limited. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Jess Dugas, jdugas@sevenhills.org with questions.

TRUNK OR TREAT: Friday, October 17, 5:30-8pm. Join us for a spooky, fun-filled evening of trick or treating, games, and Halloween festivities! Dress up in your best costume and collect treats or decorate your own trunk and hand out sweets or creepy surprises! Please avoid costumes, trunk themes, and masks that may be too scary for a family friendly event. **Location:** GLFSC. **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org if you are interested in decorating a trunk, donating candy/prizes, or have any questions.

FAMILY TRIP TO STONE ZOO: Saturday, September 13, 10am-2pm, Free. Join us on a trip to the Stone Zoo! We will meet at the Zoo, 10am-2pm to hand out the tickets. Enjoy the zoo for as long as you like. Limited tickets available. **Location:** Stone Zoo, 149 Pond St., Stoneham. ****Registration Required**** **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org.

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN FALL FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL: Saturday, November 1, 11am-5pm. **Cost to enter: \$3-\$5; additional cost for the Skyride.** Join GLFSC staff for a relaxing day at the mountain. Enjoy the music, food, hiking, and skyrides. **Location:** Wachusett Mountain, 499 Mountain Rd., Princeton. **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

MARVEL, DC, AND DISNEY: Wednesdays, weekly, Sept 3, 10, 17, 24; Oct 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Nov 5, 12, 19, No session on Nov 26; Dec 3, 10, 17, No session on Dec 24, Dec 31; 6-7:30pm, Free. Love superheroes? Join us for a fun trivia night, episode watches, comic book culture, and good friends! Zoom registration is required to join, all ages are welcome. Please contact Kristen Tower, ktower@sevenhills.org with questions. bit.ly/MarvelDCDisney

ASD-ONLY EVENTS

ASD: THE SOCIAL SPECTRUM: Third Wednesday, monthly, 9/17, 10/15, 11/19, 12/17, 5-7pm. Free to attend; activities may have costs to be covered by the individual or family. A peer group for people on the autism spectrum who are seeking a low-pressure space for social connection, not services, who are learning to navigate the world independently. We will be meeting up monthly within the community for fun social activities. **Contact:** Kim Guy, kguy@sevenhills.org with questions.

Seven Hills

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Pride

Fall 2025 • What's Inside:

A Publication of the Seven Hills Family Services Family Support Centers

Cover story: "Direct Support Professionals: Champions for Community Inclusion;" FSC Directory; Registration Information; Stay Connected with Social Media; Transition Trainings; Recreation Department Happenings; Regional Family Support Center Events; and more!

Pride

PRIDE Fall 2025

PRIDE is a newsletter published by the Seven Hills Family Services Family Support Centers. Please direct all content requests, comments, and questions to:

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New Beginnings 37th
CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT



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THANK YOU golfers,
sponsors, donors, and volunteers!

Your participation in the 37th Annual New Beginnings Charity Golf Tournament strengthens Community Connections for people with disabilities and special needs. As the signature fundraiser, New Beginnings sustains a robust schedule of activities that foster a spirit of independence through socialization, self-expression, & accomplishment. In your steadfast support, you join Seven Hills and its corps of partners

Answering
the call to care