

Michigan Family Connections Newsletter

Fall 2017

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES GETTING CAREER EXPERIENCE WITH PROJECT SEARCH

Students with disabilities will have new opportunities to gain career experience with the launch of a new Project SEARCH program partly funded by Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) within MDHHS.

The Project SEARCH High School Transition Program is a unique, business led, one year school-to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace. Total workplace immersion facilitates a combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training.

The State of Michigan is one of 17 host sites offering Project SEARCH programs throughout Michigan. Other partners in the initiative include the Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties, Peckham Inc. and the Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons.

The internship program will begin this year by connecting seven students within the Ingham Intermediate School District with training opportunities within 15 state department divisions and agencies in Lansing.

“Every Michigander deserves a chance to gain employment skills that will help them live self-determined independent lives,” Lt. Gov. Brian Calley said in October. “I am proud that the State of Michigan is now a Project SEARCH site, helping connect young people with disabilities to valuable career skills so they can live up to their full potential.”

Project SEARCH will provide high school students with disabilities the opportunity to train, gain and maintain employment through businesses and organization opportunities across the nation. Through this program, students are offered a one-year opportunity to develop valuable workplace skills leading to post-graduation employment.



For more information on Project SEARCH and to find a site near you, visit:

<http://www.projectsearch.us>

Photo on the right: Project SEARCH participant Daniel Sneathen showing off his new office space.



*A newsletter
for families of
children and youth
with special health
care needs, and
professionals who
help them.
Connecting you
with information
and news you
can use!*

**A quarterly 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**

QUIZ FOR YOUTH: ARE YOU READY TO TRANSITION TO ADULT HEALTH CARE?

Transitioning from a doctor who sees children to a doctor who sees adults is a big step. Like going to college, getting a job, or going to live on your own, transitioning to adult care takes independence, self-advocacy, and preparation.

Growing up always means taking on more responsibilities in your life, and that includes your health and health care.

Are you ready to transition? The Family Voices' National Young Adult Transition Advisory Group worked with Got Transition to create a Youth Health Care Transition Quiz for youth and young adults to find out how ready they are to transition to adult care.



The quiz asks about major issues important during transition years. It also gives tips and resources to address many health care transition questions, including how to add their medical information to their smartphone, what legal changes happen at 18, and how to sign up for health insurance.

To take the quiz, go to:

<http://gottransition.org/youthfamilies/HCTquiz.cfm>

NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

November calls attention to the over 26 million Americans, over 8% of the U.S. population, who have diabetes. Everyday in America, 35 children are diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. That is more than one child every hour. Diabetes can impact the whole family, especially when a child is diagnosed. It can be a scary and overwhelming time for your child and family. One thing that can help is having a Diabetes Care Plan for your child.

Putting together a Diabetes Care Plan is an important part of your child's care. This care plan will not be the same as everyone else's. To work well, it must be adapted into your child's life. For example, it needs to take into account:

- your child's schedule (including school)
- how active he or she is
- when and what your child likes to eat
- your family's lifestyle
- other medical conditions your child has

You should help create your child's diabetes care plan. Otherwise, it may not fit into your child's life and you and your child won't understand what you need to do. Be sure to speak up and ask questions or ask when you need help to understand the best way to manage your child's diabetes.

After the initial shock of a diabetes diagnosis wears off, your family will adjust to life with diabetes. With planning and preparation, your child can do most typical activities. Diabetes should not keep your child from achieving his or her goals.



BOOK HIGHLIGHT CORNER

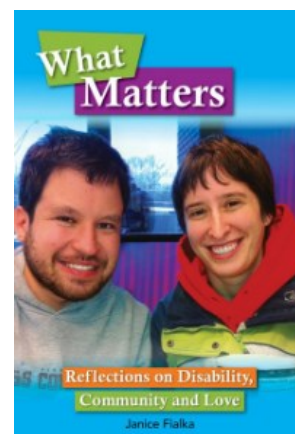
What Matters: Reflections on Disability, Community and Love
by Janice Fialka (www.danceofpartnership.com)

This is the story of Micah, who has an intellectual disability, his community, and his ground-breaking journey to full inclusion in K-12 schools, college, work and life. It is told by Micah, as well as his parents, his sister, friends and colleagues in essays, poems and interviews.

Despite such labels as "low I.Q.", "unemployable" and "not-a-student," the book powerfully chronicles how Micah was fully included since elementary school, and later, how he challenged discrimination in the federal court, and won, how he moved 300 miles from his home to become a teaching assistant at Syracuse University, and most recently, how he survived heart surgery.

It offers practical strategies to ensure authentic lifelong inclusion, create circles of support, help parents shift from protectors to guides. Micah and his community are mentors on how to honor interdependency, redefine disability, cultivate relationships, and live a meaningful life. A book of hope and practical guidance for families, self-advocates, professionals and all the rest of us---because we all need to be included.

Listen to an interview with Janice Fialka on [NPR—Michigan Radio \(91.7\)](#).



“You have to accept whatever comes, and the only important thing is that you meet it with courage and with the best you have to give.” - Eleanor Roosevelt

ACA OPEN ENROLLMENT IS GOING ON NOW—DON'T WAIT!

With so much uncertainty around the Affordable Care Act, some individuals and families are waiting to see what happens. But it is important to note that there are important deadlines to meet if you need to purchase coverage. Don't wait and take a chance on missing out on enrollment.

The Kaiser Foundation recently did an analysis on individuals eligible for Marketplace insurance. The results show that 54% or 5.9 million people who are uninsured and eligible to purchase coverage on the Marketplace would pay less in premiums than they would owe as a penalty for lacking coverage.

Within that, about 4.5 million (or 42%) could obtain a bronze level plan at no cost in 2018, after taking income-related premium tax credits into account. For more information on the results of this analysis, go to the Kaiser Foundation website [here](#).

For more information, or for assistance in finding help with enrollment, please visit:

www.healthcare.gov

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

November 1, 2017—Enrollment begins

December 15, 2017—Enrollment closes

For individuals who enroll during this open enrollment period, coverage will begin on Jan 1, 2018.



NEW MILESTONES APP FROM CDC

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is pleased to announce the launch of CDC's Milestone Tracker – a free app for tracking every child's development in a fun and easy way. This app adds to the popular suite of free, family-friendly materials available through CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early. program.

The CDC Milestone Tracker app gives parents tips to help their child learn and grow, a way to track developmental milestones, recognize delays, and the ability to share this information with their healthcare provider.

The new app offers:

- Interactive milestone checklists for children ages 2 months through 5 years, illustrated with photos and videos
- Tips and activities to help children learn and grow
- Information on when to act early and talk with a doctor about developmental delays

- A personalized milestone summary that can be easily shared with the doctor and other care providers
- Reminders for appointments and developmental screening

Learn more and get information on downloading the app at CDC's Milestone Tracker website. The app is available in the App Store and on Google Play.



MICHIGAN MILITARY FAMILY SPECIAL NEEDS COALITION

The Michigan Military Family Special Needs Coalition was recently formed as a partnership between the State Family Program Office, and Michigan military families with special needs. The purpose of the Coalition is to improve support and gather resources for all military and veteran families in Michigan requiring medical or educational consideration for family members. A family member with special needs is defined as a:

- Spouse, child or incapacitated adult, who, regardless of age, has special medical needs and requires medical care for a chronic condition, receives ongoing services from a medical specialist or has significant behavioral health concerns.
- Child (birth through age 21) with special education needs who is eligible for, or receives, either early intervention services through an individualized family service plan, or special education services through an Individualized Education Program.

The Coalition is seeking any Michigan military service members, veterans, or family members who want to assist in improving support and resources for our Michigan military and veteran families with special needs.

Please share this information with any military or veteran family with special needs that may be interested in participating. Any service members or family members interested may contact Jess Ulrey at (517) 481-8301.

You can also visit their Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/mmfsncoalition/>



BULLYING AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS*

Children with physical, developmental, intellectual, emotional and sensory disabilities are more likely to be bullied than their peers. A number of factors—physical vulnerability, social skill challenges, or intolerant environments—may increase their risk.

Bullying behavior can become “disability harassment” which is prohibited under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* and Title II of the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*.

Disability harassment can take different forms including verbal harassment, physical threats, or threatening written statements. When a school learns that disability harassment may have occurred, the school must investigate the incident(s) promptly and respond appropriately. Disability harassment can occur in any location that is connected with school—classrooms, the cafeteria, hallways, the playground, athletic fields, or school busses. It also can occur during school sponsored events.

If you believe a child with special needs is being bullied:

- Be supportive of the child and encourage him or her to describe who was involved. Ask how and where the bullying happened. Tell the child that it is not his or her fault and nobody deserves to be bullied or harassed. Do not encourage the child to fight back. This may make the problem worse.
- Ask the child specific questions about his or her friendships. Be aware of signs of bullying, even if the child doesn't call it that. Children with disabilities do not always realize they are being bullied. They may, for example, believe they have a new friend, even though the “friend” is making fun of them.
- Talk with the child's teacher immediately to see whether he or she can help resolve the problem.
- Put your concerns in writing and contact the principal if the bullying or harassment is severe or the teacher doesn't fix the problem. Explain what happened in detail and ask for a prompt response. Keep a written record of all conversations and communications with the school.
- Ask the school district to convene a meeting of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 team. These groups ensure that the school district is meeting the needs of its students with disabilities. This meeting will allow you to explain what has been happening. The team can review the child's IEP or 504 plan to make sure the school is taking steps to stop the bullying.
- Work with the school to help establish a system-wide bullying prevention program that includes support for bullied children. Creating a supportive school climate is an important step to prevent harassment.
- Explore if the child may also be bullying other younger, weaker students at school. If so his or her IEP may need to be modified to include help to change the aggressive behavior.
- Be persistent. Talk regularly with the child and with school staff to see whether the behavior has stopped.

*From handout available at www.stopbullying.gov.



What is Bullying?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior. It involves a real or perceived power imbalance and the behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

stopbullying.gov

2018 SAVE THE DATE FOR FAMILY CENTER'S PARENT MENTOR TRAINING

The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs is proud to sponsor trainings to parents/caregivers of children with special health care needs who would like to make a difference in the lives of others.

This training is open to all families who have a child with a medical, physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition. As a trained Parent Mentor, you will become a part of a statewide network of volunteer parents supporting one another, sharing resources, and helping to navigate various systems.

PLEASE NOTE: registration will open about 6 weeks prior to the date of the training.

To be placed on our email list, please call the Family Phone Line at 800-359-3722.



2018 Dates

January 27, 2018 - St. Joseph County

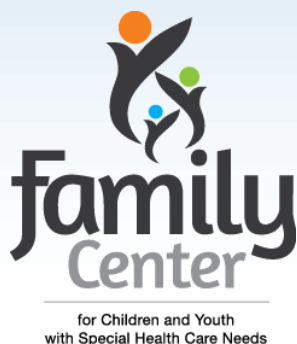
February 24, 2018 - St. Clair County

March 10, 2018 - Kent County

Michigan Family to Family Health Information Center (MI F2F) is a federally funded project. They share information and resources 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 professionals. They work to make services for children and youth with special health care needs better.



www.f2fmichigan.org



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 Phone Line 800-359-3722

Disclaimer: The Family Connections newsletter includes information and links to 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.