



CENTER FOR FAMILIES
CAMBRIDGE, MA
FEBRUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER



Hello Families and Friends,

Happy February! We have lots of exciting things to share this month for Cambridge families. **You can learn all about our Cambridge Family Fun Week programming line-up sponsored by the Center for Families and Let's Talk on page 3, including the At-Home Activity Calendar for Cambridge families.**

Check out even more programming for Cambridge families on pages 4 and 5. **Cambridge Dads**, check out page 6 for lots of info just for dads!

Center staff are available to support families in connecting with after-school programs, community resources, meet one-on-one for support, and provide access to the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), which supports parents in understanding more about their child's development. Learn more about the ASQ on page 3 and see a great list of family resources on pages 10 and 11.

The Center for Families also offers **free resource bags for families** with children's books and information and supports for parents on a variety of topics, such as Potty Training, Hitting, Starting Childcare/School, and more! Check out page 9 for more information.

Do you need information, support, or just want to connect? **Our phone number is 617-349-6385. You can also reach us via email at centerforfamilies@cambridgema.gov or visit our website at www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP/CFF.**



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Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) with the Center for Families

The ASQ online tool helps you to better understand all your child's different stages of development from one month up to 5 years old with activities you can do at home. It only takes about 10-15 minutes!



Let's hear from a parent, just like you!

"The ASQ has allowed us to know more about our daughter's developmental stages. Our follow-up conversation with Christine has been equally calming, inspiring, and enlightening about how to motivate our baby girl. We are sure that we will continue using this helpful resource." - **Cambridge Mom**

What Cambridge Parents Are Saying

"The ASQ is a valuable resource for all parents, especially for new parents. If you're curious about your child's development and want to learn about activities to do with your child, this is the opportunity for you! Our family had such a positive experience that we did the questionnaire multiple times for my child at different ages. I highly recommend this resource!" - **Cambridge Parent**

**SECURE LINK TO ASQ
QUESTIONNAIRE
(SCAN WITH PHONE'S
CAMERA)**



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CJ 1/11/22
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The Center for Families staff are available to support you in accessing or completing the ASQ tool. Please feel free to reach out to us anytime at 617-349-6385 or centerforfamilies@cambridgema.gov.

The Center for Families is funded by the City of Cambridge, the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC), Children's Trust, Cambridge Public Schools, and the Cambridge Health Alliance.

To access the ASQ, please visit:

<https://www.asqonline.com/family/3ef982> or scan the QR code with your phone's camera.

February Vacation Week Family Fun!

CAMBRIDGE FAMILY FUN

February Vacation Week 2022

Join the Center for Families and Let's Talk! for fun, free activities for young children and their families!

All events will be held on Zoom. Registration required.

MONDAY, FEB 21

Use this link: bit.ly/347w9Ag

Check out our At-Home Activity Calendar for daily ideas in February!

TUESDAY, FEB 22

11:00 am

Music with Phil Berman: find your musical groove and sing along!
Recommended for ages: 0-5 years

THURSDAY, FEB 24

6:30-7:30 pm

Alex Makes Art: let's get creative and make art together!
Recommended for ages: 3-8 years

FRIDAY, FEB 25

11:00-11:45 am

Knucklebones: let's get our bodies moving and have some fun!
Recommended for ages: 2-8 years

SATURDAY, FEB 26

Afternoon

Dads and Kids at Home: join us and other dads and kids for a fun time!

To register, please contact:

Maeve Linnane
mlinnane@cambridgema.gov
617-349-6385

The Center for Families is funded by the City of Cambridge, the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC), Children's Trust, Cambridge Public Schools, and the Cambridge Health Alliance. Let's Talk/Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative is funded by Cambridge Public Health Department and City of Cambridge.



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Check out the At-Home Activity Calendar here:
www.bit.ly/347w9Ag

CFF FEBRUARY PROGRAMMING

COVID Protocol Updates: All in-person programs will follow COVID safety measures, including following social distancing guidelines. The Center for Families continues to ask all adults and children ages 2 and over to wear masks at indoor, in-person programs and outside programs when social distancing is not possible.

Moms' Discussion Group with Craft Activity (Virtual)

Friday, February 11th from 10:00am to 11:30am. Join Christine Doucet and Kim Tran from the Center for Families as well as other moms as we talk about parenting and share our experiences while doing a craft activity at our own homes. Kits for the activity will be delivered to your home. Even if the activity is not specifically designed for children, we understand that your children might be around you during this program. We hope you can join us! This program will run on Zoom. **All mothers must register. To register, email Christine Doucet at cdoucet@cambridgema.gov or call 617-349-6385 and leave a message after the long voicemail.**

Monthly Pajama Story Time Series (Virtual)

Wednesdays, February 16th, March 30th, and April 27th from 6:45pm-7:15pm on Zoom. The Center for Families and the Cambridge Public Library invite Cambridge children birth through age 8 and their grownups to join us virtually for songs, stories, and rhymes to wind down the day. Caregivers are asked to participate in the program with their children. Plan to join in and sing along! **Registration required. To access the registration link, please contact Cynthia at cwoodward@cambridgema.gov or call 617-349-6385.**

Stress Reduction and Exercise 6-Part Series for Cambridge Parents (Virtual)

Mondays, February 28th, March 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, and April 4th from 7:00pm-7:45pm. Are you looking for a fun ways to stay active and connect with others in our community? Do you want to have fun with Zumba and new stress-reducing experience? Do you want to meet other parents? Join the Center for Families for our Stress Reduction Series! There is no experience needed! This series is designed for Cambridge parents, but children are welcome to participate or be near by! **This series will run on Zoom. For more information and to sign-up, contact Lucy Hernandez at lhernandez@cambridgema.gov or call 617-349-6385.**

Story Time and Sing-Along Series (Virtual)

Monday, February 7th and Wednesdays February 2nd and 9th from 10:30am-11:00am. For Cambridge families with children birth-4 years old. Join the Center for Families and the Agenda for Children for 20-25 minutes of interactive songs, stories, and fun! A Zoom link will be sent to anyone who registers for the sessions. You only need to register once to be added to our weekly reminder email with Zoom link for the sessions. You can come as little or as often as you want. **To receive the link, please email Maeve Linnane at mlinnane@cambridgema.gov or call 617-349-6385.**

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CFF Programming for Families with Infants

COVID Protocol Updates: All in-person programs will follow COVID safety measures, including following social distancing guidelines. The Center for Families continues to ask all adults and children ages 2 and over to wear masks at indoor, in-person programs and outside programs when social distancing is not possible.

Infant Playgroup/Support Group (Virtual)

(For Cambridge parents with babies birth - 16 months). During these groups, you will be able to connect with other parents/caregivers, participate with your baby in an interactive singalong, receive information about Cambridge resources and ask question about babies' development. During the Baby Playgroup, Christine and Annie will share an activity you can do with your baby while at home. The activity will be included in Christine's weekly Infant Support Group email. These playgroups, even though virtual, can benefit babies' social and emotional development. It also helps break isolation during the colder months. To prepare for the singalong, have a shaker or a toy baby can shake and a scarf.

- **Tuesdays from 12:30pm to 1:30 pm.** A Zoom link will be sent to anyone who has registered for the group. You only need to register once to be added to our weekly reminder email with Zoom link for the group. You can come as little or as often as you want.

All families must register. To register, email Christine Doucet at cdoucet@cambridgema.gov or call 617-349-6385 and leave a message after the long voicemail.

Baby Walk with Singalong at the Mall Series (In-Person)

Dates coming soon! For these colder months, we will continue to walk and sing together, but inside! We will meet at the CambridgeSide Galleria, 100 Cambridgeside Place (exact meeting place within the mall will be confirmed after registration). We will start with a singalong in a quiet location; then walk and talk together in the warmth of the mall.

You can register now to receive updates and information about when the Baby Walk Series will begin. All families must register. To register, email Christine Doucet at cdoucet@cambridgema.gov or call 617-349-6385 and leave a message after the long voicemail.

Nurturing Touch/Baby Massage and Infant Development 6-Part Series (Hybrid)

Next series will run in May 2022. This Series is for Cambridge Families with a baby 5 weeks through pre-crawling. Massaging your baby helps in developing strong relationships between you and your child. Massage helps your baby relax, decrease gas and constipation, increase body awareness and maturation & regulate sleep. The discussion topics and handouts in this series are designed to support you in your parenting. Other members of the family can participate too. **All families must register for the entire series. To register, email Christine Doucet at cdoucet@cambridgema.gov or call 617-349-6385.**

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CAMBRIDGE DADS



Cambridge Dads is a partnership between the Center for Families and the Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative. Cambridge Dads connects with fathers and father figures and provide information on how a dad can get involved with Cambridge Dads.

Some of the programs we offer include:

- events for Dads and Kids
- events and workshops for Dads only
- connecting one-on-one
- information on community resources
- information on child development (through the Ages and Stages Questionnaire)

Fathers and Father-figures who live, play, pray, learn or work in Cambridge can reach us by:

- Phone: call or text 857-209-4964
- Email: cambdads@cambridgema.gov
- Facebook: @CambridgeDads
- Twitter: @CambDads
- Instagram: @CambridgeDads

Fatherhood Text Campaign

Our Fatherhood Text Campaign offers a great way to be connected and informed! Sign up to receive a text once a week about fatherhood, events, and activities to do with your kids in and around Cambridge.

To Sign-Up: Text the word father to 877-936-3237 (standard text messaging rates apply).

Programming for Dads!

Dads Talk! (Virtual)

A virtual discussion group for Cambridge dads!

This is a great opportunity to:

- Connect with other dads in the community and talk about your journey as a dad in Cambridge
- Share ideas for navigating challenges
- Learn about resource in the community

When: Thursday, February 17

Time: 7:00-8:15pm

To register or with questions reach out by email at cambdads@cambridgema.gov

Dads & Kids at Home (Virtual)

Join us virtually for a fun afternoon with your child and other Cambridge dads and their kids!

When: Saturday, February 26

Time: 1:30 - 2:30 PM

To register or with questions reach out by email at cambdads@cambridgema.gov

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CENTER FOR FAMILIES INFORMATION

Are you looking for resources and supports? The Center for Families can help connect you to information and resources for families in Cambridge! We have information about: Childcare, Preschool, Kindergarten/Cambridge Public Schools, Afterschool, Early intervention, Special education, Housing, Employment, Tutoring, English classes, Ages and Stages Questionnaire (a child development screening), and more! **Please contact the Center for Families at 617-349-6385 and leave a message with your name and phone number. We will get back to you within 2 business days. You can also email us at centerforfamilies@cambridgema.gov.**

Do you have questions or need more information about your child's development or child's behavior? Here at the Center for Families, we understand how amazing and challenging parenting can be for all of us. Whether you are a first-time parent or having your fourth child, we all need support and information to understand our child's early growth and development. At the Center, we have two knowledgeable and experienced staff members who are here to help! **If you have an infant and need support, please contact Christine Doucet at cdoucet@cambridgema.gov or 617-349-6385. If your child is over 15 months, please contact Fran Roznowski at froznowski@cpsd.us or 617-821-4504.**

Friends of the Center for Families Needs Your Input!

Friends of the Center for Families (FCFF) is a nonprofit organization that supports and promotes programs, activities, and events for the Center for Families. We are looking for community members to be representatives who are willing to share their experiences and perspectives as a parent, caregiver, program participant or educator to help shape the future of the Center for Families. Even if you can spare just a little bit of time, we welcome your interest! **Please visit our website for more information (www.FriendsOfTheCenterForFamilies.org) or e-mail us at: FriendsOfTheCenterForFamilies@gmail.com.**

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MINDFULNESS MONDAYS WITH MAEVE!



THE CENTER FOR FAMILIES PRESENTS

Mindfulness Mondays with Maeve

*An opportunity to practice mindfulness to
start your week!*

A NEW VIDEO WILL BE POSTED ON OUR
YOUTUBE CHANNEL
ON THE 1ST & 3RD MONDAY OF EVERY
MONTH:

[HTTPS://BIT.LY/CFFYouTube](https://bit.ly/CFFYouTube)

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The Center for Families is funded by the City of Cambridge, the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC), Children's Trust, Cambridge Public Schools, and the Cambridge Health Alliance.

CFF You Tube Channel Link: <https://bit.ly/CFFYouTube>

CENTER FOR FAMILIES HELP IN A BAG

Are you looking for some some ideas on how to support your little one? The Center for Families offers free resource bags families can borrow on the following topics:

- First Time Dads
- Getting Ready to Share
- Biting
- Hitting
- Fun with Language
- Starting Childcare or School
- A New Baby in the Family
- Death of a Loved One
- Potty Training!
- More topics coming soon!

Each bag is filled with engaging books for toddlers and preschoolers as well as articles and resource lists, including websites for parents.

If you are interested in borrowing any of the resource bags or have any questions, please contact Kim Tran at 617-349-6385 or ktran@cambridgema.gov.



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RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES

Adult Education

- **Cambridge Employment Program:** Provides free assistance to Cambridge residents looking for work, career counseling, help with resumes/cover letters, using a computer/internet to help with job searches, and interviewing. Please call 617-349-6166.
- **Community Learning Center (CLC):** Offers ESOL Family Literacy classes (in-person and virtual options) for parents to help them develop their English skills and provide literacy support to their children. Contact Bayyinah Pandolfo at 617-349-6371 for more information and to hear about current openings.

Childcare, School & Support

- **Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP):** Runs programs for children and families, including Preschool and School-Age programming, Community Schools, and Youth Centers around the City. For information, call 617-349-6200 or visit www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP.
- **Riverside Community Care:** Provides an array of services to help children and families cope with developmental, mental health, social and behavioral difficulties. Call (617) 354-2275.
- **JF & CS** has resources for families and Support Groups for parents with babies: <https://www.jfcsboston.org/Our-Services/Center-for-Early-Relationship-Support/Support-Groups>
- **One Tough Job:** connects parents in Massachusetts and beyond with the latest and greatest parenting information, ideas, and on-the-ground resources. www.onetoughjob.org.

Food & Clothing

- **The Center for Families can help you connect with clothing resources in Cambridge.** Clothing resources provide gently used clothing for families. Want to learn more? Contact the Center for Families at centerformfamilies@cambridgema.gov or call 617-349-6385 and leave a message with your name and phone number after the voicemail. We will get back to you within 24 hours. Please include you child's name, age, and clothing and shoe sizes.
- **The Cambridge Food Pantry Network:** Provides food and information about food pantries to families around the City, such as the Margaret Fuller House and the East End House. Call the Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee (CEOC) at 617-868-2900.
- **The Somerville/Cambridge WIC Program:** Provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and nutritious food for pregnant women, infants, and children up to age 5. For more information, call the WIC at Windsor Street Health Center at 617-665-3750, or the North Cambridge WIC office at 617-575-5370.
- **Cambridge in Motion Healthy Eating & Active Living Resources During COVID-19.** Check out this list of Cambridge Food Resources Available During COVID-19 in the following languages: English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Amharic, and Mandarin. See it today at: https://www.cambridgepublichealth.org/lifestyle/Cambridge_in_Motion.php.

Housing

- **The Cambridge Multi-Service Center:** Provides housing information and assistance to families from Cambridge who are or are at risk of becoming homeless. Call 617-349-6340.
- **Just-A-Start Corporation:** Free mediation and coaching services for Cambridge residents. Just-A-Start helps with disagreements between landlords and tenants, between neighbors, or even between tenants and service providers. Contact Elizabeth Winston at 617-918-7518 or elizabethwinston@justastart.org to talk to someone about your situation.

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RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES

Special Needs Services

- **Riverside Community Care:** Provides developmental services for children under age three at risk for developmental delays. If you are concerned about your child's development, call 617-629-3919.
- **Cambridge Special Start:** Provides developmental screenings for children ages 3 & 4. For more information, call Jeannie Parkus at 617-349-3252.
- **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities:** Provides information and referrals to individuals with disabilities and their families on all kinds of disability and access issues. Call 617-349-4692 or see <https://www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP/programsforadults/ccpd.aspx>
- **Exceptional Lives** has created free, easy-to-read resources for families who have children with disabilities. Check their website: ma.exceptionallives.org
- **Special Education Liaison - Parent Advisory Council (SEPAAC):** If you are looking for parent-to-parent support and information, please contact Zuleka at 617.593.4402 or ZQueen-Postell@cpsd.us.

Wellbeing and Emotional Support Resources

- **Healthy Minds App:** a FREE app that includes a combination of podcast-style lessons and both seated and active meditations. You'll learn what the science says about the brain while developing skills to tap into these learnings for a healthier, happier you. Check it out at: <https://hminnovations.org/meditation-app>.
- **Center for Mindfulness and Compassion at Cambridge Health Alliance:** free daily programming as well as resources and supports.
- **Sesame Street in Communities:** Sesame Street has lots of great resources and activities for social and emotional wellbeing for both parents and children! Check it out at: <https://sesamestreetincommunities.org>.
- **Massachusetts Launches New Family-Friendly Website to Help Parents Support Children's Mental Health:** www.HandholdMA.org provides free tools and resources for parents concerned about their children's mental health. **HandholdMA.org is available in six languages:** English, Spanish, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese.

Other

- **The Commission on Immigrant Rights & Citizenship (CIRC),** addresses the needs of Cambridge's immigrant community in identifying, accessing and obtaining City and local resources, including legal services. Reach out to CIRC through www.Cambridgema.gov/circ.
- The **Fuel Assistance Program** assists households in Cambridge and Somerville with winter heating costs between November 1st and April 30th. Renters and homeowners in both cities are eligible to apply if they meet federal income guidelines. Due to COVID-19, all application appointments will be done by phone and applications will be submitted through no-contact options. **English, Spanish, and Amharic-speaking intake workers are available to assist applicants.** Learn more about the program and application process and requirements here: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP/programsforadults/fuelassistance/howtoapply>. You can also call 617-349-6252.
- **Let's Talk!** is a free early literacy program for families with children ages birth-age 8 in Cambridge that offers services for moms, dads and childcare providers. To sign up for a free (virtual) literacy home visit, call 617-665-3812. For tips and resources on ways to support young children, text "letstalk" to 617-272-4139 for a weekly tip via text or connect with Let's Talk! at: www.letstalkcambridge.org, or on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.
- **Find It Cambridge: Find It Cambridge (www.finditcambridge.org)** is a website to help you easily find the activities, services, and resources you are looking for in Cambridge. Find It Cambridge can help those who live and work in Cambridge learn about the different opportunities the City has to offer. The website can be translated into different languages! If you have any questions you can call Find It at 617-652- 5232 or email Find It at info@finditcambridge.org.