From the Desk of Janine Chittenden BSN RN, CSHCS Program Supervisor

It’s hard to believe summer weather is at its close and school doors are about to open. Undoubtedly, you are busy with school supply and clothes shopping, and wondering how your child will progress in their skills and knowledge this new school year.

You too may want to increase your understanding of your child’s diagnosis. The Children’s Special Health Care Services Family Center may be able to assist you. Did you know they can help pay for workshops and conferences related to your child’s eligible diagnosis? Should you find a session of interest, and you would like to see if the Family Center (FC) can cover some of the cost, contact them at 1-800-359-3722 or call your CSHCS nurse to learn more.

Wishing you and your child a meaningful school year and improved health,

Janine Chittenden, CSHCS Program Coordinator

www.michigan.gov/cshcs

NURSES ADMINISTRATORS FORUM (NAF) ANNUAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

Congratulations to our very own Janine Chittenden, who was chosen by her peers to receive the 2015 NAF Leadership Award. Janine was recognized for inspiring others with her passion and dedication to improving public health.

This recognition comes as no surprise to those who have had the privilege of working with Janine during her years at the helm of the Ottawa County CSHCS and Hearing & Vision programs, as she is a tireless advocate and champion for special needs families.

Janine has served on many NAF committees, where she has strived to promote awareness and policies to ensure that services reflect the voice of individuals with special health care needs and their families.

Her favorite committee work has been as the NAF Representative to the CSHCS Advisory Committee, where she recently worked to update the language of the Michigan Public Health Code, replacing the term “crippled children” with “children and youth with special health care needs.” Janine was proud to be a part of this change that allows the person to be acknowledged before the condition.

We thank her for the many ways she has positively impacted the lives of children with special needs and their families. Bravo Janine!
After the 20 week ultrasound – we never expected our baby to live – she had a prenatal condition that always gets worse, and is always fatal. After walking and sobbing our way through some of the local cemeteries; after looking at caskets that were heartbreakingly small, a miracle happened – our fourth or fifth ultrasound revealed that our baby’s never reversing, always fatal, prenatal condition that was incompatible with life - reversed.

A few months later, on December 11, 2000, Annah Rose Huisman was born—alive—a few moments later, we found out she had Down syndrome. When Annah was little, we couldn't stop focusing on her disabilities. Over the years, even though the gap between her and her peers continues to widen, we have learned to focus more on Annah's abilities. For me, for my wife, and for each of our other six children, Annah is one of our signature stories.

Today, in a lot of ways, Annah is a typical teenager. She plays soccer, she takes ballet lessons, and she is involved in her church youth group. When you meet Annah, you will probably conclude that she has special needs because of her appearance. You will also quickly discover that Annah wants to engage you in conversation. She is very sociable. She will want to know your name. She will want you to know her name. There is a good chance that you will like her because she will find a way to make you laugh, to brighten your day, she will cause you to feel good about yourself, and she will bring out the best in you. Annah is one of our signature stories.

You will also immediately realize that it is difficult to understand Annah’s speech. One of her biggest barriers to establishing meaningful relationships—where she can give and receive love, be accepted by her peers, and multiply the love for life that she has within her—is the lack of intelligibility of her speech. However, Annah has much more to tell you, much more to ask you, and much more love to give to you if you are patient with her. Unfortunately, most people are not patient, but the world needs more joy. The world needs more love of life. The world needs what Annah has to offer....but the world won't receive it to its' fullest measure if people walk away from her too quickly because they can’t understand what she is saying.

A speech therapy scholarship from The Family Hope Foundation not only allows our family to be optimistic that Annah, with clearer speech, could not only have better relationships with her peers, but it also creates the possibility that because of a friendship with Annah - Annah's peers would become better people. It is possible, that in addition to Annah being one of the signature stories of the Huisman family, there will be high school students who will look back on their life and be able to say, “one of my signature stories is my friendship with Annah Huisman.” – and that will be because someone gave a gift, that provided a scholarship, that provided the therapy, that helped a girl with Down syndrome be understood, and be loved by her peers.

We'd love to feature your story in the next edition of ‘Special Kid’s Corner’!
Would you, your spouse, your child or a sibling be willing to share a personal story of life with special needs?

Please send your story by October 31, 2016 to Amy Fontaine: afontaine@miOttawa.org.

Articles may be edited for length and content.
Thank you in advance! We look forward to your stories!
Over 250 members have joined *Special Families’ Corner* Facebook group. It was created exclusively for parents and caregivers who are raising children and youth with special needs.

**Have you joined us yet?** Don’t miss out on the opportunity to learn about grants, community resources, local and on-line events, get parent-to-parent support and more. *Special Families’ Corner* is a closed group, so posts are seen only by group members.

**Joining the group is easy:** Search Facebook for the group, *Special Families’ Corner*, and request to “Join Group” at the top of the page. If you have any questions or trouble finding the group, email our group administrator, Amy Fontaine: afontaine@miottawa.org or send her a private message on Facebook.

**If you’ve joined, but aren’t seeing posts, you may need to:**

- adjust your settings—hover over *Special Families’ Corner* in your group list, and select ‘See All Posts’.
- ‘Like’ or ‘Comment’ on a few posts to make sure Facebook’s ‘secret-sauce’ knows that you want to see our group posts.

**Share the group with others who may benefit:** *Special Families’ Corner* is open to all parents and caregivers with special needs children, regardless of CSHCS enrollment. You can also invite others right from the group page.

**We hope to see you at Special Families’ Corner!**

This group is supported by generous funding from The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, the parent-directed center within Children’s Special Health Care Services.

The Family Center phone Line 1-800-359-3722 is open to all parents and caregivers of special needs children, regardless of CSHCS enrollment.

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**We welcome your feedback!!!**

CSHCS of Ottawa County is always looking for ways to meet the needs of special needs families.

Do you have a suggestion for Children’s Special Health Care Services?
For the Local Department of Public Health?

Please send your comments, compliments or suggestions to our parent consultant, Amy Fontaine: afontaine@miottawa.org

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**HAVE A NEW EMAIL??**

Update your email address with Irene Atwood: iawood@miottawa.org

CSHCS uses email to communicate more efficiently with families, to send important updates and the ‘Special Kids’ Corner Newsletter’, and to inform you of issues and events that are of interest to the special needs community. CSHCS will never share your email address.
Diaper Resources

In ‘Special Families’ Corner’, our new Facebook group, some parents asked about diaper resources.

Here’s a summary of the great information that was shared by parents:

Insurance Coverage for Diapers—
- CSHCS no longer covers diapers.
- Primary health insurance may cover diapers for some diagnoses.
- Medicaid and Medicaid Managed Care plans may cover diapers with a doctor’s prescription.
- J&B Medical Supply Co. is the contracted supplier for Medicaid. They will help you obtain the prescription from your doctor, and verify insurance coverage.
  * J&B offers free samples to try sizes and styles before you buy.
  * J&B’s contact info: 1-800-737-0045
  * https://www.jandbmedical.com/michigan-medicaid-diaper-and-incontinence-supplies-program/

Tips for getting insurance coverage for diapers—
- Persistence can really pay off. It may take some pushing on your part, but remember, you are your child’s best advocate.
- If your insurance denies coverage for diapers, send a written request for reconsideration, along with a letter from your child’s doctor explaining the medical necessity of diapers.
- Keep track of your child’s training progress, this can be important information for getting coverage or appealing a denial.

Sources and tips if you self-pay for diapers—
- Diaperbuys.com or 1-855-289-3427 is a division of J&B Medical, selling name brand diapers to customers without insurance coverage. Their specialists can help with fitting and provide free samples to try before you buy.
- If you have a Flexible Spending Account (FSA), check out the FSA store for diapers: https://fsastore.com/.
- For a cloth option, look into WunderUnders at: https://www.facebook.com/WunderUnders
- Pampers go all the way to a size 7 (over 41lbs.), and can be purchased on Amazon.com.
- Amazon Prime members get a 20% discount and free shipping on diaper subscriptions.
- After her child outgrew Pampers size 7, one mom found a great fit with Slimline briefs by Tranquility.
- Select Incontinence Products makes a pull-on that is less bulky and leaks less. It is carried by many supply companies.
- Search Michigan’s 2-1-1 online database by zip code for sources for diapers and incontinence supplies in your area.
- Some families have found success with putting a larger sized diaper over the regular one to help with nighttime leaks.
- Some food pantries get diapers donations too, so it wouldn’t hurt to check.

Swim Diaper Recommendations
- Swim Mates by Tranquility
- My pool pal

Here is a link to 7 great articles on potty training your special needs child:

Thank you to all the parents who contributed these fabulous tips !!!

Help us spread the word about CSHCS!

CSHCS covers over 2,600 medical diagnoses, and we want to help as many families as possible!

Please tell other special needs families, your child’s teachers, doctors, specialists, therapists, and everyone else you know!

~ The CSHCS team thanks you in advance!

How Does CSHCS Help When You Have Other Insurance?

CSHCS covers insurance copays, deductibles and coinsurance costs for specialty services related to the CSHCS covered condition.

For help with billing issues, contact:
Brenda Kempf, CSHCS Representative
616 393-4445
bkempf@miottawa.org
**Medication Safety**

The increased use of Over-The-Counter and Prescription Medications in the home puts children at increased risk of ingesting medicine that wasn’t meant for them, or receiving the wrong dose of a medication.

**Tips to keep your children safe:**

⇒ Store all medications out of sight and out of reach of children, in a locked cabinet or med safe.
⇒ Check for medicines in places curious kids might find it, like grandma’s purse, a diaper bag, or in a night stand.
⇒ Use only the dosing device that comes with a medicine to ensure accurate dosing.
⇒ Know how to give your child’s medicine. Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or call the Poison Help Line with questions: 1-800-222-1222. Experts are available to help 24/7/365. All calls are confidential.
⇒ Write out clear directions on how to give medication when someone else will be caring for your child.
⇒ Post the Poison Help Line number by your home phones, and save it to your cell phone. You can download many free apps, including the free iTunes App: PoisonHelp.

**CALL the Poison Help Line 1-800-222-1222 immediately** if you think your child may have gotten into medicine, or received the wrong medication or the incorrect dose.

**CALL 911** if someone is having trouble breathing, or losing consciousness.

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**Seguridad Con Los Medicamentos**

Los medicamentos se han vuelto más comunes en estos días. Con el aumento de medicamentos (recetada y de venta libre) los niños corren un mayor riesgo de tomar medicina que no fue recetada por ellos o recibir una dosis incorrecta.

**Consejos para mantenerse seguros a sus hijos:**

⇒ Mantener todas las medicaciones fuera de la vista y del alcance de los niños y cerrarlos en un gabinete o seguro de medicinas.
⇒ Buscar los lugares donde los niños curioso tal vez pueden alcanzarlos, por ejemplo la bolsa de su abuela, la bolsa de pañales, o la mesita de noche.
⇒ Solo use la medidora que viene con la medicina para asegurar que el niño recibe la dosis correcta.
⇒ Sepa cómo dar la medicina de su hijo/a. Pregúntele a su médico, farmacéutico, o llame al número del Poison Help Line a 1-800-222-1222. Los expertos están disponible 24 horas al día/ 7 días a la semana/ 365 días al año. Todas las llamadas son confidenciales.
⇒ Dé instrucciones escritas en cómo dar la medicina a su hijo/a cuando una otra persona está cuidando a ellos.
⇒ Guarde el número del Poison Help Line en su celular y póngalo cerca de su teléfono de la casa. También se puede descargar muchas aplicaciones gratis incluyendo una que se llama: PoisonHelp.

**LLAME al Poison Help Line 1-800-222-1222 inmediatamente** si piensa que tu hijo/a tal vez ha metido en una medicina o ha recibido la dosis o medicina incorrecta.

**LLAME 911** si alguien no se puede respirar bien o está perdiendo la conciencia.
Advocating for Your Child with Special Needs

You know your child best! From birth, through diagnosis and beyond, you’ve been by your child’s side. Your love and devotion to the happiness and well-being of your child, makes you uniquely qualified to be your child’s best and strongest advocate. You are the expert on your child!

Being your child’s advocate means being their voice in the world. It also means helping them navigate the world, and helping the world accommodate their needs, so that their abilities can shine. Advocating for your child can be a full-time, stressful job. Arming yourself with knowledge, and finding support and resources, can help you be a strong, successful advocate for your child.

Knowledge is power: Learn all you can about your child’s diagnoses, challenges, and strengths.

- Find organizations devoted to advocating for and educating about childhood diagnoses. Visit their websites, Facebook pages, and ask them to send you information via mail or email. Doctors, specialists, social workers, the CSHCS nurses, and educators can help connect you to national organizations and their local chapters.
- Attend conferences or workshops related to your child’s medical diagnoses and their social, developmental, or educational challenges. Follow organization websites or subscribe to their email lists to learn about coming events. You can find excellent live webinars to attend, and they are often archived online. We post many conferences and workshops to the Special Families’ Corner Facebook group. The CSHCS Family Center may help pay for workshops and conferences related to your child’s eligible diagnosis. Call them at 1-800-359-3722 or contact your CSHCS nurse.

Get Connected: Fight the urge to duck and cover. Reach out to others for help and support.

- Surround yourself with allies—people who truly get it and can support you on your journey. Connect with other special needs parents. Often your child’s doctor, social worker, and teachers can connect you to other special needs families. The parents you run into at a therapy sessions, medical appointments, or at your child’s school can also be a lifeline. Some of the best connections are made this way.
- Join a Support Group: There are now many Facebook groups devoted to special needs parenting or specific childhood diagnoses. These groups can be a great source of information, inspiration, and connection. We hope that you will join us at our new Facebook group, Special Families Corner (see page 3 for more on the group).
- Find parent-to-parent support: The Family Support Network of Michigan, which is run by the CSHCS Family Center, will connect you with a trained parent mentor who has a child with a similar diagnosis for parent-to-parent support. Call them at 1-800-359-3722.

Find Resources: Resources and support are available, but finding it can sometimes be a mystery. The following organizations can put you in touch with resources to help you advocate for your child:

- The CSHCS Family Center offers emotional support, information, and connections to resources to families of children and youth with special health care needs through The Family Phone line: 1-800-359-3722. CSHCS enrollment is not required to receive help from the Family Center.
- Your Ottawa County CSHCS nurses can help you access local resources, such as grants, support groups, events and more (see page 10 for CSHCS contact information).
- The Michigan Family to Family Health and Information Center is a great wealth of information on many special needs fronts, from information to advocacy: www.f2fmichigan.org
- The OAISS Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) has a special needs parent representative for each school district in Ottawa County who are available to support families with children receiving special education. For more information, and for your district’s PAC representative contact information: http://www.oaisd.org/oaisd/departments/specialneedsseducation/parentresources/pac/
- Wrightslaw Special Education Law and Advocacy www.wrightslaw.com/ is the go-to website for special education law and advocacy with thousands of articles, cases, free resources and more. Here is a link to their article on advocating for your special needs child: http://www.wrightslaw.com/advoc/articles/advocacy_intro.htm.
Family Support Network (FSN) of Michigan
1-800-359-3722

The FSN provides parent-to-parent support through the CSHCS Family Center. It can be so helpful to talk with someone whose child has a similar health need or disability.

The Family Support Network is made up of parents who, like you, have children with special needs. These specially trained parents listen to your concerns and share information about available resources.

To talk with a parent of a child with a condition similar to your child’s, call the CSHCS Family Phone Line at: 1-800-359-3722 or send them an email: cshcsfc@michigan.gov

Help Me Grow-Ottawa connects families with children birth through age five to free local resources to help children grow up healthy and be ready for success in school.

- Up-to-date information on childcare, kindergarten tips and free or low-cost quality preschool
- Free and convenient access to the nationally recognized Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) in English and Spanish to check-in on your child’s development
- Answers to prenatal and pregnancy questions.
- Links to local playgroups, library happenings and other parenting resources, including home visiting services.

If you or your child’s teachers, caregivers, or doctors have concerns about your child’s behavior, development, learning or well-being, contact Help Me Grow-Ottawa to be connected to helpful resources and supports in your area.

Call 844-233-2244 or visit www.hmgottawa.org

Follow Help Me Grow-Ottawa on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/hmgottawa/

Help Me Grow-Ottawa is funded through the Great Start Collaborative from the Michigan Department of Education Office of Great Start and in-kind support from our local partners.

Michigan Family to Family Health Information Center (MI F2F)

As part of a federally funded project, MI F2F shares 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 improve services for children and youth with special health care needs.

For more information and helpful resources, look for them on Facebook or at their website:

www.f2fmichigan.org

Training and Events Calendar:
https://f2fmichigan.org/upcoming-events/

The Down Syndrome Association of West Michigan serves families with Down Syndrome in 12 West Michigan counties. Their mission is to create communities that embrace Down syndrome, empower individuals and promote opportunities for meaningful lives. To learn more visit:

https://dsawm.org/

Conferences, workshops and family events can be found at their events calendar:
https://dsawm.org/calendar/

Here’s the latest DSAWM newsletter:

The Holland Aquatic Center hosts open swim events for individuals with special needs and their parents and caregivers.

For future dates and more information:
http://hollandaquaticcenter.org/

Michigan Lakeshore Aquatics: Registration is now open for fall special needs swim school. Lessons take place at The Holland Aquatic Center:

https://www.teamunify.com/SwimLessons.jsp?_tabid_=83454&team=mimla
Free Pre-Kindergarten & School Age Hearing & Vision Screenings
Hearing and Vision Screenings are required for all children prior to entering kindergarten, by the Michigan Public Health Code. You must provide ‘Proof of Testing’ to your child’s school. Hearing and Vision screenings are offered **FREE of CHARGE** by your local health department. Appointment times fill up quickly, so call today to schedule your child’s appointment.

www.miOttawa.org/hearingvision

Holland 616-396-5266  •  Grand Haven 616-846-8360  •  Hudsonville 616-669-0040

Free or Low Cost Back to School Immunizations
Immunizations are offered at your local health department, by appointment, for children 18 years of age or younger. To qualify for a reduced-cost immunization, your child must meet one of the following criteria: Medicaid eligible; No health insurance; Insurance coverage that does not reimburse for vaccines, or be of American Indian or Alaskan Native descent.

www.miOttawa.org/immunize

Holland 616-396-5266  •  Grand Haven 616-846-8360  •  Hudsonville 616-669-0040

Free Dental Services for Children
The *Miles of Smiles* mobile unit is a full-service dental office on wheels. To qualify for services, children must be 20 years of age or younger, and they must be either uninsured, or have Medicaid or MIChild coverage. *Miles of Smiles* provides dental services at schools, local health departments, Head Start centers, and other sites. Appointments are required, and applications are available at:

www.miOttawa.org/dental  1-800-467-5905

Free or Low Cost Health Care Coverage
Children 19 years of age or younger may qualify for low or no cost medical coverage. Coverage is also available for qualifying pregnant women. Eligibility specialists are available to assist with the enrollment process.

www.miOttawa.org/healthinsurance  616-393-5266 or 616-393-5731

Children’s Special Health Care Services (CSHCS)
CSHCS helps children with chronic health conditions receive access to specialty medical care. CSHCS covers more than 2,600 diagnoses and can assist with the cost of visits to medical specialists, expensive prescription medications, and other expenses related to qualifying conditions. CSHCS registered nurses also help with care coordination and locating resources. All household incomes qualify. If you’re caring for a child with special needs, CSHCS invites you to join the Facebook group Special Families’ Corner for parent-to-parent support and encouragement, to share stories, resources, events and more!

www.miOttawa.org/CSHCS  616-393-4445  The CSHCS Family Center Phone Line 1-800-359-3722

Maternal & Infant Health Program (MIHP)
The MIHP offers support to pregnant women and infants. A support team of a registered nurse, dietician, and social worker provide the following services: Home visit support; Prenatal, parenting and child development education; Counseling and nutritional information; and help with obtaining needed resources, financial aid, and travel reimbursement. The MIHP’s purpose is to promote healthy pregnancies, positive birth outcomes, and healthy infant growth and development.

www.miOttawa.org/MIHP  616-393-5758
Fill in your cootie catcher:
- Put a color in each of the four outside corners
- Add the numbers 1 -- 8 to the triangles at the outside edge
- Fill in the eight inner triangles with fun predictions for the coming year.

Here are a few examples:
- Your teacher will be funny
- You will make a new friend
- You will find a new favorite book
- You will try a new food at lunch
- Your teacher will love having you in class!
- You will make someone’s day
- You will start a new hobby
- This will be a great year!

Fold your cootie catcher:
- Place the printed side down
- Fold a pair of opposite corners, then open
- Fold the other opposite corners, then open
- Now you should have 2 lines from corner to corner that cross in the middle
- Next fold each corner into the center
- Turn your cootie catcher word-side up
- Fold each corner into the center again
- Fold in half, so the numbers are inside
- Slide your thumbs and fingers, begin playing!

If you need folding visuals, check out PBS kids: pbskids.org/arthur/print/cootiecatcher/directions.html

Check on-line for oodles of ways to make learning fun with cootie catchers!
Ottawa County CSHCS Contact Info:

Brenda Kempf, Program Representative
Phone: 616-393-4445
Email: bkempf@miottawa.org

Contact Brenda for:
- annual renewals
- adding providers
- financial concerns
- and significant income changes
- billing issues
- travel and lodging requests
- scheduling a nurse appointment

Irene Atwood, Support Staff
Phone: 616-393-4439
Email: iatwood@miottawa.org

Contact Irene for:
- changes in name, address, phone, e-mail
- insurance changes

Kelsey DeMull BSN RN MPH, Program Nurse
Phone: 616-393-4442
Email: kdemull@miottawa.org
Families in: Holland, Zeeland, and Jenison.

Leslie Ver Duin BSN RN, Program Nurse
Phone: 616-393-4444
Email: lverduin@miottawa.org
Families in: Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Allendale, Coopersville, Hudsonville, West Olive, and outlying areas.

Contact Your CSHCS Nurse for:
- Plans of Care
- medical questions
- coverage questions
- adding a new medical diagnosis
- or specialist

Janine Chittenden BSN RN, Program Supervisor
Phone: 616-393-4436
Email: jchittenden@miottawa.org

Contact Janine for:
- Concerns or questions that other staff have not been able to answer

CSHCS Program Fax: 616-393-4435

The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (Family Center)
The Family Center is the parent-directed center within Children’s Special Health Care Services (CSHCS)
The Family Center offers emotional support, information, and connections to community-based resources to families of children and youth with special health care needs.
This includes all children who have, or are at an increased risk for: physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions.
Children do not have to be enrolled in CSHCS to receive services from the Family Center.

The Family Center Phone Line:
1-800-359-3722
cshcsfc@michigan.gov
Monday to Friday 8a.m. to 5p.m.

The Family Support Network
1-800-359-3722
For parent-to-parent support

For more on the Family Center:
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch
FC_One_Page_Handout_500892_7.pdf

Here’s the latest Family Center newsletter:

State of Michigan CSHCS site:
www.michigan.gov/ghcs

CSHCS Online payment site: