
Family Support Newsletter

Community Partners (Behavioral Health and Developmental Services of Strafford County, Inc.)

Annual Campership and Summer Recreation Issue

Issue # 37

February 2004

Important: If you are planning on having your child attend summer camp or other summer recreation and would like to apply for financial assistance from this agency, please use the campership request forms that are on **Page 6** in this issue and return them ASAP. Requests received after the closing date of April 9th, will be funded only if there is aid available after funding the on-time requests.



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APTD Changes

A rule is being newly enforced at the NH Department of Human Services that will impact your family if you have a family member who receives cash benefits through the APTD (Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled) program. This change does not apply if the individual only receives Medicaid and no financial assistance.

The state is requiring that related family members (husband, wife, parents, or children) complete a “Legally Liable Relative” form. This form collects financial information on the related family member which is used to calculate how much the family member can contribute to the support of the individual with a disability. The individual’s monthly cash grant is then reduced by this amount. Apparently this is not a new rule but one that has been on the books for years but never enforced until now.

In bringing families to the Rochester District Office to apply for APTD, I have first hand experience to the lack of consistency in which this rule is being implemented. I have been told on one occasion that the form is optional; on another that as long as one form is in the application, “Concord” will be happy (even if there are several individuals who qualify as legally responsible). I have been told that whatever the family member puts on the form as the amount they feel comfortable contributing will be accepted so keep it small (like \$10.00 a month). One supervisor admitted that implementing it has been a nightmare for their staff. I have been told that the roll out of the enforcement of this rule is to start immediately with new applications and then to phase it in with those already receiving APTD at the point of redetermination. It is too early to see how this will play out over time, but be prepared for this new requirement.

Fun Things to Do!

Caravan Beads on 6th Street in Dover has created an afternoon beading class for a group of teen girls. They have made earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and a variety of decorations under the supervision of Trish, the instructor. This is a great way for your child to get out with friends and then actually come home with a completed project. We have had a couple of work/study students facilitating the inclusion of some kids if they need it. There is a fee for the classes but Family Support is willing to help out if needed. Call Betsy in Family Support at 749-4015 with any questions.



Adapted Aquatics at the Dover Indoor Pool begins on Sunday, February 15 and will continue until April 18. Time is 5:15 – 6:00 PM. If your child with a disability has not yet tried this program, please do! It's great fun for the kids and the UNH volunteers are terrific. And parents, you don't even have to get in the pool. Call 516-6441 and speak with Nicole. Fee is \$45 for those connected with Community Partners.

Let me know if you are interested in **bowling**! This would be for 8-12 year olds for a 4 week period during the winter and early spring and would be located in Dover. Region 9 would be doing this in conjunction with Therapy and the Performing Arts. Call Betsy ASAP if this might be an activity your child would enjoy.

Family Support is once again providing an opportunity for you to get out and try a winter sport. We've reserved Wednesday, February 25, 2004 for **down hill skiing** at Mt. Sunapee. Their trained volunteers and organized program make for a fun day on the slopes.

Teens! Save Saturday, March 6 for **tubing** at Gunstock! There will be UNH volunteers with the group that day to support the teens.

The **FRIENDS Project Friday Night** continues for those 15-24 year olds who would enjoy some social time in a supervised environment. Time is 6:30-8:30 and the upcoming dates are Feb. 13, March 12, and March 26. Call Heidi at 436-7100 X284 for more information.

Therapy and the Performing Arts has organized **ice skating** for individuals with special needs on Saturdays from 11:15 to noon at the Rinks at Exeter. This is for ages 8 and up and goes until May 15, 2004. Contact Susan Foster at 624-2076 for further information.

Legislative Advocacy Pamphlet for Strafford County Residents

We have compiled a pamphlet to assist families who are interested in advocating for positive legislation to assist our family members who have a disability. One thing we know, living in New Hampshire means we must maintain constant vigilance on what is being proposed in Concord. The only way money is earmarked to provide new services is by our making our needs known through advocacy. If anyone is interested in receiving this free pamphlet, contact Hugh Philbrick at 749-4015. You could also send me an email at hphilbrick@bhdssc.org and I will put you on my list of email contacts so you will receive occasional news around legislative issues by email.

Looking Ahead to Summer Recreation Open House

Tuesday, March 16, 2004

6:30—8:00 PM

Dover Vocational Office

42 Dover Point Road, Unit G

Camp and Program Directors will be invited to come with information and brochures to share with families. Come by to learn more about recreation programs in the area.

Ask questions about the programs and accessibility. Get a copy of the Summer Recreation and Camp Guide and the Recreational Opportunities for Strafford County.

For further information, call Betsy at 749-4015.



Groups, Meetings, and Trainings

The Parent Information Center will be providing trainings for families at the Dover Vocational Office this spring. Save the following dates:

- March 18: Special Education Law
- March 25: IEP Clinic
- April 1: Parent/Professional Communication
- April 8: Transition from Early Supports and Services to School

A group for parents who have a child with any of the **Autism Spectrum Disorders** continues to meet on the first Wednesday of the month at the New Durham Elementary School at 6:30 PM. Call Pam at 859-7880.

A group for parents who have a child with any **neurological problems** such as cerebral palsy continues to meet on the fourth Friday of the month at Wayne and Alison Goss's home (749-4051) at 6:00 PM for a pot luck supper.

The **Family Support Conference** will be held the weekend of April 30, May 1 and 2 at the Grand Summit Hotel at Attitash Mountain. Try to make the time to go this year and if you decide you want to attend, please contact Deirdre Watson (749-4015) as soon as possible after receiving your application in the mail. There will be four workshops on Early Childhood: sign language, sensory issues, introduction to IEP's, and enhancing the development of your child; six workshops for school-age children: IEP's, No Child Left Behind, and IDEA, friendships, curriculum modifications, mentorship, and autism; five adult workshops: wills & trusts, benefits, community supports, self-employment, transportation; and seven general workshops including relaxation and legislative advocacy. Deirdre and Betsy will be up there that weekend—hope you join us for a terrific family support weekend. The Family Advisory Council has a limited number of scholarships available for attending the conference. Preference will be given to first time attendees.

Education-A-Must presents the **Wrightslaw Advocacy Boot Camp** on March 26-27, 2004 at the Best Western Executive Court Inn in Manchester. Check out their website at www.wrightslaw.com.

SERESC presents **Applied Behavior Analysis in Educational Settings** on March 11-12 in Bedford, NH. Questions? Call Robin Knight at 206-6816 or email rknight@seresc.net.

The New Hampshire Department of Education, the Bureau of Special Education, in collaboration with the State Advisory Committee on the Education of Students with Disabilities, invites you to attend the following **parent forums**:

Monday, March 1, 2004 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Spaulding High School Café 130 Wakefield Street Rochester NH	Why aren't more students with disabilities graduating with a regular high school diploma?
Wednesday April 14, 2004 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Laconia High School Library 345 Union Avenue Laconia NH	Are families and schools working together to ensure that students with disabilities learn to read?
Monday, April 26, 2004 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Center of Hope 626 Eastman Road Center Conway NH	Are students, families and schools effectively working together to promote healthy social relationships for all students?
Monday, May 10, 2004 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Monadnock Developmental Services 2 nd Floor 121 Railroad Street Keene NH	What is the role of the family in educating a student with a disability?

These forums are being offered to enable parents, students and others to:

- Ø Discuss and share ideas, issues and concerns affecting children/youth with disabilities and their families
- Ø Establish better and stronger partnerships
- Ø Build mutually respectful and responsive connections between the Department of Education, students, parents, and educators
- Ø Inform the Department of Education as they engage in strategic planning.

*For more information, or if you need special accommodations, please call Barbara Raymond
N.H. Department of Education -- (603) 271-3791.*

Katie Beckett Medicaid Update

Thanks go out to our families who attended the public forum at Exeter Hospital to advocate that the state not implement proposed rules changes in the Katie Beckett Program. These proposed rules changes would result in most families who receive Katie Beckett Medicaid services losing their benefits. The forum at Exeter was the last of the four statewide forums. Now the Commissioner will weigh the testimony presented and present his plan to the Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (JL-CAR). After he presents it, JL-CAR will require a public hearing which we will be able to attend and give input. After that, the JL-CAR will vote to accept the proposed changes and to implement them, or object to the changes (which could result in the changes being implemented, just without their blessing). The best option is for them to vote for “continuing resolution” which requires a bill to be drafted and the issue sent to the House & Senate for legislative action. If this occurs, the Commissioner’s proposed changes cannot be implemented unless approved by the regular legislative process.

Summer Programs—Financial Assistance



Dear Families,

It is that time of year to start planning summer recreational activities. Again this year the Family Support Council and the Partners in Health program have set aside funds to help pay for summer programs such as day and residential camps, family trips or other summer activities.

In order to determine how many people we can assist, we need to know how many families are interested in financial or other assistance.

This will be the only notice to apply for funds for summer 2004

In past years, many families received additional help with camperships from other organizations or their school districts. If your child is at school, now is the time to talk with your team about summer programming. If you need assistance in finding a summer program, please contact Deirdre or Betsy at Family Support.

If you are applying for a Family Support Scholarship, please return the form below to:

Gerry Riecks
Community Partners (BHDSSC)
Forum Court Suite #1
113 Crosby Road, Dover, NH 03820



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Name of Recreation Program/Activity: _____

Total Cost of Program/Activity: _____

Amount requested from Family Support/Partners in Health: _____

Scholarships awarded will depend on number of requests and availability of funding.

RETURN TO FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM BY FRIDAY APRIL 9, 2004

Volunteer Program

We are in the process of developing a volunteer program here at Community Partners. Although we have been using volunteers for years, we have not been organized in how we approach using volunteers. This is important because volunteers need to feel appreciated, valued, needed, and proud of their service to our agency. In addition, as a non-profit organization, we have a responsibility to use volunteers to help achieve our mission. We all know that funding is limited and we need to be creative and resourceful in order to fill the gaps left by budget constraints and cuts.

Because we do not have a volunteer coordinator, we are clarifying who will be taking on what roles. Employees who will be using volunteers in their programs will be responsible for supervising their volunteers. Support and training will be provided for both those who are supervising volunteers, and for the volunteers themselves.

This is an exciting new stage in our development as a growing human services non-profit agency. Everyone's input, feedback, and support is needed to make this a successful endeavor. Contact Ellen Rondina at 749-4015 if you have any questions.

Parent to Parent



Parents love to talk with other parents about their children! If you are a parent of a child with some special needs, you may want to connect with a parent whose child has similar needs; someone who understands. We have a local network here within Strafford County plus there is a statewide **Parent to Parent** network of families who are willing to share experiences.

There are so many families who have adjusted to their own child's special challenges and who have the capacity and willingness to help by sharing their feelings and listening to those of others. Studies have even shown that when parents are informed, connected, and supported by other families who have been there, they are better able to cope and go forward.

By asking for the support of connecting with another parent, you will get the opportunity to meet other parents. Experienced parents of children with special needs will talk with you and provide insights that only they can offer. Plus you can learn more about resources that have been helpful to parents.

Talk to your Early Supports and Services provider and let her know if this is something you think would be of interest to you. Or you can contact Betsy Carroll, Parent to Parent Coordinator, at Community Partners at 749-4015. Family Support is there to help in any way possible and this is just one way that might support you.

Community Partners

(BHDSSC)

113 Crosby Road—Suite 1
Dover NH 03820

Phone: 603-749-4015

hphilbrick@bhdssc.org

www.dssc9.org



February Raffle - Beat those mid-winter blahs!

Since we in Family Support are once again dreaming of warmer weather, we thought that this issue's raffle will help you get in the spring frame of mind. This issue's winner will receive a basket filled with Spring related items. Send in your name and address on the form below to Gerry Riecks at Community Partners at the above address, no later than March 1st. This raffle is only open to Community Partners families who receive this newsletter in the mail.

Name:

Address:

Telephone



(actual basket and contents will differ from this picture)

Deadline: March 1, 2004.