

Are You Ready for the New School Year?

Whether your child with special needs is starting kindergarten or high school, there are things you can do now to make sure the school year goes well. By planning ahead, you can help school staff be ready to meet the needs of your child. It can also ease some of the stress and anxiety for you and your child.

What are Your Concerns?

Start by writing down the questions you have. Consider what worries you most about the new school year. This will help you figure out where to begin and who to contact first.

Who's on Your Team?

Do you know who your child's teachers and aides are for this fall? If not, call the principal and introduce yourself and your child, and ask if you can be connected with your child's new team.

Meet and Communicate!

Once you know your new school team members, call or email them and ask to set up a face-to-face meeting before school starts. This will give you the chance to share ideas, suggestions and tips for working with your child.

Remember, IEPs or other plans do not always provide a complete picture of your child. You can share your child's gifts and the talents that will benefit his or her new classroom. Consider telling the team a story about a successful experience or classroom modification that made a difference. Also, ask about the best way to keep in touch (emails, texts, phone calls or notes home).

Have you Met the School Nurse, Social Worker or Psychologist?

Make an effort during the first week of school (or before) to meet with these important school staff members and share your concerns. Ask questions and don't assume they know your child's needs or medical conditions. Staff can answer questions about programs and supports that may increase your child's inclusion and participation at (or after) school.

Special Supplies or Modifications:

Talk with teachers or other school staff about the supplies, equipment or modifications that your child needs, and work with staff to request them before school starts. For example, a wiggly seat, headphones, writing tools or fidgets. Let staff know what worked well in the past.

What Could Help on the First Day?

Before the first day, ask your child what he or she thinks will help get the year off to a great start. Consider what your child could bring or what you could do to ease anxiety. For example, you may want to meet the bus driver, take a tour of the building or plan to bring a comfort item on the first day.

Ideas from Families

"Before my son started middle school I wrote a letter to his teachers. It helped make his learning disability more real and understandable, and helped to start a more positive relationship with school."

"I created an "About Me" photo album for my daughter who is non-verbal when she started kindergarten. It was a great way for the teachers and kids to get to know her."





Learn More

For additional resources related to the articles in this newsletter, visit the following sites:

[National Office of Family Voices](http://familyvoices.org)
familyvoices.org

[Family Voices of Wisconsin](http://familyvoicesofwisconsin.com)
familyvoicesofwisconsin.com

[Katie Beckett Program](http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/kbp/)
dhs.wisconsin.gov/kbp/

[My Vote Wisconsin](http://myvote.wi.gov)
myvote.wi.gov

2019 Circles of Life Planning Committee Members Needed!

*Want to help make the 2019
Circles of Life Conference
even better?*

Join the Planning Committee!

The group holds monthly calls and sub-groups will work on areas like sponsors, program/session selection, Family Fun Night, Sibshop and Gathering of Youth.

Contact Lynn@fvofwi.org

Circles of Life 2019
will be held May 2-3 in
Stevens Point!

Did You Know? Now You Know! The Katie Beckett Medicaid Program

The Katie Beckett Program allows certain children with disabilities or other special needs to obtain health care coverage under Wisconsin Medicaid, without considering their parent's income or assets.

The program was started at the federal level due to the strong advocacy efforts of the Beckett family whose daughter, Katie, had high medical needs. At that time Medicaid covered Katie's care in the hospital, but would not cover her care at home.

How Do We Apply?

Contact your county's [Katie Beckett Consultant](#) to learn more. Together with the consultant you will decide if the program is right for your family.

A home visit will then be scheduled and your child's disability and level of care needs will be evaluated using a tool called a functional screen. See the Family Voices Fact Sheet, [Completing a Functional Screen](#).

Your child's application will first be reviewed by the DHS Disability Determination Bureau and then by Katie Beckett Program nurses.

In addition, your child's income will be reviewed. Currently, a child cannot have a monthly income of more than \$2,205 (including child support) to qualify.

We Have Private Insurance. How Can the Katie Beckett Program Help Us?

Having both private insurance and Wisconsin Medicaid (through the Katie Beckett Program) can be very helpful! While your private insurance will be billed first, Medicaid can pay for services, supplies and additional costs that your private insurance may not cover.

Medicaid can pay for:

- ◆ Deductibles
- ◆ Co-pays
- ◆ Additional therapy visits
- ◆ Non-covered services, like personal care, diapers, and transportation to medical appointments.



Visiting the Doctor

Make sure your child's health care providers are Medicaid certified. That means they can bill Wisconsin Medicaid and accept Medicaid payment as payment in full.

When you visit the doctor, show your child's *ForwardHealth* Medicaid card so both private insurance and Medicaid will be billed.

For more information, see the Family Voices [Katie Beckett Program](#) Fact Sheet!

To stay informed on Family Voices training sessions and other events, learn about state and national policy changes, and connect with other families like you, ["Like" us on Facebook!](#)



Family Voices Training Sessions

Join us for one of our free training sessions to learn about supports and services for children and youth with special needs. Fall sessions are being planned so go to our website and “like” us on Facebook to find dates and locations.

- ◆ [What’s After High School?](#) is a broad overview of the transition to adult life for youth with disabilities and special health care needs.
- ◆ [Did You Know? Now You Know!](#) explains resources and services for children with disabilities from birth through young adulthood.
- ◆ [Coordinating Your Child’s Health Care](#) explains how to create coordinated care and find a medical home for your child. Tools and resources are provided.



Policy Update

CLTS Program Forums - *Your Voice is Needed!*

The Children’s Long-Term Support (CLTS) Program will be hosting public forums in late July and early August around the state to share updates and changes to the program, including plans to eliminate wait lists for families.

These forums are a chance for families to give the Department of Health Services feedback on the CLTS program and make suggestions for improving the program for children with special needs and their families. To find dates and locations go to dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/forums.htm.

Your Vote Matters!

A partisan primary will be held on August 14—*Mark your calendar and make sure you vote!* This election will determine who will run in the November 6 general election. Offices on the ballot are governor, U.S. Senator, U.S. Representatives, half of the state senate seats, and all Wisconsin Assembly members.

What’s on my Ballot? To see what you’re voting for, in both the primary and the November general election, go to myvote.wi.gov/en-us/PreviewMyBallot. Remember, you can register on the day of the election, but you will need to bring proper identification. Go to myvote.wi.gov to learn more.

PIP and YIPPE Family Leadership Trainings

Want to connect with other parents, learn about resources and become a stronger advocate for your child? Register for Parents in Partnership (PIP) or Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment (YIPPE)!

Both programs bring together a small group of parents for five weekend sessions to learn and grow together. There is no cost to families, but space is limited. To learn more about PIP and YIPPE go to wspei.org/families. To register call Julie Beckwith, 608-745-5421 or email beckwithj@cesa5.org.



Children and Youth with
Special Health Care Needs

CYSHCN Regional Centers

Call them with your
questions!

Northeast Region

Children’s Hospital of
Wisconsin—Fox Valley
1.877.568.5205

Northern Region

Marathon County
Health Department
Wausau
866-640-4106

Southeast Region

Children’s Hospital
Milwaukee
800-234-5437

Southern Region

Waisman Center
Madison
800-532-3321

Western Region

Chippewa County Dept.
of Public Health
Chippewa Falls
800-400-3678



Family Voices of Wisconsin

PO Box 5070

Madison, Wisconsin 53705

Summer 2018 Volume 13, Issue 2

This newsletter is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number H84MC21690-01-00. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

Contact Us

familyvoicesofwisconsin.com

608-220-9598



Co-Directors

Liz Hecht (liz@fvofwi.org)

Barbara Katz (barb@fvofwi.org)

Communications/ Information

Lynn Renner (lynn@fvofwi.org)

Community Education

Brigit Frank (brigit@fvofwi.org)

Family Network

Katy Morgan-Davies
(katy@fvofwi.org)

Nonprofit
Organization

U.S. Postage

PAID

Madison, WI

Permit No. 1222

About Family Voices of Wisconsin

Family Voices of Wisconsin is a state affiliate of national Family Voices and serves as Wisconsin's Family-to-Family Health Information Center.

Family Voices is recognized as the Family Leadership Hub for Wisconsin's Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs partnership.

Family Voices focuses its work on health care and community supports in three areas:

- ◆ **Education and information**, including trainings, fact sheets and newsletters;
- ◆ **Family leadership activities**, including the annual *Advocacy for Change* training (March 2019); and
- ◆ **Public policy and systems change** activities.

Your financial support to Family Voices of Wisconsin will help us continue to be THE VOICE for improving services and support for children with disabilities and special health care needs!

Go to **DONATE** at familyvoicesofwisconsin.com.