



family @ linkages

NEWSLETTER

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

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month is sponsored by the United States Health & Human Services Department. The theme for this year is **“Thriving in the Community,”** emphasizing the role that schools, sports clubs, youth groups and other community organizations play in supporting children’s self-esteem and mental health. It also reminds us that it takes a community, or a village, to support the mental health and success of all of its members, especially its children.

Take time this month to learn more about the programs in your community that help families and caregivers support and promote children’s mental health. Or, use your voice this month to speak up for the promotion of children’s mental health, and help to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues in our community — inform your friends, family or colleagues about the importance of ensuring healthy social-emotional development for all children!

For more information on Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week/Day, visit:
<http://www.samhsa.gov/children/>

National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day



National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day (Awareness Day) is a key strategy of the Caring for Every Child’s Mental Health Campaign, which is part of the Public Awareness and Support Strategic Initiative by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The effort seeks to raise awareness about the importance of children’s mental health and that positive mental health is essential to a child’s healthy development from birth.

This year, **National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day is Wednesday, May 9.** SAMHSA hopes to increase community involvement in 2012 by engaging local groups in a national conversation about the importance of children’s social and emotional well-being. Local groups are also encouraged to offer individuals attending Awareness Day events an opportunity to become a “hero of hope” by making a pledge to take action to help a child or youth.



Association for Children's Mental Health



The Association for Children's Mental Health (ACMH) is a statewide, non-profit, family-run organization offering parent-to-parent peer delivered support, advocacy, education, information & referrals to families raising children with emotional, behavioral, and/or mental health challenges. ACMH is Michigan's statewide chapter of the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health and SAMHSA's federally funded Statewide Family Network.

Currently, ACMH has over 30 family members providing support services to families across Michigan. **For more information about ACMH and the local family support resources available in your community, please contact 1-888-ACMH-KID or acmhadmin@sbcglobal.net.**

On May 1, 2012, the Michigan House of Representatives adopted a resolution declaring May as Children's Mental Health Month and the Michigan Senate adopted a resolution declaring May as Mental Health Month in Michigan. Senator Tonya Schuitmaker and Representative Dian Slavens sponsored the resolutions at the request of ACMH. ACMH thanks Representative Slavens, Senator Schuitmaker, and all of the Michigan legislators for recognizing the importance of good mental health as part of overall good health for Michiganders.

▶ Autism Insurance Benefit Signed into Law

On April 18, 2012 Governor Snyder signed into law the autism insurance benefit which will require that insurance companies cover evidence-based practice interventions for treating autism.



Michigan is now the 30th state to make insurance available to families for the treatment of autism.

Passing this legislation is the first step to creating a network of qualified providers who will be able to service children (0-18 years) with autism in Michigan. These services will include Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)-behavior therapy that is the evidence-based treatment of choice for individuals with autism. The legislation will also cover occupational therapy (OT) for sensory-based interventions and speech therapy.

The law to mandate coverage only applies to State Legislated Insurance Companies. If you work for a large company, they might be a self-funded plan and are regulated by ERISA, a Federal law and the mandate does not apply. However, the State has created an incentive mechanism to essentially reimburse self-funded plans for autism coverage. In essence, there may be no cost to your employer.

We will provide you an information kit for you to take to your company (if a self-funded plan) and ask them to self-adopt autism coverage. That is being developed and will be available soon.

If you are not certain if your company is on a self-funded plan or a State legislated plan, please contact your human resource department. If you are on Medicaid or are looking for services, the State of Michigan is currently working on a plan to provide (behavior) therapy coverage.

For more information on current Medicaid eligibility, contact your local Community Mental Health (CMH) agency. They can determine existing qualifications for Medicaid. More information will be forthcoming as we receive it from the Department of Community Health regarding coverage for autism.

Additionally, the Autism Alliance of Michigan will be holding informational webinars for parents in the summer, and dates are currently being established.

For continued information, go to www.autismallianceofmichigan.org or www.michigan.gov/autism

For questions: e-mail: info@autismallianceofmichigan.org.



➔ Transition to Adulthood

A new interactive transition website called “MiFutureBuilder” recently went live. MiFuturebuilder focuses on key transition planning topics i.e. daily living, education, employment, health care, recreation, housing, as well as legal decision making and social security that are important to young adults with special needs.

Viewers are able to play video segments and download resource materials related to these topics and are able to engage in social networking with other young adults through facebook, a blog, and a Kids As Self Advocates forum.

Visit: www.mifuturebuilder.com.



➔ Affordable Care Act Forums



What health insurance changes can families anticipate from the Affordable Care Act?

Michigan F2FHIEC will be hosting three Affordable Care Act Forums:

- **May 21, 2012 in the Mackinaw Room, 123 in the Bovee University Center at Central Michigan University, 103 East Preston Street, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859 from 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM**
- **May 29, 2012 at the Arc Muskegon, 1145 Wesley Avenue, Muskegon, MI 49442, from 7:00 – 9:00 PM**
- **June 4, 2012 at the Otsego Public Library, 401 Dix Street, Otsego, MI 49078, from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

These two-hour sessions will offer practical, basic information about anticipated changes in accessing health insurance benefits, the requirement to buy health insurance (sometimes known as the “individual mandate”), who will be eligible for financial help to pay premiums, what will be covered through health insurance, and purchasing health insurance through an exchange. In addition, we'll talk about Medicaid expansion under the

Affordable Care Act and the issues currently being decided by the United States Supreme Court. The Power Point presentation, handouts, and discussion are designed to supplement what you already know about this law. An interactive approach and conversation will be used to share information based on the needs of participants.

To attend one of these free sessions visit:

www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEvents?ID=1862&VER=1&LNG=EN

➔ 4th Annual Resource Fair

The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council invites you to attend its 4th Annual Resource Fair to learn about health and wellness resources for people with disabilities and their families. The fair will be held, Tuesday, July 10, 2012, at Hawk Island County Park, from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. The park is located at 1601 E. Cavanaugh Rd., Lansing, 48910.

The Resource Fair will specifically address the growing health and resource needs of individuals with disabilities, their families, and advocates. Health and wellness are important to an individual's overall quality of life. Being healthy and staying well means having the tools and information to make healthy choices.

In addition, there will be mini presentations on diabetes, taking charge of your health, gardening, recreation, and nutrition. There will be an opportunity for individuals to participate in fitness demonstrations and receive information on a range of services, supports and opportunities that lead to fulfilling, healthy lives.

To attend the resource fair, your registration and payment must be postmarked by Friday, June 22, 2012. The non-refundable registration fee of \$5.00 includes lunch, parking, and an opportunity to be entered into the grand prize drawing! Upon receipt of your registration fee, a parking pass will be sent to you. Don't delay, space is limited! Registrations received without payment will not be processed!

Hawk Island Park is an accessible park with an asphalt path encompassing the entire 30-acre lake that is perfect for a stroll where you can participate in a scheduled half-mile walk. There is an accessible play structure for children, providing an environment that fully engages all children in active and creative play. Only service animals are permitted in the park.

Please join us for a wonderful opportunity to network, learn about service delivery, and network with each other.

For additional information, please contact Tracy Vincent at (517) 334-7239 or vincenttr@michigan.gov.





ASPPiRE
(Autism Spectrum Partners Providing Instruction,
Recreation and Enrichment)

and

MMAA
(Mid Michigan Autism Association)



Invite you to attend a Social Coaching Information Night



When: Tuesday, May 15, 2012

Time: 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

**Where: Delta Library — Elmwood Room
5130 Davenport Street, Lansing**

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Anyone interested in learning more about social coaching for young adults with social and cognitive challenges in the greater Lansing area.

ASPPiRE currently provides social coaching to individuals between the ages of 18 and 35. Each small group is facilitated by a skilled professional. Come hear how you or someone you know could get involved.

The Mid Michigan Autism Association will have representatives available to provide information and resources for children and young adults with autism.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Please RSVP to: ahecht@asppireofmidmichigan.com

➔ Developmental Disabilities Institute Survey

The Developmental Disabilities Institute (DDI) is providing the best information and resources that we can. We from time-to-time have to ask for input from our friends and colleagues.

So if you could take 2 minutes to complete a very brief online survey regarding the usefulness and accessibility of the DDI website, you would be helping us out tremendously. The link to the DDI website is below, followed by the link to the survey. Anyone completing the survey before June 30, 2012 will be eligible for one of 2 Target Gift Cards! You can enter your contact information at the end of the survey if you wish to be considered for a Gift Card. Thank you for your help and good luck!! Please feel free to forward this on to anyone you think would fit.

DDI Website: <http://ddi.wayne.edu>

Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DDI-Satisfaction-Survey>

➤ Michigan Alliance for Families Trainings: Dates/ Times/Locations

Content of the IEP

- May 17, 2012 at Collaborative Solutions, 269 Summit Drive, Waterford, MI 48328, from 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

IEP: What to Know Before You Go with Sandi Koski of Michigan Alliance for Families and Mark McWilliams of Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services

- May 19, 2012 at The Arc Muskegon, 1145 E. Wesley Ave, Muskegon MI from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

IEP 101

- May 30, 2012 at the Manistee ISD, 772 Parkdale Ave., Manistee, MI 49660 from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

➤ Michigan Family-to-Family Health Information and Education Trainings

The new training schedule is currently being planned. When the schedule is complete, date/times/locations will appear in this section and on the website www.bridges4kids.org/f2f

● ANNUAL CONFERENCES

The Michigan Career Placement Association Summer Conference

- Crystal Mountain, June 18-20

For more information visit: <http://www.mi-cpa.org>

Lunchtime IEP Learning Webinar Series



TIMES AND TOPICS: Our current series is scheduled for select Thursdays, from noon to 1 PM.

May Webinars Include:

Thursday, May 17th, 2012 (noon to 1 PM)

IEP Supports and Services, including Accommodations and Modifications, with Kelly Orginski from Michigan Alliance for Families

Thursday, May 31st, 2012 (noon to 1 PM)

Inclusion: The Importance of Including Students with Disabilities in the General Education Classroom, with Kelly Orginski from Michigan Alliance for Families

Where do I sign up? Follow the registration links at:

www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/webinar

