

MEMORANDUM
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909-7979

DATE: May 2005
TO: Families of Children with Special Needs
FROM: Mary Marin, Executive Director, Parent Participation Program (PPP)
Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) Division
SUBJECT: Heart-to-Heart Information Updates

In 2003, we got overwhelming favorable response to a one-day Sibshop training for parents and professionals. So, if there is enough interest, we'll host one again in Grand Rapids on Nov. 4, just before our "Relatively Speaking" conference. Please let us know if you'd like to learn how to run a Sibshop in your school or agency. We welcome teams of social workers, teachers, psychologists, etc., to learn how to run this special event for brothers and sisters of children with special needs.

Training leader will be national sibling issues "guru" Don Meyer. His book on Sibshops explains, "*Brothers and sisters may have feelings that are difficult to express, even to a friend... At Sibshops, siblings will share these feelings with others who truly understand.*"

If you're interested in being trained by Don on Nov. 4, please let us know right away on our CSHCS Family Phone Line: 1-800-359-3722. Ask for Jeannie.♥

In a related project, we've launched a Sibshop listserv. However, last month's directions had a typo. Here's the **correction**: To subscribe, e-mail to listserv@listserv.michigan.gov. Leave the subject line blank. Type in the message's body: SUBSCRIBE MDCH-SIBSHOPS then click <SEND>. For questions or help, phone CSHCS Program Specialist Rebecca Start at 1-800-359-3722.

PPP Update

Michigan youth with special health needs require help to move into all aspects of adult life, not just health care. That's the message from more than 650 youths and families who took part in CSHCS's *Family Transitioning to Adulthood Survey*.

CSHCS mailed the survey to 700 homes of CSHCS youth ages 14 to 21 in February.

Matters with which families or youths said they need help include employment, independent living, education, finances, assisted living, mental health, housing, legal, recreation for youth who are medically

fragile, community involvement and transportation. As an opening response, enclosed is a list of websites with information that can help youth and families address those areas.

Some participants wrote that they need help but did not provide their names. Families who have transition questions or need transition assistance may phone PPP Transition Consultant Lisa Cook-Gordon at 1-800-359-3722. ♥

In an effort to get face-to-face input, CSHCS is seeking volunteer youth (ages 14 to 21) and family members for **transition discussion groups across Michigan in July and**

August. The purpose of the meetings is to help CSHCS understand how transition to adulthood affects youth with special needs and their families and to help youth and families better prepare for transition.

To sign up or to get more information, parents and youth may call the CSHCS Family Phone Line at 1-800-359-3722. ♥

CSHCS Update

A letter mailed to **all CSHCS families who have a Payment Agreement** explains changes that begin May 1. Whether one, two or all three changes apply to a family

depends on the individual case. The changes are:

- Payment Agreement amounts will double.
- There will be no refunds.
- There will be no Modified Payment Agreements.

The changes take place when a family's **new** Payment Agreement starts. CSHCS is honoring all current Payment Agreements.

In the letter, CSHCS Director Kathleen Stiffler said, *"We regret that these changes will unfavorably affect Michigan families. Due to the continuing state budget deficit, CSHCS was mandated to make these changes. The changes are needed to help preserve our core CSHCS program."*

Families with questions should call the CSHCS office in the local health department. Transfer to that office toll-free via the CSHCS Family Phone Line at 1-800-359-3722. ♥

For CSHCS families with private health insurance, the way CSHCS works with mail-order pharmacies is changing. Possibly as early as **June 1**, families will be expected to use their plan's mail-order pharmacy to fill CSHCS-covered prescriptions. If a doctor orders medicine that cannot be filled by mail order, the doctor must get authorization.

For questions about the new mail-order pharmacy process, CSHCS families should call the **Beneficiary Helpline** at 1-800-642-3195. ♥

Events

Children ages five through 20 with disabilities can join a **Miracle League** baseball team in **Southfield**.

In May, the league opens its second season at its accessible, new facility in the Southfield Civic Center. Michigan's only "Miracle Field" has custom synthetic turf plus accessible dugouts, restrooms and drinking fountains. It's among 30 or so in the U.S. For details and player registration, click to www.michiganmiracle.org or phone (248) 506-4604.

The Detroit Tigers host **Miracle League Day on June 28 at Comerica Park**. As part of the fun, *Miracle League* members will meet some Tigers players. ♥

The Second Annual **Disability Pride Parade** takes place **July 23 in Chicago**. Click to details at www.disabledandproud.com/parade.htm. The site includes Michigan parent Janice Fialka's poem recounting her experience at the '04 event. ♥

In northeast Detroit, **renovations are turning the Dad Butler Playfield into a fully accessible or "boundless" recreation area**. Improvements of its baseball and soccer fields, picnic shelter and walkways are due to be finished in August. For details, phone the *Youth Sports and Recreation Commission* at (313) 963-8916. ♥

Dose of Humor

From the *Good Clean Fun* website

A very dirty little fellow came in from playing in the yard and asked his mother, "Who am I?"

Ready to play the game she said, "I don't know! Who are you?"

"WOW!" cried the child. "Mrs. Johnson was right! She said I was so dirty, my own mother wouldn't recognize me!"

The Parent Participation Program (PPP) is a section of the Children's Special Health Care Services Division (CSHCS) of the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH).

CSHCS is part of MDCH's Bureau of Children and Family Programs. CSHCS primarily provides medical specialty care to children with a qualifying diagnosis. PPP serves families of all children with special needs. The Family Support Network of Michigan (FSN) is PPP's parent-to-parent support arm.

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CSHCS Family Phone Line
1-800-359-3722
8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday – Friday

CSHCS and this memo online
www.michigan.gov/cshcs

Free online course on CSHCS
www.training.mihealth.org

Events and Resources are compiled by PPP from a variety of sources. A listing does not denote endorsement.

If you receive multiple copies of this memo by mail, please let us know. To add your name to our postal mailing list or to remove it, families may call our Family Phone Line. Others, please phone (313) 456-4381.

Online Transition Resources for Families

The following websites can help youths with special needs transition to adult life:

Cash Assistance and Medical Services

<http://www.ssa.gov/chicago/michigan.htm>

<http://www.michigan.gov/dhs>

Education

<http://www.cenmi.org>

Employment and Rehabilitation Services

<http://www.michigan.gov/mdcd>

Food Assistance and Nutrition Education

<http://www.fcs.msue.msu.edu/fcs-programs.html>

<http://www.fbcmich.org/>

<http://www.foodstamphelp.org/>

Health Care Coverage

<http://www.michigan.gov/mdch>

Housing

<http://www.hud.gov/local>

<http://www.fcs.msue.msu.edu/fcs-programs.html>

Independent Living

<http://www.michigan.gov/dhs>

<http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc>

Legal Protection and Advocacy

<http://www.mpas.org>

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

<http://www.michigan.gov/mdch>

Recreation and Community Involvement

<http://www.arcmi.org>

Compiled by Transition Consultant Lisa Cook-Gordon
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If you have on-line resources to share contact Lisa at

1-800-359-3722

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