

Connecting for Kids Spring 2024 Program Flier

Resources, support and community for families

Connecting for Kids (CFK) provides resources, support and community to families in Northeast Ohio who have concerns about their child. We serve all families, including those children with and without diagnoses.

Free programs

All Connecting for Kids programs are free and open to the public.

For more information:

- Call/Text: 440-570-5908
- info@connectingforkids.org
- connectingforkids.org

Connect With Us

It's free to join Connecting for Kids and start connecting with other Northeast Ohio families on a similar path. connectingforkids.org/joinus

Find Full Program Details & Register Online!

Learn more about our fall programs and register on our website. To get started, visit connectingforkids.org/register

Ask Us!

Register for a 30-minute time slot and get information on a wide range of concerns from adapted program options and school struggles to mental health and specific diagnoses. Time slots are available by phone or Zoom. To view available dates/times, visit connectingforkids.org/AskUs.

Connecting for Kids Resource Fairs

CFK resource fairs are free, in-person, indoor events with drive-up grab & go options, offering resources for families with concerns about their youth (ages birth–22). connectingforkids.org/resource-fairs

Who should attend?

Everyone concerned about a youth; including concerns about disabilities, academics or mental health.

Why CFK resource fairs?

Find resources and talk with service providers.

What is a grab & go?

Only have a few minutes? No problem! Drive up to the grab & go tent to quickly receive a bag of resources. Pre-registration required.

What you'll find

Adapted camps, adapted sports and recreation, alternative schools, disability services, early intervention, educational advocates, funding

sources, job services, mental health providers, music therapy programs, occupational therapy, physical therapy, respite providers, social skills programs, speech–language therapy, support groups, transitional services, tutors and academic programs, vision therapy and much more!

Eastern Cuyahoga County Resource Fair

Saturday, March 2, 2024 from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at Tri-C Eastern Campus Student Services Building in Highland Hills.

Lorain County Resource Fair

Tuesday, March 12, 2024 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at LCCC Spitzer Conference Center in Elyria.

Western Cuyahoga County Resource Fair

Wednesday, March 27, 2024 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Don Umerley Civic Center in Rocky River.

Workshops

During workshop sessions, pediatric professionals will guide families in discussion, problem–solving and learning experiences. Free, supervised children’s activities are available but adults and children must register separately. connectingforkids.org/workshops

Behavior Chat: Special Sensory Edition

(Families with young children, 18 months – 6 years)

Christine Chambers, MEd, OTR/L, of Abilities First, LLC, will talk about what a sensory bucket is and some tools you can use to empty your child's bucket to promote positive behavior. For caregivers of children ages 18 months – 6 years. Each attendee will receive a free Behavior Toolkit.

Tuesday, Jan. 30, 6:30 p.m.

Virtual

Social Skills for the Neurodivergent Child

(Families with elementary-aged children, 7–12 years)

Lisa Mortensen, of Spectrum Social Club, will share skill-building techniques for children with ADHD, anxiety and autism. She will also discuss how to distinguish between things families need to adapt to and things they need to accept. Attendees will break into groups to share ideas and practice skills.

Monday, March 4, 6:30 p.m.

Westlake Porter Public Library

Behavior Chat: Top Five Behavior Concerns

(Families with young children, 18 months – 6 years)

Kathy Nash, MEd, and CFK staff will discuss the top five behavior questions parents ask and which tools to use to support specific concerns. The content is geared toward caregivers of children ages

18 months – 6 years (with or without developmental concerns). Each attendee will receive a free Behavior Toolkit.

Wednesday, March 6, 6:30 p.m.

Solon Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

How to Communicate Effectively with School

(Families with elementary-aged children, 7–12 years)

Karla Fitch, MSW, LSW, of Connecting for Kids, will teach families how to create and use a communication binder. She will also demonstrate ways to use the binder throughout the year to communicate your child's needs. All participants will be given supplies to put together their own binders!

Thursday, March 28, 6:30 p.m.

Lakewood Public Library, Main Library

Summer Survival: Navigating Adapted Programs and Funding for Summer

(Families with elementary-aged children, 7–12 years)

If you are trying to find adapted or inclusive summer programs, join Connecting for Kids staff who will answer questions about summer resources and provide tips for finding funding. Joy Howard, Parent Mentor for Cleveland Heights–University Heights, will also be there to answer questions and connect with families.

Sunday, April 7, 2:30 p.m.

Heights Libraries, Lee Road Branch

Less Screaming and More Talking: Discipline in 2024 – for Black American Caregivers

(Families with children, 0–12 years)

Anna Jones, LISW–S, of Cleveland State University and Up the Steps, will discuss the generational differences that make discipline difficult, the history of discipline in the Black community and how to know what types of discipline may work for your child. Caregivers will learn calming strategies for the whole family.

Friday, April 26, 6:30 p.m.

Virtual

Share & Support

Join our support groups and meet other families facing similar concerns. Free, supervised children’s activities are available but adults and children must register separately.

connectingforkids.org/support

Five Steps to Create Calm

(Families with children, 0–12 years)

Terri McNeely, LISW, of the Child and Family Counseling Center of Westlake, will teach you a five-step mindfulness process to regulate your and your child’s emotions and bring a sense of calm to your home. Enjoy coffee and treats as you wind down from the fast pace of the holidays.

Tuesday, Jan. 23, 6:30 p.m.

Westlake Porter Public Library

LGBTQ+ Caregiver Connect

(Families with children, 0–12 years)

Are you the caregiver of a child who is gender-questioning, expansive or LGBTQ+? Kameron Pepera, MEd, LPCC–S of Colors+, will lead a discussion where families can learn, connect and find resources to better support and affirm their child.

Thursday, Feb. 1, 6:30 p.m.

Virtual

Five Steps to Create Calm: For Families of Children with Complex Needs

(Families with children, 0–12 years)

At this session, we will focus on mindfulness tools to help regulate caregiver emotions. Parents will have the chance to learn techniques and coping tools while connecting virtually.

Tuesday, Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m.

Virtual

Color, Craft & Connect

(Families with children, 0–12 years)

Join CFK staff as we share joys (roses), struggles (thorns) and find some connection while we color and craft. Enjoy coffee and treats as you interact with others in a casual environment.

Thursday, Feb. 29, 6:30 p.m.

Euclid Public Library

Tuesday, May 21, 6:00 p.m.

North Ridgeville Branch of Lorain Public Library System

Sibshop: Sibling and Caregiver Support

(Families with elementary-aged children, 7–12 years)

Join Connecting for Kids and the Down Syndrome Association of Northeast Ohio for a parent/sibling support program. Children ages 7–12 will meet other sibs, play games, craft and talk about having a sibling with disabilities. In a separate room, caregivers will learn about opportunities for sibling support.

Tuesday, April 9, 6:30 p.m.

Middleburg Heights Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

Speaker Series

Presentations on childhood topics by pediatric professionals. Free, supervised children's activities are available but adults and children must register separately. connectingforkids.org/speakerseries

Conquer the Chaos: Empowering Families with Executive Function Coaching

(Families with elementary-aged children, 7–12 years)

Katie Greenleaf, MA, LPCC, of Anchored Unbound Counseling, Coaching and Consulting, will discuss how to use executive function strategies to create a supportive family environment that

contributes to your child's success. She'll also discuss the differences between counseling and coaching, and provide tools to help your family thrive.

Tuesday, Feb. 6, 6:30 p.m.

Rocky River Public Library

Music Therapy & More

Join us for a hands-on program designed to teach families how to use music to improve their child's academic, motor, communication and social skills as well as behavior. This program is designed for families and their children, ages 0 - 6 years, who have concerns about development. connectingforkids.org/music

Euclid Public Library

Sessions begin at 6:30 p.m.

- Thursday, Feb. 15
- Thursday, March 14
- Thursday, April 11

Heights Libraries, Lee Road Branch

Sessions begin at 6:30 p.m.

- Wednesday, March 13
- Wednesday, April 10
- Wednesday, May 8

Lakewood Public Library, Madison Branch

Sessions begin at 9:30 a.m.

- Saturday, Feb. 17
- Saturday, March 16

- Saturday, April 13
- Saturday, May 11
- Saturday, June 8
- Saturday, July 13

Middleburg Heights Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

Sessions begin at 11:00 a.m.

- Saturday, Feb. 17
- Saturday, March 16
- Saturday, April 13

North Ridgeville Branch of Lorain Public Library System

Sessions begin at 6:30 p.m.

- Thursday, March 28
- Thursday, April 25
- Thursday, May 16

Parma–Snow Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

Sessions begin at 6:30 p.m.

- Monday, March 11
- Monday, March 18
- Monday, March 25
- Monday, April 8
- Monday, April 15

Solon Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

Sessions begin at 6:30 p.m.

- Wednesday, Feb. 28
- Wednesday, March 20

- Wednesday, April 17

Westlake Porter Public Library

Sessions begin at 10:30 a.m.

- Friday, Jan. 12
- Saturday, Jan. 13
- Friday, Feb. 9
- Saturday, Feb. 10
- Friday, March 8
- Saturday, March 9

Music Therapy & More: Elementary Age

These sessions are designed for families and their children ages 7–12 with complex needs or disabilities. Participants engage in singing, listening, instrument play and movement to music in a fun, interactive environment. Families will learn to use music to enhance gross motor skills, develop body awareness, practice social skills and expand their creative abilities. This program is led by a Board-Certified Music Therapist. connectingforkids.org/music

Lakewood Public Library, Main Branch

Sessions begin at 6:30 p.m.

- Thursday, Feb. 22
- Thursday, Mar. 21
- Thursday, April 18

Inclusive Drop-In Playgroups

Caregivers will have a chance to get hands-on support, meet other families and connect to community resources. Led by an Early Childhood Specialist and CFK staff, children and caregivers will learn strategies for dealing with behavior challenges, communication concerns and sensory issues. Registration is welcome but not required. For caregivers and children ages 0 – 6 years.

Lakewood Family Room

All sessions from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

- Thursday, Jan. 25
- Thursday, March 14
- Thursday, June 13

Adapted Playgroups

Adapted Playgroup is a safe, welcoming environment for caregivers of children (18 mos – 6 years) with concerns about development. Your child will practice play and social skills. You will have the chance to interact with our experienced Intervention Specialist who can provide tips on everything from behavior to social skills.

connectingforkids.org/play

Lakewood Public Library, Main Branch

Sessions begin at 9:30 a.m.

- Saturday, Feb. 24
- Saturday, Mar. 23
- Saturday, April 20

Westlake Porter Public Library

Thursday sessions begin at 6:30 p.m. and Friday sessions begin at 10:30 a.m.

- Thursday, Feb. 22
- Friday, Feb. 23
- Thursday, Mar. 21
- Friday, Mar. 22
- Thursday, April 18
- Friday, April 19

Adapted Storytimes

Children with varying learning styles and abilities learn together in a safe, supportive environment where respect and appreciation for differences is encouraged. This storytime is designed for children who may not be successful in a typical storytime experience.

Content is geared toward ages 3 – 7 years, but all ages are welcome. Siblings may also attend but must register separately. For more information, visit connectingforkids.org/library.

Euclid Public Library

- Saturday, Feb. 17, 11:00 a.m.
- Saturday, March 16, 11:00 a.m.
- Saturday, April 13, 11:00 a.m.

Middleburg Heights Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

- Saturday, Jan. 13, 11:00 a.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 10, 11:00 a.m.

- Saturday, March 2, 11:00 a.m.
- Saturday, April 6, 11:00 a.m.
- Saturday, May 4, 11:00 a.m.

Parma–Snow Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

- Tuesday, Jan. 9, 11:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, Feb. 13, 11:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, March 12, 11:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, April 9, 11:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, May 14, 11:00 a.m.

Rocky River Public Library

- Saturday, Jan. 13, 9:15 a.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 10, 9:15 a.m.
- Saturday, March 9, 9:15 a.m.
- Saturday, April 13, 9:15 a.m.
- Saturday, May 11, 9:15 a.m.

Solon Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

- Saturday, Jan. 6, 10:30 a.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 17, 10:30 a.m.
- Saturday, March 16, 10:30 a.m.
- Saturday, April 13, 10:30 a.m.
- Saturday, May 11, 10:30 a.m.

Westlake Porter Public Library

- Thursday, Jan. 11, 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Jan. 25, 6:30 p.m.
- Friday, Feb. 2, 10:30 a.m.
- Thursday, Feb. 8, 6:30 p.m.

- Sunday, Feb. 18, 2:30 p.m.
- Thursday, March 7, 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, March 16, 11:00 a.m.
- Thursday, April 4, 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, April 13, 11:00 a.m.
- Friday, April 26, 10:30 a.m.
- Thursday, May 2, 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, May 11, 11:00 a.m.
- Friday, May 24, 10:30 a.m.

Adapted Library Programs

For more information, visit connectingforkids.org/library.

GenZen Hangout: For Tweens of All Abilities in Grades 4–6

Play games, tinker, make art and just hang out at our inclusive monthly meet-up.

Thursday, Jan. 11, 6:30 p.m.

Solon Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

Saturday, March 23, 3:00 p.m.

Middleburg Heights Branch of Cuyahoga County Library

Sensory Workshop

Let's make...connections, friends, cool stuff! In each session of Sensory Workshop you'll make something to take home with you! Ages 8–12. For children with disabilities and typical peers.

Wednesday, Jan. 17, 4:30 p.m.
Westlake Porter Public Library

Adapted Art

Adapted Art features fun, interactive, and easy art projects, for families with young children with disabilities. Ages 2–5. We may get messy, so dress accordingly!

Tuesday, Jan. 30, 11:00 a.m.
Westlake Porter Public Library

Sensory Friendly Movie: The Super Mario Bros. Movie

Join us for a sensory-friendly presentation of The Super Mario Bros. Movie for kids! The lights will be up and the sound will be down to accommodate children with unique needs. Children are welcome to talk and explore during the film showing.

Monday, March 18, 10:30 a.m.
Euclid Public Library

P.A.L.S. Big Screen Sensory Friendly Movies: Kung Fu Panda

Join us for a Sensory Friendly Movie, where the sound is lower, the lights are brighter, and where talking, singing and moving is perfectly acceptable! Light refreshments available.

Friday, March 29, 11:00 a.m.
Parma-Snow Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

Kids in the Kitchen Adapted Story Time

Join us for a story time and a hands-on cooking lesson for children with varying learning styles and abilities. Learn together in a safe, supportive environment where respect and appreciation for differences is encouraged. Content is geared toward ages 3 to 7 years, but all ages are welcome.

Tuesday, May 24, 6:30 p.m.

North Ridgeville Branch of Lorain Public Library System

With Thanks

Programming is made possible in part by support from local organizations.

- Community Foundation of Lorain County
- Community West Foundation
- Cuyahoga Arts & Culture
- GPD Employees' Foundation
- Healthy Lakewood Foundation
- Nordson Corporation Foundation
- Rotary Club of North Ridgeville
- Rotary Club of Westlake-Bay Village
- Sierra and The TJX Foundation

Locations

Avon Lake Public Library

32649 Electric Blvd.

440-933-8128

Euclid Public Library

631 E 222 St.

216-261-5300

Heights Libraries, Lee Road Branch

345 Lee Road

216-932-3600

Lakewood Family Room at Cove Community Center

12525 Lake Ave.

216-529-5018

Lakewood Public Library, Madison Branch

13229 Madison Ave.

216-228-7428

Lakewood Public Library, Main Library

15425 Detroit Ave.

216-226-8275

Middleburg Heights Branch Cuyahoga County Public Library

16699 Bagley Road

440-234-3600

North Ridgeville Branch Lorain Public Library System

35700 Bainbridge Road

440-327-8326

Parma-Snow Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library

2121 Snow Road

216-661-4240

Rocky River Public Library

1600 Hampton Road

440-333-7610

Solon Branch Cuyahoga County Public Library

34125 Portz Pkwy.

440-248-8777

Westlake Porter Public Library

27333 Center Ridge Road

440-871-2600