



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
LANSING

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Dear Local Health Department Partners,

The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (Family Center) is excited to be sponsoring a two-day Sibshop Facilitator Training on May 1 and 2, 2015 in Lansing. We invite you to be a part of this statewide Sibshop initiative, which is offered at no cost to participants. Sibshops are workshops designed for typically developing siblings that have brothers or sisters with special needs. Sibshops provide pedal-to-the-metal celebrations of the many contributions made by siblings. Sibshops are a spirited mix of new games, new friends, and discussion activities designed to honor and increase the self-esteem that siblings often need. There are now over 200 Sibshops in 45 states.

The two-day Sibshop Facilitator Training is one event with two goals and two audiences. The primary goal is to train new Sibshop facilitators and administrators – that is, adult sibs, service providers, parents and other community partners who want to learn how to run a local Sibshop. Our hope is to recruit from all areas of Michigan in order to have trained facilitators across the state that will then provide Sibshops within their own community. This audience will attend both days of the two-day training.

During the two days of the Sibshop Facilitator Training, the trainees will learn about sibs' life-long concerns, find out how to organize a local Sibshop, and experience what a Sibshop is all about as they join us and local young brothers and sisters for a three-hour Demonstration Sibshop. These trainees must attend both days of the Sibshop training. Upon completion of the two-day training, they are considered "first-generation" Sibshop trainees and may (upon registration) start their own local Sibshop.

The secondary goal is to educate parents, service providers, and others about sibs' ever-changing issues across the lifespan. This target audience is interested in sibling issues, but not necessarily interested in how to run a Sibshop. This audience will attend just the first day of the two-day training.

We are asking for your help in recruiting parent leaders within your area who you feel would make a great Sibshop facilitator. Our goal is to have one parent from each Local Health Department attend the workshop to become a trained Sibshop facilitator. In addition, we are seeking 20 typically developing siblings of children with special needs, ages 8-13, to attend the Demonstration Sibshop on the second day of the workshop from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. These siblings may or may not have parents who are attending the two-day training. Please forward the attached Sibshop Facilitator Training registration materials to parent leaders in your area. Space is limited, so we are advising anyone who is interested in attending to register as soon as possible. If there are any CSHCS Local Health Department employees who are interested in attending day 1 of the workshop, please register by April 1, 2015 as space is limited. The workshop is expected to fill up quickly and we are prioritizing these spots for CSHCS Local Health Department employees.

Thank you for all of your help recruiting parents and siblings for this Sibshop Facilitator Training. Feel free to contact Amanda Larraga at 517-373-2239 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Candi Bush  
Director of Family Center for CYSHCN