



The Family Center is a section of the Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) Division of the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH). CSHCS is part of MDCH's Bureau of Family, Maternal and Child Health.

CSHCS primarily provides medical specialty care to children with a qualifying diagnosis. The Family Center serves families of all children with special needs. The Family Support Network of Michigan (FSN) is the Family Center's parent-to-parent support arm.

Mary J. Marin
Executive Director

Lisa Cook-Gordon
Transition Consultant

Lisa Huckleberry
Training Consultant

Valerie Smith
Office Manager

Randy Krause
FSN Coordinator

Dianna Rigato
CSHCS Program Specialist

Deborah Schaller
Administrative Assistant

Leah Waters
Secretary

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

Events and resources are compiled by the Family Center from a variety of sources. A listing does not stand for endorsement.

A Word from Mary

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has launched TSA Cares, a new helpline number designed to assist travelers with disabilities and medical conditions. Travelers may call TSA Cares toll free at 1-855-787-2227, prior to traveling, with questions about screening policies, procedures and what to expect at the security checkpoint. TSA Cares will serve as an additional, dedicated resource specifically for passengers with disabilities, medical conditions or other circumstances to help them prepare for the screening process prior to flying.

The hours of operation for the TSA Cares helpline are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. EST, excluding federal holidays. Travelers who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to contact TSA Cares. They can also contact via e-mail at TSA-ContactCenter@dhs.gov.

If you would like to make advance arrangements for screenings at airports, travelers can contact TSA using Talk ToTSA, <https://apps.tsa.dhs.gov/talktotsa/>, a web-based tool that allows passengers to reach out to an airport Customer Service Manager directly. Travelers can also contact the center to ask questions, provide suggestions and file complaints.

Mary J. Marin

Has Your Child Had Flu Shots?

It's not too late to get a seasonal flu shot. The flu presents a special threat to children, especially those with special health care needs. Contact your health care provider or county health department to find out about options for getting the shots in your area. If a family member with special needs becomes ill, contact the doctor immediately. Don't wait until symptoms worsen.

The U.S Department of Health & Human Services has information and updates about seasonal flu on its website. For specific information about vaccinations, prevention, symptoms and more recommendations about how to keep your children and family safe, visit www.flu.gov.

There are simple steps you can take to help keep your family healthy. Wash hands frequently. Drink plenty of fluids. Stay home when sick. Get vaccinated. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or by using the inside of your elbow.

Children with Special Needs Fund

The CSN Fund provides support for children in Michigan with special health care needs when help is not available through any other funding source. Families with a child enrolled, or medically eligible to enroll, in the Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) Program may apply to the CSN Fund. For eligible recipients, the Fund may provide partial or full payment for items including but not limited to: wheelchair ramps, van lifts and tie downs, therapeutic tricycles, adaptive recreational equipment and electrical service upgrades necessitated by the eligible child's equipment. The Fund operates entirely on donations. No tax dollars are ever used. The Fund was created in 1944 when 1000 shares of Dow Chemical stock to the State of Michigan by Dr. and Mrs. James Pardee. Their generosity, along with donations of others over the last 60 years has enabled the Fund to help thousands of families. To apply for assistance from the Fund, contact the CSHCS office at your local health department. Applications are available online at www.michigan.gov/csnfund.



Before You Celebrate Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day can be a sugar-powered swirl of unsafe edibles, confusing feelings and school exclusion for a child with special needs -- and one that makes parents feel overwhelmed and lost a little, too. These articles will help you make the holiday safer, happier, and a whole lot sweeter for everyone close to your heart. Scout out safe sweet treats.

- Nut-Free Candy - <http://specialchildren.about.com/od/foodallergies/qt/nutfreecandy.htm>
- Gluten-Free Candy- <http://specialchildren.about.com/od/allergysaferecipes/qt/gfcandy.htm>
- Sugar-Free Candy - <http://candy.about.com/b/2006/12/26/sugar-free-candy.htm>

Creating a Sensory Tool Kit

Many children and youth with special health care needs have some type of sensory issue which can cause the person to have sensory overload. A sensory toolkit can be created so that it can travel with your child wherever he or she may go. The idea is that if the child starts to lose composure due to sensory input or overload, the sensory toolkit can be accessed to use a sensory approach to help manage the arousal state or behaviors. While each child's toolkit should be based on his or her individual sensory needs, here are some suggestions that may help you get started:

- something to squeeze -- stress balls, etc.
- two footprints that can be put on the floor for jumping or stomping
- lotion with one of the more calming scents, such as vanilla
- two handprints that can be placed on a wall as a deep pressure "push place"
- a washcloth or small towel to wipe off anger
- a write-on, wipe-off board and dry erase markers
- an unbreakable mirror so the child can see his or her emotions
- words or pictures to help the child begin to identify these emotions
- a visual or auditory timer to guide a child to continue to use the sensory activities until calmer
- an oral/motor blow toy (like a whistle) with any ability to make sound removed.

Michigan Prepares

The State of Michigan has many resources to help keep persons with special needs safe. From Emergency Preparedness to "Ready in 3" for Individuals with Dialysis, the Michigan.gov website has links to forms and tips to help prepare in the event of an unexpected emergency. For more information go to: https://www.michigan.gov/michiganprepares/0,1607,7-232-42659_42661_42935---,00.html

Resources

Assistive Technology (AT) Xchange
www.atxchange.org

CSHCS Courses
http://www.training.mihealth.org/course_detail.htm#CSHCS

Family Center
www.bridges4kids.org/f2f
1-800-359-3722

Autism Resource Network of Northwest Michigan
<http://www.autismresourcenetwork.org/>

Syndromes Without A Name-USA
<http://www.undiagnosed-usa.org/>
1-269-692-2090-or-1-888-880-SWAN(7926)

SNApps4Kids
<http://www.snapps4kids.com/>

bridges 4 kids
www.bridges4kids.org

Friendship Circle Blog
Special Needs Resources for Parents and Educators
<http://blog.friendshipcircle.org/>