Does the idea of another winter like last year’s makes you feel a bit edgy? Wanting to be optimistic in all things and knowing the weather is out of my control, I’m thinking the best defense will be preparation. This will take planning for warm clothes, winterization of the car, finding an activity class to boost my mental and physical health, and scheduling time with family and friends to help “shorten” the winter months.

Our health has some similarities. Sometimes it is out of our control, yet with preparation and the work of treatment we may be able to positively affect our condition. During this fall and winter season, I hope you make time for health planning to determine what might help you and your child reach some health goals.

A big Thank You to our CSHCS parents who answered the call to review local CSHCS policy. This task was successfully completed by mail in lieu of attempting to coordinate everyone’s schedules. We received honest and insightful feedback, which will guide staff in achieving our goal of providing good services. It was helpful to have parents’ perspective on how we serve you. In response, we are acting on your suggestions. Here are some of the ways! Within this newsletter, we included more area resources and kid-friendly activities. Our website was updated to ensure accurate and current information. In outreach to our community, parents recommended early education staff and medical support staff know of the program. A concerted effort was made. Staff provided in-services to all three local hospitals, many area pediatrician offices, school nurses, and attended events where parents and professional staff could learn of the program.

In 2014, one-hundred eighty-five new enrollees joined eight-hundred and forty who renewed their coverage. We look forward to serving you in 2015!
Why didn’t CSHCS pay our provider? Often it is due to a change in your insurance.

If there is a change in your insurance coverage contact us as soon as possible. This means any addition of insurance, termination of previous coverage, or a change of insurance carrier.

We will need a copy of the new insurance card, date of birth and social security number of the primary insurance card holder. Once this information is received it is submitted into the State of Michigan to be verified and then changed in the system.

This process can take a few weeks and if insurance isn’t correct in the system, it can impact billing and especially medications at the pharmacy. This is why it is imperative to contact us as soon as there is a change in coverage so we can help you get the correct information updated in the system. If you experience an access to care issue with billing or medications, feel free to contact us so we can help get it resolved.
The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) was signed into law in 2010. There are many ways the new law impacts children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN). Some examples of additional protections include:

1) Providing greater coverage for more kids
2) Prohibiting insurance companies from denying or charging more for coverage due to a pre-existing condition, or rescinding coverage due to the cost or amount of services used
3) Eliminating lifetime limits on insurance coverage
4) Allowing children to remain on their parents’ insurance policies until age 26
5) Requiring health care plans to offer a comprehensive package of items and services, also known as essential health benefits. These include: ambulatory patient services; emergency services and hospitalization; laboratory services; maternity and newborn care; rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices; pediatric services, including oral and vision care; preventative and wellness services and chronic disease management; prescription drugs; and mental health and substance abuse disorder services, including behavioral health.

For coverage in 2015, the open enrollment period is November 15, 2014 – February 15, 2015. During open enrollment, individuals can shop for coverage in the Health Insurance Marketplace, also known as the Health Insurance Exchange. Only certain life events, such as losing job-based insurance, marriage, divorce, or the birth of a child allow you to enroll in a plan outside of the open enrollment plan. For more information about the marketplace, visit www.healthcare.gov or call 800-318-2596.

Assistance with enrolling in an insurance plan is available for Michigan residents from insurance navigators and certified application counselors. Go to http://localhelp.healthcare.gov/ to find a navigator or counselor in your area. Here are three places in our county where a counselor can help: City On A Hill (616) 748-6009, Intercare (855)869-6900, or North Ottawa Community Hospital (616) 847-5272.

In addition to the new federal law, Michigan enacted the Healthy Michigan Plan in April 2014. This program, also referred to as the Medicaid expansion, enables even more Michigan residents to be eligible for health insurance. For information about this plan, visit www.HealthyMichiganPlan.org or call 855-789-5610.

Let’s Talk Transition

As youth get older they must prepare for the transition to adult life. This planning for future needs includes health care, employment, education and independent living. It is a process, that over time, should provide youth with tools and resources to increase their ability to lead productive adult lives.

So when should this process begin? Current national transition guidelines say at the age of 14 and that it should occur over several years with the youth and family. To learn more visit:
http://gottransition.org
http://depts.washington.edu/healthr/
http://syntiro.org/hrtw/

DO YOU HAVE A NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS?

CSHCS uses e-mail to keep our families updated about changes in CSHCS policy and upcoming community events. E-mail also allows families to ask questions, discuss issues, and to request forms and information. Imagine... no more phone tag, saving trees, and more money to help our CSHCS families.

Please update your e-mail address with CSHCS today at: bkempf@miottawa.org.
Family Fun

Getting out with the family can be challenging some days, but can definitely be rewarding. Check out these activities or links for some ideas to get out and go!

Locally, Ottawa County Parks offer many different types of programs to discover and have fun inside and out. Families are often surprised how many parks we have available just around the corner: www.miottawa.org/Parks

If you’ve never visited Pigeon Creek or Hemlock Crossing Parks, Weaver House or the Nature Education Center, winter may be the best time! Here are a sampling of reasons why.

**Pigeon Creek Park** Your destination for winter sports. Cross-country skiing, sledding, or snowshoe the trails. Warming hut offers hot chocolate and hotdogs by the fire! Lit trails. For information: 616-738-9531.

**Hemlock Crossing Park** On December 6 enjoy Plant Skeletons Where do all the wild flowers go? Explore what remains when the colorful flowers have faded and gone to seed. On December 7 from 2-3:30 PM join Branches and Twig Art. Sunday Family Programs are designed for children ages 5 and up and go all winter!

**Weaver House in Pine Bend Park** Picture your kids with Santa. Bring your camera as St. Nick will be visiting from 1-4 PM on December 7. Punch and cookies will be served.

**Preregistration or fees are required for some programs. Call (616) 786-4847 to register or 738-4810 for information.**

Events and exhibitions throughout the year in Michigan can be located at: www.michigan.org/museums
For a bigger picture, one can look into State fairs and festivals available: www.michigan.org/fairs-festivals

![Winter Sudoku](image)

Have some fun at home.

Try this short word suduko.
Or have fun making a home-made puzzle.

Christmas Dog Jigsaw

Print out onto card, and cut carefully around the large and small squares. Choose one of our Christmas jigsaw cutting guides. Print onto paper, and again cut out the square. Now place over the jigsaw, matching the squares up carefully. Cut through both layers together, and discard the paper pieces. Store the jigsaw in a box or bag with the small image below to help your child recognise and complete the puzzle.
With kids going back to school, learning to share and sharing everything including those nasty germs. It’s getting colder and the days are getting shorter and that means that not only is winter upon us but it is also flu season. The cold weather puts our bodies more at risk for colds and the flu. Here at the health department and within Children’s Special Health Care Services, we value prevention. The best way to prevent colds and flu is……wait for it……washing your hands. Hand washing is a simple task but there are some critical steps that are necessary to make sure you get all of the germs and nasty flu bugs off. Here are the steps you should follow:

1) Get your hands wet
2) Grab some soap
3) Rub your hands together, be sure not to miss the trouble areas of the back of your hands, between your fingers and the tops of your fingers.
4) Rub hands together for 20 seconds (you can sing your ABC’s twice or just count to 20).
5) Rinse your hands.
6) Turn off the water (use another part of your arm or a towel to shut the water off so you don’t get germs back on your hands.)
7) Dry your hands with a clean towel.

You now have clean hands!

Source: http://food.unl.edu/safety/handwashing-spanish

Lavarse las manos

Los niños están regresando a sus clases y están aprendiendo como compartir todo las cosas incluyendo los microbios. Hace más frío en estos días y las horas de sol están disminuyendo. Estas cosas significan solo una cosa, que está llegando el invierno y el tiempo de gripe. Cuando hace más frío nuestros cuerpos están más susceptibles a las enfermedades. Aquí, en el departamento de salud pública valoramos la prevención. La manera más fácil de prevenir la transmisión de la gripe, además de recibir la vacuna contra la gripe, es lavarse las manos. Aquí son los pasos necesarios para lavarse las manos.

1) Mójese las manos
2) Enjabónese
3) Lavarse las manos por 20 segundos
4) Enjuáguese
5) Séquese las manos
6) Cierre el grifo (usando una toalla de papel)
Resources and Events

Netiquette: Impacting Your Teens “Other” Life
This adult only Parent Workshop is on teen online safety, online behavior popular among youth and how parents can engage with their youth around Social Media. The event is Tuesday, December 9 from 6:30-8PM at the Allendale Middle School Media Center. Speakers are Detective Jake Much, Ottawa County Sherriff Dept. and Leigh Moerdyke of Pathways.

Dad, Not Just a Name
Dan Seaborn is the keynote speaker for this father’s conference on December 6 from 9AM-4PM. It will be at Central Wesleyan Church in Holland. Cost is $20 and includes lunch. Free child care. For information and registration go to www.alleganesa.org/gsc.

Parenting Development Opportunities: to register call 1-800-396-0241
An Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders on December 10 from 6:15-9:15 PM at the Life Church’s Young Life Childcare Center in Grand Haven
Kids in the Kitchen on December 10 from 6-9 PM at Ready for School in Holland

Sibling Peer Support Group
Did you know sisters and brothers will likely have the longest-lasting relationship with a sibling who has special needs, one that can exceed 65 years? During their lives, they will experience most of the unique joys and concerns their parents do but few have the chance to talk about their experiences with other siblings who “get it”. Contact Andrea at 616-460-3781 or email at amvegteveen@gmail.com. Cost is $10/child includes a snack. Group is facilitated by a social worker who specializes in working with youth and meets at Family Tree Therapies in Grand Rapids.
- 6-9 year old children meet Saturday, December 13 from 9:30-11 AM
- 10-14 year old children meet Thursday, December 11 from 7-8:30 PM

Ottawa County Department of Public Health has a mission to “assure conditions in which all people can achieve optimum health.” Optimum health looks different to different people. For some it may be having access to vaccinations that help prevent illness and for others it may be having the chance to recycle and help keep the earth clean. A number of different services can help people reach the status of ‘optimum health’. Here is a list of some of the things that go on here. Feel free to ask your nurse for more information on any of the services and we will make sure you get connected.

Community Health Services:
Children’s Special Health Care Services- A specialty health system of support for families of children with chronic health issues
Maternal Infant Health Program- Home visits are made to Medicaid recipients who are pregnant or infants by a nurse, social workers and/or a dietician to provide education and to support the health of mom and baby.
Hearing and Vision- Screenings are done in schools county wide. Appointments can also be made at the health department. Children can be screened from birth through school age. There is no charge.
Medicaid- Staff offer assistance filling out the Medicaid application.
Environmental Health
Restaurant Inspection- Environmental Health Specialists educate and audit restaurants to reduce risk factors of foodborne illness
Well and Septic System Inspections- Any new well or septic system installation is overseen by them and when a house is sold, wells and septic system are evaluated to make sure everything is up to code.
Resource Recovery (recycling)- Household recycling is accepted at 4 Ottawa County locations for an annual fee of $50. It is free to drop off electronics and household hazardous waste. Businesses can drop off these items too, but will pay the cost of disposal. Expired prescription drop off sites are at various locations throughout the county.
Health Promotion
A team of health educators work in the areas of nutrition and wellness, sexual health, and substance abuse prevention.
Clinic Services
Our clinic provides a number of services that include vaccinations, STD testing, family planning, women’s physicals and a travel clinic to help you prepare for international trips.
CSHCS Staff Contact List

Brenda Kempf  
CSHCS Representative  
Phone 616-393-4445  
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Irene Atwood  
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Janine Chittenden  
CSHCS Supervisor  
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Fax 616-393-4435  
E-mail jchittenden@miottawa.org

Although all staff members can assist you with any question or need, specialty areas are listed here:

Contact Brenda for: annual renewals; adding providers; financial concerns such as billing issues and significant income changes; travel/lodging requests; and to schedule an appointment with your CSHCS nurse.

Contact your nurse if you have questions or issues regarding: coverage; medical information; Plans of Care; and adding a new medical diagnosis.

Leslie works in Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Allendale, Coopersville, Hudsonville and West Olive areas  
Kelsey works in Holland, Macatawa and Zeeland areas.

Contact Irene for changes in name, address, phone, e-mail, and insurance information, or to schedule an appointment with your CSHCS nurse.

Contact Janine for help with problems or questions that have not been able to be answered by other staff members.

Helpful CSHCS Contact Information

The CSHCS Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs  
Send an e-mail to: feshcsfc@michigan.gov  
or call:  
The CSHCS Family Phone Line  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Monday -- Friday  
1-800-359-3722

Family-to-Family Health Information & Education Center (F2FHIEC)  
www.f2fmichigan.org

The Children with Special Needs Fund  
Online applications available at: www.michigan.gov/csnfund  
1-517-241-7420  
For help with the application, call your local CSHCS office, or the CSHCS Family Center Phone Line

CSHCS Online payment site: https://www.thepayplace.com/mi/dch/cshcs/challenge.aspx