



JUNE 2007

# Family Matters

“FULL INCLUSION, FULL LIVES”

## A Message from Larry

Larry Winter is the Supervisor of Children with Special Needs Unit II.

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Last year at this time we in the Family and Children’s Section of La Crosse County encouraged you as a parent of a child with special needs to become involved in system wide improvements to ensure your voice is represented in all aspects of your delivery system. We promised we would take your recommendations seriously and make changes to improve the support and services offered to you.

Recently we did a consumer survey to receive feedback on how parent’s perceive the children’s crisis program. The following are some comments we received of what is working well; “in general the crisis program does a great job”, “Glad they’re there”, “The crisis program was.....wonderful for our situation”. We received the following comments on what is not working as well; “Crisis workers should be more in tune with the needs of kids”, “The crisis workers need more communication with the social workers”, “Overall, the problem is with systematic difficulties”.

The information you provided to us will direct our compass over the next year for our Children’s Crisis Program. We will continue to do what you find effective and address the program areas where improvement in the delivery of service is necessary. We have taken some initial steps to improve service delivery and we want to share with you what this means for the future of our children’s crisis program.

The first is a strong emphasis on being proactive. One way this is addressed is through the development of an ‘Emergency Response Plan’ which is done with children we are currently working with who are at high risk for a behavioral crisis. Another way of being proactive is through learning and changing how all of us approach our children when they are experience behavioral challenges. On June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007 Paul White from the University of Wisconsin Waisman Center will be conducting a day long training titled, “Safe Support to Children in Emotional and Physical Distress” at CESA #4 in West Salem, Wisconsin.

The most significant step toward program improvement is having mobile crisis responders specializing with children who have special needs available Monday thru Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and weekends/holidays from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.. The clinical therapist and social workers in the Family and Children’s Section will continue to provide the service Monday thru Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Lutheran Social Services will cover some of the other hours. LSS will begin providing support on June 18, 2007. During the late night hours approximately 11:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. the crisis duties will continue to be performed by our current mobile crisis workers who are responsible for both children and adults.

The outcomes we anticipate with these changes include mobile crisis workers will be knowledgeable about children with special needs. Communication will increase between mobile crisis workers and social workers. As a parent you will have confidence that your child’s needs can be met by utilizing this service and meet the crisis needs of your children in your home or community rather than placement in an institution, hospital or other setting outside the community.

We encourage you to continue providing feedback on all programs that the Family and Children’s Section offers to children with special needs. This can be done by speaking with providers, social workers or responding to consumer satisfaction survey’s when requested. We appreciate your involvement!!!!

# Wisconsin First Step



A grandmother calls Wisconsin First Step very distressed about grandson. Grandson is currently 2 ½ months old. He had many complications at birth including bleeding in the brain and seizures and has been in and out of the hospital. There is no diagnosis at this time. The Parent Specialist and caller talk over the situation and what an emotional drain this is for all people involved. Daughter is also dealing with her own health concerns. Grandmother feels helpless about the situation. Grandmother then expresses interest in the Katie Beckett Program. Daughter has sizable income and health insurance, but insurance only covers 80% and bills are piling up. The Parent Specialist explains the Katie Beckett Program and refers caller to the local office. A referral to the local Birth To 3 Program is made. Arrangements are made for a follow-up call in a couple of weeks.

Having a child or youth with special needs often creates unique family challenges. Many programs and services exist for children with special needs, although it is often difficult to sort through them. Wisconsin First Step can help find resources for children birth to 21 with special needs. Calls are accepted 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday calls are answered by a Parent Specialist, a professional who also has a child with special needs.

## Partner Picture

Wisconsin First Step provides a statewide telephone information and referral service dedicated to helping families and professionals find services for children birth to 21 years with special needs. Staff have access to a comprehensive, computerized database of over 4000 agencies and programs located throughout Wisconsin, surrounding states, and nationwide. Referrals are provided to callers on a variety of services including early intervention services, medical resources, advocacy, transportation and assistive devices. All referrals are free and confidential.

Wisconsin First Step can help find several resources:

- Early Intervention Services
- Financial Assistance
- Parent and Family Support Groups and Networking
- Home Health Care
- Therapy Providers
- Education
- Medical Resources
- Medical Diagnosis and Evaluation
- Advocacy and Legal Services
- Transportation
- Assistive Devices
- Respite Care



The Wisconsin First Step phone number is **1-800-642-7837 Voice/TTY**. The website is [www.mch-hotlines.org](http://www.mch-hotlines.org). There is a search component on the website that allows users to search the Wisconsin First Step database.



# Awesome Activities

## Wisconsin Family Ties annual Family Fun Day

Wisconsin Family Ties [608-267-6834](tel:608-267-6834) or [800-422-7145](tel:800-422-7145)

**When:** Tuesday July 10, 2007

Registration deadline is July 5th, 2007

**Where:**

Mt. Olympus Water and Amusement

Park WI Dells Indoor park: 9am-7pm

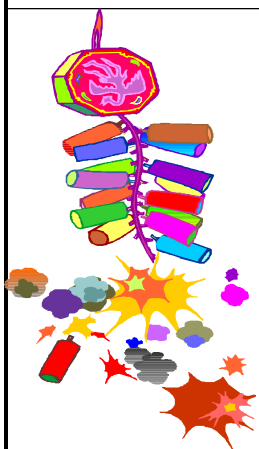
Outdoor park: 10am-10pm

**Details:**

Tickets are \$11.00/person includes a picnic lunch with a \$7.00 upgrade available for the amusement park only available to those with pre-purchased family fun days tickets

This is open to all families that include children or youth with emotional, behavioral, mental health or substance abuse differences

\*There are no scholarships available through WFT for this event <http://www.wifamilyties.org/>



## Family Resources' Children's Summer Festival (Rain or Shine)

**When:** August 9th 4-7pm.

**Where:** Myrick Park in La Crosse

**Performance by:** Children's Musician Hans Mayer

Food by Taco John's

Buttons \$7

For more information please call 608-784-8125.



## Coulee Coalition for Children with Differing Abilities

### Family Summer Picnic

**When:** Monday August 20th 4-7pm.

**Where:** Myrick Park in La Crosse



## Myrick Park Zoo Family Night

The last Tuesday of each month:

June 26, July 31, and August 28 From 5:00 to 7:00 pm.

There are FREE Kiddie rides, FREE Big 'E' Express Train Rides for adults and kids, and prizes. Sponsored by The Big Event Company.

La Crosse Street between Hillview and East Avenue

783-3333



## An Awesome Activity at Pla-More Lanes

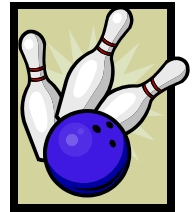
For Kids 18 and under. It is \$5 to register and this registration goes until August 24th. It is for one game of bowling a day Mon-Fri 11-5pm. This does include the cost of shoes.

For an extra game it is \$2

Once the child is registered the card stays at Pla-More Lanes  
An adult can bowl with the child for \$2.

**This is for all kids!**

To register go to: Pla-More Lanes 807 S. 4th St. La Crosse 608-784-3043



## Radical Resources



**A New magazine for Young Wheelchair Users ... And the Adults who care about them!**

The magazine is published quarterly  
March • June • September • December

There are two versions per issue:

- One to teach and entertain kids
- One to inform and support parents, educators and professionals

To order: call toll free: 888-850-0344 ext. 209 or go online to [www.kidsonwheels.cc](http://www.kidsonwheels.cc)



## NEW MOBILITY

New Mobility is a colorful lifestyle magazine for wheelchair users.

It features in-depth health articles and product information.

Contact them toll free: 888-850-0344 ext. 209 or online at:  
[www.newmobility.com](http://www.newmobility.com)



## Assistive Technology Resources and Links

Go to CESA #4 website: <http://www.cesa4.k12.wi.us/programs-services/special/at/links.htm>

There are several links on Autism, assistive technology training, enabling devices, toys for special children, traumatic brain injury, leapfrog, etc.

There is also information on Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, special education team's home page including information about special education policy, law, technical assistance, and other information about special education.



# Radical Resources

## **YiPPE** Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment

For youth ages 14-21 and their parents, foster parents, grandparents, or guardians  
Begins Fridays promptly at 5:00pm and ends of Saturdays at 4:00pm.

October 19-20, 2007    December 7-8, 2007    January 18-19, 2008  
February 29-March 1, 2008    April 4-5, 2008    May 2-3, 2008

At: Wintergreen Resort and Conference Center Wisconsin Dells, WI

To apply contact:    Phyllis Voelker by September 14th  
Phone: Toll Free 877-844-4925  
Email: Phyllis@banbury.com

Cost: It's FREE! All meals and materials for youth and parents are included, but you MUST attend each of the six trainings.

What is YiPPE: It is an opportunity for parents and their children to learn about the transition process in a unique way. Parents and youth will hear from speakers and take part in hands-on activities in parallel programs. While some topics may overlap, parents will be able to enjoy their own sessions while their children are learning similar information in a youth-friendly format.

- Youth must be receiving special education services.
- Parents and youth must attend ALL six trainings.
- Couples say attending together strengthens the experience. Individual parents are always welcome and may bring a friend or relative provided this person shares responsibility for the care of your child.

### **These resources are available to you if you have any questions about Medical Assistance/Medicaid**

- Wisconsin ACCESS website: <http://access.wisconsin.gov/access/>  
This website will help you determine if you might be eligible for Medical Assistance/Medicaid services
- Wisconsin Medicaid Recipient Handbook: [www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/meh](http://www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/meh)  
This book has extensive information about how to access Medicaid covered services.
- Wisconsin Medicaid Recipient Brochures/Fact Sheets/Updates:  
<http://dhrs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid1/publications.htm>
- Medicaid Recipient Services Hotline: 800-266-3236  
Staff can answer your questions about covered services.
- Recipient-Friendly publications:  
[http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/recpubs/eligibility/book\\_c.htm#medicaid](http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/recpubs/eligibility/book_c.htm#medicaid)  
This site will help you to know what Medicaid/Medical Assistance is and isn't.

# Hot Under the Collar?

By Eleanor Shaffar MA LPC



Summer is here and already the temperature is rising. And so are some tempers! Since we're all about preventing crisis, let's spend some time considering what we can do to

## Stay Cool!

When I was a little girl my mother used to sing a song "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, all good children go to heaven." It was her way of stopping herself from yelling at us right away and it was our "warning" that she was getting upset so we'd better behave ourselves. Sometimes she would tell us to count to ten when we got mad. Even now I find that counting helps to prevent me from blowing up. I am sure everyone has numerous suggestions /ideas for "keeping their cool" in heated situations. Here are just a few ideas- add your own:

1. Count
2. Take a deep breath
3. Walk away from the situation
4. Take a time out
5. Take a walk around the block
6. Go for a run/swim/hike/bike ride
7. Blow bubbles
8. Talk it out
9. Meditate/pray
10. Make music/listen to music
11. Journal
12. Eat Chocolate
13. Laugh about it
14. Take a vacation
15. Do something hilarious
16. Soak in a hot tub/ pool/ bath (alone)
17. Draw pictures
18. Make funny faces
19. Take the family out for ice cream
20. Forgive the offender

Some people might suggest hitting a punching bag or pillow ( worse yet, hitting a wall). I don't recommend any of those strategies. Hitting tends to increase the flow of adrenaline which excites us more rather than calming us down. So try to avoid any aggressive acts.

What ever you choose to do in a heated moment the important thing is that you DO something constructive. When you lose your temper everyone loses! When you keep your cool everyone wins! Here's to



## Cool Summer Breezes!

Family Matters  
Attn: Susan Becker

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

## Announcements: We Need Your Help!

### EMERGENCY RESPITE CARE FOR CHILDREN

La Crosse County Human Services Crisis Program is seeking caring, responsible individuals/families to provide emergency respite for children. We provide training. Call Joleen Trussoni at 785-6262 weekdays for more information.

COUNTY OF LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN  
**HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
300 4TH STREET NORTH  
LA CROSSE WISCONSIN 54601-3228  
608.785.6262

