



The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Needs 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 the MDCH's Bureau of Family, Maternal and Child Health.

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

Mary J. Marin, Executive Director

Lisa Cook-Gordon, Transition Consultant

Valerie Kimmons, Office Manager

Randy Krause, FSN Coordinator

Jean Rennie, Administrative Assistant

Dianna Rigato, CSHCS Program Specialist

Leah Waters, Secretary

Robin Rennie, Communications Consultant

CSHCS Family Phone Line

1-800-359-3722

www.michigan.gov/cshcs

Click on "Family Center"

8 a.m.—5 p.m., Monday - Friday

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

Has Your Child Had Flu Shots?

It's not too late to get a seasonal and H1N1 flu shots. The H1N1 (Swine Flu) presents a special threat to children, especially those with special 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 and H1N1 flu. 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 some 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

A Word from Mary.....

From the Desk of
Mary J. Marin, Executive Director
 Family Center

The Relatively Speaking conference, presented last month by the Family Center was a great success. A total of 196 participants enjoyed a weekend of learning and new friendships based on mutual experiences. Here are some of the attendees comments:

- "Really enjoyed it, kids loved it!"
- "We feel blessed to have been a part of this conference."
- "My family didn't want to see it come to an end."
- "It was excellent, please let me know about the next one."
- "Kim was a doll; she was very nice, great ice breaker."
- "Really enjoyed this opportunity, my kids really loved it, could not have attended without the scholarship given to us, thanks so much!"

Thirty-seven staff, volunteers and presenters contributed to make this a great conference. The attendees and I deeply appreciate the unselfish efforts by the volunteers to make the event a success. Thank you to the presenters whose information both enlightened and entertained us and to the staff and volunteers who worked so hard to make everything run so smoothly. Thank you to those of you who attended, for making your unique contribution to this very special conference.

One of our conference presenters was Don Meyer, Sibling Support Project Director.. He has edited and written books providing information and assistance to families with children who have special needs. We are lucky to have limited quantities of two of these books available for purchase through the Family Center.

The Sibling Slam Book is aimed toward teen brothers and sisters of children with special needs. It is formatted like the slam books passed around in many junior high and high schools, but it doesn't "slam" in the traditional sense of the word. The tone and point-of-view of the answers are all over the map. Some answers are assuredly positive, a few are strikingly negative, but most reflect the complex and conflicted mix of emotions that come with the territory. Whether read from cover to cover or sampled at random, teenagers will find common ground among these pages and reassurance that they are not alone. It is a book that parents, friends, and counselors can feel confident recommending to any teenager with a brother or sister with special needs.

Thicker Than Water: Essays by Adult Siblings of People with Disabilities, is a powerful anthology of compelling essays which express a diverse range of sibling experiences and attitudes. The contributors range in age from 20 to 70 and have brothers and sisters whose disabilities include autism, cerebral palsy, seizures, visual impairment, fragile-X syndrome, intellectual disability, or mental illness.

I strongly recommend both books to you and your family. You can purchase either book by calling the Family Line, 1-800-359-3722. *The Sibling Slam Book* sells for \$15 and *Thicker Than Water* is priced at \$20. If you wish to learn more about Don Meyer or the Sibling Support Project, visit: www.siblingsupport.org



Mary J. Marin

Upcoming Conferences & Events

Resources

We're on the Web!

www.michigan.gov/cshcs

Assistive Technology (AT) Xchange
www.atxchange.org

CSHCS Courses
www.training.mihealth.org/coursedetail.htm#CSHCS

Down Syndrome Guild
www.dsgsemi.org 248-827-9135

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

Healthy Children Project Monthly e-News
www.LDAofmichigan.org/healthychild.htm

Heart-to-Heart Updates
www.michigan.gov/cshcs, click on "Family Center"
E-mail [Dianna Rigato at RigatoD@Michigan.gov](mailto:Dianna.Rigato@Michigan.gov)
for electronic copies of the Updates.

Judson Center Autism Connections
www.judsoncenter.org

Michigan Cleft Network
www.MiCleft.org

Michigan Loan Funds
www.michiganloanfunds.org

Natural Learning Concepts
www.nlconcepts.com
Toll free: 800-823-3430

On the Spectrum: Autism Resources
www.myspace.com/on_the_spectrum

Syndromes Without A Name-USA
269-692-2090 or 888-880-SWAN (7926)

The Special Needs Store
www.thespecialneedsstore.com

American Sign Language (ASL) Exposition
Saturday, Dec. 5, Lansing Center, Lansing, MI

The ASL EXPO welcomes everyone, including the deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing, those with a hearing loss, people with disabilities, interpreters, families of children who are deaf and sign language students. The ASL EXPO is the place to get up to speed on important sign language related issues and trends. Learning opportunities will abound at the show with educational programs focusing on topics such as video relay services, solutions in deaf education and more. For complete information please go to: www.aslexpo.com

The Arthritis Foundation 2009 Jingle Bell Run/Walk

Two dates from which to choose: Saturday, Dec. 5 Northville Downs Race Track, Northville, MI or Saturday, Dec. 12 at Covington School, Bloomfield, MI

Please Help with Child Safety Research



Unintentional injuries are the top cause of death in children over the age of one. The Institute for Child Development at Binghamton University is conducting a research study to find ways of reducing injuries by improving preventive methods for child safety. As part of the study, there is survey of parents and teachers to determine what safety risks are of greatest concerns and to better understand the safety needs of children. Please help by participating in the survey by going to: <http://icd.binghamton.edu>

Ingham County Hosts Successful Family Forum

Over 40 families attended an Information Forum hosted by the CSHCS, Ingham County Health Department. Featured speaker was Clifford Weisberg, Attorney-at-Law, who spoke on Supplemental Security Income for children with special needs when they turn 18. Families also had the opportunity to ask questions, provide feedback on services received and services needed and to socialize. Refreshments were enjoyed. Gift bags and a raffle rounded out the event. This very positive and successful meeting was made possible by a mini-grant from the Family Center.



How Can Heart-to-Heart Better Serve You?

Do you have suggestions for items or information you would like to see in Heart-to-Heart? Information to share? Please share comments, suggestions and information with our Communications Consultant, Robin Rennie by calling her at 734-498-3395 or emailing her at rennie@academicconsult.com.



Smile With US!

A Support Network for Parents of Children with Facial Difference



Michigan Cleft Network invites families and individuals affected by cleft lip and palate and other craniofacial anomalies, to join their on-line social network at: www.MiCleft.org. Interact with others and have access to an unlimited amount of resources in a private-community. Whether you're expecting a baby with differences, concerned about upcoming surgeries, or need help finding the surgical team that best fits your needs - the best support comes from other people who truly understand! MiCleft is a 501(c)(3) dedicated to enriching the lives of individuals affected by facial differences and provides its services at no charge. MiCleft is also the ONLY craniofacial organization that awards sponsorships to pay for CSHCS payment agreements for affected children when the family cannot afford to pay.

For more information, call Teresa Croughen at 313-590-6000 or visit www.MiCleft.org