

Children with Special Health Needs (CSHN) Connection September 2026



AHS - VDH CSHN

12 min read



Dear Colleagues, Community Partners, and CSHN Families,

The Cambridge English Dictionary defines Fall most simply as “the act of moving onto or toward the ground...” Think autumn leaves floating and falling, but this time of year we are also falling in a sense. Falling back into routines that we may have loosened a bit for summer. Falling back into school. Grounding ourselves as we prepare for cooler temperatures and hopefully making the most of these glorious warm afternoons. We hope you find a quiet grounded moment to enjoy this month’s newsletter.

The September *Connections* newsletter has more information on incontinence supplies through VT Medicaid and how families can troubleshoot issues, and tips for providers when writing the letter of medical necessity. There is the Fall greeting from CSHN Program Director, Adam Poulin, a word from The Vermont Continence Project, which is our Community Partner Spotlight, and as with every issue a variety of news, resources, and updates.

As you are falling back into your routines and the general busyness that comes with this time of year take a moment to catch a falling leaf or bask in a warm ray of sunshine.

“So this is autumn, a windy world with misty music, and leaves that

twirl.” Angie Weiland-Crosby

CSHN Connections Team

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Program Spotlight

CSHN Program Spotlight: CSHN and Vermont Team Based Care

Program Highlight

CSHN & [Vermont Team Based Care | Agency of Human Services](#)

The Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS) is committed to a philosophy of team-based care for Vermonters with diverse needs, across the lifespan. For children with special healthcare needs, this means care conferencing, clearly defined care team roles, information sharing, and care planning that centers family priorities and goals. As we know, the children we serve are part of a larger family system, with parents, caregivers, and siblings who may have their own needs as well. A strong, team-based ecosystem benefits our identified patients/clients and their families alike.

While effective team-based care has been a goal for AHS for over a decade, efforts were renewed in 2024 to reinvigorate and improve this approach. In partnership with the [Camden Coalition](#), staff across AHS, including representatives from CSHN, developed new tools and resources for providers in human services, housing, and corrections. These materials are available online and are free to use. CSHN Care Consultants are regional points of

contact for anyone seeking to implement a team-based approach. We encourage you to reach out to learn more and tap into resources for the children you serve, their families, and their communities.

AHS.VDHCSHN@vermont.gov.

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

Community Partner Spotlight:

Vermont Continence Project

The Vermont Continence Project (VCP) is dedicated to improving the quality of toilet training and incontinence care for Vermont children and youth. These are some of our current offerings:

- [Continent & Confident: The Parents' Guide to Toilet Training Challenges](#) (go.uvm.edu/continent-confident) – This plain language video series addresses issues parents face when their child has an incontinence issue. It consists of more than 30 short videos over six units, and is great for anyone looking for an introduction to holistic, interdisciplinary continence management
- [Primary Care Toilet Training Toolkit](#) (go.uvm.edu/tt-toolkit) – This toolkit provides guided access to resources from the VCP through a decision tree, a glossary, and succinct tip sheets. Check back over the course of the 2026-2027 project year for additional guides related to medical complexity, disability, and psychosocial toilet training challenges.
- [Consultative Rounds](#) (go.uvm.edu/tt-rounds) – Consultative Rounds are the VCP's only source of consultation. Sessions may include OT, PT, psych, nutrition, and medical consultants, and are open to professionals to observe. Check back for dates in the 2026-2027 project year.

You can learn more about VCP at go.uvm.edu/continence. The VCP is based

in the [Center on Disability and Community Inclusion at the University of Vermont](#).

To learn more how we at CSHN can help with continence resources, see CSHN Updates below.

CSHN Updates



Cloudy sunset over a pumpkin patch.

CSHN Updates

How to Get Diapers and Pull-Ups through VT Medicaid and How to Get the Products Your Child Needs!

Did you know that if you have Vermont Medicaid and your child has a medical condition that makes them unable to control urine and/or bowel movements-your child's doctor can write a prescription for the incontinence supplies and how many you'll need? Medicaid/Dr. Dynasaur covers medically necessary diapers, pull-ups, under pads, and liners for children with incontinence. The company that Vermont Medicaid works with for all incontinence supplies is ActivStyle. Children With Special Health Needs has developed a one-page information sheet with complete step-by-step instructions! Found here: [Incontinence Supplies from Medicaid](#)

Sometimes families find that the diapers or pull-ups that ActivStyle provides

don't work for their child- not to worry. Families should make a good faith effort to work with ActivStyles products by trying a variety of samples. Families should ask their child's Primary Care Provider (PCP)/Pediatrician to make sure the conversations around diaper/incontinence supplies issues & trials are documented in the child's office file/clinical notes. If the child still needs a specific diaper or pull-up product, the Primary Care Provider (PCP) or pediatrician and clinical notes can be very helpful. The PCP may need to write a new diaper prescription and letter of medical necessity.

When the PCP is preparing the diaper prescription, they should include a well written letter of medical necessity. - This should include details of previous trials with other diapers including names/brands, why they did not work (caused rash, too big, too small, excessive leakage, etc.) - The PCP should include what brand and size that is working. They should also write across the top of the letter, "Letter of Medical Necessity/EPSDT Request." Toward the end of the letter outlining the medical necessity, there should be a sentence that includes this wording/information- "This request should fall under the child's EPSDT benefits. It is outlined within this letter to show that this request is appropriate, and it is medically necessary to correct, ameliorate, and prevent health conditions" such as skin breakdown, etc.,

CSHN Care Consultants are always happy to help navigate issues with ActivStyle!

AHS.VDHCSHN@vermont.gov.

We hope you find this resource helpful!

Resources for Families



Child sitting on adult's shoulders, reaching for fall leaf. Second child observing from side.

Fall Goings On

Introducing the VT Community Feeding Team

This fall, Attune2Food is launching a new option for Vermont families navigating pediatric feeding challenges: a registered dietitian, a feeding therapist (OT and/or SLP), and a mental health clinician working together on one intake, one shared record, and one coordinated plan — primarily via telehealth.

Who this is for:

- Rural families with no feeding therapist within reasonable driving distance, or any local option at all
- Resource-strapped families for whom the cost and travel of a specialty clinic has been the reason a child goes without care
- Families seen at UVM or Dartmouth feeding clinics who want more frequent, ongoing support with day-to-day details or plan adjustments
- Clinicians already working with a family who want to bring in a multidisciplinary team to work alongside them as needed — think a nutrition layer, the emotional side of eating, or an added set of eyes
- Families needing a break or a different approach after a feeding plan has stalled

Get started:

- [Refer a family](#)
- [Book a short consult](#)
- [Learn more](#) | [Meet the team](#)

Questions welcome — reach out to Attune2Food directly at [Meet the team](#) link.



Early Intervention Project of Vermont

Feeding Forward Vermont: Applications Now Open

[Feeding Forward Vermont](#) is a new statewide professional development initiative from the Early Intervention Project of Vermont in partnership with [Feeding Matters](#). The program is designed to strengthen Vermont's capacity to support young children with feeding challenges by building shared knowledge and stronger connections among providers across disciplines.

Two learning pathways are available: Foundations, for professionals across disciplines who support young children with feeding challenges, and Specialist, for providers who provide or are preparing to provide feeding evaluation and intervention. Learning begins in November 2026 and continues through spring 2027. [Applications are open through the end of September](#). Learn more about the pathways, schedules, and eligibility and apply at go.uvm.edu/earlyintervention.



Child wearing blue and white jacket, green backpack, standing alone in classroom.

Vermont's Agency of Education (AOE) provides a lot of information and resources to share about Individual Education Plans and transition planning resources. Check out [Postsecondary Transition for Students with Disabilities](#) for current resources. Additionally, staff recently conducted several parent specific trainings with Vermont Family Network (VFN) about planning resources. Those can be found on the [VFN Disability Workshops](#) webpage.

Also check out these upcoming trainings from the Vermont Family Network!

All sessions are free, held on Zoom, and open to families and professionals.

9/29/26, 2:00-3:00 pm

Overwhelmed with Health Questions?

Searching for health information online can be overwhelming, and it can be difficult to know where to turn for quality resources. UVM Libraries' Maria Avery will introduce MedlinePlus, a trusted source of free, evidence-based health information designed for patients and caregivers.

Register here: [Overwhelmed with Health Questions?](#)

10/13/26, 2:00-3:00 pm

Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Programs for Students with Disabilities: A Panel Presentation

Students with developmental and intellectual disabilities have many options to continue their education after high school. We will hear from participants and staff at four programs that serve Vermont students: Think College, College Steps, Mansfield Hall, and the SUCCEED program.

Register here: [Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Programs for Students with Disabilities: A Panel Presentation](#)

11/5/26, 10:00-11:00 am

From Homework to Healthcare: What Families Need to Know about AI

UVM Libraries' Maria Avery will explain what generative AI is, how it works, where youth may already encounter it, and how families can talk about and use AI safely and responsibly.

Register here: [From Homework to Healthcare: What Families Need to Know about AI](#)

11/19/26, 10:00-11:00 am

Being an Active Member of Your Child's Special Education Team

This session will focus on effective ways families can communicate with school personnel while understanding the rights that support their participation in the special education process.

Register here: [Being an Active Member of Your Child's Special Education Team](#)

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

Policy Corner



Medical providers having conversation standing in a circle seen from above.

Vermont Policy Updates

Final Policy GCR 26-015 - [GCR 26-015 FINAL Medicaid School-Based Services](#) PDF describes expanded Medicaid covered services for medically necessary services and new cost-based payment model Random Moment Time Study (RTMS) effective October 1, 2026. This affects Medicaid-enrolled students receiving medically necessary health services billed by Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Additional details are contained in the PDF or at [Medicaid School-Based Services website](#).

Final Policy GCR 26-075 – Home Health, High Tech Nursing & Pedi Palliative Care SFY27 Rate Update increases rates by 3.5% for SFY 27. [GCR 26-075](#)

Final Policy GCR 26-076 – Temporary Primary Care Services Rate Increase effective July 1, 2026 implements a temporary rate increase for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Centers and Resource-Based Relative Value Scale (RBRVS) Primary Care Reimbursement. Detailed description in [GCR 26-076](#).

Final Policy GCR 26-078 – [Adolescent Hospital Diversion Program Rate](#) Update effective July 1 for the Northeastern Family Institute diversion program

per diem rate.

Gainwell Banner Updates

Gainwell and DVHA Advisories – Recent advisories from DVHA and Gainwell have a lot of important information about changes to billing software and other billing resources. It's that time of year where changes take effect. Check out the September/October 2026 Advisory for explanations about Provider Location, Dental Services Coverage Updates, Supervised Billing Provider guidance, and more.

New Emergency Medical Services Code

A new Emergency Medical (EM) code through MMIS is effective as of 08/02/26. Individuals who are ineligible for Medicaid due to immigration status can apply through the Vermont Medicaid application. Section 6 in the [Emergency Medical Provider Manual](#) (updated 06/01/26) provides detailed information. As always, contact Gainwell if further questions.

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.

Community Happenings

Statewide

2026 Health Equity Summit at University of Vermont will be September 24 thru September 25 this year. This all day summit will take place at the University of Vermont Davis Center. Contact hesummit@uvmhealth.org for more information. Registration [2026 Health Equity Summit | University of Vermont Health](#) on the Health Equity Summit website.

Vermont Department of Health - September 21, 12:00–1:00 PM | From Findings to Action: Vermont's BIPOC Birthing & SUD Studies Hosted by the Family and Child Health Division and PQC-VT, this introductory

session will provide an overview of findings and recommendations from both studies and highlight how they are informing maternal health improvement efforts across Vermont. All are welcome.

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/247081499102124?p=QFF2zrmDzU8jEPnYa4>

Supplemental materials: [BIPOC Birthing Study Report](#) | [Substance Use Disorder & Pregnancy Study Report](#)

Vermont Department of Health - September 22, 12:00–1:00 PM | Centering Lived Experience in Maternal Care: A Panel Discussion

Hosted by Vermont AWHONN as part of its Respectful Maternity Care series, this deeper-dive session will center the BIPOC Birthing Study through a facilitated conversation with lead investigator Dr. Nadia DuBose, research team member Hope Elliott, and study participants. The discussion will connect study findings and lived experience to opportunities for strengthening trust, communication, informed consent, respect, and culturally responsive maternity care. All are welcome.

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/230654602186177?p=XOr5aSu0mdbl4atpgS>

Supplemental material: [BIPOC Birthing Study Report](#)

Northern New England Perinatal Quality Improvement Network – November 16 & 17 at Omni Mount Washington Resort – Bretton Woods NH. Explore the latest in emerging and evidence-informed approaches to perinatal care, including maternal and newborn safety, perinatal mental health, health equity, quality improvement, systems change, and the integration of patient and family perspectives into clinical practice. [Download the Event Flyer](#). To register, please visit the [event website](#).

2026 Interagency Core Transition Teams Conference

Register: [Core Transition Teams Conference](#)

The Power of Firsts

Every young person's future is shaped by a series of "firsts." Their first opportunity, first job, first advocate, first success, and sometimes their first experience with assumptions that influence what others believe they can achieve.

Join transition professionals from across Vermont for a day of professional

development, connection, and practical learning centered around The Power of Firsts. Through lived experiences, youth perspectives, interactive sessions, and cross-system expertise, we'll explore how our first impressions, expectations, and actions can open, or unintentionally limit opportunities for youth with disabilities.

Throughout the day, workshops will move beyond information-sharing to focus on what we can do with what we learn. Explore how communities are creating first college experiences, how employer partnerships can open doors, how we can recognize the skills youth already have, and how stronger collaboration, family partnerships, transition planning, and self-advocacy can create meaningful opportunities.

But this day isn't about adding another item to an already-full to-do list. It's about stepping back, connecting with others, learning from what's already working, and finding practical ways to build on the work you're already doing.

Whether you support youth through education, employment, healthcare, human services, or community programs, you'll leave with new connections, practical tools, fresh perspective, and a renewed sense of possibility, along with one first step you can take to help create a meaningful opportunity for a young person.

Come ready to learn. Come ready to connect. Leave ready to take one step forward.

Middlebury

Nest and Gather [Nest & Gather | Find Your Village](#)

A space for families - offering a community play space, classes, gatherings, and support through pregnancy, postpartum, and early childhood.

Calendar of Events: [September 2026 • Class Calendar for Nest & Gather | powered by Punchpass.com](#)

Bristol Harvest Festival Saturday, September 26th, 2026

10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Bristol Town Green

Windsor County

Special Needs Support Center – Events for ages 18 and up

SNSC Swims

Join SNSC and the Upper Valley Aquatic Center for group swim classes led by instructors who have completed the Swim Angelfish program. Classes are 45 minutes, and you're welcome to enjoy the pool before and/or after class. For individuals who need physical support, we ask that someone join them in the pool.

When: Mondays, 10:45–11:30 AM

September 14–October 26 (no class October 12)

Where: Upper Valley Aquatic Center

100 Arboretum Lane, White River Junction, VT

Art Lab

Join SNSC at AVA Gallery to explore new art techniques and individual creativity. This class is led by an art instructor and provides a welcoming space to try new things, express yourself, and meet new friends!

When: Wednesdays, September 9–December 16

Session 1: 9:15–10:15 AM

Where: AVA Gallery

11 Bank St., Lebanon, NH

Volunteering with rePlay Arts

Join SNSC and rePlay Arts to learn new job skills in a supportive environment. This session, we'll be expanding our focus and learning new skills. There is a job for everyone!

When: Thursdays, 10:30 AM–12:00 PM

September 17–December 17

Where: rePlay Arts

87 Maple St., White River Junction, VT

3-Session Advance Transit Training

This three-session program will help participants build confidence and independence using Advance Transit.

Session 1: Learn about bus basics, the ACCESS bus, and explore a bus. Lunch will be provided.

Session 2: Take the bus from the SNSC office to Kilton Library. We'll do an activity at the library and have lunch.

Session 3: Take the bus from the SNSC office to Kilton Library, where we'll

transfer buses and travel to Cold Stone Creamery in West Lebanon.

When: Fridays at 11:30 AM

September 11, September 18, and September 25

Where:

Session 1: Advance Transit, 120 Billings Farm Rd., Wilder, VT

Sessions 2 & 3: SNSC Office, 129 S. Main St., Suite 103, White River Junction, VT

If you need help accessing or understanding information in this newsletter, contact AHS.VDHCSHN@vermont.gov.

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!](#)



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