

Newsletter of
Sibling Connections, Inc.
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www.siblingconnections.com

Providing year-round sibling
connection opportunities for
sisters and brothers who are
separated when placed in foster care.

Our primary mission
is to create enduring family
relationships for siblings
who experience foster care
through innovative programs
and practices.

Program Director
Kelley Lane

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“Camp to Belong and Sibling
Sunday are two things I can
count on in my life. When I
am spending time with my
sisters the world is right.”

—Camper

SIBLING CONNECTIONS

December 2010

Sisters & Brothers Together All Year Long!

What do you remember from your childhood? Do you recall a special memory with your siblings? Blowing out birthday candles, playing tag, baking cookies, riding bikes, welcoming home your first puppy?

Just like you, children who experience foster care cherish their sibling relationships. However, once they enter the foster care system over 75% are separated from one another and do not see one another on a regular basis. The result: Their health and well-being are compromised. Many kids worry about one another, miss each other, and feel the impact of being removed from their homes and placed in foster care.

Sibling Connections is a non-profit organization that has created a solution. We make it possible for brothers and sisters to stay connected all year long. With the help of generous volunteers, donors, sponsors, and foundations, we provide children across the Commonwealth with two programs: Camp To Belong Massachusetts and Sibling Sundays.

This summer we celebrated our sixth season of Camp To Belong MA. Children from all over the state came together with our fabulous volunteer counselors and spent the week creating joyous shared memories. They spent time together swimming and boating in the lake, scaling the climbing wall, swinging from the

trapeze, playing in the pool, and riding their favorite horses.



Signature Camp to Belong activities such as sibling pillows, our campwide Birthday Party, Carnival Night, Talent Show, and Campfires were woven into the week as well. Everyone had a wonderful time! CTB MA campers and counselors alike left the Berkshires

with wonderful keepsakes supplied by our generous partners from Beaver Summer Programs: sleeping bags, pillows, flashlights, beach towels and duffle bags. Cradles to Crayons donated a brand new backpack full of school supplies to each sibling.

After camp ended, CTB MA campers went back to school and we began preparing for our sixth season of Sibling Sundays in western Massachusetts. We planned our third season of Sibling Sundays in southeastern MA. Then we prepared to launch a new monthly program in the Greater Lowell area.

Please help us bring sisters and brothers together all year long. Our organization needs your help to be healthy and vibrant for the kids. Thank you for your time and consideration!

The Sibling Connections Team

THANKS...

TO OUR GENEROUS SC SPONSORS & FUNDERS!

Robert & Sue Africk
Barbara Alavi
Anonymous
Bean Town Sports
Beaver Summer Program
Denise & Fran Boucher
Casey Family Services
Club eX
Michelle Cote
John Driscoll
Todd & Tracy Egan
Robert Faherty
Karen Falcone
Anne & Charles Hajjar
Peter & Connie Harris
Jason Hayes Foundation
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Jordan's Furniture
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Holly Lambert
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Mel Lambert
Linda & Matt Lane
Frederick Cushing Lee
Nick Leschly
Agnes Lindsay Foundation
Lowell Community Foundation
Massachusetts Department of
Children & Families
Doug & Kimberly McClure
MENTOR Network
METRO Credit Union
The Reiser Family Foundation
Peter Tea
Kelli Thomas
James Thomas
Nat & Gina Saltonstall
Tranquil Escape Day Spa



**"The horses were awesome!
Mel and Tracy were so nice.
We all got blue ribbons."**



**"Did you see the counselor who raised
money to send a sibling to camp by
getting a Mr. T hair cut? These people
are FUN!"**



"This camp brings me joy."



**"I love Camp To Belong!
I had so much fun with my
brothers on the banana boats
and the trampoline in the lake.
THANK YOU EVERYBODY!"**



Sibling Connections Founder Wins Congressional Award!

This fall Sibling Connections founder, Judy Cockerton, was named a 2010 Congressional Angel in Adoption for her leadership and vision. Thank you Senator John Kerry for making this honor possible!

SIBLING SUNDAY FUN!

Our recipe for a great Sibling Sunday gathering is foolproof! Every month we use it to honor the lives of kids all over the state. Here's our special recipe that has kindness, caring and compassion mixed in every step of the way!

- Take one group of siblings who have been separated from one another when placed in foster care.
- Bring them together with other sisters & brothers in their community who have similar life experiences.
- Add in a dynamic group of trained volunteer counselors.
- Create special seasonal events for the kids to enjoy together.
- Raise the funding required to offer these fun monthly events.
- Have Kelley connect with social workers and foster/adoptive parents.
- Have Kelley go out and meet the children and their families.
- Extend personal invitations.
- Arrange transportation.
- Show up.
- Have a blast!

Please contact us if you would like to sponsor one of our Sibling Sunday programs or become a Sibling Sunday volunteer counselor!



“I want to be a social worker when I grow up so I can help kids in foster care be as happy as I am right now.”



“PLEASE invite me back to Sibling Sunday again. It's so nice to spend the day with my sisters having fun.”

“Re-Envisioning Foster Care? We're doing it every day at Sibling Connections!”



“Best volunteer experience I have ever had in my life! This is one great program!”



THANKS...

TO OUR AMAZING CTB MA & SIBLING SUNDAY VOLUNTEER COUNSELORS!

Aaron Aggerwal
 Barry Bouthilette
 Matt Bouthilette
 Nick Bouthilette
 Nonie Bouthilette
 Alyssa Brown
 Lindsay Burke
 Judy Cockerton
 Matther Jones Cooper
 John Dahl
 Shadia Damra
 Christopher Dial
 Tracy Lambert Egan
 Katherine Flynn
 Alissa Gillis
 Jennifer Gleason
 Jay Green
 Elissa Gross
 Patrick Harden
 Tyler Harlow
 Elise Herrig
 Leslie Hopper
 Mike Jones
 Edward Joyner
 Sheila Kane
 Mel Lambert
 Linda Marie Lane
 Kelley Lane
 Christopher Langelier
 Beatrice Legere
 Mike Marlow
 Phil Mastroanni
 Maria Melone
 Stephanie Millette
 Amanda Neas
 Joanna Neas
 Jane Novotny
 Leah Novotny
 Sue Novotny
 Alexandria Pellegrini
 Jeffrey Pike
 Arthur Pollock
 Jenna Pollock
 Karl Rehbein
 Hilary Robertson
 Adam Roy
 Jason Runnals
 Bridget Schirripa
 Brandon Sessions
 Harvey Shepard
 Shaemus Shepard
 Lily Ventrell
 Peter Whistler
 Seth Window
 Aneilay Wisseh



Re-Envisioning FOSTER CARE

every
child
rooted
in family &
community

Thanks to the visionary leadership of a beloved social entrepreneur and wise philanthropist who understood the importance of investing in the lives of our children who experience foster care, a Re-Envisioning Foster Care Initiative was launched this fall in western Massachusetts. Sibling Connections was there to fully support the launch of this very important milestone in child welfare.

This dynamic initiative envisions creating a culture of possibility. It is designed to foster engagement, change and success by bringing together a multi-disciplinary group of stakeholders that includes youth in care, former youth in care, families, advocates, child welfare and mental health professionals, educators, court personnel, legislators, researchers and interested community members. It aims to inspire additional investments in innovative ideas that lead to positive outcomes for our children and youth in foster care.

Our second Re-Envisioning Foster Care Conference will take place on March 11, 2011. For more information, contact Judy Cockerton at 413.527.7966.

GIVE THE GIFT OF CONNECTION!
Visit www.siblingconnections.com to make a
secure on-line donation.