



TOWN OF BEDFORD
BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Health Department
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The Loneliness Epidemic in the United States: How to Feel More Connected

Americans are becoming less connected over time through factors like changes in social participation, community involvement, and use of technology. Social networks are getting smaller, levels of participation in-person gathering are declining, and people are less engaged in their communities and more connected to technology. These trends were accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many people were cut off from friends, loved ones, and support systems.

In 2023, the [U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community](#) spoke of the United States' epidemic of loneliness and isolation, and the profound threats they cause to our health and well-being.

The Town of Bedford and the Bedford Health Department are dedicated to promoting socialization and a sense of community through town-based programs, classes, events and resources.

Bedford Council on Aging (COA)

The [Bedford Council on Aging \(COA\)](#) provides services to residents 60 years of age and older from Bedford and surrounding communities. One of the COA's goals is to combat isolation and loneliness by offering over 50 ongoing programs per month that promote socialization and connection. Many of the programs and services are at low or no cost, and financial assistance is available for those who need it.

The COA also offers [social services](#) with its very own social worker, Danika Castle! She is able to connect people to resources, provide guidance, and offer support related to home care, caregiver supports, food, financial supports, mental health, decluttering, and other topics. Danika is available Monday through Friday either by phone at 781-275-6825 (Ext. 4302) or in-person, by appointment.

The COA's monthly newsletter, [COA Connections](#), includes a Calendar of Events that displays all of the events being offered that month. (This includes the monthly ongoing programs and special events!). Here is a list of some of the monthly programs and activities the COA offers. Take a look at *COA Connections* to see the full calendar for the month!

Some of the COA Monthly Programs			
Activity	Description	Day	Time
Bridge	Play an entertaining card game with other players	Tuesdays	12:30 PM
Computer Drop-In	Computers and WiFi available for use during open hours	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday -- Saturdays	8:00AM – 4:00 PM -- 10:00AM – 3:00 PM
Current Events	Friendly social environment within which a variety of local, national, and international topics are discussed	Thursdays	1:00 PM
Mexican Train Dominoes	A fun, modern version of dominoes	Thursdays -- Fridays	1:00 PM -- 2:00 PM
Moving Ahead Together	Join a compassionate group of caring Bedford locals who provide support, friendship, and life experiences with each other	Tuesdays (Located in the Flint Room, on the second floor of Town Center)	7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Pool	Two regulation sized pool tables are available during open hours	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday -- Saturdays	8:00AM – 4:00 PM -- 10:00AM – 3:00 PM
Sing-A-Long	Sing along to your favorite songs	Mondays	12:30 PM
Sit 'N Stitch	Knit, needlepoint, quilt, embroider, crochet, and weave with a fun group of stitchers! All types of handworkers welcome	Mondays -- Fridays	12:30 PM -- 10:00 AM
Tech Support	Volunteers help with personal mobile devices, laptops, tablets, e-mails, Zoom, and more	Thursdays -- Saturdays	2:30 PM -- 10:00 AM

Bedford Local Transport (BLT)

The [Bedford Local Transit \(BLT\)](#) is a door-to-door public transportation service provided by the town of Bedford. The BLT offers on-demand service to destinations in the town of Bedford (including the COA!), as well as weekly trips to Market Basket in Billerica on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

The BLT is available to all residents of *any age*. Please note priority is given to disabled, elderly, and veteran riders. The BLT van is wheelchair accessible and Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliant.

The BLT operates Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM. To make a reservation, call on one of the operating days from 7:30 AM – 8:30 AM. Please note, same day pick up may not be available depending on how many seats have been filled. It is recommended to call in advance to reserve your spot at 781-275-2255.

Bedford Recreation Department

The [Bedford Recreation Department](#) offers a wide variety of programs and classes for **all ages**: youth, adults, older adults, and those with disabilities. The Recreation Department publishes brochures throughout the year describing its many upcoming programs and classes. The most recent brochures are [Spring & Summer 2025: Adult Programs & Classes](#) and [Spring & Summer 2025: Youth Programs & Classes](#). Participation in Recreation programs and classes is a great way to meet new people and socialize! Contact the Recreation Department at 781-275-1392 to learn more.

Some of the Upcoming Rec Programs			
Activity	Description	Day	Time
Therapy Alpaca Meet & Greet	Come and meet Linus and Macintosh, the two therapy alpacas from Harvard Alpaca Ranch! Fee: \$10 per child Location: E Field, next to the playground	Tuesday, April 22 nd	1:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Summer Concert Series	Enjoy five evenings of music, activities and community! Fee: None Location: Town Center, 12 Mudge Way	Thursdays on the following dates: July 10 th July 17 th July 24 th July 31 st August 7 th	7:00 PM
Summer Solstice Hair Tinsel Night	Celebrate the first day of summer by adding some tinsel to your hair! Fee: \$36 per person Location: Town Center Flint Room, 12 Mudge Way	Friday, June 20 th	5:30 PM – 8:00 PM (time slots will be assigned)

Bedford Family Connection (BFC)

[The Bedford Family Connection \(BFC\)](#) is a volunteer-run, nonprofit organization that was founded to support and connect families with children ages five years and younger. Those who are new to town or looking for a way to meet other families with young children, are invited to join the BFC to engage with the community and make new friends.

To join, visit the [BFC website](#) and click “[join](#)” or you can email bfcdirectors@gmail.com with any questions.

Bedford Youth and Family Services (YFS)

[Bedford Youth and Family Services \(YFS\)](#) offers social, emotional, and development support for youth, adults, and families in Bedford through programs and services that foster a sense of community and belonging.

Bedford YFS is staffed with experienced social workers and coordinators who offer a variety of mental health services. Staff also work with those experiencing loneliness and isolation by assisting residents with finding support groups, social groups, and activities they may be interested in.

Mallory Fuller, Youth Services Coordinator, offers a high school student volunteer program at the Bedford Food Bank, located in Town Center. This opens an opportunity for students to meet each other who might not have otherwise, and to forge new connections and friendships. To learn more, please email Mallory Fuller at mfuller@bedfordma.gov.

Chris Bang	Serves those 19 – 59 years of age	781-918-4328
Mallory Fuller	Serves those 18 years of age and younger	781-275-7727 Ext. 4331

Questions or Need Help Connecting to Resources?

Please feel free to reach out to the Health Department by calling us at 781-275-6507 or emailing us at BOH@bedfordma.gov with questions, concerns, and/or connection to resources.