



# Town of Westford Massachusetts

## Town Manager's Newsletter

July 2023



**Kristen Las**  
Town  
Manager

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978-692-5500

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**Westford Farmer Market**  
Tuesday afternoons  
2:30 - 6:30 pm

**Strategic Planning Retreat**  
Thursday, September 7  
5 - 8 pm

### Dear Westford residents,

July 1st marked the start of the new fiscal year (FY2024) for the Town; The start of the new fiscal year means that the beginning of the FY2024 budget. The proposed budget document was completed in December 2022 and the final budget was approved at the Annual Town Meeting in March 2023. Read more about Westford's FY2024 budget and the process of creating the document on the Town Manager's webpage. The new fiscal year is also when any warrant articles that are funded through taxes, or "raise and appropriate", are available to move forward.

On July 7, 2023, the Town of Westford was awarded \$500,000 for the brownfield remediation at 12 North Main Street at a ceremony in Worcester. These funds will be used to perform assessments and continued remediation of contaminated soil. You can read more about this grant award and project [here](#).



*Delivery and assembly of Westford's new Fire Department Training Facility*

The Community Farmer's Market at the Roudenbush Community Center is in full swing on Tuesday afternoons from 2:30-6:30pm. I was lucky enough to visit the market this week and chat with some vendors and community members.

The Budget Task Force will hold a public forum on July 24, 2023 at 7pm in the Millennium Building. This will be an opportunity for residents to provide feedback on several scenarios that will be presented for a five-year sustainable fiscal plan for the Town moving forward. To learn more about the Budget Task Force, please visit their webpage <https://www.westfordma.gov/1582/Budget-Task-Force>



Watch  
**westford** CAT  
community access television  
[www.westfordcat.org](http://www.westfordcat.org)

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[WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV](http://WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV)

At the Select Board Meeting on June 27, 2023, Select Board Vice Chair Scott Hazelton announced the passing of lifelong Westford resident Helena "Mickey" Crocker, and recognized her many contributions to the Town of Westford, including her work with the Council on Aging, Westford Housing Authority, the Westford Food Pantry, and the Cameron Senior Center.

The Parks and Recreation Commission along with members of the National Cricket Academy America presented the Select Board with a donation of \$5,000 to help facilitate the creation of a cricket pitch on the fields at Farmer Way. This new space will help to develop the sport of cricket and its positive impact on the Westford Community.

The Select Board continues to discuss round table topics for the Strategic Planning Retreat on September 7, 2023, from 5pm-8pm at Kimball Farm. An agenda will be presented to the Select Board at their meeting on July 25, 2023 and more information will be released.

At their meeting on July 11, 2023, Community Wellness Coordinator Nicole Laviolette updated the Board on her work during her past 13 months on the job, and her goals in the next year. Nicole has had many opportunities to work in collaboration with the Westford Public Schools, the Cameron Senior Center, and Public Safety on First Responder Wellness, Hoarding Disorder Training, young person addiction and coordinating community wellness events.

The Select Board also discussed and voted to send a letter to the State House of Representatives and Senate regarding remote participation at Town Meeting.

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Affordable Housing Trust                  | Economic Development Committee                  | Selectmen Policies & Procedures Sub Committee   |
| Agricultural Commission                   | Healthy Westford Committee                      | Senior Low Income Disabled Tax Relief Committee |
| Bylaw Review Committee                    | Housing Authority                               | Tax Possession Disposition Committee            |
| Capital Planning Committee                | Permanent Town Building Committee               |   |
| Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee | Recycling Commission                            |   |
| Commission on Disability                  | Scholarship and Grant Committee                 |   |
| Cultural Council                          | Senior Low Income Disabled Tax Relief Committee |   |

I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete and submit a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

Would you like more detailed information on the Select Board's meetings? Click the following links to access: [Select Board Documents](#) & [Select Board Meeting Videos](#).

If you have any suggestions for articles or added features in future newsletters, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Town Manager's office at (978)-692-5501 or email at [klas@westfordma.gov](mailto:klas@westfordma.gov).

Sincerely,



Kristen Las, Town Manager

## Sustainability - Sue Thomas, Sustainability Coordinator, 978-399-2798

**Tell your friends to sign up for the newly created Sustainability Newsletter/News Flash using the town [Notify Me System](#) – scroll down the page to the bottom of the News Flash category to find it.**

Readers of this newsletter will be automatically subscribed if they click the link they receive in their inbox. I now have enough content to produce a subject specific publication like many of the other town departments do. I will be distributing this content electronically through email. In August, I will start limiting the content in the Town Manager's newsletter, where I have been taking up an increasing amount of space, to items of more general or immediate concern, understanding that people will have access to sustainability content through my dedicated newsletter.

When you respond you might want to consider signing up for the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee agendas to remain current with their work and any other town committee agendas or content of interest. Please note that the system will send you an email which you must click to confirm your subscription for each of the items you select. If you don't click the link, you will not be subscribed. Also note that you can also unsubscribe at any time using the Notify Me System.

### 7 Steps to Beat the Summer Heat Sustainably

1. Schedule a FREE [Energy Assessment](#)
2. Visit [Mass Save](#) for information on rebates and free services on energy efficiency improvements and electric/energy saving appliances
3. Consider [Clean Energy Solutions](#) for your home (including solar) and [your transportation](#)
4. Plan your electricity use to shave the peak (generally 5-8 PM now in MA in the summer – solar power balances the demand during peak daylight hours – more solar, wind and conservation will delay and shorten the peak period even further, hence steps 1-3).
5. If you have a Nest thermostat, try [National Grid's Rush Hour Program](#) and get paid to participate.
6. Skip the oven, the dryer and any other nonessential energy use altogether.
7. Lower blinds on sunny windows and use fans in rooms while you are occupying them (and not when you are not) to help you shed heat.

### Sustainable Mosquito Control

Just in time, after all of our rain, [this](#) is a great article on how to protect yourself from mosquitos without spraying your yard with pesticide, as well as an explanation of what energy and poison intensive practices do not work. I would move the prevention step of eliminating standing water, that is not in a wetland, and screening water barrels, to the top of the list presented in this article, and add the step of planting natural repellants like citronella and bee balm around outdoor spaces where people gather. I try to use DEET and permethrin sparingly and only on gear and clothing, not skin, when possible. More indiscriminate use of insecticides threatens our food supply by poisoning pollinators, and the natural environment, including beloved wildlife, like birds and fireflies, and all wildlife, by eliminating a segment of the food chain.

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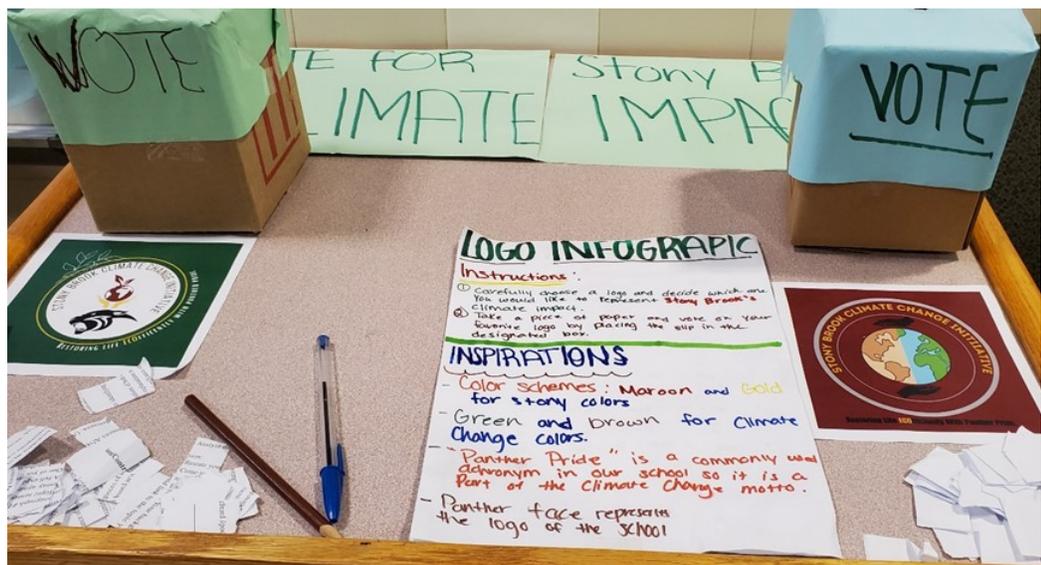
## Sustainability (Continued)

Interested in deepening your climate connections and knowledge of our human and natural habitat through citizen science, study and local action?  
Check out these opportunities!

- [Monitor](#) the performance of the town solar panels on the roof of the Stony Brook Middle School.
- Learn about fireflies and report your [firefly sightings](#) with Mass Audubon
- [Count your \(avian\) turkeys](#) for Mass Wildlife or favorite birds, for a day or a year, with [The Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#)
- Try to catch the [Northern lights](#) or a [meteor shower](#)
- Join the [Litter League](#) and help clean up trash wherever you travel in town
- Learn to compost with the [Westford Recycling Commission](#) July 22<sup>nd</sup>, August 5<sup>th</sup> and August 19<sup>th</sup> or on their website.
- [Plant Trees](#)
- Remove [Invasive plants](#)
- Study the [Westford Tree and Invasive Species Inventory and Management Plan](#)
- [Certify your habitat](#) with the National Wildlife Federation

### Stony Brook 8<sup>th</sup> Graders' Climate Change Exhibit

I had a great time visiting the Stony Brook Middle School to see the results of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade project-based learning unit on climate change. The common area was transformed into a visual spectacle, overflowing with exhibits, learning games, artwork, costumed students, facts and data. Illustrations of the effects of climate change and our lifestyle overwhelmed the senses. It was wonderful to see so much creativity, learning and passion in action! I hope each of these students learned the power of both group participation and personal choices on shaping their planet and futures. I look forward to seeing what they do with their newfound knowledge.



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## Sustainability (Continued)

### Back to School Shopping and Tax Free Weekend

While to many of us it still feels like summer has just begun, July is often the season to start back to school shopping, Prime Days, and this year, as in many years, an August Tax Free Weekend (August 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> 2023). Please remember to think critically about what you need vs what you want, and about more sustainable, multi-use, and used items prior to buying new. Think strategically about more expensive durable goods purchases (like appliances) on tax free weekend and purchase items with low electricity needs and high recycling potential, and stack tax savings, tax credits and rebates on home goods like appliances and lawn and garden equipment.

- Check out this [great article](#) on how buying almost anything and everything used is easy, inexpensive and often yields items of equal or better quality than buying virgin products.
- Clothing: If you are no longer growing, investing in durable natural materials is often more financially sustainable, and definitely healthier and more environmentally sustainable than petroleum based and plastic fibers (nylon, rayon, spandex, fleece) even when they are sourced from recycled materials. Avoid coatings, which often incorporate PFAS. This can be a high bar, for sure, so start with a high value item or two and build on that progress, or focus on a cheaper but plentiful item, like tee shirts.
- Linens: the clue is in the name (linen is a natural fiber), but identifying linens processed without PFAS practically requires a specialized Phd and there is no reliable labeling system yet. Do your best with high organic cotton content and no coatings within your budget.
- Mattresses – consider flame retardant chemicals and other contents carefully and don't forget to think about how you will dispose of your old mattress. Is it reusable? Will the retailer take it back? Or do you need to recycle it with [Tough Stuff Recycling](#)?
- This is a great time to buy appliances, particularly a refrigerator. If yours is close to 10 years old, it is costing you money in electricity and National Grid will pay you to recycle it if it still works. This is true of your freezer as well. Conduction ovens are also a good choice with rebates from Mass Save on top of the tax savings, as are small electric engines and tools. If you buy that convection oven, you might also want or need a new (or new to you) set of cast iron cookware. Recycle your old cookware appropriately – don't reuse or donate items with coatings, especially if they are scratched.
- More resources for shopping are available in my summer reading recommendations [here](#).

### State News: [Housing and the Massachusetts Green Bank Explained](#) Happy and Productive July!

The news and our senses are keeping unusual weather events fueled by a warming world top of mind. Here in Westford, thankfully, we have yet to experience any emergencies tied to these events, but each of us plays a part in contributing to, or preventing, disastrous outcomes. For scientific inspiration and for a deeper and disturbing (hopefully motivating?) study of global planetary health, spend some time with [this article in Nature](#). Whether you read this article, or all or part of the sustainable content or not, I hope each of you feels empowered to allocate a little of the precious summer season to connecting with our changing natural world and taking actions to both protect it and keep your families safe.

## July at the J.V. Fletcher Library



Unless otherwise noted, the following programs are made possible by the Friends of the Library.

**Director's Corner:** We are excited to announce that our statistics show that we are back up to pre-pandemic circulation and our attendance at programs is booming! The library circulates 1,375 items per day. With the return of our popular summer reading programs, we predict that the library will continue to be the hot spot of Westford! And speaking of hotspots, don't forget to borrow one from us so you can enjoy Wi-Fi on vacation at your ocean cottage or mountain cabin.

**Summer Reading Programs for All Ages!** There is still plenty of time to sign up and participate! This summer we have exciting programs and prizes lined up for children, young adults, and adults. Check out the [Children's Summer Reading page](#), [Teens Summer Reading page](#) and the [Adult Summer Reading Page](#) for more information. Please call or email us with any questions on these exciting summer-long programs.

**YA Thrift Swap: Tuesday, July 18 from 3:00-4:00.** For Grade 8 and up. Join us on the back lawn. It's a free library thrift swap! Bring your pre-loved items and swap them for new-to-you items from other participants! Things you could bring:

- Clothes
- Accessories
- Books
- Coloring Books
- Board Games
- Plushies
- Art/Posters

Please e-mail Jess at [jdyment@westfordma.gov](mailto:jdyment@westfordma.gov) with any questions.

**Ooch's Yo-Yo's, Music, and Dance: Tuesday, July 18 at 6:30 p.m.** Ooch returns to show us his AMAZING Yo-Yo skills during this music and dance filled program. Your kids may know Ooch from a visit to their school or from the great party he led for Nancy's birthday last year. This program will take place outside, weather permitting, or we will move it to the Meeting Room. This program is generously funded by the KDK Foundation in honor of Kurt Kelly. Registration is not required.

**Camp Read a Lot, Wednesday, July 19 at 6:30 p.m.** Camp Read a Lot is an interactive family story time with a camping theme. Miss Ellen leads the library Camp Read a Lot adventure from in the Meeting room and it includes stories around the campfire, camp songs, and even pretend toasted marshmallows around the camp "fire". No registration required.

**Big Trees of Northern New England: Thursday, July 20 at 6:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room** Author and wooden boat builder, Kevin Martin, directs you on over 50 hikes, bikes, or paddles to find over 150 of the largest trees on public lands, both in the countryside and in the cities. Visit old growth pine or hemlock forests or discover a city tour to a horse chestnut in Portsmouth, NH that was planted by a signer of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Come and learn about the biggest trees in Maine, NH, Vermont, and Northern Massachusetts as featured in his book *Big Trees of Northern New England*. No registration required.

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## J.V. Fletcher Library (continued)

**Mystery Book Club: Monday, July 24 at 2:00 p.m.** – Wake up your week with a stimulating book club discussion! We'll meet in the Mary Atwood Room to discuss *The It Girl* by Ruth Ware. Print copies are available at Main Desk. Email Justin Liberti at [jliberti@westfordma.gov](mailto:jliberti@westfordma.gov) for details!

**Talewise, Saving the Earth Together: Tuesday, Jul. 25 at 1:00 p.m.** In this action-packed story, two unlikely heroes work together to save their town (and the planet) from a super-polluting mastermind. Throughout the adventure, volunteers will help the performer conduct several exciting science experiments that bring this story to life and explore **Newton's Laws of Motion, air pressure, chemical reactions**, and more. For ages 5 and up. [Register here.](#)

**Let's Draw Pets with Rick Stromoski: Virtual Cartooning Class, Thursday, July 27 at 1:00 p.m.** [For kids going into grades 1 and up, award winning cartoonist and humorous illustrator Rick Stromoski will teach you how to draw a variety of household pets. We supply the paper, pencil - Rick supplies the expertise and fun. Register here.](#)

**Harry Potter's Birthday: Monday, July 31 at 3:00 p.m.** We are hosting our annual Harry Potter birthday celebration. We are planning the party games and crafts, which are sure to spill out of the Meeting Room and all over the library. Remember to dress up as your favorite witch or wizard or wear your house colors. [Register here.](#)

**Mother Goose Story Time, Thursdays in July at 10:30 a.m.** Mother Goose is an interactive story time for children ages 0 and up with their caregivers. We include books, songs, a field trip, fun movements, and of course, dancing! Hang out for a few minutes afterwards and make some new friends or migrate up to the children's room for more play. We will do the program outside when weather permits - we will keep you posted!

### Follow us!

[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook](#)

**Friends of the Library e-newsletter: The best way to learn about our upcoming programs and new services is through the FOL weekly e-newsletter. [Sign up here.](#)**

Check out our [Museum Passes page](#) or call the Library for reservations. Unless otherwise noted, our museum passes are generously funded by the Friends of the Library. [Have you joined the Friends yet?](#)

### Quick Links to Our Most Popular Services!

[Programs - Adults](#)

[Programs - Kids](#)

[Programs - Young Adults](#)

**If you have questions or need assistance, please call us at 978-399-2300 or send us an email at [westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov](mailto:westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov).**

## Westford Recreation

### Seasonal Programs for Youth and Adults

Check out Recreation's upcoming programs, to include Fast Skills Football, Flag Football, Impact Speed & Agility, Knucklebones Ninjas, Lego Club, Pickleball, Swim Instruction, and Marcus Lewis Tennis Extension Program, offering classes for all levels and age groups, at Stony Brook tennis courts.

Learn more at [Programs](#) on [westfordrec.com](#).

### Summer Weekly Programs

At Recreation's **Summer Weekly Programs**, kids will enjoy activities that relax and engage, like arts & crafts at the Nab, or swimming and s'mores at East Boston Camps. Our Site Directors and counselors focus on safety and positivity, supporting each child as they enjoy new experiences.

### Four more weeks of summer fun!

#### Summer Beach Party at D.E. -

Summer program coverage just when you need it – August 21-25

For ages 4-13, Monday-Friday.  
Directors: Recreation Staff Site Directors  
*One week program with full-day, full-week or partial week, early arrival, and extended day options.*

#### Kids Club

**Fast-paced, fun-filled activities for children at all levels.**

For ages 4-13, Monday-Friday, specific times to be announced.  
Directors: Recreation Staff Site Directors.  
*Seven-week program with full-day, full-week or partial week, early arrival, extended day, and swim lesson options.*

#### Destination Exploration at EBC

**Classic summertime activities in a classic summertime setting at East Boston Camps.**

For ages 7-13, Monday-Friday.  
Directors: Recreation Staff Site Directors  
*Seven-week program with full-day, full-week or partial week, early arrival, and extended day options.*

Learn more at [Summer Weekly Programs](#) on [westfordrec.com](#).



#### Top to Bottom:

Week 2 at Kids Club featuring a DISNEY HEROES theme, and a visit from Westford's Fire Department! Paramedic Fire Prevention Officer, Ryan Monat, told us how much the department enjoys interactions with the community "in positive (and non-emergency based) ways."

## Cameron Senior Center

**Summer Enjoyment at The Cameron We welcome adults ages 55 and older**

### ONLINE REGISTRATION NOW BEING OFFERED

We are excited to roll out online registration thanks to the hard work of Katie Russell, Program Coordinator with a soft start in July. Now with a few more tweaks to our system you may register and pay for programs through My Active Center, which works in conjunction with My Senior Center.

To use the online features, you must have a valid MySeniorCenter swipe card. We will be posting a step-by-step tutorial on our website and Facebook page. If you would like a copy of this tutorial, send Katie an email at [krussell@westfordma.gov](mailto:krussell@westfordma.gov). Please call 978.692.5523 to set up a one-on-one appointment. We will be glad to sit with you and help each step of the way. Please first make sure you have a valid swipe card. If not sure contact Katie. Applications for a swipe card can be found at the front desk.



### STROLL YOUR WAY TO BETTER HEALTH

Wednesday Walks will be held on July 19<sup>th</sup>, July 26<sup>th</sup>, Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup>, Aug. 9<sup>th</sup>, Aug. 23<sup>rd</sup> and Aug. 29<sup>th</sup>. Walk with our Health Departments **Gail Johnson** and **Britany Nash** each Wednesday in July and August starting at the Cameron at 9AM. Please sign up at the front desk at 978.692.5523. If you want to sign up the day of that works too. The more the merrier!



### WESTFORD'S "A SPA FOR YOU" HERE AT THE CAMERON



Monday, July 24 from 10am -2pm in the Arts & Crafts Room  
 A Spa For You will perform one of the **following services for \$15.00**. Fifteen-minute chair massage, Fifteen-minute express facial: wash, exfoliation, mask, hydrate, Fifteen minute Pedicure: soak feet, cut and file and polish and/ or fifteen-minute Manicure: cut and polish. All services provided by licensed tech. *Payment in cash due at time of the service.* Any questions please call Eleanor at A Spa for You in Westford at 978.486.8900. To sign up for an appointment call the Front Desk at 978.692.5523.

### LIVE MUSIC UNDER THE SUN



Wednesday, July 26 at 12pm. Join us for a cookout while **Roger Tincknell** plays everything from Elvis to the Everly Brothers 1950s Rock and Pop Classics! This will be outside so summer attire is recommended. Sponsored in part by a grant from the **Westford Cultural Council**, a local agency, which is supported by the **Massachusetts Cultural Council**, a state agency. For more information, please call the Senior Center at 978.399.2326. Cost is \$3 to attend.



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## Cameron Senior Center (continued)

### REPRESENTATIVE ARCIERO'S ANNUAL COOKOUT

Wednesday, August 9 at 12pm

Representative Jim Arciero will again be hosting his crowd-pleasing indoor cookout at the Cameron. Enjoy freshly grilled hot dogs and burgers. This is a great opportunity to meet and share concerns with him! Please RSVP to 978.692.5523. Will fill up quickly!



### FREE ORGANIC VEGETABLE DISTRIBUTION

Every Thursday 1pm numbers given out and 1:15 distribution of produce We are excited to continue our relationship with **Gaining Grounds of Concord**. They offer their organic produce weekly to all Westford residents who meet income guidelines. The gross income limit is \$42,411 for a household of one, and \$55,461 for a household of two. To participate one must sign an income attestation on the day of produce pick up. This distribution will be held at **the Westford Housing Authority at 65 Tadmuck Rd. in the community center parking lot**. People often arrive early so we pass out disposable numbers starting at 1pm and the freshly picked and packaged vegetables are distributed at 1:15. Any questions call Annette or Jen at 978.399.2326.



Town Planning Strategic Retreat at Kimball Farm is scheduled for Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup> from 5-8PM. More information will be coming from the Town managers office on discussion items and registration. This is a fun, community planning event coupled with a complimentary dinner, ice cream bar and socializing. Look for your COA staff there...

SAVE THE DATE! Our next Delvena Theatre show will be Friday, September 22, 2023. More information to come! Sign up Now !

### Dementia Caregiver Support Group

Tuesdays, July 25<sup>th</sup> and August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6PM

Joanne Fontaine, RN and Lisa Sobhian, LICSW have been co-facilitating a support group for many years with the Alzheimer's Association, Joanne is a geriatric Care Manager, owner of pro-Active Eldecare. Lisa is an Alzheimer's Specialist and is currently the Director of Dementia Services and Social Services at D'Youville Life and Wellness Community Center. The group meets at the Cameron. Before attending, please call Lisa at 978-808-4246.

To learn more about the Cameron Senior Center programs and services please visit:

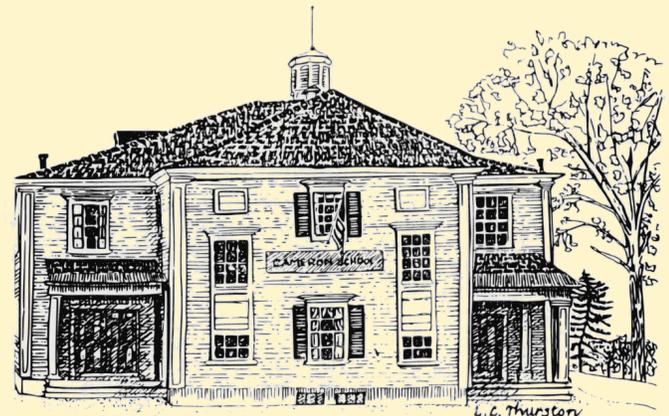
[www.westfordma.gov/coa](http://www.westfordma.gov/coa),

[www.facebook.com/Cameron Senior Center/](https://www.facebook.com/CameronSeniorCenter/)

[www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

To view the complete Council On Aging Newsletter please visit our website:

[www.westfordma.gov/coa](http://www.westfordma.gov/coa) and click on **Newsletters**.



Westford Senior Center

## Health Department

# SAMHSA

Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

**Family and Caregiver Access to  
Resources on Anxiety and Depression  
in Children and Youth — [Webinar](#)  
Wednesday, July 19, 2023 6 – 7 p.m. ET**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#) will host a virtual training on Wednesday, July 19, from 6 – 7 p.m. ET for parents, caregivers, and families about children's mental health. This training will focus on anxiety and depression in children and adolescents. This training is a continuation of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) efforts to provide important and useful information and resources about child, youth, and family mental health. This training is co-designed with, and informed by, youth, parents, and caregivers and will feature youth and parent leaders.

This free, virtual training will feature information and resources specifically for parents and caregivers. While it is designed to provide education to parents and caregivers, you do not need to be a parent or caregiver to attend. The training will provide the following:

- Information on anxiety and depression in children and youth from parents, caregivers, and behavioral health professionals;
- Useful skills to recognize and respond to children and youth managing anxiety and depression;
- Information on how to access mental health resources and guidance to help children and families;
- An overview of resources available to support parents and caregivers.

Spanish interpretation will be offered live during this training and certificates of attendance will be available.



[Click Here to  
Register for the  
Webinar](#)

## Health Department (continued)

## 5

## Action Steps for Helping Someone in Emotional Pain



Suicide is a major public health concern and a leading cause of death in the United States. Suicide affects people of all ages, genders, races, and ethnicities.

Suicide is complicated and tragic, but it can be preventable. **Knowing the warning signs for suicide and how to get help can help save lives.**

Here are 5 steps you can take to #BeThe1To help someone in emotional pain:



### 1. ASK:

“Are you thinking about killing yourself?” It’s not an easy question but studies show that asking at-risk individuals if they are suicidal does not increase suicides or suicidal thoughts.



### 2. KEEP THEM SAFE:

Reducing a suicidal person’s access to highly lethal items or places is an important part of suicide prevention. While this is not always easy, asking if the at-risk person has a plan and removing or disabling the lethal means can make a difference.



### 3. BE THERE:

Listen carefully and learn what the individual is thinking and feeling. Research suggests acknowledging and talking about suicide may in fact reduce rather than increase suicidal thoughts.



### 4. HELP THEM CONNECT:

Save the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline number (**call or text 988**) and the Crisis Text Line number (**741741**) in your phone so they’re there if you need them. You can also help make a connection with a trusted individual like a family member, friend, spiritual advisor, or mental health professional.



### 5. STAY CONNECTED:

Staying in touch after a crisis or after being discharged from care can make a difference. Studies have shown the number of suicide deaths goes down when someone follows up with the at-risk person.

For more information on suicide prevention:

[www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention)



National Institute  
of Mental Health

## Community Wellness

Mental health conditions do not discriminate based on race, color, gender, or identity. July is Bebe Moore National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, also referred to as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) Mental Health Month. The month was created to increase awareness about the unique mental health struggles that the underrepresented groups face in the United States. (source: <https://mhanational.org/> )

Increasing awareness to our community, **J.V. Fletcher Library** has a BIPOC Mental Health book display. There are additional books available through inter library loan.

Nami (National Alliance on Mental Illness) is sharing stories from various backgrounds and communities. The Strength over Silence Stories of Courage, Culture and Community stories can be viewed at: <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Bebe-Moore-Campbell-National-Minority-Mental-Health-Awareness-Month/Strength-Over-Silence>

### **Explore and share the information and resources available through the following links:**

- Take a free mental health test at <https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools/>
- **National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** – call or text **988** - The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States. Callers who follow the “press 1” prompt are connected to the Veterans Crisis Line. A Spanish Language line is available by pressing 2 when calling 988, and more than 240 languages are supported through a Tele-Interpreters service. Callers also have the option of following a “press 3” prompt to be connected to a counselor specifically trained in supporting LGBTQI+ callers. <https://988lifeline.org/>
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** <https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/minority-mental-health/>
- **DMH Multicultural Mental Health Resource & Directory** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/bipoc-mental-health-awareness-month-resources/download> ; <https://www.mass.gov/lists/dmh-multicultural-mental-health-resource-directory>
- **Massachusetts General Hospital BIPOC Mental Health Resources** <https://www.massgeneral.org/psychiatry/guide-to-mental-health-resources/for-bipoc-mental-health>
- **Mental Health America BIPOC Mental Health Resources** <https://www.mhanational.org/bipoc-mental-health>

**You are not alone. For more information or help connecting to resources:**

*Community Wellness Coordinator, Nicole Laviolette*

(978) 399-2503 [nlaviolette@westfordma.gov](mailto:nlaviolette@westfordma.gov)

<https://www.westfordma.gov/1487/Community-Wellness>

Community Wellness

# Parent Support Group

Are you experiencing the challenges of parenting a child who may be struggling with their mental health?

**Please join us for our monthly parent support sessions where you will learn new coping skills, new resources and receive caring support.**

**The group meets the 2nd Thursday of every month from 7:00 - 8:30 PM**

**July's meeting held at the Town Hall Meeting room  
55 Main St, Westford**

**August and September's meeting held at the J.V. Fletcher Library Meeting room, 50 Main St, Westford**

If you have any questions, please contact Community Wellness Coordinator, Nicole Laviolette  
nlaviolette@westfordma.gov or 978-399-2503

Co - sponsored by the Westford Health Department and  
Community Wellness Department

## Westford Recycling Commission



### How to Use your New Recycling Guide

Recently Westford residents opened their mailbox and found a valuable resource inside – the [updated 2023-2024 Recycling Guide](#). Seldom among the unexpected ads and solicitations do we find something so useful in our mail!

Highlighted in the Guide is the Collection Calendar, showing the schedule for waste and recycling pickups for the next year, as well as dates for special collections like used electronics and more. The calendar is an important reference to use from now through June, 2024 – post it on your refrigerator or bulletin board where you can check it easily.



When do your containers go out on pickup day? Where do you place your recycling relative to your trash? How can you purchase a 64 gallon recycling “toter” or an Earth Machine composter? See those details in the Guide.

The Westford Recycling website, <https://westfordma.gov/recycling>, supplements the Guide with ideas on how to recycle dozens of other items and materials. Click on “A to Z Guide: How to Recycle Most Everything!” to find out where can you bring used books, toner cartridges, button batteries, hazardous waste and other things you don’t want to put in your trash.

The bottom line is, if it has to do with recycling in Westford, you can find it in the Guide – or, as an alternative, at <https://westfordma.gov/recycling>. If you can’t find the answer you’re looking for, feel free to call a member of the Recycling Commission. Where can you find their phone numbers? Of course, they’re in the Guide.

### Upcoming Composting Demo

Want to take the “next step” to reduce your trash and help the environment? Come to our Composting Demo on Saturday, July 22nd from 9 to 11 a.m. to learn more. The demo will be held at the Harde residence, 39 Main Street, across from Muffins on Main. Grab a muffin and learn about composting!



*Earth Machine Composter*

## Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Repurpose, and Recycle!

MA resource for “What is Recyclable?”

[www.RecycleSmartMA.org](http://www.RecycleSmartMA.org).

**The Mission of the Westford Recycling Commission is to:**

*Increase awareness of the financial and environmental impacts of recycling; provide opportunities for non-curbside recycling; educate residents on options to reduce, reuse, repurpose, and recycle; and organize recycling events that encourage diversion from the trash.*