

# Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

Presented by  
**Megan Mezel**

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**Connecting families. Sharing resources. Instilling hope.**

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## Mission

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To support and connect Michigan families of children and youth with special health care needs, provide family-centered leadership throughout Michigan's health care settings, and partner in decision making within the systems of care for children and youth with special health care needs.

# Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (Family Center)

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- The parent-directed center within Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)
- Staffed by parents of children with special needs
- Can be a voice and bring a family perspective
- Promotes family/professional partnerships





## Family Center Staff

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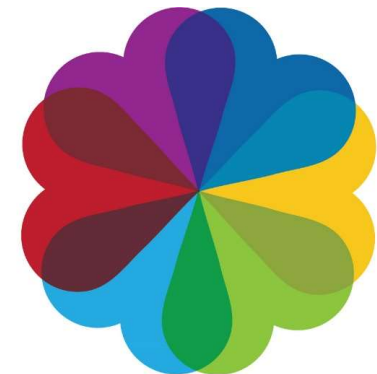
- Staff of parents who have children with special health care needs
- Trained as parent mentors
- Understands the complex needs of families
- Can help to ease isolation for new parents

# Family Center Services

- CSHCS Family Phone Line at 800-359-3722
  - For families and professionals who work with families
  - CSHCS questions
  - Connect to your local CSHCS office
  - Connect to a Parent Consultant on staff for immediate support
  - Help navigating systems and services
  - Help finding resources and information
  - Connect to a trained parent mentor
  - Provide support for all families in the state of Michigan



- Parent to Parent Support Network
  - Evidence-based model of peer support
  - Can be matched with a Parent Mentor
  - Match made based on needs of referred parent
  - Statewide trainings to become a Parent Mentor
  - Alliance Member of Parent to Parent USA



PARENT<sub>TO</sub>PARENT  
USA



## Part of the Parent-to-Parent USA Model:

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- There are 38 states that are Alliance Members of Parent-to-Parent USA
- We are Michigan's Parent to Parent Support Network.
- We also have connections with Parent-to-Parent organizations abroad and can provide match support internationally if needed



# Family Center Parent Mentor Trainings

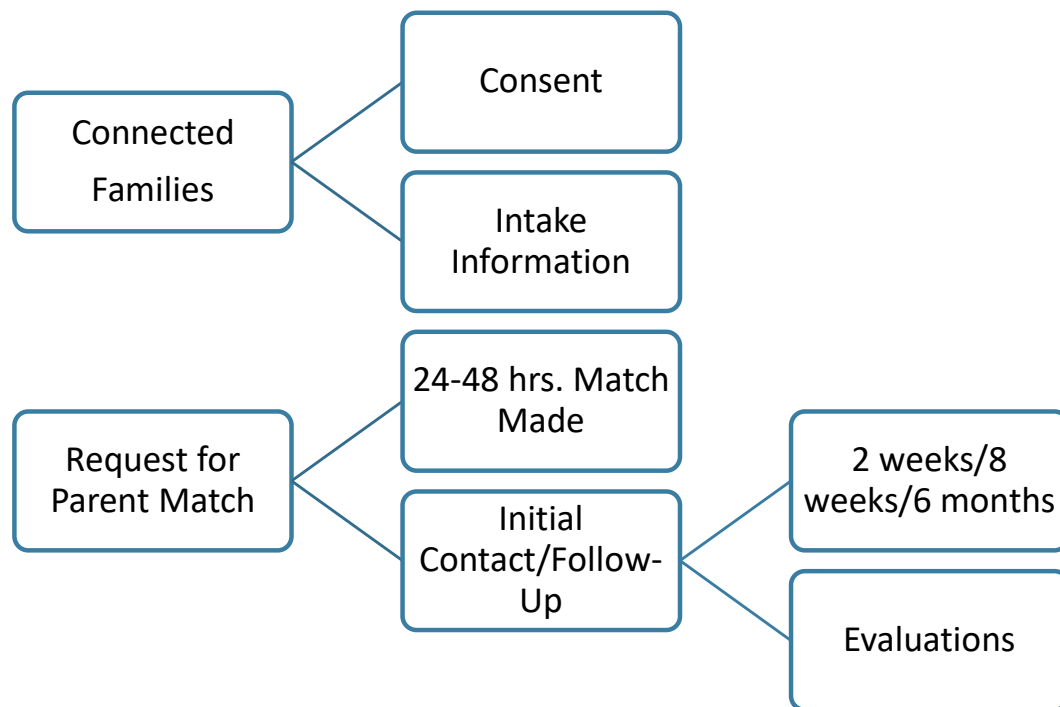
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- Our Parent Mentor trainings are based on the Parent-to-Parent national model. It is a parent-directed, evidence-based model of support.
- The training demonstrates best practices for parents of children with special needs to support their peers.
- The mentor model is not limited to medical diagnoses. It also includes all children who have, or are at an increased risk for: physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions.



- Anderson, Larson, & Wuorio, 2011

# Parent to Parent Support in Action



# Effectiveness of Parent-to-Parent Support

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- Parents feel more equipped to cope with their child and their situation
- Parents are able to view their family and circumstances more positively
- Parents value helping other parents make progress toward their own goals
- Parents feel empowered to partner in the decision making process

# Family Center Scholarships

## Camp Scholarships

- Covers children/youth with special needs, ages 5-21
- Not based on family income - first come, first served basis
- Do not need to qualify for CSHCS – any disability or diagnosis
- Does not need to be an overnight camp or special needs camp
- Camp must be licensed or be connected to a school or city/township Parks and Recreation



# Family Center Scholarships

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## Conference Scholarships

- Not based on family income - first come, first served basis
- Do not need to qualify for CSHCS – any disability or diagnosis
- Covers one parent and/or youth ages 14 - 26
- Conference must be in the continental US – not limited to Michigan





# Family Center Partnerships

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## Family to Family Health Information Center

- Provides support, trainings, information and resources around health issues
- Collaborate on projects and trainings
- Michigan Family Connections Newsletter
- Family Leadership Network
- [www.f2fmichigan.org/](http://www.f2fmichigan.org/)



## Family Leadership Network (FLN)

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- Partnership between the Family Center and the Michigan Family to Family
- Connect families in their region with information, resources, and leadership opportunities
- Provide feedback to the Family Center and the Michigan Family to Family
- <https://f2fmichigan.org/who-we-are/family-leadership-network/>

# How Can You Help?

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Refer families to the Family Center if:

- They need to talk to a Parent Consultant
- They are looking to connect to another parent for support
- They can be a support for another parent
- They need help finding resources or navigating systems
- They would like more information about scholarships
- They want to learn about leadership opportunities or trainings for families
- They would like information on support for the entire family
- They would like information on youth in transition





# Family Center Staff Contacts

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