

FAMILY CONNECTIONS

The Nemasket Group



Issue # 41

December 2007

NEWSLETTER



Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

To you and your family from all of us at
Family Connections!



We are grateful for our relationship with you
and privileged to have the opportunity to serve you!

Sandy ~ Gloria ~ Jorge ~ Ross ~ Sherry ~ Emily

THANK YOU!

Family Connections would like to thank everyone who came out to
support our annual Holiday Bazaar on November 10, 2007.

It was the most successful yet! Your support will help benefit many
families in the Greater New Bedford area.



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MassMATCH: Massachusetts' Assistive Technology Act Program

The purpose of MassMatch is to put assistive technology into the hands of people with disabilities. The Mass-Match Info Line is (866) 682-9955 V and (617) 204-3815 TDD, massmatch@state.ma.us. The INFO-line provides information and referral services on AT for people of all ages with disabilities. Mass Match assists individuals with disabilities, family members, and disability-related providers, agencies and organizations across the state with getting AT through the following four programs: Device demonstration program, Device short-term loan program, Device re-utilization program and State financing activities.

Device Demonstration and Short-Term Loan Programs give individuals a chance to see, touch, and try assistive technology devices to help you decide before you buy. Assistive technology devices are loaned to individuals for two to four weeks. It's like a lending library; you can take home the equipment and try it out! Requests for loans can come from you, a family member, friend, advocate or someone who is helping you with your assistive technology needs, such as a therapist, teacher or rehab center. Hundreds of devices are available in the areas of communication, education, hearing and vision impairment and daily living.

Program Locations:

- Eastern Mass Katie Krusinski, DLRC Coordinator Catherine Bly, DLRC Associate Easter Seals Technology & Training Center (617) 226-2634 or (800) 244-2756 DLRC@eastersealsma.org

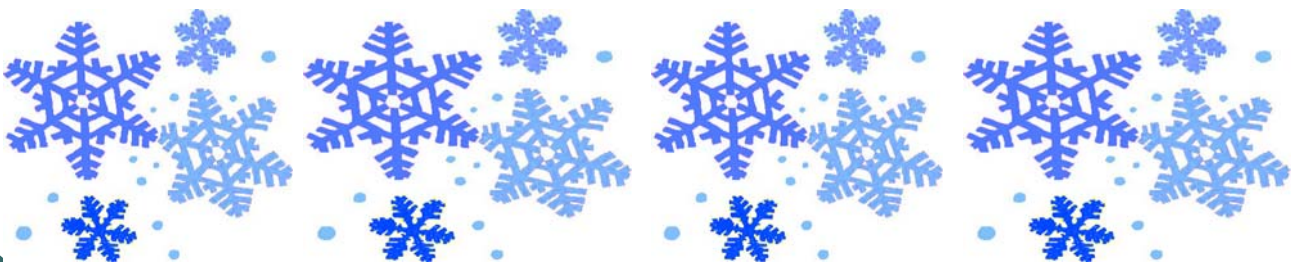
State Financing Activities

- **The Massachusetts Technology Loan Program.** MRC, Easter Seals and Sovereign Bank work together to offer a reduced-rate loan program for people with disabilities who like to purchase any type of AT (wheelchairs, adapted cars or vans, communication devices). For information about the program contact Jason Luciano, Program Director at Easter Seals at (800) 244-2756 V or (800) 564-9700 TTY.

The Home Modification Loan Program. MRC and CEDAC work together in offering a reduced interest rate loan program for homeowners with disabilities who need to make access modifications to their principal residence. Eligible homeowners may qualify for 0% or 3% amortizing loans of up to \$30,000 for modifications such as ramps, lifts, bathroom and kitchen modifications. For more information about program, contact Steve Scarano at MRC at (617) 204-3724.

Re-utilizing AT

- AT Exchange in New England ([getATstuff](http://getATstuff.org)). This is MassMATCH's free AT exchange program. The Equipment Exchange is similar to a "want ad" where pre-owned AT is listed in order to put people looking for AT in contact with sellers or donators. To buy, donate, sell used AT, visit www.getATstuff.org



“FOCUS” On Vision Impairment & Blindness Conference

March 12th, 2008

Holiday Inn, Taunton, MA 8:00am-3:30pm

The third "Focus" On Vision Impairment & Blindness Conference: Meeting the Needs of Individuals with Cognitive Disability and Vision Loss

Conference Description

As with last year's over subscribed conference, the multi-tracked educational program will reach out to the needs of clinicians, family members, support staff at day and residential programs, nurses, eye doctors, administrators, advocates and all concerned with the needs of individuals with cognitive impairment.

The goal is to highlight the needs of individuals with cognitive disability and vision loss. The prevalence of vision impairment and blindness in this population is 12 to 25 times higher than the general population. This multi-disciplinary conference seeks to educate and share information and strategies for visually related care and services focused on the needs for individuals with cognitive and vision impairment.

This year, we are so pleased to welcome Y.K. Gary Chu, OD, MPH, Vice President, Community Collaborations, Associate Professor, New England College of Optometry and Barry S. Kran, OD, FAAO, Chief, Individuals with Disabilities Service, Associate Professor New England College of Optometry, New England Eye Institute Optometric Director, NE Eye Perkins Low Vision Clinic. Together, they will provide the Keynote entitled "Progressive Vision Loss in Individuals with Cognitive Disability: Prevalence, Causes and Effects".

The conference is generously sponsored by the New England Eye Institute, New England Center Deafblind Project, DMR Southeast Region Training Council, and MA Commission for the Blind. Friends of the conference include the Lowell Association for the Blind, Perkins Training Center, and the Northeast Regional Center for Vision Education (NERCVE). Additional collaborators include The Carroll Center for the Blind, and Shriver Clinical Services Corp.

Registration forms will be available in early December 2007. The registration brochure and form, including continuing education information, will be downloadable from "Regional Training" or "Happenings" sections of the NERCVE website at the beginning of December 2007: www.nercve.umb.edu Please be sure to register early.

Registration Information:

** Early Registration Fee post marked by February 1, 2007: \$40.00

Registration Fee post marked after February 1, 2007: \$50.00

Registration needed by February 25, 2008 to attend conference.

For additional information, please contact:

Lisa DiBonaventura, COMS

Statewide Director for Vision & Vision Loss Services, DMR

E-mail: Lisa.DiBonaventura@state.ma.us

Phone: 508.384.5539.



Blue Mountain Center For Living Arts offers Massage, Reiki, Psychotherapy and expressive arts therapy. Serving Individuals and Groups, Adults, Adolescents and Children in each of the following areas: Ancient Healing Arts, Ancient Healing Art Supplies, Art Therapy, Expressive Art Classes, Mandala & Spirit Art Workshops, Maskmaking, Spirit Art Gallery. Accepting MassHealth payments.



Located at 15 Middle St. Fairhaven, MA. **Phone:** 508-997-5989 or 508-243-7931 **Email:** bluemtfarm@aol.com

Anna D'Epiro Trafton LICSW ATR

Federation for Children with Special Needs Presents:

VISIONS OF COMMUNITY 2008

Save the Date: March 1st 2008

A Conference for Families of Children with Special Needs and the Professionals Who Serve Them.

Location: Seaport World Trade Center~ Boston

With over 35 break-out sessions-Many presented and/or translated in Spanish, Portuguese and Cantonese...

Featured Speakers: Paul Reville and Keith P. Jones

the
nemasket
group

Family Connections

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Creating a network of family support

For individuals with developmental

Disabilities and their families