



# **Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN) Connection May 2025**



**AHS - VDH CSHN**  
AHS

Dear Colleagues and Community Partners,

May is finally here; we can let ourselves exhale and relax into the warmth of sunshine and longer daylight hours. May is Mental Health Awareness Month and because Children With Special Health Needs supports the health and wellbeing of children and youth with complex medical needs and their families, we take a minute to remind you that mental health is sometimes overlooked for this population. Part of improving the overall health of the children we serve, is supporting their medical and mental health needs in a more integrated and coordinated way. That may start with simply remembering to ask about the child's emotional wellbeing, asking parents if they are

taking time for themselves, and recognizing the increased mental health risk factors for children with medical and developmental complexities.

We hope you find this edition of the CSHN Connection interesting and helpful. Don't forget to carve out time for activities that rejuvenate you and support your wellness!

CSHN Connections Project Team

## **Table of Contents**

Program Spotlight: CSHN Care Consultation  
Community Partner Spotlight: Help Me Grow  
CSHN Updates  
Resources for Families  
Policy Corner  
Community Happenings

## **Program Spotlight**

### **CSHN Care Consultation**



Children With Special Health Needs (CSHN) is a free public health program for children with chronic medical conditions and developmental disabilities. We are a program of the Vermont Department of Health. CSHN Care Consultants provide information and support to families, care teams, and community providers to help access resources and reduce barriers to care. Our team is distributed across the state and partners with care coordinators in primary care and home health, as well as case managers in designated agencies and educational settings. Care Consultants are knowledgeable about complex medical conditions and developmental disabilities, Vermont Medicaid, healthcare transitions, and access to higher-levels of care – including out of state treatment. Our team supports care providers to implement team-based care and shared plans of care for children with complex care needs.

The Care Consultant's involvement is generally short term and on an as needed basis until a child's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. We are proud of our diverse partners- families, healthcare professionals, educators, community-based service providers, specialists, rehab therapists, and other Vermont Agency of Human Services employees that are serving Vermont kids and families. We enjoy finding creative solutions and helping our partners navigate the often complex and unique needs of children and youth with special health needs.

Want to reach the CSHN Care Consultant for your area? Local contact info is available on our website: [CSHN Service Area](#).

## Community Partner Spotlight



Baby, adult with grey beard holding baby and child wearing red and white polka dot top.



**Help Me Grow is Vermont's go-to resource for connecting families to services and supports**

[Help Me Grow](#) links families and children to the information, supports, and services they need to thrive. Help Me Grow also stays in touch to provide continued support for families! Help Me Grow is powered by a resource grid of more than 3,000 services across the state. This helps to ensure that families can plug into the services they need.

### **How Help Me Grow Works**

Help Me Grow helps families and professionals navigate and connect to community services. Providers can refer a child or family by dialing 211 ext. 6 or completing an online referral [form](#). Help Me Grow staff will then contact the parent/caregiver and will also follow up with the referring provider (with parent permission).

## Free Tools and Training

Help Me Grow provides training on using Ages and Stages (ASQ) developmental and behavioral screening tools and offers free access for providers to the ASQ Online system.

Contact us at [info@helpmegrowvt.org](mailto:info@helpmegrowvt.org)



Our 2024 highlights include:

1. The number of referrals from health care providers on behalf of families to HMGVT increased by 15% from baseline. There were 215 referrals from health care providers, compared to 88 referrals in 2023, a 144% increase over the prior year.
2. HMGVT served 1,060 families, an 18% increase over 2023.
3. There are 18 medical practices using the Ages and Stages Online system to conduct developmental and behavioral screening.

Learn more at [www.HelpMeGrowVT.org](http://www.HelpMeGrowVT.org)

## CSHN Updates



Child in bright blue jacket holding up multi-colored kite above their head.

**Join our team!** CSHN's Children's Personal Care Services is hiring!

Please follow this link for details: [Children's Personal Care Services Specialist Job Details | State of Vermont](#)

**Children's Personal Care Services is holding CPCS Assessor Trainings** on the following dates on Microsoft Teams:

Wednesday, May 28, 2025, 1pm-3:30pm

Wednesday, June 25, 2025, 1pm-3:30pm

Wednesday, July 23, 2025, 1pm-3:30pm

Please email [AHS.VDHCPCS@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.VDHCPCS@vermont.gov) to register.

---

## Helping Families Moving to Vermont

Our team at Vermont Department of Health, **Children with Special Health Needs (Vermont Department of Health)** is looking to engage with families who have a **child with special health needs (chronic medical condition or developmental**

**disability) and who have moved to Vermont from another state in the last 2 years.** We are seeking to better understand the experience of planning, preparing, and moving to the state within the context of transferring and accessing healthcare for children with complex needs. The work will inform the creation of recommended protocols and practices as well as materials to support families moving to Vermont in the future.

Please share widely to any families with a child with special health needs that is new to Vermont. **Participation is completing a survey that takes about 10 minutes and we will compensate families \$25 for their time .**

**If you or someone you know are interested in participating this study or have additional questions, please contact Marinell Newton at [Marinell.newton@vermont.gov](mailto:Marinell.newton@vermont.gov) or 802-578-2667.**



Adult sitting with child on sofa. Both wearing striped shirts. Child wearing glasses.

## Resources for Families





Pod of green peas in opened pod.

## Vermont Summer Food Sources

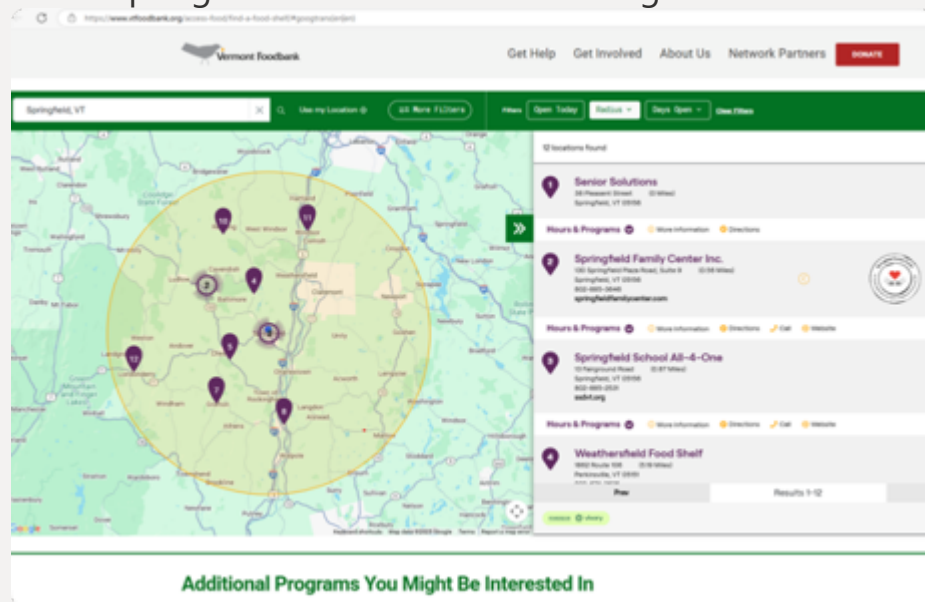
Do you have families seeking food sources this summer? The following websites contain locations, programs, and a wealth of information for families to access summer food. Some of the following programs can talk to families to help meet their needs. Additionally, its recommended families check with their local schools for special programs such as free summer swimming or recreation programs along with free lunch.

Sources throughout Vermont include:

**Hunger Free Vermont** [Summer Meals — Hunger Free Vermont](#) has a lot of information and locations on their website.

**Vermont Foodbank** has a fantastic new map and online resource webpages for Vermonter families!

First, start with Find a Food Shelf at [Find a Food Shelf - Vermont Foodbank](#). For example, I typed in "Springfield VT" into the search engine:





Further down their webpage under “Additional Programs You Might Be Interested In” specific programs are listed such as VeggieVanGo, 3SquaresVT, and more.

At the top of Vermont Foodbank’s webpage are other options for assistance under “Get Help”.

Families can contact Vermont Foodbank at: 1-800-585-2265, [info@vtfoodbank.org](mailto:info@vtfoodbank.org) if have further questions.

---

Speaking of food...

**Attune2Food** is running a grant program through the end of June that allows food insecure families that have kids with *extreme picky eating* to access gift cards to local grocery stores that allow them to purchase a specific list of foods that are 'prescribed' by a pediatric dietitian or feeding therapist.



Children and families must qualify via medical diagnosis and confirmation of food insecurity (self-reported). Gift cards to local grocery vendors will be issued to each family at least monthly. The family co-creates the prescribed food list, based on their goals and needs. Less processed foods and plant-based foods will be prioritized and recommended with the goal of increasing nutrient intake & variety.

## Grant Info

Check out the announcement on Bi-State Primary Care's website

[FAHC Community Grant Awardees | Bi-State Primary Care](#)

## Enroll Families

Fill out a short referral form or watch our 12 minute video for referring providers

[Vermont Pediatric Medically Tailored Meals Grant Program - Attune2Food](#)

---

## Family Needs Assessment

The [RAPID Survey Project](#) is an ongoing national survey of households with children under 6 designed to gather essential information on the needs and well-being of children and the important adults in their lives. Since its launch in April 2020, RAPID has proven to be a powerful resource for uplifting the voices of parents/caregivers and early childhood educators. The survey is available in English and Spanish.

The survey can be found here:

**Survey Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/rapidec-bbf>

**QR Code:**



2025 QR code



QR code link to survey. Text description of survey. Adult showing child a toy, in pre-school learning classroom.

---

Did you know...?

**Circle of Parents** is a network of peer-led support groups. These groups foster connections, share experience, and mutual support for parents who might be experiencing similar challenges raising their children. Open to parents and caregivers, no referral required. COP has a lot of information, projects, and research on their website: <https://www.pcavt.org>.

In the Upper Valley area, **Circle of Parents Support Group for Parents of Children with Special Needs** meets on Tuesdays at noon. Families can email [familysupport@pcavt.org](mailto:familysupport@pcavt.org) or call 1-800-CHILDREN for meeting information or for information about meetings in your area.

**Please consider sharing these resources with the families you serve and others at your organizations.**

## Policy Corner



Child in light blue scrubs, wearing a green stethoscope, examining tan stuffed animal.

## Vermont Policy Updates

GCR 24-013 **Physician Visit Limit Change** removes limits on physician office visits, home visits, and nursing facility visits. Physician hospital visits remain. The effective date is February 15, 2025. Further information can be found at [GCR 24-013](#).

Note: this GCR will appear also as State Plan Amendment 25-0005.

GCR 24-060 **PT Therapy, OT, and SLP Changes** - this one is complex, accessing the Change notice might help: [24-060-GCR-PT-OT-SLP-Changes](#). These changes are effective January 1, 2025, for the Vermont Medicaid program.

GCR 24-091 **Mental Health Case Rate Update** updated final notice. This is a *technical correction* to the value-based payment measures that align with the 2024 Managed Care rule 89 FR 41002 for Designated Agencies and Specialized Service Agencies. Further information is found here: [GCR 24-091](#).

GCR 25-010 **Reimbursement for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics** is effective February 1, 2025. This increases the Prospective Payment System rates by 3.5% for Dates of Service after February 1, 2025. See detailed descriptions at [GCR 25-010](#).

GCR 25-047 **Updated Federal Poverty Levels for MAGI-Based Medicaid** for 2025 Federal Poverty Level (FPL) income thresholds effective April 1, 2025. What is "MAGI"? Detailed descriptions can be found on multiple webpages: [2025 Eligibility Tables | Vermont Health Connect](#) and [What's included as income | HealthCare.gov](#). The Policy info sheet link is here: [GCR 25-047](#).

Want to be added to **email notifications for Global Commitment waivers**? (Recommendation: If don't want to flood your Inbox, perhaps choose one person in your office or team to receive the emails for everyone.) Please email [AHS.MedicaidPolicy@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.MedicaidPolicy@vermont.gov).

## Community Happenings

**LISTEN Community Services** has in the past provided our CSHN families with LISTEN Summer Camp Scholarships. These need-based camp scholarships for Vermont's Upper Valley children ages 6-14 is available for one week at a camp of their choice. But the scholarships are going fast! Families can self-refer by calling LISTEN to schedule an eligibility appointment. For more information about the scholarships, see [Providing need-based camp scholarships to Upper Valley children](#) or call 603-448-2510.

---

**Camp Knock Knock (CKK)** is a weekend camp for families with children who have experienced the death of a loved one. Designed to provide open support and guidance, families receive opportunities for growth & healing with the help of skilled counselors & specially trained volunteers.

In addition to camp traditions such as recreation, arts and crafts, and campfires, CKK offers therapeutic groups for adults and children and an opportunity to share space with others coping with loss.

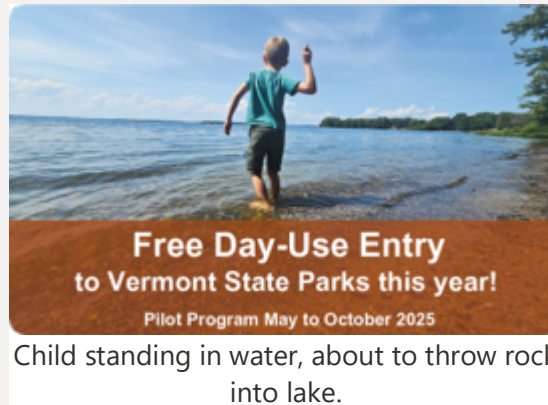
CKK will be held October 3-5, 2025 at Camp Ta Kum Ta in South Hero, VT. Visit the [website](#) for more information or reach out to [campknockknock@gmail.com](mailto:campknockknock@gmail.com) for questions or referrals. **Please share this information with any families that might be interested in attending Camp Knock Knock 2025.**



Adult with brown hair, wearing blue hoodie, holding a bag. Child with long brown hair in a UVM hoodie, holding a white bag in front of them.

---

## Free Day-Use Entry to Vermont State Parks this year!



Child standing in water, about to throw rock into lake.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Eligibility</b><br>Eligible Vermonters include those enrolled in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3SquaresVT</li><li>• Essential Person Program</li><li>• Fuel Assistance</li><li>• General Assistance</li><li>• Reach Up</li><li>• Summer EBT</li><li>• WIC</li></ul> | <b>Using the Benefit</b><br>If you have an EBT or WIC card with active benefits: Bring this card to a state park and you and your household will get in for free. That's it!<br><br>Enrolled but don't have an EBT card?<br>Visit your local Economic Services District Office to receive an ESD card that can be used for state park entrance this year or call 1-800-479-6151 to request one be mailed to you. |
|  <p>Scan now!<br/>Learn more<br/>about this<br/>2025 benefit.<br/><a href="https://VermontParksForever.org/paf-pilot">VermontParksForever.org/paf-pilot</a></p>                                |  <br>   |

---

**Autism Spectrum Disorder Foundation (ASDF)** provides summer scholarship grants for families. See this Autism Speaks webpage for more information: [Autism grants for families | Autism Speaks](#) .

---

The **Vermont Department of Disabilities Aging and Independent Living (DAIL)** is seeking to improve services for Vermonters who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or



DeafBlind via a quick survey to understand the community and identify gaps in services. **Please take 5-15 minutes to fill out this survey.** Your voice and experience are valuable and necessary for this work. **Thank you for sharing your time with us!**



Link to survey home page with ASL videos: [Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, DeafBlind Survey | Disabilities Aging and Independent Living](#)

CSHN supports children with complex, chronic health conditions and/or developmental disorders, ages birth to-21, and their families, with flexible, experienced, and proactive services. If you'd like to learn more about CSHN programming and resources, please see the [CSHN Website](#).

Do you have feedback or content for this newsletter? Please [let us know!](#)



[View in SharePoint](#)

How was the formatting of this email?  



This email is generated through State of Vermont's use of Microsoft 365 and may contain content that is controlled by State of Vermont.