



A Word from Mary

It is hard to believe, that in only five months we'll be attending our every-other-year conference **Relatively Speaking**. This year, it's on October 7-9, 2011 in Grand Rapids. This conference focuses on siblings of children with special needs. It gives siblings of brothers and sisters with special needs the rare opportunity to meet with other siblings and have fun, talk, and connect heart-to-heart. The children meet in age appropriate workshops while the parents attend workshops dedicated to "mom and dad issues." Don Meyer, the founder of *Sibshops*, will be one of our speakers. We will also have speakers that are featured in Don's latest book, Thicker than Water. This book features a series of essays by adult siblings of people with disabilities.

A limited number of stipends are available to help defray the costs of attending the conference. The stipends can be used for registration, lodging, transportation and child care. To apply for a stipend to attend **Relatively Speaking**, please call the Family Phone Line at (800)359-3722. Preference will be given to first time attendees.

The Children with Special Needs Fund is a generous supporter of this conference.

Mary J. Marin

Transportation Reminders

If you receive transportation reimbursement through CSHCS is important to ensure payment:

1. In-state travel cannot be authorized for more than one calendar month at a time.
2. Travel requires prior authorization. Families must contact the Local Health Department for in-state travel. Invoices for trips taken before authorization was granted will not be reimbursed.
3. Families have 90 days after completion of the prior authorized trips to submit the invoice to MDCH accounting. The date is based of receipt date not postmark date. Invoices received beyond 90 days that the travel occurred will not be reimbursed.
4. Inquiries about travel reimbursements cannot be investigated prior to eight weeks after submission of invoices.

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.

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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.

We'll miss you, Dr. George Baker. Dr. Baker, the Chief Medical Consultant for CSHCS, retired effective March 31, 2011. George retired after working over 25 years for, and with, the families of children with special health care needs. He has always been innovative and forward thinking. Most recently, he has been instrumental in moving Michigan forward in the creation of the Medical Home concept. George always did his job with insight, compassion and integrity. He did his best to make sure that the medical needs of our most vulnerable population were taken care of.

A reception was held in his honor on March 31, 2011 in E. Lansing. It was attended by current and past co-workers, friends, parents and peers. When he agreed to the reception, he asked that no gifts be given. However, generous friends contributed to a group gift and a donation was made in the name of Dr. Baker's grandson to the Autism Center in Iowa which is where his grandson lives.

THE COMMUNITY PAGE: Articles Contributed by community Organizations

Watch Me Grow – A Calendar for Michigan Families

The Watch Me Grow Healthy Happy and Strong calendar is celebrating its 15th year. The 2011-12 edition is now available. It includes activities for parents and children, highlights of 30 programs for families, and lists important telephone numbers. It also provides space for families to add their own!

Order a calendar for your family, or families you work with, at: <http://www.watchmegrowcalendar.com/about.html>

Resources

Assistive Technology (AT) Xchange
www.atxchange.org

CSHCS Courses
[www.training.mihealth.org/
course_detail.htm#CSHCS](http://www.training.mihealth.org/course_detail.htm#CSHCS)

Down Syndrome Guild
www.dsgsemi.org
1-248-827-9135

Family Center
www.bridges4kids.org/f2f
[1-800-359-3722](tel:1-800-359-3722)

Healthy Children Project Monthly e-news
www.LDAofmichigan.org/healthchild.htm

Judson Center Autism Connections
www.judsoncenter.org

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

Little Mary's Hospitality House

Little Mary's is a **free** vacation/retreat for families who have children battling life threatening or terminal illnesses. This six apartment complex, established in 1982, helps families cope with the mental and physical stresses pertaining to their illnesses. Little Mary's is located in Wellston, Michigan between Cadillac and Manistee. It is supported solely through private donations.

For more information, visit their website at www.littlemarys.org.

Camp Resources

Please visit the websites below for a comprehensive list of summer camp opportunities in Michigan.



www.bridges4kids.org/summercamp.html
www.activitytree.com
www.veryspecialcamps.com/michigan

Family Support Subsidy The Family Support Subsidy (FSS) Program provides financial assistance to families that include a child with severe developmental disabilities. The intent is to help make it possible for children with developmental disabilities to remain with or return to their birth or adoptive families. The program provides a monthly payment of \$222.11. Families are able to use this money for special expenses incurred while caring for their child.

Child must be younger than 18 years of age and live in the family home in Michigan.

- The family's most recently filed Michigan income tax form must show a **taxable** income of \$60,000 or less.
- The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team of the local public or intermediate school district must recommend the child for an educational eligibility category of severe cognitive impairment, severe multiple impairment or autism spectrum disorder. Children with autism spectrum disorder must be receiving special education services in a program for students with autism spectrum disorder or in a program for students with severe cognitive impairment or severe multiple impairments.

Applications are available at all county community mental health services programs (CMHSPs).

Thought for the Day

A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was,
the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove....

But the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.