

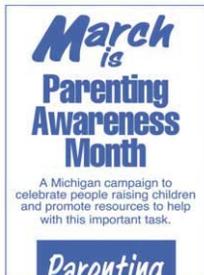


family linkages

NEWSLETTER

A way to connect families of children and youth with special needs in Michigan
with information, education and support

Parenting Awareness
MICHIGAN



Parenting
is for a
Lifetime

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS!

March 2013 – The 20th Annual Observance of Parenting Awareness Month

**Parenting Awareness Michigan Celebrates Parents and Caregivers
With a Special Focus on March as Parenting Awareness Month**

Parenting Awareness Month is a Michigan initiative to promote awareness, education, and resources — through state outreach and local efforts — emphasizing the importance of effective parenting in nurturing children to become healthy, caring, and contributing citizens. Parenting Awareness Month is unique to Michigan and has been celebrated since 1993. Parenting Awareness Michigan provides guidance, materials, resources, and technical assistance throughout the year.

Parenting Awareness Michigan/Month celebrates people who are parenting our children, and seeks to:

- ➔ draw public attention to the critical importance of effective parenting across the lifespan;
- ➔ raise awareness that effective parenting is a key factor in alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention;
- ➔ promote education and resources for developing parenting skills year-round;
- ➔ raise awareness that everyone benefits from parent education and support;
- ➔ encourage and assist in the development of parent networks;
- ➔ **and, celebrate the month of March as Parenting Awareness Month.**

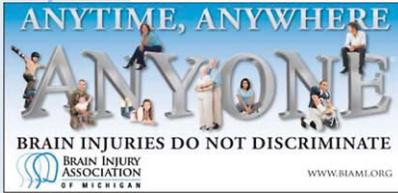
The heart of Parenting Awareness Month (PAM) is local activity. Communities throughout the state celebrate with parent and family fairs, conferences, parent appreciation events, and a variety of other activities. They use the PAM initiative to circulate resource lists and make parents aware of the education and support available to help with their important job of raising children. For a list of local PAM activities taking place in communities throughout Michigan visit www.preventionnetwork.org/pam.

Many communities have formed Parenting Awareness Michigan/Month groups and coalitions in an effort to bring diverse people and resources together, for a focused and systematic approach to increasing parenting education and involvement in the community, and to support their citizenry in their role as parents.

Parenting Awareness Month posters, matching bookmarks, and a packet of reproducible parenting materials are developed each year to involve communities in the initiative. Contact Parenting Awareness Michigan at 800-968-4968 or pamcampaign@preventionnetwork.org. Or, visit us at www.preventionnetwork.org/pam for a variety of downloadable parenting materials.



March is BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH



A brain injury can happen anytime, anywhere to anyone — brain injuries do not discriminate. Did you know that 1.7 million people will sustain a brain injury each year? An injury that happens in an instant can bring a lifetime of physical, cognitive and behavior challenges and early, equal and adequate access to care will greatly increase overall quality of life. We encourage all of our readers to take action and spread the word about brain injury. Here are a few things you can do:

Get involved. Contact the Brain Injury Association of Michigan to volunteer or donate. You can see the full list of ways you can become involved here: www.biami.org. If you'd like to make a donation, please go here: <http://www.biami.org/donate.htm>.

→ **Speak out.** Since many people with disabilities rely on publicly funded services to fully participate in their communities, policy makers need to know you are concerned about continuing those services in the face of budget cuts during tough economic times. Contact your legislator today and let them know you expect them to enact public policy to assist people with brain injury.

→ **Speak up.** Talk to your employer or the businesses you frequent about their practices for recruiting and hiring people with brain injury. Many employers don't realize just how much an employee with brain injury can contribute to the workplace. The Bureau of Labor Statistics released a report for the end of 2010 showing the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is at 14.3 percent, compared with 8.9 percent for the general population.

→ **Spread the word.** Educate yourself about issues important to the brain injury community, then tell the world what you found out. Use March as a great reason to post your positive thoughts about the brain injury movement on your Facebook page or Twitter account. Follow the Brain Injury Association of Michigan on Facebook and Twitter and express yourself. Or send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper explaining to your community why they should care about brain injuries.

Join us during March to help raise awareness. Find out more about brain injuries and what you can do at www.biami.org today.

disability benefits 101

Michigan's Disability Benefits 101 Website

www.mi.db101.org

Both an Adult Calculator and a Transition Youth Calculator

- **On-line calculator**
 - available 24/7/365
- **Confidential**
 - Only requires month/year of birth and zip code
- **Direct links to supporting information and/or contacts**
- **Become more self-determined and empowered**
 - Save sessions to discuss with agencies
 - Recall on-line with your chosen password
 - Print out details (up to 60 month projection)
 - Use key agency terms for credibility

* Note: Does NOT replace full benefits planning provided by a well-trained benefits planner/coordinator





The Michigan Department of Education, Office of Great Start, Early Childhood Education and Family Services, will conduct public hearings to receive comment on the proposed Michigan Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (aka Early On(r)) Federal Fiscal Year 2013 application.

The Part C application includes a revised State Plan which has incorporated updates as a result of the Federal Regulations released September 29, 2011, and the public comments received in March 2012. To review the proposed State Plan and related documents please visit the MDE website at http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-6530_6809_44785-231302--,00.html

The public participation period will be from January 25, 2013 through March 27, 2013, with public comment accepted only February 25, 2013 through March 27, 2013.

Public hearings will be held at the following sites:

Wednesday, March 13, 2013, from 9 to 11 AM at the Michigan Library and Historical Center, Forum, 702 W. Kalamazoo, Lansing, Michigan.

Tuesday, March 19, 2013, from 2:30 to 4:30 PM at the Marquette-Alger Regional Educational Service Agency, Conference Room B, 321 E. Ohio, Marquette, Michigan.

Oral or written comment may be presented in person at the hearings or submitted in writing by mail, email, or facsimile no later than 5:00 PM, March 27, 2013. All comments will be reviewed and considered in the final version of the application. Comments may be submitted to the following:

Public Comment

Michigan Department of Education

Office of Great Start

Early Childhood Education and Family Services

P.O. Box 30008

Lansing, MI 48909

MDE-ECEPubComment@michigan.gov

Fax: 517-335-0592

EPILEPSY FOUNDATION OF MICHIGAN 2013



Camp Discovery is a life-changing experience for youth ages 8-17 with epilepsy that includes five days and four nights of exciting camp activities (horseback riding, canoeing, swimming, arts & crafts, and so much more) with 24-hour medical supervision. Camp Discovery will take place June 23 to June 27 in Augusta, Michigan.

An online application is available on our website at www.epilepsymichigan.org/campdiscovery.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Bird at (248) 351-7979, ext. 1204.

Camp Discovery is the only specialized camp in Michigan for youth with epilepsy.



March is National Talk with Your Kids about Sex Month

Seven in 10 teens of both sexes have had sexual intercourse by the age of 19 and according to the Center for Disease Control; teen pregnancies are on the rise once again.

The United States still has the highest rate of teen pregnancies in the industrialized world making NOW the best time to start talking to your teens about sex. Barb Flis, Founder of **Parent Action for Healthy Kids**, is an advocate for parents, and a published parenting and children's health expert. Barb's focus lies in connecting families, schools and communities for the purpose of promoting the well-being of children's social, emotional and physical health. Her "parent-to-parent" approach has garnered her much praise and national media attention. Parent Action for Healthy Kids offers **Talk Early Talk Often** Workshops throughout Michigan.

📦 6 Tips for Talking to Our Tweens & Teens about Sex!

The goal of sex education is to help our young people develop a positive view of sexuality, provide them information to take care of their emotional and physical health, and help them develop skills to make healthy decisions now and in the future. Parents are the primary educator of their child's sexuality education and yet struggle to find the courage to have a conversation to become an "askable" parent. Here are 6 tips for parents to have an on-going conversation:

📦 Look for Teachable Moments

When spending time with your kids, be aware of what is happening in the moment and make it teachable. You're listening to the radio and a song with sexually explicit lyrics is played. That's a door opener to talking about sex. Try to push through any embarrassment or fear and before you know it, those two inhibiting feelings will be gone.

📦 Listen More Than you Speak

Nobody wants a lecture, especially an adolescent. Instead of getting on your soapbox, parents might ask their teens what they think about sexual situations they see in a video game or read about on Facebook. If you listen to their answer without lecturing or judging you will build respect, trust, and have a better idea of the direction of your teens' thinking.

📦 Be Inquisitive

Open-ended questions allow parents to better gauge what their kids are thinking. Instead of "how was your day?" try, "tell me one cool thing that happened to you today!"

📦 Keep the Conversation Going

Having "The Talk" only one time is about as effective as giving one swimming lesson and then expecting your teen to swim the length of the pool. Frequent small talks spread over time (pre-school through high school) are less embarrassing, make you a more "askable" parent, and build communication skills, which means the talks are much more effective.

📦 Know When Opportunity Knocks

Never miss an opportunity to learn more about your kids and their friends. For example, kids need someone to chauffeur them. When carting the kids and their friends around, listen to what's going on in the backseat. Especially with middle school kids, it's amazing the way they have conversations as if parents are not even in the car.

📦 Stick to Them like Glue

The teen brain is a work in progress. They are working primarily off the emotional part of their brain with little assistance from the pre-frontal cortex. This means they are on an emotional roller coaster without the benefit of a fully developed pre-frontal cortex to help calm down, think rationally and make good decisions. Parents need to stick to them like a well-paid consultant. Who better than a parent to help a teen practice skills such as assertiveness? The payoff will be enormous. When they are in their mid-20's and that brain is fully developed, they will tell you what a great job you did and what an awesome parent you are!





Developmental Disabilities Institute

Two Additions Made to Award Winning “Possibilities” Video Series

The **Developmental Disabilities Institute (DDI)** at Wayne State University has announced the release of two additional videos in its award winning “Possibilities” video series. Each of the six, 5-7 minute videos in the series depict the lives and accomplishments of individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, highlighting how self-determination and community inclusion benefit both persons with disabilities and the members of the community. The videos are meant to be viewed and shown by anyone interested in making the lives of individuals with disabilities as fulfilling and worthwhile as possible.

The first new video profiles Karen, a young woman with Williams Syndrome, who attends Cesar Chavez Academy in Detroit. Karen attends classes with her peers and illustrates the positive impact that inclusion has upon all aspects of one’s life.

The second new video highlights the lives of Bjorn, Danny and Tom who are young men with different

intellectual disabilities and roommates living in Charlevoix, Michigan. Their stories exemplify the benefits of self-determination, team work and how a community can come together to affect positive change in the lives of persons with and without disabilities.

“Possibilities” presents a vision held by DDI Director Dr. Barbara LeRoy and shared by all striving to improve the lives of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, that anyone can achieve their ideal life through support and self-determination. As Michigan’s University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), DDI is dedicated to promoting inclusive communities and enriching the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families.

All videos in the “Possibilities” series are offered free of charge online at ddi.wayne.edu/possibilities.php or on a DVD containing all six videos. To request copies, contact Michael Bray by email: mikebray@wayne.edu or (313) 577-6684.

Pendulum *By Scott Newport*

The dress hangs there, tiny,
On a hospital-room wall.

The short sleeves —
Puffy like clouds,
Pleated angel’s wings.

The little patient in her bed.
Nearby, her mom wonders,
Silent rocking, hoping
Her girl’s eyes will brighten
When she wakes.

The drugs, the lines,
The nurses, the doctors
Wonder, too.

The triangular hanger, tilted,
The dress askew.

Today, in my mind
Searching for balance
I straighten the hanger.



Michigan Alliance for Families is proud to announce their

2013 Webinar Series

The presentations will cover a variety of topics, including: iPads, Mental Health and Education, IEP 101 in Spanish, Virtual Schools, and Progress Monitoring.

These free webinars are held on most Thursdays from noon to 1 PM. Webinars are archived and available online about a week later.

Sign up today at
www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/webinar

To see our list of in-person workshops, see our calendar of events at
www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/upcoming-events/



Michigan Family-to-Family Health Information and Education Trainings: Dates/Times/Locations

Two new trainings have been added to our March schedule:

Everything My Child Needs to Know About Sexuality But, I Was Afraid to Tell!

- March 16, 2013 from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at University Center Campus, Room 07, 2200 Dendrinos Dr., Traverse City, MI 49686

Dream It — Achieve It!!! With SSI and other Social Security Disability Benefits

- March 22, 2013 at Comfort Inn, Dixie Hwy, Birch Run, MI from 6-9 PM

To access a complete schedule and register for Michigan F2FHIEC trainings, visit:

<http://www.michiganf2fhiec.com>.

Families may call the **Family Phone Line** at **(800) 359-3722**.

Upcoming Conferences

Michigan Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Conference

March 08, 2013
Lansing Center
333 E. Michigan Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933

For more information contact Sherri Hines:
(517) 324-8356

73rd Annual Michigan Council for Exceptional Children Conference

March 14, 2013 — March 15, 2013
Grand Plaza Hotel
Grand Rapids, MI

For more information visit:
<http://www.michigancec.org/Home.aspx>

2013 Michigan Women, Infants, and Children Conference

March 26, 2013 — March 27, 2013
Grand Traverse Resort
Acme, MI

For more information visit: <http://www.mphi.org/>

MiAEYC Early Childhood Conference 2013

April 04, 2013 — April 05, 2013
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel and DeVos Place
Grand Rapids, MI

For more information visit: <http://miaeyc.org/>

