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(413) 782-2500

260 Westfield Road  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
(413) 534-3299

3 State Street  
Westfield, MA 01085  
(413) 562-4885

505 East Columbus Avenue  
Springfield, MA 015  
(413) 301-7390



### LETTER FROM THE MCS FAMILY ADVISORY COUNCIL:

The MCS Family Advisory Council for the Springfield/Westfield area is looking for additional members. The council meets once a month at the Westfield site with the Family Support Director, Mary Beattie. Come join us to share your thoughts and ideas. Along with providing your valuable input to MCS, you can meet other parents and caregivers in a casual setting for good conversation and snacks! Another benefit of joining the committee is learning about what services MCS provides as well as other area providers. If you are interested in becoming a new member, please contact Mary Beattie at 413-782-2500, ext. 335 or email at [marybeattie@mcsnet.org](mailto:marybeattie@mcsnet.org)

Thanks for your interest,

Dale Lapointe, PAC Member

### Meet the Team...

#### Mary Beattie



My name is Mary Beattie and I am the Director of Family Support at Springfield MCS. I started in 1996 at the Westfield office and then moved to Springfield as the Director of Family Supports several years ago. I am proud to be part of an exceptional team of Navigators and Direct Care staff working to support our individuals and families.

I live with two of the cutest cats in the world (voted as such in a totally unbiased poll) – Anabelle and Ollie.

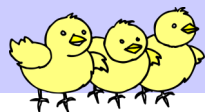
I like poker, Marvel movies, reading, chocolate, traveling, and all things feline and canine.

### HIGHLIGHT

This issue's spotlight is on Jolene who runs Jolene's Pet Farm in Southwick. Jolene cares for a variety of chicken breeds including Rhode Island Reds, Easter Eggers, and show bird quality chickens from France bred in the Ukraine. Jolene describes her chickens as "great pets" who sometimes wander through open doors into the house! She delights in describing the myriad of egg colors her hens produce including pink, blue, green, maroon, brown, and shades of green and lavender. While roosters can be a bit nippy and prone to fighting, the love and affection Jolene gives them from birth makes them kinder and gentler like the hens. Jolene expertly provides daily care for her chickens and eggs ensuring that they're happy, healthy, and safe from predators.

Sometimes Jolene takes the show on the road and educates children and adults about nature, agriculture and responsibility of caring for animals. She even agreed to bring her chickens to the MCS Springfield office so we can meet and learn about her chickens! Once our Family Support Center renovation is complete, we'll include a visit from Jolene's Pet Farm on our Group Respite activity list.

Thank you to the Arnold family for sharing your cute,



interesting pets with us!



Visit our website at  
[mcsnet.org](http://mcsnet.org)

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8-month-old Winnie is the daughter of Lilly Rodzen from our MCS Family Support Holyoke office. Winnie is energetic, communicative, and a comedian in training. Winnie's favorite activities include tipping the family dog's food bowl, spending time with her grandparents, eating all the food mom and dad have her try, and playing with the containers and lids in the Tupperware drawer.



## Babies of MCS/Future Staff



Lucas is Samantha Michelli-River's 9 month old son. Samantha is a Navigator at our Family Bridges program at MCS SOS. Lucas is cheerful and curious. He loves music, watching people dance, and working in partnership with his brother and family members. Lucas is ready to explore the world. He is sitting on his own, crawling, and standing up. We expect great things from him in the future!



We eagerly anticipate Winnie and Lucas joining our MCS staff, but we need some backup while we wait for them! If you know anyone interested in becoming a Direct Care Professional with MCS, please call your Navigator for more information or go to **Employment Opportunities** on our website ([mcsnet.org](http://mcsnet.org)).

Direct Care Professionals provide respite and/or skills training in a one on one, group, or overnight setting. We are looking for reliable, compassionate and creative people to enhance the lives of the individuals we serve.



## How to dress for Spring



## SEASON PASS NEWS FROM SIX FLAGS

- Many of you have been asking about season passes for Six Flags. Unfortunately, they are no longer offering the park passes with parking and meal plans. They still have day passes and some more expensive season pass options, however, unlike previous years, MCS will no longer be able to purchase tickets for families. You can, however, still use your allocation to purchase tickets on your own.





# TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

## GUARDIANSHIP:

MCS and the Department of Developmental Services are offering a workshop on Guardianship, Health Care Proxy, and the differences between the two. Betsy Johnson, DDS Medical Ethicist, will give an overview on Guardianship, and be available to answer any questions you may have on this topic. This is an excellent opportunity for you to have your questions and concerns addressed.

**When:** Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>      **Time:** 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Where:** Via Zoom <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83357073313>

Meeting ID: 833 5707 3313      Passcode: 169820

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## STRATEGIES FOR A POSITIVE OUTLOOK IN TIME OF COVID:

**TOPIC:** Knowledge is power. Identify how we react to stress, focus on positives, take time.  
**PRESENTED BY:** Dr. Sylvia E. Gines Villanueva

*NOTE: This workshop will be presented in Spanish*

**When:** Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup>      **Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Where:** Zoom & in person - SOS office, 505 E. Columbus Avenue, Springfield  
ZOOM MEETING ID 679 654 6068

*Call 413-301-7390 to register by March 18<sup>th</sup>—space limited to 25  
in-person participants*

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## The Family Leadership Program at MCS Presents:

Key Elements of Truly Inclusive Education: A Miniseries for Families - Topics to help families plan and advocate for inclusive educational settings for their family member(s). Join us on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month from October 2021 through June 2022 for online webinars discussing key policies, tools and methods of inclusive education.

**Session 6 - Standards Connected IEPs:** Special education is a service, not a place, that should ultimately work to provide the services and supports that create greater access for students to content and curriculum. In this session, we will focus on standards-based IEPs as an essential piece of inclusive education: what standards-based IEPs are and why they are important, even for students perceived as being significantly below grade level.

**Presenter:** Sara Scribner, Ph.D, Department of Education, Springfield College  
**Location:** Online via Zoom. **Register online:** <https://forms.gle/2XssgaUtFdUiAwBZA>  
**When:** Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022      **Time:** 6:30 - 8:00 pm

## Meet this issue's pet:

Kyrie was born on July 15, 2021. He is a 7 month old Yorkie and lives with Navigator Ida Borrero and 3 year old pit bull mix Kimba. Kyrie is a little spitfire who has enough energy to launch a spaceship. Ida has found him on top of her refrigerator and dresser. Here at Family Support we have been lucky to know Kyrie from the beginning. When Ida brings him in for visits we line up at her door for our Kyrie time. It certainly makes the day a little brighter!



### UPCOMING DANCE:

The MCS semi-formal dinner and dance is back! Please join us on Friday, June 17th for an evening of music, dancing, food and fun. The theme of this year's dance is Old Hollywood. DJ Eddie is back, and a photo booth will be available to capture the fun.

The event will be held at the Castle of Knights at 1599 Memorial Drive in Chicopee and is open to MCS participants who are 15 or older. Families are welcome. The participant and one family member may attend for free, and additional tickets are \$25 each.

Be on the lookout for a flyer with more details coming your way. We hope to see you there!



### PPE

MCS has a limited supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including masks and Covid Rapid Tests. Please call your Navigator if you need supplies.

*This newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Mayco Cotto, Jonathan Wills, Daydan Olavarria and Kirk Rideaux. We wish the family and friends of all peace and comfort .*

### EXPANSION FUNDS:

DDS statewide Family Supports received \$7 million in Expansion Funds for this fiscal year 2022 (7/1/21—6/30/22). The Springfield/Westfield DDS office is using a portion of the funding to create two new programs at MCS. The first is a part-time Navigator who will work exclusively with families in the Hilltowns to address the unique challenges families in that area face.

The second program is Adult IFFS, also known as Intensive Flexible Family Supports. This program will serve as wrap around supports for families who are caring for a disabled adult family member in their home who are experiencing serious challenges. These circumstances can be directly related to the disability or indirectly related and causing severe stress for the family and/or putting the disabled adult at risk of needing out-of-home placement. Adult IFFS provides case management, behavioral supports, and flexible funding to ease the level of stress and help them continue to care for their disabled adult family member in their home.

