



JUNE 2006

# Family Matters

“FULL INCLUSION, FULL LIVES”

## A Message from Larry and Keith

Larry Winter and Keith Keller are the Supervisors of the Children with Special Needs Units I & II.

In the March 2006 issue of Family Matters we encouraged you as a parent of a child with differing abilities to become involved in system wide improvements to ensure your voice is represented in all aspects of your delivery system. We have witnessed this occurring throughout the Coulee Region and wish to share a few examples with you.

The Coulee Coalition for Children of Differing Abilities and the Family Support Advisory Committee have several parents who are active members providing direction for all children with differing abilities.

When the Family and Children’s Section of La Crosse County Human Services requested proposals for the Family Advocate position parents were involved in reviewing the proposals and recommending Wisconsin Family Ties as the agency to provide this support for families.

Children with Special Needs Unit II within the Family and Children’s Section recently had a social work vacancy. A parent participated in the interviewing process and provided valuable insight into the eventual individual that was selected.

At least three parents are involved in various committees and workgroups at the state level. These parents have the ear of those charged with making decisions that impact the supports and services of children.

Parents have started various support groups in order to connect, educate and become resources to each other.

A website is being designed for Children of Differing Abilities through the Family and Children’s Section. The workgroup charged at undertaking this activity is receiving parental input. When discussions occur those involved are always asking the question “Will this be helpful to you as a parent”?

In the months ahead there will be other opportunities for you as a parent to be involved in influencing the direction of the delivery system for children of differing abilities. These opportunities include; involvement in a focus group discussion to discover what your support and training needs are, becoming a member of the Mental Health Advisory Committee and responding to surveys you may receive in the mail.

Seeing you along the way is important to us. Thoreau once said “Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you’ve imagined”. This will only happen if you share your stories and your desires to make the Coulee Region an area of inclusion for all children with differing abilities.

**JOIN US  
FOR OUR  
SUMMER  
PICNIC!**



When: August 21  
4-7:30pm

Where: Myrick Park  
main shelter

See pg. 4 for more in-  
formation

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# Partner Picture

**Family & Children's Center is a regional, private, not-for-profit agency that helps children and adults overcome social, emotional or mental challenges to enjoy a greater sense of well-being in their families, homes and communities. We are 125 years old in 2006!**

**Family & Children's Center has a continuum of services that helps people at all stages of their lives, strengthening the families by helping individuals.**

## ***Especially for Children and Youth***

Alternative Education – There are alternative education schools in La Crosse, Holmen, Winona and Viroqua. These schools offer highly structured programming and hold students accountable for their actions – with well-defined rewards and consequences for their behavior. After-hours detention is included in our alternative education program. This program serves kids aged 12-17. Please call Tim Garrity at (608) 785-0001 ext. 248 with questions.

Day Treatment – For students who need additional counseling or clinical attention, we offer a half-treatment program of group and individual therapeutic setting where therapists and youth counselors help the children work through the difficult aspects of their lives. Day treatment is in La Crosse, Holmen, Winona and Viroqua. This program serves kids aged 8-17. Please call Tim Garrity at (608) 785-0001 ext. 248 with questions.

Residential Treatment – For children who have suffered severe physical, sexual or emotional abuse, our residential treatment provides an intense therapeutic setting. Our residential treatment facility is in La Crosse. This program serves kids aged 6-17. Please call Jonelle Wolfe at (608) 785-0001 ext. 330 with questions.

Youth Home – These homes are similar in intensity to residential care but offer a more home-like setting. Youth in this program often attend our alternative education and day treatment programs. We have youth homes in La Crosse and Winona. This program serves kids aged 12-17. Please call Jonelle Wolfe at (608) 785-0001 ext. 330 with questions.

Treatment Foster Care – Foster families of Family & Children's Center are highly trained in caring for children with emotional needs. It is a top priority to return children to a family environment and if a child is unable to return to their biological family, Family & Children's Center offers the loving structure and support through treatment foster care. Please call Joannette Robinson at (608) 785-0001 ext. 259 with questions.



**Family & Children's Center**

## ***Individuals and Families***

Prevention – Healthy Families is a voluntary, intensive home visiting program offered to at-risk families prenatally or at birth. Family Support Workers visit families at least weekly to help teach parent-child bonding skills and coping skills. Healthy Families aims at stopping the cycle of child abuse and neglect. Please call Donna Jolley at (608) 785-0001 ext. 237 with questions.

Counseling – With counseling services for individuals, couples and families, we help people of all ages address a broad range of issues – anxiety, depression, major life changes, self esteem, chemical abuse, divorce, sexuality and personal relationships. Outpatient counseling is located in La Crosse, Viroqua and Black River Falls. Please call (608) 788-6322 with questions.

Community Support Program – This program offers support for adults with chronic mental illness. In addition to helping participants live as independently as possible in the community, we monitor their mental health and help them better manage their illness. Community support programs are offered in Viroqua and Black River Falls. Please call (608) 637-7052 with questions.

Senior Apartment Housing – Fox Hollow apartments is an affordable housing complex for seniors 55 and older. These apartments are located in Holmen and offer many amenities for an affordable rent. Please call (608) 526-4000 with questions.

# UW-L Active and Healthy Lifestyles



## YMCA Modified T-Ball/Baseball and Happy Bats Program

**DATES:** Tuesday June 20–Thursday August 10, 2006

**FOR:** Kids with special needs and their non-disabled peers and siblings, ages 5-15 years

**WHEN:** 5-6 yr. olds will be integrated with assistance in Happy Bats every Tuesday & Thursday from 5:15-6pm  
7-15 year olds will participate in the modified t-ball/baseball program with practice Tuesdays 6:15-7:15pm and games on Thursdays from 6:30-7:30pm

**WHERE:** Longfellow Middle School (19th and Denton St., La Crosse)

**COST:** Special needs baseball \$25 for YMCA family members and \$34 for non-members. Happy Bats is free for YMCA family members and \$34 for non-members (SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE)

**REGISTRATION:** Sign-up at the La Crosse Family YMCA or by phone at 782-9622

## UW-La Crosse/YMCA Fitness Program for Youth with disabilities

**DATES:** Tuesday, June 27–Thursday, August 17, 2006

**WHO:** Youth with all disabilities, ages 12-18 years

**WHEN:** Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 7:30-8:30 a.m.

**FOCUS:** Health-related fitness: Cardiovascular endurance, strength training, and flexibility in a community-based setting

**WHERE:** Tuesdays and Thursdays at the La Crosse Family YMCA Wellness Center (1140 Main St. La Crosse, WI) and Wednesdays at UW-La Crosse Outdoor Stadium/Track

**COST:** \$15 for YMCA members and non-members

**REGISTRATION:** Sign-up at the La Crosse Family YMCA or by phone at 782-9622



## 2nd Annual Kids Marathon with Bronston Chiropractic and YMCA

Throughout the months of August and September kids will run 25.2 miles and on September 30th they will run their final mile to complete the marathon on the YMCA Maple Leaf Road Race Course. To keep kids motivated over the 8 weeks the YMCA will be holding group training runs and sending out a kid-friendly newsletter that emphasizes the importance of healthy eating habits and staying active.

**FEE:** \$15.00 per child – includes T-shirt, finisher's medal, participant's packet, group trainings, and newsletters.

There were 12 participants with disabilities last year and it went very well!

Contact Alison Huppert at the YMCA at 782-9622 ext.236 for a registration form



## Physical Activity Mentoring Program for Children and Youth with Disabilities

The program requires 2-3 hours during the week Monday - Sunday for children and youth with Disabilities ages 5-18 with physical, emotional, developmental, and intellectual disabilities. The times are based on the family and mentors schedules. It is a program that is a minimum of six weeks, but can continue on forever for the benefits of the child. Mentors must be 18 years or older, CPR and First Aid certified as well as go through orientation, training, and receive a criminal background check as well as sex offender check.

**YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE YMCA TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE ACTIVITIES**

**For more information on any of these programs or to sign your child up for a mentor, please contact:**  
Shelley Wetzel - Grant Coordinator of Active and Healthy Lifestyles for Children and Youth with Disabilities  
at 608-785-8695 or [wetzel.shel@uwlax.edu](mailto:wetzel.shel@uwlax.edu)

# Awesome Activities

## Summer Picnic for Children of Differing Abilities and their Families



August 21st, 4:00—7:30 pm  
Myrick Park Main Shelter

### Food, Fun, Games and Prizes!

Main dish, tableware, and beverages will be provided. Please bring a side dish to pass with the recipe attached to share with everyone.

RSVP by August 11th to Kristine Buehler at 785-6225 or email at [Buehler.Kristine@co.la-crosse.wi.us](mailto:Buehler.Kristine@co.la-crosse.wi.us).



## FREE AIRPLANE RIDES THIS SUMMER!

WHO: Local E.A.A. (Experimental Aircraft Association) chapter is offering free 20 minute sight-seeing rides around La Crosse as part of the national young eagles program!

WHEN: June 10 8-10am      July 8 8-10am  
August 12 8-10am      September 9 10-12am  
(Rain dates are the following Sundays at 5pm)

FOR: All children ages 8-17

WHERE: La Crosse airport, EAST side of the field, near the control tower (NOT at the main terminal)

YOU NEED: Parental permission: parent or guardian will be asked to fill out a short form giving permission for child to ride the morning of or request a form prior to the day by contacting Kip Zirkel at 785-0001 ext.308

FOR MORE DETAILS, VISIT [EAA.ORG](http://EAA.ORG) AND CLICK ON 'YOUNG EAGLES'

### EARN A FREE BOOK THROUGH BARNES & NOBLE



1st- Stop at Barnes & Noble after May 31 and pick up your 'A Summer of Unfortunate Events' Journal

2nd- Read 8 books of your choosing, you can read any book, it doesn't have to be from Barnes & Noble

3rd- Document your favorite part about each book and have an adult sign each of your journal entries

4th- Take your completed journal to a Barnes & Noble bookstore before September 8th, 2006 and get a coupon for a FREE BOOK!  
(ONLY TWO FREE BOOKS ALLOWED PER CHILD)

# Awesome Activities



## Family Fun Day

July 11, 2006

9:00 am—?

Wisconsin Family Ties, Inc. presents the 11th annual Family Fun Day at the Mt. Olympus Water and Amusement Park in Wisconsin Dells.

The event costs \$11.00 per person for the waterpark for the day (an additional \$7.00 upgrade is available to gain access to all the fun rides in the amusement park).

A free lunch will also be provided.

This event is exclusively for families that include children or teens with emotional, behavioral or mental health differences. Last year over 650 people attended and a great time was had by all!

To obtain tickets or make reservations please contact:

M. Ann Hager/Senior Family Advocate  
Wisconsin Family Ties, Inc.  
784-4657 or [WFTLAX@aol.com](mailto:WFTLAX@aol.com)  
Or  
Joan Maynard, (608) 267-6888

Or mail check or money order to:  
Wisconsin Family Ties  
16N. Carroll St., Suite 640  
Madison, WI 53703

# Family to Family

## North American Squirrel Association

NASA is a non-profit organization that provides physically challenged and elderly members of our community with outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing. Check out their website for fun outdoor activities for the whole family. [www.nasasquirrel.org](http://www.nasasquirrel.org)

Upcoming Summer events:

A pontoon boat is available all summer through September 30th and is equipped for any person with physical challenges and their guests. Reserve the boat by going on the website or calling Tony Christnovich at 781-3100. Reserve early as it gets filled up fast.

NASA has trout fishing trips for adults and children with physical challenges. These trips will take place in July and August this summer. Look on the website for upcoming information or in the Outdoor Section in the La Crosse Tribune.



## NEW CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY-BOOSTER SEAT LAW EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 2006

1. Rear-facing child safety seat in the back seat is required when the child:
  - is less than 1-yr-old OR weighs less than 20 lbs.
2. Forward-facing child safety seat in the back seat is required when the child:
  - is at least 1-yr. old but less than 4-yrs. old
  - weighs at least 20 lbs. but less than 40 lbs.
3. Booster seat is required when the child:
  - is at least 4-yrs-old but less than 8-yrs-old,
  - weighs at least 40 lbs. but less than 80 lbs.
  - is not 4-feet 9-inches (57-inches) or taller
4. Safety belt is required when the child:
  - is 8-years-old or older OR weighs 80 or more lbs. OR is 57-inches or taller



**Exemption: Children whose body-size, physical condition or medical condition makes safety restraints unreasonable are still exempt from the booster seat and safety belt laws.**

GO TO [WWW.BOOSTERSEAT.GOV](http://WWW.BOOSTERSEAT.GOV) FOR AN EASY TO USE GUIDE

# Radical Resources

Disability rights WISCONSIN- Protection and advocacy for people with disabilities  
800-928-8778 608-267-0214 Madison office, [www.disabilityrightswi.org](http://www.disabilityrightswi.org)

**Family Voices of Wisconsin** –promotes a system of comprehensive health and community supports based on fundamental principles that assure the health and well being of children and youth with special health care needs and their families.  
Contact them at 608-239-1364 or 608-233-3726 or [www.wfv.org](http://www.wfv.org)



Parenting kids with special needs with Love and Logic, contact [davefunk@loveandlogic.com](mailto:davefunk@loveandlogic.com)

**Progressive Travel, Inc. -Tours for people with special needs. Expanding horizons. Enriching lives. 1-800-231-4391 [www.progressivetravel.org](http://www.progressivetravel.org)**

Hearing Loss Association of America (formerly Self Help for Hard of Hearing)- information about a variety of national and regional resources that may be able to provide financial assistance toward purchasing hearing aids or assistive technology for children and adults. Learn more by visiting [www.hearingloss.org/hat/faha.html](http://www.hearingloss.org/hat/faha.html)

**Family Village – A Global Community of Disability-Related Resources**  
This is an award winning website for children and adults with disabilities, their families, and their friends and allies. This site offers thousand of online resources in an organized, easy-to-use directory.  
[www.familyvillage.wisc.edu](http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu)

La Crosse County Public Libraries-provide us with not only books! They have audio books, magazines, books with cassettes, CDs, videos, DVDs, puppets, CD-ROMs (educational games for preschool to college age) and family fun bags each with a book, puppet or puzzle, tape and activity book that all go with the same theme.  
Can't get to the library? Call Judy Mulroy at 781-9568 for home delivery.  
Head down to your local branch and sign up for their summer reading program. The theme is: 'Make Waves-Read' Throughout the summer they will have crafts, a reading raffle, performances, lunch bunch, snack pack, and library club. BEST OF ALL, EVERYTHING IS FREE!!! [www.lacrossecountylibrary.com](http://www.lacrossecountylibrary.com)

**Children with special health care needs regional service areas provide free and confidential assistance to families and providers to meet a wide variety of needs ranging from finding potential resources and providing information, to assisting families in accessing services. La Crosse county is served by the Western Region in Chippewa county through the Chippewa Falls Dept. of Public health. Contact them at 800-400-3678 or online at [www.co.chippewa.wi.us/ccdph/CYSHCN](http://www.co.chippewa.wi.us/ccdph/CYSHCN)**

Autism One Radio. You listen on your computer. A worldwide, web-based radio station for the care, treatment, and recovery of children with autism. Autism one radio presents knowledgeable, caring hosts providing answers to many of the most important questions. They cover school concerns, legal issues, government policies, family dynamics and breaking news.  
Listen at [www.autismone.org/radio/](http://www.autismone.org/radio/)

**Wisconsin Seizure control network-Helps children and youth with epilepsy achieve seizure control more quickly and effectively and reduce or prevent the developmental, physical, social and emotional affects associated with poor seizure control. Call 866-734-9638 or go to [www.wisconsinseizure.net](http://www.wisconsinseizure.net)**

Check out the Family TLC website for parents, teachers or caregivers at [www.familytlc.net](http://www.familytlc.net). The mission of Family TLC is to provide busy, caring adults with a means to encourage learning and enrich relationships with children. The website offers ideas for all types of family-friendly activities—games, sports, crafts, music, cooking, nature and more. Each month the website has age-appropriate activities—from infants to teenagers—plus parenting tips and articles on child development.

# Crisis Connection

## E.R.P.'S ARE COMING!

After 18 months of hard work and collaboration within the Family and Children's section of Human Services, we are finally ready to begin using our new EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS!

Two years ago there was a discussion concerning the need to have children receiving services within La Crosse County to have a crisis plan in place. Mobile Crisis Workers were being called out to intervene in situations with children and families without any background information on the child's special needs/circumstances. It was felt that the outcomes for these children might have been better had the Crisis Worker had more information with which to make critical decisions during the crisis situation.

A decision was made to develop an Emergency Response Plan that could be used for the children in our care. Eighteen months ago a committee was formed to work on this task. Committee members included staff from each unit within the Family and Children's section. Those members included Dawn Miller and Lynn Wilkins from Alternate Care; Shelly Sieger and Liza Collins from CPS; Darren Dannhoff from Delinquency Services; Eleanor Shaffar from the Crisis Program; Keith Keller and Larry Winter, supervisors; and Dave Steinberg from the Juvenile Detention Center.

After working on the ERP for the past 18 months, the plan is finally ready to be put into practice. Staff in all units are now being trained on how to work with family support teams to develop these emergency response plans. As staff receive their training they are beginning to develop plans for those children and families for whom they provide services.

The new emergency response plans are similar to the old crisis plans we had been using. If you are used to having a crisis plan for your child, the transition to the new plan will hardly be noticeable. For others having an emergency response plan will be new. We are hopeful that you will find the process of developing a plan to be very informative and beneficial in preventing crises from occurring with your child. We are also hoping that if a crisis does occur, all those involved will know exactly what to do to resolve the situation as positively as possible.

If and when you have experience with the new emergency response plan, we would greatly appreciate your feedback on its effectiveness for your family. Please call Eleanor Shaffar at 789-4857 with your comments or send them via email to [shaffar.eleanor@co.la-crosse.wi.us](mailto:shaffar.eleanor@co.la-crosse.wi.us).



# THANK YOU

*Merci*

**Thank you to those that purchased coupons for the Herberger's Community Day sale and to the following businesses who have made donations for children with differing abilities: Herberger's, Dairy Queen, Culver's, Best Western, New Mega Movies, Pizza Hut, Children's Museum, Pla-mor Lanes and Coulee Golf Bowl. Please support these businesses as they support our children!**

Family Matters  
Attn: Kari Flicek

La Crosse County Human Services  
300 4th St. N.  
La Crosse, WI 54601

## Announcements

Please note: Starting in mid-June Children with Special Needs Referrals will not be responded to for a minimum of 60 days. Only referrals that are crisis related or for children who may qualify for the intensive autism benefit will be responded to in a timely manner.

This is due to the Family Resource Liaison position being vacant.



Be a part of an exciting new coalition in La Crosse County! The Coulee Coalition for Children of Differing Abilities seeks to identify the unique challenges of children with special needs and their families. We promote access to community resources, supports and services through collaboration and advocacy. We do this through a strong emphasis on family involvement. We feel it is important that no matter what avenue a family takes to seek help for their child, they have a complete array of strength based and family directed programs to help support that child and, in turn, the family. Our coalition has identified several areas of need and challenges that will be focused on in order to support families and professionals working with families. Meetings are primarily held the 4th Monday of every

month. For more information contact Kristine Buehler at 785-6225 or [buehler.kristine@co.la-crosse.wi.us](mailto:buehler.kristine@co.la-crosse.wi.us).

**If you have anything you would like to submit to the newsletter such as upcoming events, articles, or resources for children of differing abilities please contact Kari Flicek at 789-4807 or [flicek.kari@co.la-crosse.wi.us](mailto:flicek.kari@co.la-crosse.wi.us).**