

Family Update



Bi-monthly Newsletter of the Region III Family Support Council

If you're looking forward to summer...it's time to think about camp!

By Karen McDowell, Family to Family Coordinator

Summer holds great opportunities for families to relax, unwind, and enjoy spending time together. But for families who need to find and pay for safe, appropriate activities and care for their child or adult with a disability, it can also be a challenging time.

Campership Assistance

Funding to help defray the cost of summer camps and activities is available through the Region III Family Support Council in the form of campership grants. Grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and are generally paid directly to the program in which the individual is registered. The maximum grant is \$650. If an individual needs one-on-one support to participate in a specific program or activity, campership funds may also be used to compensate the person providing that support. To apply for campership funding, please contact your Resource Coordinator.

Some private, community, or school-based camp programs also offer needs-based scholarships, so you may want to ask about financial assistance as you are researching programs.

Camp Allen, Bedford, NH

www.campallennh.org

622-8471 -- Day & Overnight Programs

Established in 1931, Camp Allen welcomes campers of all ages with developmental disabilities and other challenges. Camp Allen offers both traditional day and residential "sleep over" programs. The camp also offers a **Peer Work** program, which provides vocational training for young adults who are on the waiting list for services or need additional training to become employable.

Life Camp is a fun six-day experience offered during the third week of May, where campers learn about budgeting, responsibility, cooking, how to be a good friend, cleaning, pet care, and other life skills. Social experiences include attending a Fisher Cats game and going to the movies. Life Camp is limited to 12 campers.

Camp Fatima, Gilmanton, NH

www.campsfatimabernadette.org

364-5851 -- Overnight

Special Needs Week

Camp Fatima in Gilmanton provides a one-week camping experience for boys and girls with mild to moderate developmental disabilities. The daily program helps campers make new friends, enjoy outdoor activities, develop new skills and build self-confidence. The program is open to boys and girls ages 9 and up.

Exceptional Citizens Week

www.ecweek.org -- **Overnight**

This is a co-ed camp for children and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities ages 9+. This year, EC Week will be held Aug. 17-23rd. The program is fully funded by annual fundraisers, donations and in-kind contributions and is staffed entirely by volunteers.

Easter Seals NH Camp Sno-Mo,

Gilmanton Ironworks, NH

www.nh.easterseals.com

364-5818 -- Overnight

Easter Seals NH and the Daniel Webster Council, Boy Scouts of America, work together at this nationally recognized, residential camp program, sponsored by the New Hampshire Snowmobile Association, to create a life-changing experience for campers. Children and adults with special needs, ages 11-21, participate alongside Boy Scouts in a wide variety of activities including water sports, team sports, hiking, archery, a ropes course, and crafts. For more information on Camp Sno-Mo, please contact Rob Kelly at 364-5818.

- continued on page 2

Summer camps - continued from page 1

Camp Starfish, Rindge, NH

www.campstarfish.org

899-9590 -- Overnight

Camp Starfish provides a one-on-one staff to camper ratio at all times to enable success, build social skills, teach coping mechanisms, and help children who have difficulty finding success in traditional settings.

The Mayhew Program, Newfound Lake

Bristol, NH

www.mayhew.org

744-6131 -- Overnight

Free month-long camp for at-risk boys ages 10 and 11 from low to moderate income single-parent families.

Camp Spaulding

www.cfsnh.org

800-640-6486, ext. 4110 -- Overnight

Camp Spaulding is an overnight summer camp for boys and girls ages 8-14 nestled on 56 acres of forest overlooking the Contoocook River in Penacook. Eligibility: Low/moderate income. Sliding fee.

Day programs offering summer fun and recreation

If you are the parent of a school-aged child, contact your local parks & recreation department or school district about what types of summer programming are offered in your community. Here are some day camp programs in the area and contact information for the Boys & Girls Club of the Lakes Region.

Gilford Summer Program

The Gilford Summer Program is an experience of fun and learning for children entering first grade through entering sixth grade, who live in Gilford or surrounding communities. The program is in session for seven weeks and is run by certified teachers. Daily enrichment activities include sports, arts and crafts, technology, motion madness, and healthy choices. Field trips to area attractions and a trip to Gilford Beach are planned each week. For more information, contact Katie Bryant, director, at 524-7146, ext. 671 or gsp@sau73.org.

Gilford Youth Center Middle School Summer Camp.

This program utilizes the Gilford Youth Center, Gilford Community Church, Wixson Community Center, Town fields, the Gilford Library, the Gilford Beach and other local spots. The program is offered to students living in the Lakes Region currently in or going into grades 5-9. For more information, contact Scott Hodsdon, director at 524-6978 or gccscott@metrocast.net.

**Belmont Parks and Recreation Summer Day Camp
267-8329**

Boys & Girls Club of the Lakes Region

www.lakeskids.org

527-0198

Save the Date and Join Us!

**LRCS' 2014 Annual Celebration
Set for April 10**

At a special event on Thursday, April 10, 2014 from 4:30-6:30 pm at the LRCS Main Office at 719 N. Main Street in Laconia, Lakes Region Community Services will hold its Annual Celebration to acknowledge the accomplishments of the past year and to recognize friends and community partners.

The Annual Celebration begins at 4:30 pm with a reception and social hour followed by a program focused on "Success at Work." Speakers will include employers involved in sector-based intern programs and individuals sharing their employment success stories. The Celebration will also feature an appreciation of our community partners and supporters and a recognition of longevity.

Space is limited. RSVP to Pat Hilson at 581-1527 or path@lrsc.org by April 7, 2014. Visit www.lrsc.org for more details. ■

**DHHS Medicaid Care Management
Hotline:**

1-800-852-3344, ext. 4344

*Choose the menu option for
Medicaid Care Management*

Medicaid recipients experiencing ongoing conflicts regarding Step 1 of NH's Medicaid Care Management program, which they are unable to resolve with their Managed Care Organization, are encouraged to call this hotline number. The Governor's Commission on Medicaid Care Management urges you to share comments and concerns through Commissioner Don Shumway's email address:

don.shumway@crotchedmountain.org. ■

Unique Status for the FSC

By Susan Michaelis Gunther, Chair

I have been on the Family Support Council (FSC) for about fourteen years, and, in all those years, this is the first time the FSC has a full complement of members. Regulations governing family support councils set membership at no less than five and no more than fifteen. At its January 2014 meeting, we reached the maximum number of fifteen!

In past newsletters, FSC members were featured so readers could know more about them. In this issue, **Irene Chapman** (who joined in September of 2012) and **Denise Colby** (who joined in December of 2012) share some experiences and thoughts.

Irene has lived in Campton for 28 years with her husband of 35 years, Ron. They have three children. Ron, Jr. graduated from UNH's Whittemore School of Business. Melissa also graduated from UNH with a degree in psychology. Alicia works at the Campton Cupboard (for 12 years); volunteers at a local daycare center; and attends Lakes Region Community College, studying for a certificate in childcare. Alicia also participates in Special Olympics skiing, bowling, and track and field.

For about a year, Irene has participated on the FSC. "I was surprised but honored I was asked. My first thought was, 'what do I have to offer?' I went to my first meeting and was very happy I went. I learned a lot!" Irene feels "members of the FSC really care about the adults and children" they assist. Not only does the FSC sometimes help with the purchase of disability-related items, the FSC is aware of legislation which benefits families experiencing special needs. The FSC sponsors work programs so adults can have jobs, which foster self-confidence and self-worth.

Irene feels the FSC shows her "people care about individuals with special needs. There are a lot of issues to be solved in the financial area in government. [The FSC] is a place for families with questions and concerns to get help and information. We always keep information updated."

An area where Irene would like to see continued progress is "jobs to put more people to work. The hot dog cart was great!"

Irene says, "I am still learning about the Council, but I hope to be able to help do more wonderful projects and solve more problems."

Denise lives in Belmont with her husband Syl and sons Christian, 5, and Nicholas, 3. Christian was diagnosed

with autism at 20 months and was one of the first children enrolled in the LRCS Family Resource Center's Autism Center. Denise and Syl "wholeheartedly feel it was the educators and therapist at LRCS who helped Christian conquer so much."

After Christian aged out of early support services, Denise sought more involvement with LRCS and advocacy. Mission accomplished: Denise has been heavily involved with the Autism Center, including doing substantial fundraising for the center's Annual Walk-A-Thon. A few years back Denise attended a State Family Support Conference, which sparked an interest in her local FSC. Denise looks forward to the monthly FSC meetings and feels the FSC helps her understand LRCS from a broader perspective. "I have a better understanding of the different departments and staff. The Council has also helped me learn more about the legislative process and issues pertaining to developmental disabilities. I have even attended a couple of hearings at the State House," Denise commented.

Denise is now participating in the eight-month Leadership Series, a statewide program offered by the Institute on Disabilities that fosters greater involvement in advocacy, policymaking, and systems change for individuals experiencing developmental disabilities and their families.

Concluding her thoughts, Denise said, "I feel very blessed to be part of Region III, LRCS, and our FSC. I'm honored to serve on a council that embraces families in their quest for inclusion and advocacy!"

On the business front, the FSC remains strong in its support of LRCS's goals to provide employment opportunities for the individuals it serves. Look for updates on successes as the year progresses.

Linda Graham, from the Bureau of Developmental Services, attended our January 2014 meeting and described a storytelling project she is spearheading. The purpose is to record five-minute, personalized family stories which highlight the work families do caring for their relatives. One person from each area agency will be sought to attend a three-day workshop in Concord in early April.

Now that Step 1 (the medical care piece) of Medicaid managed care is active, anyone with a story to share regarding your experience may contact Karen McDowell at 581-1544 or karenmc@lracs.org.

Check the FSC web page on the LRCS web site for updates, lists of trainings, upcoming social opportunities, and other general information. ■



Buddy Cruise 2013

Family, Education & a Lifetime
of Memories

Last October, the Hilbrunner family traveled to Bermuda on a Buddy Cruise. "The Buddy Cruise is a great way to provide educational opportunities, promote awareness, acceptance, and inclusion for individuals and their families with Down syndrome through an exciting vacation," said Family Support Council member Lynn Hilbrunner. "We connected with wonderful families from across the country who we plan on staying in touch with. We also participated in the Buddy Walk, collecting over \$800 for Down syndrome research. Go Kaitlyn's Crusaders!"

For more information, visit buddycruise.org. ■

3rd Annual Community Dance

UNCLE STEVE BAND

March 21

Foster's Boiler Room in Plymouth

Contact Amie Harvey at 996-3978 or amieh@lrsc.org for more information.

Save the Date for the 4th Annual Autism Center Walk-A-Thon

The 4th annual Autism Center Walk-A-Thon will be held on Sunday, May 18th on the WOW Trail in Laconia. Mark your calendar and plan to get your friends and family together to do something that's healthy and fun and supports a great cause.

The Autism Center, located in the Family Resource Center at Lakes Region Community Services' Main Office in Downtown Laconia, has been operating for four years. The Autism Center's mission is to create a learning environment that helps parents to advocate, encourage, educate, and support their child with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. The center's programs primarily serve children ages birth to 5.

Last year's event attracted 250 walkers and raised over \$14,000. Thanks to the feedback we've received from a growing number of participants and supporters, we're working on some enhancements to this year's event. For instance, while the Walk-A-Thon will still begin and end at the LRCS Main Office in Laconia, we are working on making the luncheon afterwards a little more family friendly. To make the most of what will hopefully be a beautiful spring day, we would like to utilize the outdoors more. This year, we will use more of the LRCS parking lot for gathering, since plenty of parking space will be available at the Laconia Clinic and there is plenty of public parking nearby. We will also be grilling hot dogs outside. The restrooms and indoor seating will also be available to participants.

Everyone is welcome to join in the fun and groups are encouraged to register as teams. Walkers who raise a minimum of \$25 will receive a T-shirt. The Region III Family Support Council will host a lunch for participants. ■

Council, Social Activities Coordinator Increasing Social Opportunities for Adults

The Family Support Council is committed to increasing the number of social opportunities available to adults supported by LRCS. Late last year, the Council hired Social Activities Coordinator Jen Reera, who has already arranged a number of fun activities including a movie night, a dance, and a makeover afternoon. Jen also started a Cooking Club, in which participants get together under the direction of an instructor, then prepare and share a meal.

If you'd like to find out more about upcoming social activities or have an idea for an activity, contact Jen at jreera@yahoo.com. ■

Individual Development Accounts - A Matched Savings Program

For a long time you've had a dream: to buy a car, or a house, or go to college. But you just don't have the money. The New Hampshire Community Loan Fund might be able to help you. The following information comes directly from a Community Loan Fund brochure. It could make the difference between dream and reality.

What is an IDA? An Individual Development Account is a special savings program ... funded in partnership with Citizens Bank, NH Community Development Finance Authority, and the federal Assets for Independence Program.

Who is eligible? Households:

- ◆ in which someone works and earns an income
- ◆ AND (1) whose household income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty line (for example, a family of four with up to \$47,100 annual income)
- ◆ OR falls within the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) limits and whose household net worth is not more than \$10,000
- ◆ OR (2) whose household is eligible for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program.

It is important to remember an IDA is available only to households with an income that a member goes out and earns. Unearned (government benefits) income alone is not enough for eligibility.

How does an IDA work? Participants make deposits into their IDA savings account until they have reached their goal a maximum of \$500. Deposits are matched with *eight times* the deposited amount (\$1 saved is \$8 earned). (For example, if you deposit a total of \$200, you end up with \$1,600 in matched funds and \$1,800 total. If you deposit the maximum of \$500, you end up with \$4,500 total.)

Requirements: Before making the first withdrawal, IDA savers must attend eight hours of financial training which will strengthen saving, planning, and budgeting skills.

Additional information: Savers can start withdrawing IDA funds to pay for their goals when they have: (1) had their IDA open for six consecutive months, and (2) met training requirements.

Payments are sent directly to a vendor. For example, if your goal is education, the check is made out to the college.

If savers leave the IDA program for any reason, the money they have put in the account remains theirs.

If you are interested in this program and think you are eligible, contact the N.H. Community Loan Fund, 7 Wall Street, Concord, NH 03301 (1-800-432-4110 [ask for the IDA team] or www.communityloanfund.org). Community Loan Fund representatives will help you determine whether you are eligible to participate.

Start saving soon to make your dream a reality! ■

Tax Change to Difficulty of Care

Payments

In 2011, Community Support Network, Inc. (CSNI) – the not-for-profit organization that supports the 10 Area Agencies throughout the state of New Hampshire – requested a private letter ruling from the IRS for guidance regarding payment to parents for the support of their adult children. The ruling resulted in *Notice 2014-7 Qualified Foster Care Payments under the Waiver* and became official on Friday, January 3, 2014. Much of what was found in the final notice was based on the original request of CSNI.

In summary, the notice states a family member who provides in-home care for a related adult will be treated the same as Enhanced Family Care Providers in regards to taxable income. Family members who are under a contract to be paid, as part of a care plan, for the provision of waived services for those ages 18 and over are eligible for the Section 131 exclusion for difficulty of care payments. This tax treatment applies to tax years going forward and includes 2013. This does not include respite reimbursement paid to families.

As LRCS cannot offer tax advice, it is recommended you seek consultation from a Tax Advisor if you have questions regarding this notice. ■



To follow us on Facebook, find the Lakes Region Community Services Facebook page, look for our logo, and click “like.”



Left to right: Shelly Shamberger, CRAVE Program Instructor; Patty Boisvert, CRAVE participant; Jennifer Nelson, CRAVE participant; Stephanie Harris, CRAVE participant; Leeanna Woods, CRAVE participant; and Sarah Poire, CRAVE Program Instructor

CRAVE Internship at Gunstock Mountain Resort Offers Development of Career Skills

By Wendy Robb, Director of Community Supports
Lakes Region Community Services

Lakes Region Community Services (LRCS) is very excited to announce a unique partnership with Centerplate, one of the largest hospitality companies in the world. Working together, an internship opportunity was formed and is underway at Gunstock Mountain Resort in Gilford. The development of the “CRAVE” Program, an acronym for Centerplate Recruiting and Assistance for Valuable Employees, is an on-the-job training internship program for individuals with disabilities. This new 12-week internship program is based on the needs and workflow of Centerplate. The goal of this program is to introduce participants to the skills necessary to attain competitive employment in the food service industry. Interns attend five days per week and work side-by-side with a Centerplate employee/mentor. Working in three-week rotations, each intern will have the opportunity to learn the skills needed in environmental services and food preparation and as a dining room attendant/stocker and a busser/expeditor. Daily formal classroom instruction focuses on employment readiness, such as developing interview skills, effective workplace communication, and review of company policies and procedures. Each intern develops an employment portfolio that includes a

resume and references. Interns will have the opportunity to participate in business tours. Tours will include visits to local restaurants and to the bank to learn about savings/checking accounts. Presenters will be invited into the classroom. A health and wellness professional is scheduled for a classroom presentation on how healthy living choices impact success at work. All interns will receive assistance in seeking employment and other career services upon graduation.

John Timbrook, Centerplate General Manager at Gunstock Mountain Resort states, “I feel the program has been a success for several reasons. It’s been great to see the interns come in each day looking forward to being here and working. They seem to really enjoy it and are always smiling and laughing. They have been learning useful kitchen and social skills which will help them in future positions. I feel it has also been a benefit for our staff. They feel good about helping the interns learn new skills. It’s a great program that benefits everyone whether they realize it or not.

The people who deserve the most credit for this program are Mary Macdonald, Assistant General Manager and Dan Chiavacci, Kitchen Manager. Mary was the driving force behind getting this program started. Dan has been great with the interns and has been the one working the closest with them. I think they are the ones that have made this program a success.”

LRCS believes every person should have the opportunity to access and maintain employment. The agency is actively involved in the Employment First initiative and is committed to assisting people with disabilities to reach their career goals and to obtain meaningful employment. For more information on employment services please contact me (Laconia Team) at 524-8811 ext. 1530 or Laurie Vachon (Plymouth Team) Plymouth at 996-3976.



Left to right: Sarah Poire, CRAVE Program Instructor; John Timbrook, Centerplate General Manager; and Shelly Shamberger, CRAVE Program Instructor



Andrea Stoia, shown here competing in the NH State Summer Games, will be participating as an athlete in the 2014 Special Olympics USA Games in New Jersey in June.

Andrea Stoia to Compete in the Summer Special Olympics USA Games in New Jersey

Andrea Stoia of Meredith will be joining a group of athletes from New Hampshire and around the country to compete in this summer's 2014 Special Olympics USA Games in New Jersey. Andrea has been actively involved with Special Olympics since the age of eight and this will be her first time competing at the national level. She placed 1st in shotput at the NH State Summer Games in 2013, qualifying her for the upcoming competition.

“I am extremely excited about going to New Jersey!” Andrea stated. “I will be in Track & Field events a 400 meter walk, an 800 meter walk, shotput, and the mini-javelin. My team has been practicing and we will be doing a lot more. My mom and dad are coaches for the Winnepesaukee Comets (a local Special Olympics of New Hampshire team) and we will practice even more in the spring.” The team has been practicing at the Executive Health and Sports Center in Manchester during the winter months.

Several members of Andrea's family, including her parents, Bob and Nancy Stoia, will be traveling to New Jersey. And there's no shortage of family and friends who will be cheering her along from back home. “They all support me 100%. They love coming to see me at my events here in New

Hampshire.” Bob Stoia is the head coach for the track and field team for this national team.

The venue for Athletics is Weaver Stadium, on the campus of Princeton University. Nearly 3,500 athletes, 1,000 coaches, 10,000 volunteers, and 70,000 spectators are anticipated to attend the events at venues throughout Mercer County between June 14 and 21. The National Summer Games are held every four years, and promote respect, acceptance, inclusion, and human dignity through sports.

Best wishes go to Andrea as she prepares and competes this summer. We'll be joining those who are cheering from afar! ■

The Special Olympics Athlete Oath is: Let me win. But if I cannot win, Let me be brave in the attempt.

Save the Date!



Lakes Region Uncorked

November 1, 2014

The first Lakes Region Uncorked tasting event was an incredible success thanks to our amazing vendors, organizers, and guests. We're already looking forward to the next one.

So, mark your calendars! Lakes Region Uncorked 2014 will be held on Saturday, Nov. 1, at the Laconia Country Club. At this true celebration of the Lakes Region you can expect to sample premium, locally-crafted wines, mead, ciders, and beers, as well as delicious food. You will also learn the finer points of how these items are made and have the opportunity to participate in a Silent Auction.

Watch www.lrcs.org and our Facebook page for updates. If you have any questions, contact Director of Development Joanne Piper Lang at 581-1588 or joannel@lrcs.org. ■



Family Support Services
Lakes Region Community Services
P.O. Box 509
Laconia, New Hampshire 03247-0509

*The point is not to pay back
kindness but to pass it on.*

- Julia Alvarez

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Laconia, NH
Permit #203

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

2014 NH Family Support Conference

Celebrating Families

May 2-4, 2014

Attitash Grand Summit Hotel and Conference Center in Bartlett, NH

*Great workshops and presenters throughout the weekend.
Fun filled Saturday night activities include dinner, dancing,
a family movie, an auction, and karaoke.*

Families receiving services from LRCS should have already received their brochures in the mail. Scholarships from the Family Support Council are available to assist with registration costs. Families who wish to stay overnight must make their own accommodations. Limited ESS scholarships, respite, and other financial assistance may be available to assist families. To register, contact Sherrill Babler at LRCS by calling 524-8811.

For other conference-related questions, contact
Family to Family Coordinator Karen McDowell at 581-1544.



*Children's
Authors Tea*

**Tuesday, April 8
from 5:00 to 7:00 pm**
at the Historic Belknap Mill
in Laconia

Join us at this free family
event. Every child will receive
a free book!

For more information call
The Family Resource Center
at 524-1741.