SUMMER 2023

Michigan Family Connections Newsletter

New Family Center Manager

The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs is excited to share that Jane Pilditch accepted the position of Family Center Manager and started June 26th. Jane is an experienced parent leader with a long history of managing projects and teams. She has a son with special health care needs and over 25 years of experience elevating the family voice in programs serving children and families.

Her responsibilities will include providing leadership, oversight, and management of Family Center programs and initiatives. She will represent the perspective of families on local, state, and national committees and advisory boards. In addition, she will also support the Family Center's work to promote parent-professional collaborations and partnerships.

For the past 9 years, Jane has worked at Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI), the home of the Michigan Family to Family project. She has been an important contributor to Michigan Family to Family, and looks forward to continuing to partner with them in her new role.

In addition to working on Michigan Family to Family, Jane has been involved in a number of projects at MPHI that involve families, children with special health care needs, newborn screening, access to metabolic food and formula, telehealth, improving access to healthcare for underserved families, and increasing access to genetic services.

Jane's experience as a parent and advocate for her son with special health care needs and medical complexity, along with her professional experience, provides her with a unique blend of skills and knowledge that prepares her well for her new position at the Family Center. Please join us in welcoming Jane to her new role!

A newsletter for families of children and youth with special health care needs, and the professionals who care for them.

Connecting you with information and news you can use.

A virtual publication brought to you by the Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs and Michigan Family to Family Health Information Center

The ABC's of Respite—A Resource For Families

Parenting a child or young adult with a disability or special health care needs typically means you take on additional responsibilities. You may engage in multiple roles supporting their independence and overall quality of life, in addition to being a caregiver.

Sometimes individuals with disabilities, such as intellectual and developmental disabilities, have unique physical, emotional, and behavioral conditions that require specialized care.

It is important for you to be aware of a resource called respite care. Respite care provides short-term relief for primary caregivers. It can provide you with a much needed break away from your caregiving responsibilities.

The ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center works to assist and promote the development of quality respite and crisis care programs in the United States. In addition, they help families locate respite and crisis care services in their communities, and they serve as a strong voice for respite in different forums.

They have compiled a helpful resource called ***The ABC's of Respite—A Consumer Guide for Family Caregivers***. Information in the guide includes finding a respite provider, planning for respite, how to pay for respite care, and much more.

This guide and other caregiver resources are available on the

ARCH National Respite Network website.

"Autism Society of MI" Is Now "Autism Support of MI"

Autism Support of Michigan (ASM), formerly known as the Autism Society of Michigan, is an information and referral non-profit that provides resources to persons on the spectrum, their families, educators and professionals in the State of Michigan.

The mission of ASM is to assure full participation and self-determination in every aspect of life for everyone. They believe the best advocacy occurs with education, respect, and the presumption of competence of all persons.

Some examples of what they offer include a website listing of local resources suggested by other families, a general information packet on Autism for families of newly diagnosed individuals, a newsletter, and a blog.

Autism Support of Michigan
Making Human Connections

ASM is committed to empowering individuals with autism and their families by offering educational resources, materials, and other services. For more information, visit:

Autism Support of Michigan website.

Important Information About Medicaid Renewals

During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE), many changes were made to the Medicaid program, including changes that prevented Medicaid beneficiaries from losing healthcare coverage. With the end of the PHE, Michigan is requiring Medicaid beneficiaries to submit renewal applications again.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has been preparing for these changes and working to keep beneficiaries informed. Starting in March, MDHHS began sending out letters to let beneficiaries know of the upcoming renewals.

Renewal packets began going out in May, and beneficiaries need to respond in order to maintain their Medicaid coverage.

What can you do?

Be sure your address, phone number, and email address are up to date. The best way to update your information is online at **MI Bridges (Michigan.gov).** You can also call your local MDHHS office. Visit the **MDHHS County Office webpage** to find your local office information.

If you do not have an online account for MI Bridges to access your Medicaid case or report changes, visit www.michigan.gov/MIBridges to sign up for a MI Bridges account.

If you already have a MI Bridges account, creating new accounts will limit the information you can see. MDHHS strongly suggest using your original account if you are the "Head of Household." Head of Household can see case information and report changes. If you are not the Head of Household, you will only see resource information.

Be sure you also report any changes to your income or household. This can also be done online on MI Bridges or by calling your local MDHHS office.

When you get a renewal packet, make sure to fill it out, sign the forms, and return it by the due date with any required documentation needed.

NOTE: If you do not complete and return the renewal application, you may lose Medicaid coverage. If they complete a review and you no longer qualify, you can choose to buy healthcare coverage at **HealthCare.gov**.

"While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about."
–Angela Schwindt

Michigan Medicaid Covers Asthma Spacers

Metered dose inhalers, which are also called "puffers" or "inhalers", spray asthma medicine out so you can breathe it into your lungs. A spacer is an attachment that should always be used with an inhaler. Using an inhaler with a spacer and a mouthpiece helps ensure the medicine gets into the lungs.

Using the inhaler without a spacer can leave some of the particles from the medicine on your tongue or throat. The spacer holds the medicine in place so you can breathe it deep into the lungs, where it is most beneficial.

Did you know that Michigan Medicaid covers four spacers every year which you can get through the pharmacy? If you have other insurance, check with your health plan to see if spacers are covered and where you can purchase them.

The infographic on the following page from the Asthma Initiative of Michigan has more helpful information. You can also learn more at:

Get Asthma Help website.

Mimi's Mission Helps Downriver Families in MI

Mimi's Mission is a local non-profit organization that helps Downriver families who have autistic children or adults. The goal of the organization is to provide unique programs and resources to autistic individuals and their families.

When a new parent first gets a diagnosis that their child has autism, it can be overwhelming. Downriver parents may not find a lot of options for community supports. That's where Mimi's Mission steps in by offering the following:

- Autism Acceptance Group to support families
- Downriver Young Adults supports teens
- *911Ready* to work with first responders
- Downriver Do-Gooders to share equipment and resources
- Family outings and support groups
- Memberships to experience-based activities for families
- Sensory regulation tools
- Support and information for families

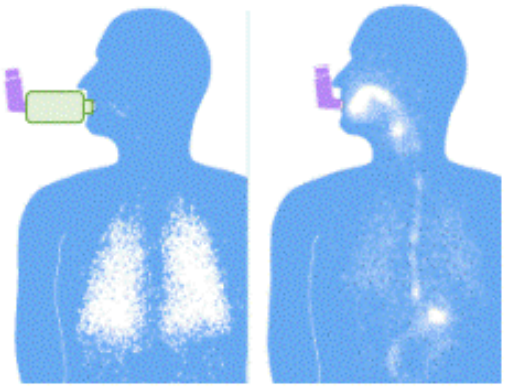
Mimi's Mission provides assistance to the following communities: Allen Park, Brownstown Charter Township, Ecorse, Flat Rock, Gibraltar, Grosse Ile Township, Huron Charter Township, Lincoln Park, Melvindale, River Rouge, Riverview, Rockwood, Romulus, Southgate, Taylor, Trenton, Woodhaven, and Wyandotte.

For more information, visit:
Mimi's Mission website Link

Spacers + Inhalers for Asthma
Easy as 1 – 2 – 3!

1 Get a prescription for a spacer from your doctor.

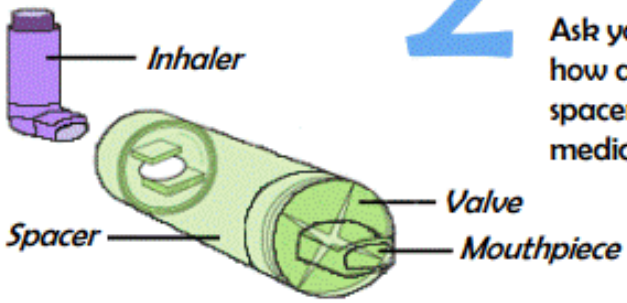
Using a spacer means that you will get more of the medicine in your lungs where it's needed. Michigan Medicaid plans allow 4 spacers every year from the pharmacy. The pharmacist can call your insurance for more information.



Medicaid plans pay for rides to and from doctor visits and the pharmacy.

2 Learn how to use your inhalers with your spacer.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to show you how and when to use your inhalers with the spacer. Bring your spacer and all of your medications to each doctor visit.



3 Use your spacer every time you use your inhalers!

Keep your rescue inhaler and spacer with you at all times! Use the spacer with your long-term controller inhaler if it needs it.

Learn more at
GetAsthmaHelp.org/spacers

AIM Asthma Initiative of Michigan

This infographic was supported by the Grant or Cooperative Agreement Number, NU59EH000525-08, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services.

MC3 Program Available To Support Primary Care

The MC3 program offers psychiatry support to primary care providers in Michigan who are managing patients with behavioral health problems. This includes children, adolescents, young adults through age 26, and women who are contemplating pregnancy, pregnant or postpartum (up to one year).

Psychiatrists are available through same-day phone consultations to offer guidance on:

- diagnostic questions
- medication recommendations
- appropriate psychotherapy

A local MC3 Behavioral Health Consultant is also available to provide recommendations for local resources.

How Does it Work?

- The treating provider or clinic designee initiates the consult with a phone call to the Behavioral Health Consultant (BHC), a master's-level mental health professional based locally, or submits a consultation request through a secure web-based form.
- The BHC triages the referral, responds to any questions that are within the scope of his/her expertise, and forwards appropriate cases to the MC3 psychiatrist for same-day phone consultation. In cases that are deemed urgent, the BHC will suggest local resources for referral.
- Upon completion of the consultation between the psychiatrist and treating provider, a written summary of the consultation is sent to the provider along with local resources.

Who Can Participate?

Primary care providers in Michigan are eligible to participate in the program. This includes M.D.s,

D.O.s, N.P.s, P.A.s and C.N.M.s in pediatric, OB/GYN, family medicine, internal medicine, and psychiatry practices. As part of their participation, they will be asked to sign a Provider Agreement that outlines program services and respective responsibilities.

As an additional educational resource, participating primary care providers can access live virtual trainings with free CMEs. Recorded learning modules are also available on the program website in addition to tools and resources to assist providers in their practice.

What's Not Included?

MC3 is not an emergency service. Emergency consultations over the phone or in person are not provided. If a PCP calls about a case requiring an urgent intervention, the Behavioral Health Consultant can offer appropriate resource recommendations.

U-M psychiatrists do not prescribe medication or provide ongoing treatment, but rather support primary care providers as they provide care. For those cases beyond the scope of the provider, the BHC and psychiatrist will offer referrals to local or regional clinicians.

Where Can My Provider Get More Information?

MC3 Program website

Stay Well Resources for Teens and Young Adults

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about many changes that were challenging for teens and young adults. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services developed some youth resources to help teens manage their mental health through a program called Stay Well. The Stay Well program was created to help promote resilience and healing.

The Stay Well web page offers many different wellness videos and recordings on a variety of topics for teens and young adults, including:

- **T.A.P. (Take a Pause)** - brief videos demonstrating mindfulness exercises you can do to restore calm and focus.
- **Cultivating Joy**—animated videos exploring ways to move beyond struggles to reclaim your personal joy.
- **Be Kind to Your Mind**—a webinar for teens who want to know how to help their struggling friends, as well as improve their own mental wellness.
- **Beyond the Plate**—a recorded six-part webinar series that discusses health and nutrition using a holistic lens.

These videos and recordings are available on the Stay Well website at:

MDHHS Stay Well—Webinar Recordings

The Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice

The Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice (CYVYC) is a national youth resource center on alternatives to guardianship.

Research show that as youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities reach age 18, they, their parents, and the professionals that serve them are not well informed about guardianship or knowledgeable of less restrictive alternatives.

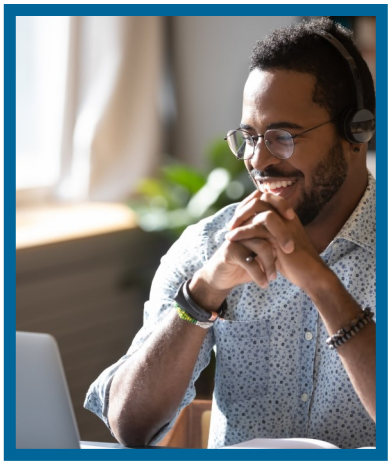
The Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice does research, advocacy, and education about alternatives to guardianship. The work directly with youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as with families, supporters, and researchers from a variety of backgrounds.

They have worked together to develop tools and information to share about alternatives to guardianship, including youth stories, resources, and a Youth Ambassador program.

You can learn more about alternatives to guardianship and get tools to get the support you need to make decisions in your life on their website at :

Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice

Trainings and Other Events



Parent Connect Calls

Topic: Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

- August 9, 2023, 11:00 am –12:00 pm

Parent Connect Call: Non Emergency Medical Transportation Tickets, Wed, Aug 9, 2023 at 11:00 AM | Eventbrite

Professional Connect Calls

Topic: Children with Special Needs (CSN)

- August 17, 2023, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Professional Connect Call: CSN Fund Tickets, Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 11:00 AM | Eventbrite

• Topic: Family Center for Children 101, Thursday, September 21, 2023, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Professional Connect Call-FC 101 Tickets, Thu, Sep 21, 2023 at 3:00 PM | Eventbrite

Parent Mentor Trainings

Weekday Virtual Parent Mentor Trainings:

Tuesday – Wednesday, 9 am – 11:30 am and Thursday, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

- August 15 –17, 2023

Virtual Parent Mentor Training Tickets, Tue, Aug 15, 2023 at 9:00 AM | Eventbrite

Saturday Virtual Parent Mentor Trainings:

Saturday, 9:00 am—3:30 pm

- August 12, 2023

Virtual Saturday Parent Mentor Training Tickets, Sat, Aug 12, 2023 at 9:00 AM | Eventbrite

• Sickle Cell Disease—September 30, 2023

Virtual Parent Mentor Training: Sickle Cell Disease Tickets, Sat, Sep 30, 2023 at 9:00 AM | Eventbrite

Navigating Healthcare Webinar Series

Topic: ***The Benefits of Care Mapping***. Learn how to create an interactive communication tool that can be used to highlight strengths, and identify resources needed to support your child and family.

Date/Time: July 27, 2023 from 12 noon—1 pm

Registration: **Navigating Healthcare Webinar Registration**

Growing As Leaders: A Parent Leadership Series

Topic: ***Networking and Relationship Building***. Join us for conversation on the significance of networking and cultivating connections within your community as a family leader.

Date/Time: August 16, 2023 from 12 noon — 1 pm

Registration: **Growing as Leaders Registration**

Who We Are:

The Michigan Family to Family Health Information Center (MI F2F) is a federally funded project. They share resources and information on disability and health issues with families of children and youth with special health care needs.

MI F2F also works with health and other professionals. MI F2F helps families make educated decisions and supports families to partner with various professionals. They work to make services for children and youth with special health care needs better.

For more information and helpful resources, look for us on Facebook or visit our website

MI F2F Website

Like us on **Facebook**

The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (Family Center) is the statewide parent-directed center within Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

The primary role of the Family Center is to offer emotional support, information and connections to community-based resources to families of children and youth with special health care needs, including all children who have, or are at an increased risk for physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions.*

Family Center Direct Line (517) 241-7630

CSHCS Family Phone Line (800) 359-3722

Family Center Website

*Children do not have to be enrolled in CSHCS to receive services from the Family Center.

Disclaimer: The Family Connections newsletter includes information and links to the internet and other resources. These resources are for your consideration only and are not endorsed by the Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, Michigan Family to Family Health Information Center, or our funders. The Michigan Family to Family Health Information Center is a project of the Michigan Public Health Institute. It is funded by Health Resources Services Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau under Grant H84MC26214. The information or content and conclusions of the author should not be construed as the official policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. Furthermore, the information provided should not be used for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease, and is not a substitute for professional care. Please direct any questions through the Family Phone Line or MI F2F website listed above.