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

Dear CSHCS Families,

After 40 years in nursing, May 31st will be my last. It has been wonderful serving you and your families.

You have taught me through your resilience, persistence, patience, humility, and above all, strength. Together, we have shared stories, laughter and tears, good and bad times. You have made me a better person.

Thank you for inviting me into your homes and letting me into your lives. Thank you for such a great journey. I will miss you.

Now begins the transition to retirement. My goals are to stay young at heart, be kind in spirit, and enjoy life. I hope our paths cross in our local grocery stores, in our county parks, or on a national park trail or campground. I want to talk, to listen, to share.

I leave you with a smile, for it says so much all at once. Most of all, it carries hope for you and me.

May your path lead you and yours to better health,

Janine Chittenden
**A Fond Farewell**

It is a bittersweet time for our CSHCS family, as we bid adieu and a happy retirement to our beloved boss and treasured friend, Janine Chittenden.

Janine is retiring after dedicating the past 37 years to advocating for the health and well-being of children and families too numerous to count.

As a long-time Child Health Supervisor for both the Children’s Special Health Care Services and Hearing and Vision programs at the Ottawa County Department of Public Health, Janine has set the bar high for those who work for her and along side her, and for those who will follow in her footsteps.

Leading by example, Janine’s commitment to fairness, integrity and equality has shone in her work as a devoted advocate for special needs families. From her leadership at the state level, to supporting the local CSHCS team, her efforts have ensured that families and children continue to receive the highest quality care and support from the CSHCS program.

With her impressive wealth of knowledge, her wisdom, dedication and enthusiasm, Janine has gently guided and inspired each of us to be better, to learn more and do more for the families we serve. Above all, the greatest gift she has given to CSHCS children and families and her colleagues alike, is the compassion and love that she so freely gives to all of us. We are so blessed to have had her as a teacher, role-model, advocate and friend.

So, how do we say goodbye and how can we thank her enough for the guidance, passion and wisdom she has shared? For her support and inspiration to be all that we can be in helping the Children’s Special Health Care families she cares for so deeply?

The answer is that though we will miss her dearly as the head of our CSHCS family, we will honor her beautiful legacy by continuing to serve CSHCS families with passion, support, and mostly love. We will continue to spread the message she so warmly instills, “We are all in this together”.

Congratulations, Janine! We wish you good health and joyous days on your next adventure. Thank you, we love you!

To send your personal congratulations, well-wishes and thanks to Janine, please send them via email to: jchittenden@miottawa.org or mail to: Janine Chittenden c/o CSHCS 12251 James Street Holland, MI 49424
Trouble Getting a Bill Paid?

DON’T IGNORE THE BILL: If a bill becomes older than 12 months, CSHCS may not be able to pay the claim, and it could become your responsibility.

For bills from providers listed on your CSHCS Client Eligibility Notice (CEN):

1. Contact the provider directly
2. Ask if your primary insurance has been billed
   Your primary insurance must be billed and the claim processed before CSHCS is billed
   You may need to call your primary insurance to straighten out any problems that are causing a delay
3. Ask the provider to bill CSHCS
   If your primary insurance has already processed the claim, ask the provider to bill CSHCS

For bills from providers not listed on your CSHCS Client Eligibility Notice (CEN):

Call your local CSHCS office to see if the provider can be authorized

Note: Durable Medical Providers and Pharmacies do not need to be listed on your CSHCS Client Eligibility Notice (CEN)

Travel Assistance

In some instances, CSHCS offers 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.

To request travel, contact:
Brenda Kempf, CSHCS Representative
616-393-4445 or bkempf@miottawa.org

If a CSHCS enrollee has Medicaid or is enrolled in a Medicaid Health Plan, then transportation requests must be made to DHHS or to the Medicaid health plan.

Transportation to a specialist appointments can be arranged if all possible resources have been exhausted.

Special Families’ Corner Facebook Group

was created to help ease the isolation often faced by families raising children and youth with special needs, and to allow parents and caregivers the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue with others who can relate!

Sharing experiences, resources, & events

 Asking questions of the group, and
 Posting items of interest to the special needs community
 are all enthusiastically encouraged!

Here: https://www.facebook.com/groups/480920718777204/

Or find Special Families’ Corner on Facebook
and request to join

Special Families’ Corner is made possible by the generosity of The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs. The Family Center phone Line: 1-800-359-3722 is open to all parents and caregivers of special needs children, regardless of CSHCS enrollment.
"Being a mom isn't a job, a hobby, or a task. 
It is a calling, 
A calling to love well 
A calling to instruct hearts 
A calling to be present."

I saw this quote once and thought, “how true is that!” But, so much more could be added when the child you have has special needs. You are the child’s everything!!! And, as hard as that is to accept, it is true.

I have a non-verbal 18 year old severely multiply impaired daughter. She is the mental age of one. When we found out her diagnosis of Angelman’s Syndrome, one of the parents I talked to told me I would have a baby for the rest of my life!!

You should NEVER say those words to a special needs parent. As true as they probably are, why would I want to start this journey defeated? How will that benefit my child? How will it benefit me or the people around me? It won’t!!

Haley is Haley!! She is just normal to us. She likes all the things we like; being outside, quad riding, tubing behind the boat. There is no reason for her not to do what we are doing. Is it hard to make things work for her? Yup! But, she has one life just like us, she needs to get out and enjoy it! It is totally worth all the trouble.

And please don’t think she is easy. This summer she has all but stopped walking, and eating is a BIG issue. So now, we are getting used to having a wheelchair with us all the time. Maybe there are some fun things we can do with it!!!

Don’t get me wrong, there are bad days. Like mornings when you wake up and the contents of the diaper are no longer in the diaper. Or, when she can’t tell you what she wants or how she feels; Like a never ending game of charades.

Live the bad days! Let them happen if you need to. Don’t dwell there long. You need to roll with the punches and remember that tomorrow is a new day!

Society may label Haley as special needs, but she is just special! All people NEED something. Half the time, my 16 year old son is higher maintenance. But, how awesome it is that he gets to see us handling the situation in a positive way! Teaching him grit!!

There are good days, too! Like when your child learns to walk or eat on their own, maybe even something as small as clearing the spit out of their throat; What a HUGE Accomplishment! Try to make your tears of joy outweigh the tears of sadness! Your child needs you to be ready to go!

You were blessed to raise a special child. Not everyone can handle that or gets the privilege to do it. Wake up each day with joy! Even if you have to live just one day or one minute at a time. Take a deep breath. Your child is watching you. Be sure to show them, "you got this"! Conquer the day!!

I love our life! I’m not always sure how to word it for other people, so thanks for the opportunity to share.

Happy Mother’s Day!
Lori Grasman
Happy Mother’s Day to all of you wonderful moms!

You are rock stars and warriors, researchers with encyclopedic knowledge about your child’s conditions, teachers who help others know the beauty and gifts your child brings to the world. You are team builders, peacemakers, leaders, givers, and helpers.

The weight of your responsibilities can be crushing, but your perseverance and strength under difficult circumstances and your boundless love for your child means you push through your own pain and heartache to do what needs to be done.

You see the beauty in imperfection and the perfection of the imperfect. You are gentleness and comfort. You are home. You are love.

We celebrate you always! Your CSHCS Team

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Self Care: I can hear you...

“I just can’t add one more thing to my To-Do List”.

Wait! Please don’t stop reading. I care about you, and because I do, I am going to make a confession, in the hope that it might keep you from the same fate.

You see, I found a lump in my breast... and then I forgot about it. Completely!

I know it sounds impossible; My daughter was in crisis and we were barely making it through the day. I noticed it, and then, assuming it was the same type of benign cyst that I’d had drained before, I forgot about it as our lives continued to spin out of control.

And then, two weeks later, after her surgery, when finally life was going to be sane again, I discovered the lump—that I hadn’t even thought about—was still there. It was bigger. It was breast cancer.

I still struggle with self care, but I am going to make a real effort to put myself first, so that I’ll have something left to give; So that I will be happy and healthy and here for my children.

I learned the hard way, but you don’t have to. I hope that my story will inspire you to add a little something ‘Just-For-You’ to your long To-Do List.

Taking care of yourself isn’t selfish. In fact, it could be the most loving thing you could ever do for your family!

~Amy
The Family Center
For Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

*The Family Center is the parent-directed center within CSHCS and MDHHS*

**The Family Center:**
- offers health resource information
- provides emotional support via The Family Support Network
- offers scholarships for disability-related conferences and camps
- helps shape CSHCS policies and procedures
- guides families with enrollment and navigating the CSHCS system

**NOTE:** All families with special needs children/youth are eligible for services from The Family Center regardless of CSHCS enrollment.

**This includes** children and youth who have, or may be at increased risk for physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions.

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**Conference Scholarships**
For Parents and Children
From The Family Center

Parenting a child with special needs often means learning a whole new complex language and keeping up on vast amounts of rapidly changing information.

Attending a conference related to your child’s condition can be a great way to learn important up-to-date information and to make valuable connections with medical experts and other caregivers.

The Family Center offers a limited number of scholarships to help cover expenses for one parent and/or one youth (aged 14 to 26) to attend a conference related to the child’s diagnosis, condition or treatment.

Applications must be received at least 45 days prior to the conference date.

For details and an application:

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**Family Support Network (FSN)**
Operated by The Family Center

1-800-359-3722

Does your child have a new diagnosis? Are you facing challenges in caring for your child? Would it be helpful to talk with another parent who has “been there”? If so, the Family Support Network (FSN) can help.

The FSN offers parent-to-parent support from fellow special needs parents who are specially trained volunteers. They can be a listening ear, provide moral support and encouragement, and help you find information and resources to help you on your special needs parenting journey.

Contact The Family Center (above) to be matched with a parent mentor who has a child with a similar condition.

For anyone interested in becoming a parent mentor, parent-to-parent training will be coming to our area soon!
**Michigan Family To Family Health Information Center**

is part of a federally funded project to share resources, information and education for children and youth with special health care needs, the families who love them and the professionals who support them.

**The Michigan Family To Family Website:**  www.f2fmichigan.org

**Is Being Updated**

**To Make It ‘The Place’**

**For Special Needs Resources and Information**

The fabulous new site will go live in early June. Stay tuned....

https://www.facebook.com/MIF2F

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**Special Swim**

at the Holland Community Aquatic Center

**Special Swim** is a program designed to introduce children with special needs to the water.

Children ages 4-12 work one-on-one with trained volunteers on skills that include water adjustment, movement, socialization and basic water safety.

**For class info:**  http://hollandaquaticcenter.org/

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**Special Needs Grants**

**Grants offered by organizations:**

- https://www.michigan.gov/csnfund/
- http://www.familyhopefoundation.org/programs/scholarships/guidelines-application
- http://www.lorisvoice.org/app-for-assistance.html
- https://www.asws.org/Scholarships.aspx

**Lists of Grants and Scholarships**

- https://calvin.edu/offices-services/Grant+Sources+for+Families.pdf
- http://www.kidspeech.com/courses/special-needs-grants/
- https://www.especialneeds.com/funding

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**Special Needs Open Swim**

**Saturday, June 16**

10:30am – 12:00pm

**Future dates:**  http://hollandaquaticcenter.org/

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**Swim Diaper Recommendations**

**Helpful info and advice:**


**Containment swim briefs:**

- http://www.sosecureproducts.com/

**Swimmates by Tranquility Products:**


**My Pool Pal:**

EXCITING NEWS!!!
Grand Haven Dental Center
Opening in August
Serving Children & Adults

To learn more or to register as a patient:
Call: 1-877-313-6232
Or visit: mydental.org
Patients are seen by appointment
Call to add your name to the waiting list

Yes, You Can Afford a Healthy Smile!
MCDC provides a full range of general dentistry services, including:
- Oral exams/cleanings
- Fillings
- Tooth removal
- Partials and dentures
- Other dental procedures
- Specialty services at select locations

We recommend that children begin seeing a dentist by age 1
Patient Registration:
877.313.6232
mydental.org
All patients are seen by appointment

Child Development Services (CDS)
Lakeshore Head Start

CDS operates early childhood education programs to promote health and education for children and families.

CDS offers no-cost high-quality Preschool, Home Visiting and Child Care Services in Ottawa County.

CDS programs provide a safe, caring environment for children in a group learning setting. The curriculum focuses on the whole child in the areas of language, health, nutrition, science, math, and social skills.

CDS welcomes students with disabilities. Head Start teachers use individualized teaching strategies to help children achieve their learning objectives. In addition, the CDS Special Needs Manager supports and assists families of children with disabilities as they navigate the special education system.

CDS values parents as their child’s first and most important teacher. They provide support services to parents, and welcome and encourage parent input and involvement.

In addition, children receive meals and snacks, and transportation is provided at some sites.

Call 616-786-0736, or visit www.cdsoc.org
for more information or an application.

https://www.facebook.com/Child-Development-Services-Lakeshore-Head-Start-1664297693807846/timeline/
The Ottawa County
CSHCS Team:

Brenda Kempf, Representative
616-393-4445
bkempf@mioittawa.org
CONTACT BRENDA FOR:
• BILLING AND INSURANCE ISSUES
• INCOME CHANGES OR FINANCIAL CONCERNS
• ADDING OR CHANGING SPECIALTY PROVIDERS
• ANNUAL RENEWALS
• TRAVEL AND LODGING REQUESTS
• SCHEDULING A CSHCS NURSE APPOINTMENT

Irene Atwood, Support Staff
616-393-4439
iatwood@mioittawa.org
CONTACT IRENE FOR:
• INSURANCE CHANGES
• NAME CHANGES FOR YOU OR YOUR CHILD
• A NEW HOME OR EMAIL ADDRESS
• A NEW PHONE NUMBER

Amy Fontaine, Parent Consultant
616-393-4440
afontaine@mioittawa.org
CONTACT AMY FOR:
• SPECIAL FAMILIES’ CORNER FACEBOOK GROUP
• FEEDBACK ON LOCAL CSHCS SERVICES
• NEWSLETTER ARTICLES AND RESOURCES
• PRESENTATIONS BY THE CSHCS TEAM AT YOUR EVENT

Contact Your CSHCS Nurse (below) for:
• PLANS OF CARE
• MEDICAL QUESTIONS
• COVERAGE QUESTIONS
• ADDING A NEW DIAGNOSIS OR SPECIALTY PROVIDER

Leslie Ver Duin BSN, RN, CSHCS Nurse
616-393-4444
lverduin@mioittawa.org
NURSE FOR FAMILIES IN:
• Grand Haven
• Spring Lake
• Nunica
• Conklin
• Marne
• West Olive
• Coopersville
• Hudsonville
• Grandville

Kelsey DeMull BSN, RN, MPH, CSHCS Nurse
616-393-4442
kdemull@mioittawa.org
NURSE FOR FAMILIES IN:
• Holland
• Zeeland
• Allendale
• Jenison
• Byron Center
• Parts of Greater Grand Rapids

Sandy Boven, MEd Community Health Manager
616-393-5765

Other Helpful CSHCS Information:
CSHCS Program Fax: 616-393-4435
Ottawa County CSHCS Website: https://www.mioittawa.org/health/OCHD/Child_Sp_Health_Care.htm
State of Michigan CSHCS Website: www.michigan.gov/cshcs
The CSHCS Family Center Phone Line
1-800-359-3722
cshcsfc@michigan.gov

The Ottawa County CSHCS Team:
• Grand Haven
• Spring Lake
• Nunica
• Conklin
• Marne
• West Olive
• Coopersville
• Hudsonville
• Grandville
Kids’ Corner Links:  More Yoga & Spring Fun

http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2014/05/19/10-spring-activities-for-children-with-special-needs/

https://www.pinterest.com/especialneeds/sensory-crafts-spring/

https://www.especialneeds.com/blog/six-special-needs-activities-perfect-for-spring/


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EmeTZGr_R5Q&list=PLNiQ_Pld858D1bMKzX8ab6huCemzv85Le