

Michigan Family Connections Newsletter

SUMMER 2019

SAVE WITHOUT LOSING ASSISTANCE

Across Michigan and nationwide, a \$2,000 federal asset limit is imposed on people with disabilities who receive government assistance like Medicaid or Social Security Income.

With a disability savings account with the Michigan Department of Treasury's MiABLE program, enrolled children and adults with disabilities are free to save and invest up to \$15,000 annually in five investment options.

Most importantly, people do not have to fear losing government benefits due to their MiABLE account. The accounts are available to individuals who became disabled before age 26, regardless if the disability is physical, developmental or mental.

Qualified individuals can use MiABLE savings to pay for expenses such as rent, tuition, vehicle purchases, health care, personal needs and long-term care. If you're employed, you may be able to contribute up to an additional \$12,140 from your income – increasing the total yearly contribution limit to \$27,140.

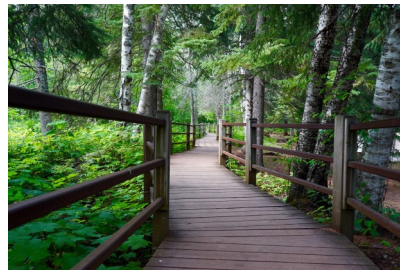
For more details or to enroll, visit <https://www.miable.org/>



*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!*

ENJOYING THE GREAT OUTDOORS

The State of Michigan is known for being an amazing place for outdoor recreational activities. With summer here, many individuals are headed out to enjoy Michigan's beaches, trails, fishing spots, and campgrounds.



The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has a strong focus on making Michigan's natural resources available for people of all abilities to enjoy. You can visit their website to find a wide variety of accessible recreation opportunities at state parks, campgrounds, boating access sites, state game areas, trails and more.

https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79137_79782---,00.html

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

INCORPORATING DOCTORS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Navigating the special education system is a challenging task for parents of children with special health care needs. It is often overlooked that including your child's doctor(s) may help. Involving your child's doctor(s) in the education process can help make sure your child is receiving the supports they need and that there is consistency in your child's care in school.

Doctors are able to identify children in need of special education and/or advocate for children already in the special education system. Doctors can help your child's school understand your child's individual needs and how their disability can impact their education. This includes social/emotional, behavioral or physical disabilities that impact your child's ability to successfully participate in school.



It is important to know that the schools and your child's doctor(s) may not always reach similar conclusions. This is because schools evaluate children under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and doctors evaluate under medical criteria.

Doctors are not able to make decisions on services within schools, but can provide input to school evaluation teams who decide if and what criteria a child meets for special education services. By working together, any differences can hopefully be resolved for your child to get the supports that they need to succeed.

For your child's doctor(s) to be able to communicate with your child's school, you would sign a release to allow the doctor to share any information with your child's school. Open communication can be helpful as it also allows for schools to share information with your child's doctor(s) that may help inform their medical treatment. The school is only allowed to share this information with your permission.

A recent report by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) discusses this topic further and can be found at: <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/136/6/e1650.full.pdf>

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE BY KRISTEN REESE

My daughter has been in special education services since age 3. My daughter was diagnosed with a genetic condition that impacts her developmentally and physically. Because of her health issues, there have been times that it was in my daughter's best interest to include her pediatrician's input in the school setting.

One time her pediatrician helped when my daughter had a medical issue that impacted her attendance. Due to body temperature regulation issues, she would spike a low "fever" at school. School policy required her to be sent home, and stay out for 24 hours. This was hard because she wasn't actually sick. Her doctor helped work with the school to find a solution. With help from her doctor, the school created a plan to identify when my daughter's "fever" was truly due to an illness, and when it was okay for her to stay in school.

My daughter's pediatrician has also written prescriptions as needed for therapy, adaptive equipment, and DME. She helped secure an air conditioned bus because of my daughter's potential to overheat. We consider my daughter's doctor to be part of her special education team, and it has improved the supports and services my daughter gets at school.



MEET A MEMBER OF OUR FAMILY LEADERSHIP NETWORK

TOMMARA GRICE

The Family Leadership Network (FLN) is a joint effort between the Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (Family Center) and the Michigan Family to Family Health Information Center (Family to Family).

The FLN is a way to share diverse views from families, receive input on programs and projects, and gain a better understanding of family experiences with healthcare and other systems. The FLN helps promote the family-centered, community-based system of coordinated care for all children with special health care needs.

In this edition, we would like to introduce you to one of our FLN members, Tommara Grice. She has been a member of the FLN for two years, and is one of our representatives from Region 10 (Oakland, Macomb, and Wayne Counties).

We sat down with Tommara and asked her a few questions about herself and her role within her community. Here is what she had to say:

Tell us a little about yourself.

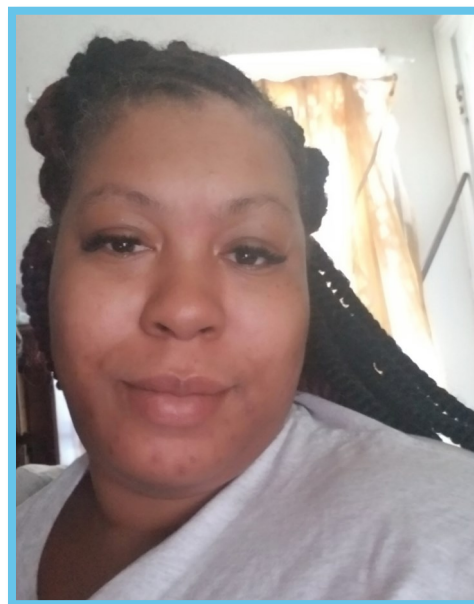
I am a mom of three girls, ages 15 years, 11 years, and 18 months, and one boy, age 4 years. I am a parent advocate, community organizer, and I homeschool.

Why were you interested in serving on the FLN?

I was interested in serving because my oldest daughter is on the spectrum and has celiac (disease). This platform allowed me to talk with other parents like me and be part of developing a network to help parents get the resources they need.

What are some of your interests and passions?

My passion is early childhood and education. I want children that look like me to have a better start. I also believe that all children should be nurtured and encouraged.



What started you on your leadership journey?

My inspiration for all I do stems around my children...they will always be my why.

What advice would you give to parents of a newly diagnosed child (with special needs) in your area?

Find a support group, or start your own. The support you'll receive from other parents is valuable. Be open-minded and don't blame yourself.

What do you see are the biggest needs or challenges for parents of children with special health care needs in your area?

The biggest needs or challenges I see are the distribution of resources in urban areas. There are a lack of support groups in the city of Detroit. There is also a lack of respite workers available for parents who need it.

WANT MORE INFO ON THE FAMILY LEADERSHIP NETWORK?

Visit the Michigan Family to Family website for more information. We currently have open positions in several regions, and applications are accepted at any time.

<https://f2fmichigan.org/who-we-are/family-leadership-network/>

HER POWER! HER PRIDE! HER VOICE!

The Michigan Disability Rights Coalitions' 10th annual Her Power will be July 25th-July 28th at Camp Fish Tales in Pinconning, Michigan. Her Power works directly with teen girls with disabilities through a unique, four-day, overnight event designed to promote critical thinking about society's messages, eliminate shame, develop leadership skills and encourage self-acceptance.

This event is open to high school girls with disabilities (visible and/or invisible) ages 14-19.

This event is built on the best practices of the disability justice community and emerging research in female development and goes beyond self-esteem activities to provide a venue for real self-empowerment.

Together, they will explore what it means to be a teen girl with a disability, in today's world. Participants will challenge stereotypes and shatter myths about what it means to be a girl with a disability.

At this interactive weekend, they will use hands-on activities to learn from each other and teach the world how they see themselves. Her Power provides background checked, female, personal assistants and a nurse is on site 24 hours a day.



This event registration fee is on a suggested scale that ranges from \$60-\$100 per girl and scholarships are available.

To register visit Her Power's website <http://www.herpowermdrc.org> Registration is due by July 15th.

If you have any questions contact Theresa Metzmaker (517) 333-2477 ext. 326

NEW TOOLS AVAILABLE FOR MANAGING YOUR HEALTH

The State of Michigan is excited to offer the **myHealthButton** and the **myHealthPortal** applications. These applications are tools for current members enrolled with the Michigan Medicaid program, Healthy Michigan Plan, MICHild and/or the Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) program.

myHealthButton is a mobile application that can be accessed from a smartphone and the **myHealthPortal** is an online application that can be accessed from any device with internet access. The applications access the same data with the same features, just with different ways to get there.

These applications will provide tools that will put health care benefits and services directly into the hands of members that are served by the State of Michigan.

Some of the uses include:

- See healthcare benefit information, such as covered services and co-pays
- Order a copy of the mihealth card
- Search for a provider

You can also view:

- CSHCS qualifying diagnosis and authorized providers
- CSHCS payment agreement notification and online payments
- Other insurance information

Also available are:

- Health risk assessments
- Health tools and health tracker information

New features are constantly being added. All members are encouraged to access the applications on a regular basis to take advantage of additional features.

https://myhbcld.state.mi.us/myHBPublic/landing.action?request_locale=en



There's an app for that!

National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

July 2019



In 2008, the month of July was established as Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. It raises awareness to the unique struggles that minority groups face in regard to mental illness in the United States

Despite advances in health equity, disparities in mental health care persist. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's 2016 National Healthcare Quality and Disparities report indicates that racial and ethnic minority groups in the U.S. are less likely to have access to mental health services, less likely to use community mental health services, more likely to use emergency departments, and more likely to receive lower quality care. Poor mental health care access and quality contribute to poor mental health outcomes, including suicide, among racial and ethnic minority populations.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration* (SAMHSA):

- Over 70% of Black/African American adolescents with a major depressive episode did not receive treatment for their condition.
- Almost 25% of adolescents with a major depressive episode in the last year were Hispanic/Latino.
- In the past year, nearly 1 in 10 American Indian or Alaska Native young adults had serious thoughts of suicide.

RESOURCES

SAMHSA's Behavioral Health Equity webpage offers resources related to various minority populations including behavioral and in-language resources, national survey data and reports, and federal initiatives and related resources. <https://www.samhsa.gov/behavioral-health-equity>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers an online educational opportunity for Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors, Nurses, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, and Social Workers to help them become more aware of their cultural identity and the cultural identity of their clients to increase their ability to engage, assess, and treat clients from diverse backgrounds. <https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/education/>

This infographic from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) was created to help individuals find the right provider for his/her cultural background. https://www.nami.org/getmedia/96871c65-293b-42cb-9697-091897cfd8bd/flyer_culturallycompetentproviders2016

This three-part docuseries from NAMI explores unique perspectives on mental health from African-American and Latino communities. Through candid and courageous stories of lived experience, these mental health champions share their journeys of resiliency and recovery. <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Minority-Mental-Health-Awareness->



*<https://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/content.aspx?ID=9447>

UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Care Coordination: Empowering Families: This one day training was created for parents to improve the way they coordinate care for a child with complex medical needs. Topics covered include medical home, organizing information, navigating health care, planning for transition and ways to advocate for improved care. Open to parents or guardians of children with epilepsy or other special health care needs. Participants who attend the full day are eligible for a \$150 Visa gift card.

Muskegon August 9, 2019 <https://mph.wufoo.com/forms/muskegon-care-coordination-2019/>

Parent Mentor Training: 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.

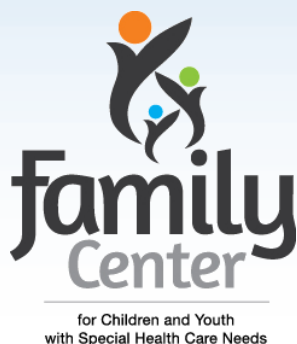
Ann Arbor July 27, 2019 <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/washtenaw-parent-mentor-training-tickets-63583462849?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

Bereavement Parent Mentor training Kalamazoo July 13, 2019 <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/kalamazoo-bereavement-parent-mentor-training-july-13-2019-tickets-62513568767>

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.