

Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS)

Newsletter – April 2021

CSHCS is a secondary insurance program designed to support children with eligible chronic health conditions and their families. CSHCS is also available for adults with cystic fibrosis and bleeding disorders. Call the office for more information at 269-373-5015.



Kalamazoo Great Start Parent Coalition

Parent coalition meetings are opportunities for parents and caregivers to take action on ways we can help support families in our community. Coalition meetings include opportunities for connecting with other parents & caregivers and actionable steps for using our influence to help shape early childhood initiatives. The meetings will take place on Zoom and last 1 hour. Meetings are **Tuesday, April 20, 2021** and **Thursday, April 22, 2021** at **7:30pm**. To sign up for the Parent Coalition, please visit:

<https://www.kalamazoogreatstartcollaborative.org/blank>



Health Insurance Marketplace

A Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for Marketplace health insurance has opened up in response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. This SEP allows individuals and families to enroll in 2021 health insurance coverage from **February 15, 2021** through **May 15, 2021**. Eligible families can submit a new application or update an existing application. Families may call the Health Insurance Marketplace at 800-318-2596 or visit online:

<https://www.healthcare.gov/quick-guide/getting-marketplace-health-insurance/>

Virtual Parent Mentor Training

The Family Center for Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs (Family Center) will be hosting a free Virtual Parent Mentor Training for Region 8 residents, which includes Kalamazoo County. Training will take place from **Tuesday, April 20, 2021 to Thursday, April 22, 2021** on Microsoft Teams. The trainings on Tuesday and Wednesday will be **9:00am-11:30am**, then Thursday will be **9:00am-12:00pm**. If you are a parent, caregiver, or guardian of a child/youth with special health care needs, and would like to make a difference in the lives of others, please take this opportunity to become a trained Parent Mentor. This training is open to all families who have a child with a medical, physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition. If interested please register at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/parent-mentor-training-tickets-133386928895>

Camp Scholarships

Parents/Caregivers of a child/youth with special health care needs are encouraged to apply for up to \$250 for a camp scholarship from the Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (Family Center). Camp scholarships are not just limited to face to face, virtual camps are considered as well. Applications are being accepted now through **May 31, 2021**, but funding is limited so apply now! For questions or to request the application forms, please contact the Family Phone Line at 800-359-3722.

For next month's Newsletter, please go to "Hot Topics" at www.kalcounty.com/hcs or find it on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ KalamazooCounty HCS](https://www.facebook.com/KalamazooCountyHCS). If you have questions or concerns please call the Family Phone Line at 1-800-359-3722 or the Kalamazoo CSHCS Program Representative, Heather, at 269-373-5015.

COVID-19: Vaccination Information

Eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine now includes all people over the age of 16 years old who live in Kalamazoo County. Despite this expanded eligibility, vaccination efforts in Kalamazoo County will continue to prioritize residents based on highest risk, including older adults, those with underlying medical conditions, caregivers of children with special needs, and frontline workers.

The Health Department has introduced an online self-scheduling tool for Kalamazoo County residents (who are eligible) to make appointments for upcoming clinics. Please visit:

www.kalcounty.com/covid19vaccine. The vaccine continues to be provided by appointment only at vaccination sites. Please do NOT come to the health department or any vaccination site without an appointment.

If you are a **caregiver of children with special needs**, 16-49 years old with disabilities and/or underlying medical conditions, or over the age of 50, then you are eligible for a vaccine. The health department reserves special appointment slots at upcoming clinics for this group. If you qualify in this group and have not yet received the COVID-19 vaccine and wish to do so, call the health department's COVID-19 Call Center at **269-373-5200** to schedule your appointment.

It is important to continue the following practices to protect yourself, especially with new variants of the virus being found in our community:

1. **Wash your Hands Often**
2. **Avoid Close Contact (Social Distancing)**
3. **Wear a Cloth Face Covering**

For the most up-to-date information visit: www.kalcounty.com/covid19 and www.facebook.com/KalamazooCountyHCS. Please reserve phone calls for those who cannot easily access online information. The health department's COVID-19 Call Center is 269-373-5200.

Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services is committed to providing equitable, culturally competent care to all individuals served, regardless of race, age, sex, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.



Kalamazoo county Pre-K is now accepting applications for the 2021-2022 school year!

There are many high-quality options available to families with in-person learning as well as distanced and hybrid options. Kalamazoo County Pre-K programs are either free or low-cost for qualifying families.

Please be aware that according to new guidelines, all children must be:

- **3 years old on or before December 1* in order to be age eligible for the 3-year-old programs.**
- **4 years old on or before December 1* in order to be age eligible for the 4-year-old programs.**

*Placement may be prioritized for children who will be 3 or 4 years old on or before September 1.

Questions? Need help? Call 269-250-9333 or visit <https://www.kresa.org/Page/1368>

Parent Connect Calls

The Family Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (Family Center) is excited to offer a series of free virtual Parent Connect Calls twice monthly. The next call is scheduled for **Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 4:00pm**. The topic for this call is Genetics 101. During this Parent Connect Call, participants will learn basic genetics concepts, common indications for genetic testing throughout the lifespan, and the future direction of genetic technology. To register, please visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/parent-connect-call-tickets-141049112693?aff=erelexpmlt>