Dear CSHCS Families,

One. More. Thing. That’s what I’ve been hearing from so many people during these anxious times! Though the COVID-19 pandemic has us all stretched thin, our CSHCS families were already dealing with more than most with the health of their child(ren). And then this pandemic hit. One. More. Thing.

As parents, we’ve been asked to make decisions for education I don’t think we could have ever even dreamed we’d have to make. I imagine the educators and administrators are feeling the same. There is no “right” decision, just the decision that is right for your family.

Please remember there are options for special education and school support, especially with regard to health concerns. We have already seen some wonderful advocacy from parents and professionals in our local districts to make sure unique needs are not being forgotten during these stressful and chaotic times. Please see the wonderful list of educational resources and support for families with children who have IEPs on pages eight and nine of this newsletter to help you navigate these uncharted waters.

As we all battle to try to regain some normalcy and learning for our children’s sake, know that your Ottawa County CSHCS team is thinking of you especially at this time. We are working to answer questions, sort through billing and pharmacy issues, help with enrollment and any CSHCS coverage concerns. Please bring these and other issues you may be having to your Ottawa County CSHCS team, do not let them go. We are here to help!

You really are not alone if you chose to reach out. I encourage each of you to lend a hand out or take a hand up in this time. Sometimes I think it truly is our best hope to thrive at this time!

In health and hope,

[Signature]
**Contacting CSHCS:** Although Kelsey and Rachel are currently assisting with OCDPH COVID-19 response, we want to assure you that we are all working together to continue to meet the needs of CSHCS families!

If you have urgent questions or concerns, please reach out to Brenda, Leslie or Aimee. We thank you so much for your patience!
I just got a bill for services that I thought should be covered by CSHCS—What do I do now?

**FIRST:** DO NOT IGNORE THE BILL — Old bills may become your responsibility!

**Next:** If the provider is listed on your CSHCS Client Eligibility Notification (CEN), please contact the provider’s billing person/department directly to:

1. Make sure your primary insurance has been billed—
   (You may need to contact your primary insurance to straighten out issues that are causing a delay in processing the claim.)

2. Ask the provider to bill CSHCS if your primary insurance has already processed the claim,
   **Note:** CSHCS can’t be billed until your primary insurance processes the claim.

**OR:** If the provider is not listed on your CEN, please call your Program Nurse or Program Representative Brenda Kempf at 616-393-4445 to see if the provider can be authorized.
   **Note:** Prior authorizations, pharmacies, medical equipment and supply companies, hearing and speech centers, hearing aid dealers and home health agencies do not need to be listed on your CEN. You may contact these providers directly to discuss billing issues.

**Reminders:**

**Out of State Care requires pre-authorization:**
Contact your program nurse asap if your child’s specialist refers you to an out-of-state provider!

**Travel Assistance:** In some instances, CSHCS provides transportation assistance for medical specialist appointments when the expense of travel causes a financial hardship.

**Requests for non-emergency travel assistance must be made prior to the date of travel** by contacting your Program Nurse or Program Representative Brenda Kempf at: 616-393-4445 or bkempf@miottawa.org.

If a CSHCS enrollee has Medicaid or a Medicaid Health Plan, then transportation requests must be made to DHHS or to the Medicaid health Plan. They may make arrangements for transportation to a specialist appointment if all possible resources have been exhausted.
You are not alone! We’ll connect you to one of our trained parent mentors who can help you navigate the challenges presented by your child’s diagnoses or by this unprecedented time, call us! We’ll also help you connect to information and resources, transition information, and help you enroll in or navigate CSHCS.

We provide disability related conference scholarships and camp scholarships too.

**The CSHCS Family Phone Line**

1-800-359-3722

Mon—Fri 8am to 5pm
cshcsfc@michigan.gov

The Family Center serves all special needs families, regardless of CSHCS enrollment

**Special Families’ Corner Facebook Group**

Join our growing community of parents & caregivers

Learn about news and issues that affect special needs families

Discover resources and events for the special needs community

Find answers and support from fellow special needs parents

Group link: https://www.facebook.com/groups/48092071877204/

Or search for Special Families’ Corner on Facebook and request to join us!

Ottawa County CSHCS has exciting plans in store to keep area special needs families informed and supported:

We’ll continue our growing Facebook group (left). We are up to almost 750 members, so if you haven’t yet, please join us! We’d love to have you!

CSHCS newsletters will get a revamp to be shorter and more frequent, with an updated, easier-to-read format.

We will launch a six event speaker series—both in person as COVID-19 allows, and online via Zoom and Facebook Live. Possible topics are: transition, person-centered planning, sibling matters, special education, AAC, and information from community/agency resources like SSI, DHHS. Your input and ideas are welcomed! Please email: afontaine@miottawa.org

**Virtual Introduction to Sibshops and Sibshop Facilitator Training**

Emily Holl, Director of the Sibling Support Project, will lead this training!

**Sessions 1--3 Introduction to Sibshops**

will be held from 9:00—10:30am on Tues. Wed. and Thurs. September 15-17

**Session 4 Additional Facilitator Training Day**

will be held from 9:00—11:00am on Friday September 18

Sibshops are celebrations of the many contributions made by the siblings of kids with special needs. Sibshops acknowledge that being the sibling of a person with special needs is for some a good thing, others a not-so-good thing, and for many, somewhere in between. They reflect a belief that siblings have much to offer one another – if they are given a chance. Sibshops are a spirited mix of new games, new friends and discussion activities. To learn more and to register, click here:


Emily Holl, Director of the Sibling Support Project, will lead this training!

**Virtual Introduction to Sibshops and Sibshop Facilitator Training**

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COVID-19 Resources

COVID-19 Health Resources:

Ottawa County COVID-19 Response:  
https://www.miottawa.org/Health/OCHD/coronavirus.htm

State of Michigan COVID-19 Information:  
https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus

CDC COVID-19 Information:  

The CDC: COVID-19 Information for Those with Disabilities:  

The CDC: COVID-19 Information for Families with Children and Youth with Special Needs:  

Community Resources:

For housing, food, mental health, utility assistance and more!

Ottawa County Resource List:  

Ottawa County Community Mental Health:  
https://www.miottawa.org/Health/CMH/

OCDPH Community Action Agency:  
https://www.miottawa.org/Community/CAA/

Ottawa Area Intermediate School District:  
https://www.oaisd.org/

MDHHS:  
https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs

Mi Bridges:  
www.newbridges.michigan.gov

Food Resources

http://www.ottawafood.org/

Emergency Food Resources:  www.call-211.org

Local Food Pantry Updates & Schedules:  
http://www.ottawafood.org/

Feeding America Local Food Truck Schedule:  
https://www.feedwm.org/mobile-pantry-schedule/

Call 211 for Help Accessing Resources:

food, housing and other basic needs
2-1-1 is free, confidential, and our Call Specialists are available 24 hours a day...7 days a week  
http://www.call-211.org/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline available 24/7:

1-800-273-8255

Or

Text TALK to 741741

Visit:  
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Individuals in a mental health crisis who need help immediately are encouraged to call the Community Mental Health of Ottawa County’s 24-hour Crisis Line at 866-512-4357 or TTY 711.

Individuals who are not in crisis and need mental health counseling are encouraged to contact CALL 2-1-1 for referrals and information.

For more complete information on mental health resources and support in Ottawa County, including a list of organizations providing mental health supports by telehealth and/or online services, see the Ottawa County Community Mental Health’s website:  https://www.miottawa.org/Health/CMH/
**Just breathe. In. Out. Repeat.**

Breathing is something we all innately do, but many children with significant medical histories have inefficient breathing patterns. This may affect their sustained mobility and endurance, spinal/rib cage alignment, speech production, and other important aspects of a child’s day.

As a pediatric physical therapist, I review postural control, positioning, and alignment to **improve and support breath control** for my patients. I also utilize manual strategies and **breathing exercises** to improve postural alignment, increase activation of the deep abdominal muscles, relax muscles of the neck and shoulders, recover from exercise and even allow for improved secretion management. **Breathing seems so simple, yet the impact can be profound!**

**Our diaphragm is the key!** A strong, functional diaphragm can make a huge impact, and the best way to improve it’s function is by practicing diaphragmatic breathing.

During Diaphragmatic breathing you inhale deeply through the nose, causing the diaphragm to contract and lower further into the abdomen (expanding your belly) and allowing for greater filling capacity of the lungs. **As you exhale, you blow out of pursed lips to slowly exhale the air.**

As a pediatric physical therapist, I like to call Diaphragmatic breathing **pizza breathing**—it’s way more fun!

**Use your imagination, and as you breathe in through your nose you “smell your pizza”, and then you slowly exhale and “blow on the hot pizza”; Voila, you’re PIZZA BREATHING!**

Families, I want to leave you with another benefit of using this breathing technique: **stress reduction!** We are all living in unprecedented times and I know many of you are feeling added stress with the start of the school year. Pizza breathing can be taught to kids of all ages and abilities and it can benefit the whole family—parents too! So, please remember to lean into your support system and don’t forget to pause and take some time to pizza breathe.

Kind regards,

Jen
How about a little Pizza Yoga to go with your pizza breathing?

As a pediatric occupational therapist specializing in sensory integration, I love to use fun, motivating sensory-motor activities during therapy. Pizza yoga is a favorite in my groups!

Activities like pizza yoga provide proprioceptive input—this means contracting and/or stretching of muscles and pushing/pulling of joints which fires receptors sending information to the brain regarding body position and movement, which promote muscle tone, strength, and coordination. Proprioception also has a very calming effect on the nervous system. A calm, regulated body is much better equipped to attend, participate, and learn.

Pizza Yoga—Let’s get cheesy!

- First, sit on your bottom with your legs out wide in a “v" shape.
- Next, roll out the dough by rubbing your palms from your thigh to your toes with firm pressure.
- Spread sauce on your pizza by sliding your hands around on the floor (reaching as far as you can in front of you and down to each toe).
- Grate a block of cheese onto your pizza by rubbing your hands together quickly. Add toppings by pretending to reach for jars, chop veggies up and down your legs, or pick up pepperoni by giving each of your fingers a gentle tug. Get silly and creative!
- Next, carefully get the pizza in and out of the oven by bending at the waste and reaching forward with both arms. Careful, it’s HOT!
- Use pizza breathing to smell the pizza with your nose and blow on the pizza to cool it down.
- After the pizza has cooled, it is time to dig in with an “On your mark, get set GO!” cue.
- After the feast, clean up your mess by rubbing each arm and leg. Are you feeling stuffed?! Lay down on your back with your arms at your side or resting on your “full” stomach. Take a number of deep breaths and quietly relax for about 30 seconds.

For more on putting Proprioceptive Heavy Work (AKA Play!) into your day here’s a link to an interview I did with Duncan Lake Speech Therapy for families. I hope you find it helpful! Click here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqHwzpKw2g4&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR1p36O2v716v5QEIOclubg3xobqpdO_eJdr_S9N2oOS1tWGBFaehgV7E

Opportunities to regulate our body and feel calm are so important for learning, and have never been more important than they are right now. We could all use frequent heavy work proprioceptive input. I encourage everyone to ensure movement and self-care opportunities are built in to your day. Stay safe. Stay well. Deep (pizza) breaths.

Have a sensational week!

Kaylie
The Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education is hosting a webinar, on September 14th from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm in order to promote family-school collaborations and provide a common and consistent understanding between parents, families, advocates, school districts, and intermediate school districts.

This webinar opportunity has been specifically designed for parents, families, and advocates of students with IEPs. Participants will have an opportunity to hear firsthand from the MDE OSE as well as ask additional questions and clarifications.

Throughout these uncertain times, school districts and families are learning to navigate through multiple challenges together. In the spirit of collaboration, the MDE OSE will discuss recently released guidance, titled Return to Learn for Students with IEP’s and provide an in-depth conversation regarding the six special education priority topic areas recently established for the 2020-2021 school year.

This Return to Learn for Students with IEPs webinar is September 14, 2020 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. HURRY! Register by close of business on Thursday, September 10, 2020 here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeU9mEG9sS8zndZ8EOLQUzp9AOYaMVU5WD9-eEByzFi_C6EXA/viewform?fbclid=IwAR0D4IaV4DrBY_tvb5UkJlRdWEHxdDqITg0oU_fUCeRRr9krMwFJ9QSc

MDE COVID-19 Special Education Information and Resources

Michigan Department of Education COVID-19 Education Information and Resources:
https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_53456--,00.html

MDE OSE Special Education Guidance:
- Guidance to Address Return to Learn for Students with IEPs (PDF)
- Guidance for Compliance with IDEA and MARSE During the COVID-19 Pandemic - Version 2 (PDF)
- Guidance to Address Foregone Learning for Students with IEPs as a Result of the COVID19 Pandemic (PDF)

https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-1406598_99211_99212-525104--,00.html

Announcing DRM—Disability Rights Michigan

Formerly known as Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services, Disability Rights Michigan is the independent, private, non-profit organization designated by the governor of Michigan to advocate and protect the legal rights of people with disabilities in Michigan.

Important DRM Links:

The DRM website—redesigned to be mobile-friendly and fully accessible: www.drmich.org

Updated DRM/MPAS Manual—“Students with Disabilities: An Advocate’s Guide”:
https://www.drmich.org/resources/special-education/

As your child with an IEP or IFSP returns to learning this year, remember, you can connect with a Michigan Alliance for Families (MAF) Parent Mentors to help find resources, supports, and answers to special education questions! Contact us here:

1-800-552-4821
info@michiganallianceforfamilies.org
https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/

MAF’s Covid-19 Resource Document:
https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/covid19/

MAF’s Return To School Conversations: https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/covid-return-to-school/

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**Educational resources during COVID-19 school shutdown Facebook group**

For resources that are free, or close to free, this is THE place to find fabulous ideas for fun, entertainment, and education!

Searchable by topic, find online classes and events, tours, fun sensory activities, arts and crafts, curriculum resources, social/emotional guidance, and so much more!

Join the public group here:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/827127204431640

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**From MSU’s Office of K-12 Outreach—**

**Resource Guide for Parenting During COVID-19 & Getting Started with Online Teaching Guide:**

- Information on Covid-19 for Parents
- Homework Help: Tips and Guidance
- Helping Your Child Learn (specific tips for reading, math, science and history)
- Helping Your Child Succeed
- Supporting Middle School Transition and PBIS
- Strategies for Online Learning
- Supplemental Resources and References

Advocacy and Voter Accessibility

These presentations are geared toward people with I/DD, their families, and those who work with them.

These virtual presentations will be held
tuesday, september 22, 2020

there will be two choices for sessions -- each will cover the same information

session 1  10am-12pm
session 2  6pm-8pm

Captioning will be available

You can sign on using the links below:

Session 1
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83258970103?pwd=bmUxaithem9NTDd0M2xmeStWdUxVZz09

Session 2
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84428722564?pwd=U2VQVnRtSVFVMGdYdWlyMkJKL0p0QT09

During the first half of each session, Barb Valliere, of the Self Advocates of Michigan, and Brett Williams, Public Policy Analyst for the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council will talk about levels of advocacy and how people with disabilities can get involved in the advocacy movement in Michigan.

During the second half of each session, Tameka Spruce, Disability Justice Activist, and member of People with Disability Voter Rights Coalition along with Lacy Dawson of the American Civil Liberties Union will talk about voter rights and accessible voting.

This event is co-sponsored by the following organizations:

- Council
- OASIS Community
- The Arc.
- Michigan Family Voices
- Children's Special Health Care Services
- Self Advocates of Michigan
Fun Activity Links:

Fall Word Search:

Fall Mad Libs:
https://www.woojr.com/fall-mad-libs-for-kids/

Fun in the Kitchen—Fall Inspired Recipes:
https://produceforkids.com/12-healthy-fall-inspired-recipes/

“What Falls in the Fall?” by the Laurie Berkener Band:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luj4bfyjahg

Fall Crafts for Kids:
https://www.countryliving.com/diy-crafts/g2542/fall-crafts-for-kids/
https://www.happinessishomemade.net/easy-fall-kids-crafts-anyone-can-make

Autumn Leaves
An Action Poem
from teachingmoma.org

Autumn winds begin to blow
(blow)

Colored leaves fall fast and slow
(falling motion with fingers)

Twirling, whirling, all around
(turn self around)

‘Till at last they touch the ground
(gently fall to the ground)