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Michigan FAMILY VOICES/Michigan Family-to-Family Health Information and Education Center

family linkages NEWSLETTER

A way to connect families of children and youth with special needs in Michigan with information, education and support

Family Voices is a national organization that aims to achieve family-centered care for all children and youth with special health needs and/or disabilities. Through the Family Voices national network, families are provided with tools to make informed decisions, advocate for improved public and private policies, build partnerships among professionals and families, and serve as a trusted resource on health care. Ultimately helping them to find their voice, share their story and become actively involved in communicating with policymakers.

In 2012 representatives from National Family Voices, the Michigan Family-to-Family Health Information and Education Center, the Arc Michigan, family leaders and key organizations began to explore the possibility of establishing a State Affiliate Organization (SAO) in Michigan. During the exploration it was learned that although there are many organizations that offer advocacy assistance in the state, few families and individuals feel prepared to present information to decision makers that could be key to improving access to services and service systems. There was a vast need for an organization dedicated to helping families and individuals become informed citizens, teaching skills so they could tell their stories, and organizing a network to make a difference. It was determined that a Michigan Family Voices SAO would be established.

In great anticipation, we are excited to announce the approval of The Arc Michigan as being the house and incubator for the Michigan Family Voices SAO by the National Family Voices Organization. **Michigan Family Voices** aspires to inform, educate and bring impacted families (and professional partners) together so we may proactively address key points prior to policy decision making. This type of network will bring a powerful message to policymakers at the local, state and federal levels. Stories will be told in a mighty way that will allow decision-makers to better understand what families experience; leading efforts toward key changes that make sense for families and improve services for "all" children and youth with special needs and/or disabilities.

We Welcome Families To Join Us

May 22, 2013

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM or 8:00 PM – 9:00 PM

for an informational Family Voices teleconference

Please RSVP by email or phone on the time that works best for you at:
info@michiganfamilyvoices.org or
(800) 292-7851 box 472

Join us for a discussion on the future direction of Peer Mentoring programs in Michigan. Family Voices is hosting two conference calls on **May 14, 2013 at 12:00 PM–1:00 PM and 8:00 PM–9:00 PM.** We would love to hear from you regarding your son's or daughter's experience with peer mentoring and what you might see for the future of peer mentoring opportunities.

Karen Larsen, Social Security Administration (Retired) and Amy Maes, Disability Network Michigan will be co-facilitating the discussion. Space is limited so please reserve your spot early. RSVP by email or phone at: **info@michiganfamilyvoices.org or (800) 292-7851 box 472.**

Sponsored by the Michigan Statewide Independent Living Council, the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council & Disability Network Michigan.

Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council

MSILC Michigan Statewide Independent Living Council

DISABILITYnetwork Michigan

Children's Mental Health Matters!

May is Children's Mental Health Awareness Month and the Association for Children's Mental Health, Michigan's statewide chapter of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, and SAMHSA funded Statewide Family Network wants to help you become more aware of the importance of positive mental health for our children, youth and ourselves!

This year's National Children's Mental Health Awareness theme is: Out of the Shadows: Exposing Stigma. Stigma is a collection of negative attitudes and beliefs that sometimes motivate people to fear, avoid and even discriminate against people with mental health disorders. Stigma often results from a lack of knowledge or information and fear of stigma can be a barrier for young people and their families seeking help. One way to combat stigma is to educate; helping other's to better understand mental health. So in honor of children's Mental Health Awareness Month we would like to take this opportunity to share some facts about children's mental health, including:

Mental health problems are common and often develop during childhood & adolescence

There are over 280,000 children in Michigan that experience serious emotional, behavioral, or mental health disorders. One in five children have a diagnosable mental emotional or behavioral disorder and one in ten young people have a mental health challenge that is severe enough to impair how they function at home, school or the community. Even though mental illness affects so many of our children & teens research tells us that at least ½ and some estimate as many as 79% do not receive the mental health care or treatment or support they need.

The first signs of mental health problems can look different in children and youth and may be overlooked. A lot of times when people think of mental illness, they think of the extremes, with people acting really sad or out of control. In children and youth, the first signs of a mental health challenge may be changes in appetite, acting worried, being less interested in activities, trouble sleeping, irritability, difficulty in school, disengaging from friends or family, acting out or taking risks. In addition, many symptoms of mental health disorders are similar to normal development changes associated with adolescence so they are often overlooked or dismissed as 'just a stage' and parents and others may wait for the problem to pass instead of connecting the young person to help.

If you have concerns about a young person's mental health it is important to act! Left untreated, mental health problems can complicate daily activities and may lead to:

- **School Failure or Drop Out:** Almost 25% of adolescents who required mental health issues reported having problems at school. Over 50% of students who experience psychological challenges, ages 14 and older, drop out of high school. This is the highest drop out rate of any disability group. (Youth Mental Health First Aid)
- **Inappropriate out-of- home placements including involvement in the Juvenile Justice System**, where 66% of boys and 75% of girls in juvenile detention in the United States have at least one diagnosable mental health disorder.
- **Higher rates of substance use & teenage pregnancy**
- **Inability to participate** in continuing education, unemployment or underemployment and even a lack of independent living skills.
- **Suicide**… Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in adolescence and young adults and 90% of children who commit suicide have a mental health disorder.

Even though those statistics are frightening, it is important to remember that:

Mental Health Treatment Works! Early detection and intervention strategies for children and youth with mental health challenges improve resilience and the ability to successful in life! With access to individualized, family-driven, youth-guided, treatment that meets the needs of the child and their family including such things as Home Based Therapy, Wraparound, Respite Care and Medication if needed, young people and their families can successfully manage their mental health symptoms and lead happy and successful lives. →

We have come a long way in knowing how to effectively treat mental health disorders in children and youth, but there is still much work to do! There are still several barriers to children and youth getting the services and support they need, including: Lack of health care coverage for mental health services; Uneven access to much needed intensive home and community based services; and, A shortage of mental health service providers, especially psychiatrists (it is estimated that the United States has only 1/5 of the child psychiatrists it needs to meet the need). ACMH will continue to work to increase awareness about children's mental health and the barriers to treatment that still exist through community outreach, education and public awareness activities, including an upcoming Children's Mental Health Awareness Event and Balloon Launch on the Capital lawn on May 9th, 2013.

ACMH's dream is that All Michigan children and youth with emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges live in safe, welcoming communities with access to needed services and supports. Please join us in our efforts to make this dream a reality!

We hope the facts above helped you to become more knowledgeable about children's mental health and why it is so important for us to recognize and provide appropriate support and treatment to young people with mental health challenges.

To learn more about ACMH, children's mental health, or upcoming events, call 1-888-226-4543 or visit us on the web at www.acmh-mi.org.

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Kicks off Great Strides Walks in Michigan

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation has announced the launch of **Great Strides**, a national walk event held in hundreds of cities, which generate critical funds to fight cystic fibrosis, a fatal genetic disease. Funds raised through Great Strides have helped spur dramatic progress in the lives of those who have cystic fibrosis.

Fifty years ago, most children with CF did not live long enough to attend elementary school. Today, people with CF are living into their 30s, 40s and beyond. Cystic fibrosis affects about 30,000 adults and children in the United States and 70,000 people worldwide. It causes debilitating lung infections that lead to premature death. More than 10 million Americans are symptomless carriers of a defective CF gene.

Help our local efforts to fight CF by registering and fundraising for one of our twenty-two Great Strides walks occurring all over the state of Michigan in the months of May and June: **http://tinyurl.com/bn484sy**.

For more information, contact the Metro-Detroit/Northwest Ohio Chapter at 248-269-8759 or email at Detroit@cff.org.

Michigan Alliance for Families announces the release of a new DVD **"Making the Most of Early On®,"** designed to help parents better understand and access the system of supports and services for children from birth through age three.

This video is chaptered into six easy to navigate topics —

- **What is Early On®?**
- **Natural Environments**
- **Transition: Leaving Early On®**
- **Parent to Parent Advice**
- **Problem Solving**
- **Parent Survey**

Each topic includes options for Spanish subtitles, Arabic subtitles, and English closed caption. In addition to the DVD, parents can find more early intervention resources at **www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/babies-and-toddlers.**

Parents and professionals can view the videos via the Michigan Alliance for Families YouTube Channel **http://www.youtube.com/michiganalliance**.

A limited quantity of DVDs is available. Visit **www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/dvd** or contact **info@michiganallianceforfamilies.org**.

Help create the Early On® Michigan license plate!

House Bill (HB) 4004 would create the Early On Michigan license plate and provide another stream of revenue for Early On Michigan.

In order for this to happen, passionate parents throughout Michigan must provide testimony about the importance of Early On and how it makes a difference.

Please educate parents about this opportunity to testify before the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Transportation:

Tuesday, May 14, at 10:30 AM
House Office Building, Room 521
124 N. Capitol
Lansing, MI 48909

Those planning to testify should RSVP Barb Schinderle at schinderleb@wowway.com.

Michigan Update from

Michigan Consumers for Healthcare

Federal Medicaid funding and Senate Bill 136 Update

Written by: Brett Williams, Mid-Michigan Regional Coordinator for MCH

Michigan is in a precarious position when it comes to strengthening Medicaid. According to testimony provided by the Department of Community Health (DCH) at Thursday's budget hearings, it saves the state an estimated $150 million in General Fund dollars in its first year of implementation. House Fiscal Agency stated that "As a result of the Medicaid Expansion the proposed FY2013/14 budget includes a projection of an additional $1.5 billion in federal funds for the state… Including savings from the other programs listed, total estimated indirect savings would be $205.2 million GF/GP in FY 2013/14."

So why are we in a precarious position? As of today, it has been stripped out of the appropriations budget.

Through numerous meetings with elected officials, there seems to be some contention from some officials that this is not good for the state. Michigan Consumers for Healthcare has done extensive research as to the impact expansion will have on the state. We found that extending Medicaid could potentially cover half of Michigan's uninsured, will provide a bridge of coverage for veterans who are not yet receiving their VA benefits, would ensure rural hospitals will continue to receive funds to keep their doors open as well as help many people with disabilities who are unable to work full time and fail to qualify for benefits under the current system. Medicaid extension also affects some family members who may provide aid in their personal care needs.

We have a very large hurdle to overcome to get the additional Federal Medicaid funding placed back into the general budget. It is of great importance that you call or contact your state legislator and express to them the importance of this program and that the state can't afford to forego the ability to save a potential $1.5 billion dollars as well as provide essential coverage for the citizens of Michigan.

Senate Bill 136 (SB136) know as the "Conscience Objection Legislation" is legislation that, if passed, would allow healthcare facilities, providers, institutions of learning and staff the ability to refuse to perform any procedure that may be against their moral, religious or ethical beliefs.

Some have argued that this legislation is designed to aid the institutions named above from performing, or training people to perform abortions. This legislation reaches far deeper than that. It will also impact end of life decisions made by patients, it dramatically alters a person with disabilities right to treatment choices as well as limits a patient to receive needed care if that patient is at a healthcare facility that has an "objection" to the procedure the patient needs. The facility would not have to forewarn the patients prior to them arriving at the medical facility.

Many issues outlined above have not been addressed to any sort of degree. When brought to public testimony, it was voted out of the senate committee with 23 cards of opposition placed before the committee and only 3 in support. Testimony was limited to only 3 minutes per person with only 2 organizations testifying in favor of this legislation; countless in opposition. Currently, this has been referred to the Committee of the Whole. If passed by the Senate, it will be sent to the House of Representatives Health Policy Committee where more testimony will take place.

Once again, this is a dangerous piece of legislation that has the potential to dramatically impact many of our family members. Please call on your state legislator and let them know your position on a piece of legislation that strips away many patients' rights.

2013 Lunchtime IEP Learning Series

Join Michigan Alliance for Families as we present a series of webinars for parents, caregivers, and educators.

Our webinars are free. Join us for the entire series or just the one that interests you the most. Space is limited, register online and you will receive a confirmation email with directions for the webinar.

Registration links are at michiganallianceforfamilies.org/webinar. Archived webinars are available on our website.

Questions? Contact us at info@michiganallianceforfamilies.org or 1-800-552-4821

May 9 iPad —
The Consideration Process with Laura Taylor from Michigan's Integrated Technology Supports

May 16 iPad —
Accessibility Features with Laura Taylor from Michigan's Integrated Technology Supports

May 23 What Parents Need to Know About Mental Health and Education —
with Terri Henrizi from Association for Children's Mental Health

MICHIGAN ALLIANCE FOR FAMILIES TRAININGS

Re-Thinking Guardianship with Dohn Hoyle

- May 23, 2013 from 1 PM-4 PM at the Michigan First Credit Union (Community Room), 27000 Evergreen Road (at I-696), Lathrup Village, MI 48076

To register visit: www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/upcoming-events

Michigan Family-to-Family Health Information and Education Trainings: Dates/Times/Locations

Disability Pride

- May 7, 2013 from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM at Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD, 315 Armory Place, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Essential Communication Skills for IEP Team Meetings

- May 8, 2013 from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD, 315 Armory Place, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Tools I Can Use to Help Young Adults Reach Their Hopes and Dreams

- May 17, 2013 from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at Monroe County Intermediate School District, Lake Erie Room, 1101 South Raisinville Road, Monroe, MI 48162

Transition Planning? What's That? I Just Want to Help Young Adults Reach Their Hopes and Dreams: Part I

- May 18, 2013 from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm at LISD TECH Center, Classroom 1, 1372 North Main Street, Adrian, MI 49221

To register for this session, visit www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEvents?ID=1862.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Arc Michigan Conference

June 20 & 21, 2013
McCamly Plaza Hotel
50 Capital Avenue SW
Battle Creek, MI 49017
269.963.7050
Online Registration Form