



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

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[Family Voices of Wisconsin](#)

By Wendy Overturf (WI FACETS) and Lynn Renner (Family Voices of Wisconsin)

In June 2024, I had the opportunity, along with the rest of the Help Desk staff from [WI FACETS](#), to collaborate with staff from Family Voices of Wisconsin. During this meeting, we learned more about what Family Voices offers to families. Given that the theme for this month's newsletter is the special education category of Other Health Impairment (OHI), it seemed an ideal time to highlight key aspects of Family Voices as many children with OHI have special health care needs. Please note that the information and services they provide can be valuable to **all families** who have children with special health care needs. They offer a range of resources, advocacy, and learning opportunities that empower families to navigate health care and community services to ensure their children receive the appropriate care and support.

Their Mission

Family Voices of Wisconsin is the state affiliate of the national Family Voices and serves as Wisconsin's Family-to-Family (F2F) Health Information Center. Their mission is to advance comprehensive healthcare and community support based on family-professional partnerships and family-centered principles that assure the health and well-being of children and youth with special healthcare needs or disabilities and their families. The role of Family Voices of Wisconsin is to educate and promote the inclusion of these principles in the design, implementation, and delivery of support and services throughout Wisconsin.

Key Aspects of Family Voices of Wisconsin:

Family Leadership/Advocacy:

- Work on policy issues at the state and national levels to improve health care and support systems for children with special needs.
- Collaborate with other advocacy groups to amplify their impact.
- Offer one-on-one mentoring to support families as they advocate for change in their community
- [Advocacy For Change](#) This annual event promotes advocacy skills and connects families with state legislators.

- [Wisconsin Family Leadership Institute-WiFLI](#) - a 3-session family leadership series: WiFLI Foundations
- is held each spring and WiFLI Advanced is held each fall

**Note: Applications are now open for [WiFLI Advanced, Fall 2024](#). Scholarships are available to fully cover all costs.

The goal is that every WiFLI participant gains the skills and confidence to be at the table when decisions are made in the community: serving on community advisory groups (like at the library, school, recreation programs, or medical clinic) to county or state boards or committees. Parents can also share their experiences with systems, to advocate to their legislators for real solutions.

Training, Education, and Resources

Provides live (in-person and virtual) learning sessions for families on topics such as effective advocacy, Medicaid, long-term supports, transition, and supported decision making.

Family Voices also plans and manages the **Circles of Life Conference**, Wisconsin's annual event for families who have children and youth with disabilities. In 2025, the event will be held at the Wilderness Resort, WI Dells, on May 8 - 9.

[Resource Library](#)

The resource library offers an extensive searchable database of resources and fact sheets to help families understand their rights and the services available to them. Topics include areas such as Medicaid and transitioning to adult life.

Provides on-demand learning sessions, including [Did You Know? Now You Know](#), an introduction to health care and long-term supports for children and youth with disabilities and/or special health care needs, and "What's After High School," a broad overview of the transition to adult life for a youth with disabilities.

In addition to the information provided on their website, [Family Voices of Wisconsin](#) can be reached at (608) 512-0217.

UPCOMING WI FACETS EVENTS

[Independent Educational Evaluations \(IEE\)](#)

Presenters: Marge Resan and Margaret McMurray, WI DPI

Date: August 14, 2024

[Empowering Communication: From Evaluation to IEP Development](#)

Presenter: Dawn Merth-Johnson, WI DPI

Date: August 21, 2024

[¿Qué es un plan 504?](#)

Presenter: Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

Date: August 22, 2024

[IEP 1: Special Education Basics-Pre-recorded](#)

Presenter: Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

Date: August 27, 2024

[Early Childhood Evaluations: Families, We Need You!](#)

Presenter: Catherine Daentl, CESA 5

HOME LEARNING



[Children's Activity Calendar: August 2024](#)

(use printable version to access the links)

While summer is flying by way too fast, there's still time to pack in lots of learning! Explore programming ideas and book suggestions to celebrate Sleep Under the Stars Night, Sisters Day, Book Lover's Day, and much more.

[Early Literacy Activity Calendar: August 2024](#)

Craft ideas, math and science activities, book suggestions to celebrate the end of summer with holidays like Tell a Joke Day, Potato Day, and Just Because Day.

Keeping Kids Learning During the Summer

There is still about a month before school starts again and parent involvement during the summer months is crucial to student success. According to the National Education Association, "Parents who are actively involved in their children's learning at home help their children become more successful learners in and out of school."

- Set aside time each day to read. Track the books your child reads and reward them with a special activity or treat when they reach certain milestones (for example, every 10th book). Do art projects based on favorite titles, such as drawing a favorite scene, or making paper bag puppets.
- Visit your local library. Many libraries have wonderful summer reading programs that reward children for the number of books they read.
- Make every day educational. Children learn problem-solving, math, science, and vocabulary as they help with groceries, laundry, and cooking.



Online Learning

[ABCya](#)

Offers a wide range of free educational games for kids from Pre-K to 6th grade. The math games cover various topics and are designed to be engaging and interactive. While there is an option for a paid membership, parents can also sign up for a free limited access.

[Fun Brain](#)

Offers games, books, comics, and videos that develop skills in math, reading, problem-solving, and literacy.



[Free Road Trip Games and Activities for Kids](#)

Perhaps your family is planning a trip yet this summer further from home. More travel can lead to more waiting, riding, or flying time. That can be tough for a young child — they'll want something fun to do! Be sure to visit the website for some fun activities to keep children entertained.

[Check out the Wisconsin Trail Report](#)

There are thousands of miles of scenic hiking trails across Wisconsin, all of them showcasing



[Back to School: A 4-week Plan to Start the Year Right](#)

Check out this calendar that offers suggestions on how to help get your child ready to start the new school year.

UPCOMING STATE EVENTS

[WISE Coalition Meeting Focused on Social Media & Technology](#)

Date: August 20, 2024, 9:30am-11:30am

Join the next **WISE** Coalition virtual meeting. This year they are addressing Child, Adolescent and Young Adult Mental Health. This meeting will focus on social media and technology. One of the speakers will be Peggy Scallon, MD, DFAPA, DFAACAP from **Rogers Behavioral Health** She will present on the Mental Health implications of screen use for youth. They will also have one or two youth speakers TBA. This opportunity is free. You must register to attend. Parents, professionals, and everyone is welcome to attend.

[Children Come First Conference](#)

Dates: October 7-8, 2024

Location: Kalahari Conference Center, WI Dells, WI

Each year, the Children Come First Conference serves as a beacon of knowledge, offering a platform for sharing the latest research, strategies, and tools dedicated to children's mental health. This year's theme, "From Surviving to Thriving," embodies their commitment to empowering families to flourish in every aspect of their lives. For more information, visit www.wifamilyties.org

[40th Annual State Superintendent's Leadership Conference on Special Education and Pupil Services Leadership-Save the Date](#)

Date: October 16, 2024

Location: Glacier Canyon Lodge, Wisconsin Dells, WI

This conference provides local directors of special education and pupil services and other interested parties with opportunities to network with colleagues from around the state as well as consultants and administrators from the Division for Learning Support at the Department of Public Instruction. Presentations will include information about current issues and changes in state and federal policy related to meeting the needs of students with disabilities and students facing other challenges to success in school.

[Self-Determination Conference](#)

The Self-Determination Conference is one of Wisconsin's largest events for people with disabilities and the people who support them.

Dates: October 21-23, 2024

Location: Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI

[Special Education Conference 2024](#)

Dates: November 14-15, 2024

Location: Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, WI Dells, WI

Join others from around the state and Midwest to learn, relax, network, and gather new ideas and resources.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

New Resource on Serving Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

DPI's School Health Services recently published Chapter 8 of the School Nurse Handbook. This chapter, [*Education Services for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs*](#), is posted on the Publications and Resources webpage. This resource provides instruction to school nurses and outlines school districts' role in providing educational and health services to students with special health care needs.

Office for Civil Rights Releases New Resources on Students with Disabilities

The Office for Civil Rights has issued new resources for schools, stakeholders, students with disabilities, and their families. These documents remind students with disabilities and elementary and secondary schools, as well as colleges and universities, of their respective rights and responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with sickle cell disease, epilepsy, or cancer.

- [Fact Sheet: Section 504 Protections for Students with Sickle Cell Disease](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Section 504 Protections for Students with Epilepsy](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Section 504 Protections for Students with Cancer](#)

ONLINE RESOURCES: Other Health Impairment



Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)

This website has links to information related to incidence, characteristics, diagnosis and treatment, and school services related to children who have other health impairments. The website also includes links to many other resources related to specific disorders.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WI DPI)

The Wisconsin DPI website has information related to eligibility criteria for Other Health Impairment as well as links to additional medical and health information that may be of interest. This site also has a link for more information on the Comprehensive Special Education Evaluation process.

FINDING YOUR WAY– A Navigation Guide for Wisconsin Families Who Have Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs and Disabilities

The Wisconsin Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program developed this guide in partnership with the Community of Practice on Autism Spectrum Disorders and other developmental disabilities to assist families who may have concerns or questions about their child's development or have recently received a diagnosis of a special health care need or disability. It provides brief descriptions of programs, services, and systems of support available in Wisconsin. The guide also has contact information to learn more about these and other resources.

Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN)

CYSHCN collaborates with national, state, and community-based partners to link children to appropriate services, close service gaps, reduce duplication, and develop policies to better serve families.

Wisconsin Wayfinder: Essential Children's Resources

Wisconsin Wayfinder supports families of children with delays, disabilities, special health care needs, and mental health conditions. Children's resource guides are helpers who assist families, caregivers, professionals, and organizations in finding a wide array of supports and services available through the Children's Resource Network. Their services are free and confidential. Call (877) 947-2929 or use the [contact form](#).

[The Tourette Association of America Wisconsin Chapter](#)

The Tourette Association of America Wisconsin Chapter is a volunteer led, nonprofit organization supporting the needs of individuals and families affected by Tourette Syndrome and Tic Disorders. They are committed to raising public awareness and fostering social acceptance; advancing scientific understanding, treatment options and care; and educating professionals to better serve the needs of children, adults and families challenged by Tourette and Tic Disorders. They also advocate for public policies and services that promote positive school, work, and social environments.

[Epilepsy Foundation](#)

This website has information for parents and professionals related to epilepsy disorders. It also has a link to a ["toolbox"](#) and provides information on forms and information parents may want to have available in case of an emergency. Information about other support groups and services is also on this site.

[Living with Spina Bifida](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has programs and research which may help improve the quality of life and encourage full participation at every age for those living with spina bifida.

[Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder \(CHADD\)](#)

CHADD is a national nonprofit organization that improves the lives of people affected by ADHD through education, advocacy, and support. CHADD is in the forefront in creating and implementing programs and services in response to the needs of adults and families affected by ADHD through collaborative partnerships and advocacy, including training for parents and K-12 teachers, hosting educational webinars and workshops, being an informative clearinghouse for the latest evidence-based ADHD information, and providing information specialists to support the ADHD community.

[Family Voices of Wisconsin](#)

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/or disabilities and their families. Their role is to advocate for the inclusion of these principles in the design, implementation, and delivery of supports and services throughout Wisconsin.

[Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program](#)

The first three years are the most important building blocks of a child's future. The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program is an early intervention special education program that supports the growth and development of children under the age of 3 who have delays or disabilities.

[Restarting Safe Education and Testing \(ReSET\)](#)

ReSET is a collaborative project formed in 2021 to research and promote safe in-person school attendance for children with complex health needs. The information on their website helps identify priorities and provides downloadable resources for families, school staff, and health care providers.

Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports ([PBIS](#)) is a strategy schools use to teach children expected behavior. Read this [article](#) for more detailed information on PBIS.

Bedtime with kids can be a struggle. In the short series "[Donkey Hodie Bedtime Stories](#), from PBS Kids, Donkey Hodie and pals take turns sharing how they wind down to get ready for bed. Each video in the series shows how they each find a way to calm their bodies, sing a song, read a story, turn out the light, and get comfy before sleeping.

Here are some additional resources to help with the bedtime routine:

- [My Bedtime Routine Chart](#) (printable)
- [My Bedtime](#) (Daniel Tiger game)
- [Practice SUPER Morning and Bedtime Routines](#) (activity)
- [Get Ready for Bedtime with These Tips](#)

RESEARCH

Care of Students with Disabilities in Schools: A Team Approach

Johnson, K., (September 30, 2022) "Care of Students with Disabilities in Schools: A Team Approach" OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing Vol. 27, No. 3, Manuscript 2.

[Read Full Article](#)

Society benefits when every person has the education and skills to contribute to the best of their abilities. Education is fundamental to that ability to contribute. Access to education is a social determinant of health that can predict a student's future health, contributions, and financial opportunity even into adulthood and a potential future family. This article introduces a case study of a student with a disability and with discussion and application of statutes requiring a free and appropriate public education. The discussion includes the history of support for students with disabilities, the school nurse role, and principles of nursing support, including resources for practice. Finally, a brief description provides information about important professionals who can contribute as members of the school team. Supporting students with disabilities in schools provides the foundation for their ability to function and contribute as adults.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Newsletter Topics:

September: Assistive Technology

October: Learning Disabilities

November: Emotional Behavioral Disabilities

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources you may use the [Word document](#). Send submissions to [Wendy Overturf](#). If you are unable to access the form, you may send the information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.

This monthly update is provided by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please email [WI FACETS](#).

The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter can be found online: www.servingongroups.org/newsletter



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