

The WSPEI Connector

September, 2025

Communicating Information and Resources for Wisconsin Families and Educators

We are back in school here in Wisconsin! We hope the first bunch of days in the classroom have gone well for everyone!



At **WSPEI**, we're kicking off a new season of learning with an exciting lineup of fall workshops and networks. We're especially thrilled to introduce two new offerings we think you'll love:

- **"Recipe for Success: Cooking up a Great Transition Plan"**
- **"A Seat at the Table: What it Really Means to be on a Committee, Board or Council"**

This issue is packed with valuable information to get you through the start of the school year. Fall weather always brings us awareness walks and we share a few with you, as well as important updates from the **Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**, and a look at various conferences happening around the state. Plus, we've included event calendars from our partners at **Supporting Neurodiverse Students**, **Parents United**, and **NAMI**.

We know you're busy, so let's get right to it. Enjoy this month's **Connector**!

~The WSPEI Project Team

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## The WSPEI Project Statewide Training and Networking Events

All statewide WSPEI events are **FREE**, will be held virtually on ZOOM, and are open to families, educators, and community agency members. Registration is required.

In an attempt to make it easier for you to register:

[REGISTER FOR ALL WSPEI WORKSHOPS and BOOK STUDIES ON THIS FORM](#)

[REGISTER FOR ALL WSPEI NETWORKS and COMMUNITIES ON THIS FORM](#)

Sign up for our [email list](#) for the monthly newsletter and event notifications.

[Calendar of Events](#)

### Topic-Specific Workshops

#### [Recipe for Success: Cooking up a Great Transition Plan](#)

Transition planning is a key part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process and, in Wisconsin, it begins at age 14. This workshop will give families the **essential tools to prepare for meaningful transition** conversations with their child's IEP team.

**Come cook up a successful future with us!**

[Click to Register](#)

Tuesday, September 23rd from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

OR

Thursday, September 25th from 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

#### [Families As Partners](#)

This series of four educational and leadership sessions for families is focused on building relationships with school staff and other supportive individuals in order to enhance student outcomes.

[Click to Register](#)

- 10/6/25, 10/13/25, 10/20/25 & 10/27/25 | 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

#### [A Seat at the Table: What It Really Means to Be on a Committee, Board, or Council](#)

In this 3-part series using the Serving on Groups curriculum, participants will:

- **Learn** about different types of groups and their purpose, and structure in a school setting;
- **Assess** and grow their own personal strengths, knowledge, and skills for effective participation in a group(including IEP meetings);
- **Receive** a printed training manual.

[Click to Register](#)

- 10/9/25, 10/16/25, 10/23/25 | 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

#### [The Family's Role in the CCR-IEP Process](#)

This 3-session workshop is aimed at equipping parents and other family members with knowledge and confidence to actively engage in the IEP process. For families who have a child between the ages of 3-21 who has an IEP. Educators are encouraged to participate as well!

[Click to Register](#)

- 10/21/25 & 10/28/25 | 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

#### [Navigating Special Education Resources](#)

Participants in this workshop will gain fundamental information and knowledge about special education, as well as explore resources and specific tools and strategies to use when collaborating with school staff to support and advocate for their child's needs.

Session 1 Topics: Acronyms/Terms; Birth-3; Pre-School; Communication

Session 2 Topics: Evaluation Reports; IEPs; Transition(PTP); General Information.

[Click to Register](#)

- 11/6/25 & 11/13/25 | 10:00 am - 11:00 am

### **Partnering with Schools on Behavior and Discipline for Students with IEPs**

This workshop will help participants understand how all policies apply to all children, including those with disabilities; build awareness of IDEA protections for students with disabilities in regard to discipline; and understand dispute resolution options in Wisconsin.

- December 4, 2025 | 9:00 am-11:00 am

[Click to REGISTER](#)

### **Finding Children with Disabilities: What School Districts, Families, and Agencies Need to Know (flyer and registration coming soon)**

This workshop will help participants understand the responsibility of school districts to locate, identify, and evaluate all children suspected of having a disability under IDEA and the Child Find Law. And define the rights of families if they believe their child may have a disability requiring special education services.

- 1/ 20/26 | 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

**OR**

- 1/ 22/26 | 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

### **Continuous Monthly Network and Learning Opportunities**

#### **September - Family, Youth, Community Engagement Network Gathering**

**September 17th, 2025 4:00 p.m.-5:30p.m.**

Supporting Families with Disabilities: Innovative Strategies from Wisconsin Districts  
School districts across Wisconsin are finding new and creative ways to support families of children with disabilities. Join us for a conversation that explores these forward-thinking strategies, with a focus on the Madison Metropolitan School District's (MMSD) unique approach - highlighting its dedicated Family Ombudsperson position, which helps families navigate concerns about their child's education and connect with community resources.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

#### **Family, Youth and Community Engagement Network**

(formally known as the Family Engagement Community of Practice & Learning)

A learning community for educators, administrators, statewide agencies, community partners, and families focusing on family engagement-specific topics.

Meetings are held on the **third Wednesday of every month, September to May, 4:00-5:30 pm.**

[Click to REGISTER](#)

#### **Family Support Community**

A monthly learning opportunity designed for families and other caregivers supporting a child(ren) with a disability. These meetings occur on the **second Wednesday of the month from 7:00 pm -8:00 pm** and the **second Thursday of the month from 12:00 -1:00 pm.**

Our supportive community meetings provide valuable learning opportunities and mutual support. They take place from **September through May.**

[Click to REGISTER](#)

### **Book Discussions**

#### **Powerful Partnerships: A Teacher's Guide to Engaging Families for Student Success**

*Karen Mapp, Ilene Carver,, and Jessica Lander.*

In **Powerful Partnerships**, the goal is to strengthen family engagement practices and, in doing so, strengthen classroom success for all students. This work is incredibly impactful. In order for you to achieve the best possible results, one important factor is the strong ties you build with the families and community members that your school serves. Those strong partnerships are important to maximize student learning.


- 9/22/25 & 9/29/25 | 4 pm - 5:30 pm

[Click to REGISTER](#)

## A WSPEI Regional Offering

IEP Bootcamp - Empowering Families in the IEP Process Monday, September 29th 5pm-7pm  
Eagle River, WI

[REGISTER HERE](#)



### IEP Bootcamp: Empowering Families in the IEP Process

*A no-cost learning event for families of students with IEPs,  
community agencies, and educators*

**Monday, September 29th 5 pm-7 pm**  
**Walter E Olson Memorial Library**  
**203 N Main St**  
**Eagle River, WI 54521**

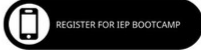

**During this workshop, YOU will:**

- **Recognize the family's essential role** as an equal member of the IEP team and partner in their child's educational planning.
- **Identify and practice key ways** families can contribute their unique insights about their child's strengths, preferences, interests, and needs to the IEP development process.
- **Practice preparing for IEP meetings**, including documenting ideas, information, and concerns, and then sharing with others.
- **Learn how to locate and contact** the appropriate district personnel to address questions or concerns about your child's IEP.
- **Explore your child's rights and available dispute resolution options** for resolving disagreements with the school district.



If you have questions, or would like more information about this learning opportunity, please contact:

**Heidi Lehman**  
Family-School Partnership  
Coordinator, CESAs 9/10  
hlehman@cesa9.org  
OR call: 715.360.2656

[Click to register for this workshop](#)



The Wisconsin Statewide Parent-Educator Initiative (CFDA #84.027A) acknowledges the support of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in the development of all products or publications and for the continued support of this federally-funded grant project.



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction



## News and Updates from DPI

### **Special Education Council Public Forum:**

The purpose of this public forum is to assist council members in advising the State Superintendent of Public Instruction on the educational needs of students who receive special education through an Individualized Education Program.

The Council on Special Education will be hosting a virtual public forum on **November 12, 2025 from 5:00pm-6:30pm**. We invite you to participate in the forum by [registering for the zoom meeting](#).

You can also submit a comment online. Online comments will open on November 5th and close on November 14th. To submit a comment please complete the following survey in either [English](#) or [Spanish](#).

### **DPI Reorganization: A Stronger DPI for Wisconsin:**

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has adopted a new, redesigned organizational structure to better serve students, educators, and communities statewide.

This reorganization is one part of our broader strategic plan and reflects a commitment to being more responsive, effective, and aligned across the agency.

[Follow this Link to learn more](#)

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## **Wisconsin Department of Health Services**

DHS is starting the process to renew the CLTS Program waiver application for the years of 2027-2031. The waiver describes how the CLTS Program works, who is eligible, what services are available, and how families can direct their own services. Renewing the CLTS Program waiver is a chance for DHS to review and improve the program. The first step in the renewal is to gather feedback from participants, their families, and others who interact with CLTS.

DHS wants to hear directly from current and past participants and family members about their experience with the CLTS program and possible program changes. We hope to hear about experiences with different services, working with providers, ways to better serve certain groups with the program, and other program issues and solutions. Participants and families can register for a session to share their experiences and ideas for the next five years of the CLTS Program. Your feedback will help DHS make the program better for children and families.

**Registration is required – sign up for a session today!**

**Tuesday, September 23rd**

2 – 3:15 p.m.

[https://dhswi.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN\\_mXphf\\_n1R7aG6in3k9whqw](https://dhswi.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_mXphf_n1R7aG6in3k9whqw)

**Wednesday, September 24th**

6 – 7:15 p.m.

[https://dhswi.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN\\_sm8umzKOQB02NzLCnNLWrg](https://dhswi.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_sm8umzKOQB02NzLCnNLWrg)

**Thursday, September 25th**

1 – 2:15 p.m.

[https://dhswi.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN\\_cSHVI8uyQ8OR0LeTWOanna](https://dhswi.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_cSHVI8uyQ8OR0LeTWOanna)

## September is National Suicide Prevention Month

Visit [Prevent Suicide Wisconsin](#) for resources, events and campaigns to help spread the word about actions we can all take to prevent suicide.



## WI FACETS

WI FACETS is Wisconsin's Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) funded through the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. WI FACETS has a large variety of resources, upcoming trainings, and webinar recordings to help families navigate special education. Check out the WI FACETS [Training Calendar](#), WI FACETS [Webinar Recordings](#) as well as WI FACETS [resources webpages](#).

WI FACETS publishes a monthly newsletter. The September issues explores Assistive Technology and the use of artificial intelligence (AI).

[September Newsletter - English](#)

[September Newsletter - Spanish](#)



## Supporting Neurodiverse Students (SNS) Professional Learning System

### Join the 2025-26 Supporting Neurodiverse Students Learning Events

The Supporting Neurodiverse Students (SNS) Professional Learning System provides support for educators and families serving students with disability-related needs in the area of social and emotional learning (SEL). The SNS provides learning opportunities with a focus on regulation, social communication, flexibility, resilience, sensory processing, and executive functioning. This year we have the privilege of offering access to information in a variety of ways, so no matter how you learn, you can participate. There are In-Person and Hybrid learning options for many dates.

**These workshops are FREE for Parents/Families of students with an IEP and anyone who attends virtually.**

To find subjects, dates, and registration, please visit the [SNS Learning Events Registration webpage](#).

To book a time to discuss learning events, coaching, and technical assistance click on [this booking link](#).

There are many resources to explore on the SNS website, including recordings of past training and quick videos on specific topics. For more information, please visit the [SNS Website](#).



## Wisconsin Conferences

### [Self-Determination by Design: Your Life, Your Way](#)

**Dates:** October 20 - 22, 2025

**Location:** Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: September 25, 2025**

Self-determination means taking control of your life. This conference is for people with disabilities and the people who support them. Learn more about independent living, community participation, and how to use public funds efficiently.

### [2025 Children Come First Conference-Save the Dates](#)

**Dates:** November 3rd-4th, 2025

**Location:** Kalahari Resort • Wisconsin Dells, WI

As one of the largest and longest-running family-driven events in the state, this conference is dedicated to addressing the pressing needs of children and families living with mental and behavioral health issues.

### [Circles of Life Conference](#)

Call for Presentations Now Open

**Dates:** May 14 & 15, 2026

**Location:** Holiday Inn Stevens Point Convention Center

Registration Opens February 1, 2026

We need a wide variety of presentations to meet the interests of our attendees.

The theme for our 2026 conference is ***Families and Professionals on the Path Together***. We encourage you to submit a presentation proposal reflecting this theme. If possible, include how partnerships and collaborations improve outcomes for all families.

[Click this link for the Presentation Application Form](#)

Contact Lynn at Family Voices, [Lynn@fvofwi.org](mailto:Lynn@fvofwi.org).

**Application Deadline: October 17**





## WI Support Organizations and Agencies Events and Resources

### WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (WI BPDD)

We are the Wisconsin board that is charged with bringing people together to solve problems, remove barriers and create statewide change for the developmental disability community.

[WI BPDD September Newsletter](#) sharing important news and events!

#### Partners In Policymaking

The Wisconsin Partners in Policymaking program is a six-session advocacy training to prepare future leaders around the state who can work with lawmakers and communities to support the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of life.

#### Dates for the Class of 2025/2026 are:

- November 14 & 15, 2025 (Madison\*)
- December 12 & 13, 2025 (Virtual only)
- January 16 & 17, 2026 (Virtual only)
- February 27 & 28, 2026 (Virtual only)
- April 3 & 4, 2026 (Madison\*)
- May 1 & 2, 2026 (Madison\*)

Find more information and the application form by clicking [HERE](#). Applications are due October 3, 2025

\*If attending in person is difficult, please contact Jenny Neugart, Project Manager at [Jennifer.neugart@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Jennifer.neugart@wisconsin.gov) to discuss options.

### Health Transition Wisconsin

Transition Table Talks

[Transition Table Talks](#) (online) 3rd Wednesday & Thursday of the Month from 12-1PM Topics are being worked out!

**Transition Table Talks** is casual, low-pressure Zoom Chat where parents and caregivers can connect, shared what's working, exchange ideas, ask questions, and support each other through the ups and downs of raising kids. No experts, no lectures-just families helping families. We need families who not only have questions, but also have ideas! Maybe things they have tried and it didn't work do well or they tried and it worked. Bring your experience and your questions!

**Aug 20 & 21; Sep 17 & 18; Oct 15 & 16; Nov 19 & 20; Dec 17 & 18**



12:00-1:00 p.m.

3rd Wednesday registration:

<https://uwmadison.zoom.us/meeting/register/g1DiJ79TRAeqAfgO953NSg>

3rd Thursday registration:

<https://uwmadison.zoom.us/meeting/register/pOCc3RTsRoyuCsZKR5vScA>

## NAMI Wisconsin

NAMI Wisconsin is the state office of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization providing advocacy, education, support, and public awareness.



[Schedule of Fall Events](#) including Peer Support Groups and Family Support Groups

## WI Coalition for Children, Youth, and Families

The WiFCC provides support and services to parents and caregivers across the continuum of kinship care, foster care, and post-post permanency, including reunification, guardianship, and adoption.

The September Newsletter includes a nice article titled:

[Effective School Communication: A Parent's Guide](#)

Visit the [Wisconsin Family Connections Events](#) Page to find virtual and in-person events.

## Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health (WI-AIMH)

WI-AIMH strives to promote infant mental health through building awareness, promoting professional capacity, fostering partnerships and supporting policies which are in the best interest of infants, young children and their families.

### Information, resources and events in the WI-AIMH Newsletter

Infant mental health is synonymous with healthy social and emotional development, all within the context of family, community, and cultural expectations for young children, and defined as the developing capacity of a child from birth to age 5.

Learn more in the:

[September Newsletter](#)

# Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin

## Healthcare Education and Supports

The Autism Society is dedicated to health equity, which is the foundation of a healthy life. People with Autism experience higher rates of medical and mental health conditions, poor health outcomes, and premature mortality. In addition to social and economic barriers, the Autistic community faces sensory, communication, cognitive, and other unique barriers to accessible healthcare.

[Click HERE](#) to find out more about resources and supports for Individuals, Families and Caregivers



## Regional Events Happening Around the State

### Parents United

#### Flyers for Fall 2025 Events!

Parents United is a non-profit community-based organization provides regular informational workshops featuring experts presenting a wide range of topics relative to students with disabilities and their families. There are both in-person and virtual workshops

Parents and families from across the state of Wisconsin are welcome to register and attend these workshops. All events are FREE!

Click the links for each date to go to a flyer with additional details and registration information:

- [October 1 \(Kick-off w/ Shelley Moore\)](#) VIRTUAL
- [October 21 \(IEP Bootcamp\)](#) IN-PERSON
- [November 13 \(Disappear Fear\)](#) VIRTUAL
- [November 18 \(Transition Panel\)](#) IN-PERSON
- [December 4 \(Creating Financial Security\)](#) VIRTUAL

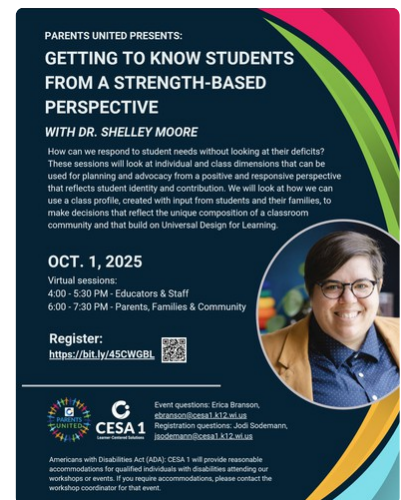


## Walks and Workshops!

**DSAW Statewide - [Down Syndrome Awareness Walk](#)**

- DATE: Sunday, September 28, 2025, 10:00 AM 4:00 PM
- LOCATION: Milwaukee County Zoo

**Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin**



## Spectrum of Colors Virtual Race Across Greater WI

- September 13th - October 4th, 2025

Celebrating the diversity of experiences within the Autism community, embracing the spectrum of colors in the Wisconsin fall and raising funds for Autism Organization

[Click Here](#) to learn more and sign up for the run

### Epilepsy Foundation Wisconsin

[Walk to End Epilepsy](#) - Milwaukee

- **Date:** Saturday, September 20, 2025, 1:00 p.m.
- **Location:** Milwaukee County Zoo

### Waldvogel's Farm: [Wheelchair Accessible Hay Ride](#)

N7416 County Road I, Juneau WI 53039

- Opening Day - Saturday September 13th!

Note that the farm train is now accessible.

NEW for 2025, we have a wagon ride to the pumpkin patch that is accessible. We do not have wheelchairs or motorized carts available on site.

### Family Voices of Wisconsin and the Waukesha Transition Advisory Council

**WHAT'S AFTER HIGH SCHOOL:** Conversations for Pewaukee and Waukesha Area Families offers families a broad overview of the transition to adult life for young adults with disabilities and special health care needs.

- **Topics Include:** An overview of transition, ADRCs, guardianship, healthcare, post-secondary education, employment, and community life.
- **When:** One session per month from **September 2025 to April 2026**. The first session is **Tuesday, September 17th, from 5:30 - 6:45 PM**. Find the full schedule on the registration form.
- **Where:** Hybrid format - In-person at Pewaukee High School and virtual via Zoom (*January and February sessions are virtual only*).
- **How to Sign Up:** Families can register easily right [here](#)

### Nature's Navigators - STEM Camp for Autistic Youth

Nature's Navigators STEM Camp aims to broaden science opportunities for autistic youth by providing a camp opportunity that supports inquisitiveness in a non-threatening, nontraditional, and inclusive learning environment. We provide nature-based, hands-on learning opportunities and encourage pursuing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) degrees and careers.

Open to autistic youth in grades 6–12 during the 2025-2026 school year, Nature's Navigators embraces neurodivergence and the associated unique thinking and learning of autistic youth through flexible teaching strategies

- **Date:** Saturdays from 1 to 5 p.m. on September 27, October 4, and October 11, 2025

- **Location:** Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center, N194 County Road N, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965

The camp is **free, but you must register** at the following website:

<https://ccr.nelson.wisc.edu/natures-navigators-stem-camp/>



**We wish all**



**scholars, teachers and  
families**



**a peaceful, productive  
year!**



## Request Support from a member of the WSPEI Project Staff

Are you looking for information, resources or support about Special Education and IEPs from WSPEI?

Information provided on this form will help us connect you to your local WSPEI Family-School Partnership Coordinator:

[Click this link for Support Request Form](#)



### Where to find us!

Email feedback and ideas of resources and information you would like to see from WSPEI!

Email: [wspei@cesa12.org](mailto:wspei@cesa12.org)

Website: <https://wspei.org/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinStatewideParentEducatorInitiative>







The Wisconsin Statewide Parent-Educator Initiative (CFDA #84.027A) acknowledges the support of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in the development of all products or publications and for the continued support of this federally-funded contract program.



**The WSPEI Project**  
[www.wspei.org](http://www.wspei.org)

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