



Press Release

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Children with Special Needs Fund receives \$50,000 grant; families can apply

LANSING, Mich. – Children with special needs will have better access to their homes and communities through the purchase of ceiling and stair lifts thanks to a Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation grant.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Children with Special Needs Fund is receiving the \$50,000 grant and will be awarding funds twice this year. Applications received by May 23, 2019, will be reviewed in June, and applications received by Aug. 22, 2019, will be reviewed in September.

Besides ceiling and stair lifts, the Children with Special Needs Fund also assists with partial or full payment for items such as wheelchair ramps, vehicle accessibility devices, transit options, therapeutic tricycles, air conditioners for certain medical conditions, weighted blankets or vests, and adaptive recreational equipment. Applications for these items are reviewed year-round.

“For nearly 75 years, the Children with Special Needs Fund has been a resource for Michigan families of children with special health care needs, and it plays an important role in the lives of these children and their families,” said MDHHS Director Robert Gordon. “Many families may not be aware of the fund, and we want them to know this is a resource they can turn to when no other resources are available.”

Thousands of children with disabilities and serious illnesses have benefited from the fund with awards of more than \$8 million. The fund operates from private funds through gifts, bequests and donations made by individuals, organizations and businesses.

Based in Midland, the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation was established by Eda U. Gerstacker in 1957 in memory of her husband. Eda Gerstacker died in 1975 and family members continue to serve as officers and trustees of the foundation. The Children with Special Needs Fund was

created in 1944 when Dr. James Pardee, co-founder of Dow Chemical Company, made a generous bequest of Dow stock.

Anyone who wants to find out if a child is eligible for assistance or donate to the fund can visit www.michigan.gov/csntfund or contact their local health department's Children's Special Health Care Services worker. Apply for funds by clicking the "Application" button on the left side of the website homepage.

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