



Educating, Assisting, Supporting, and Informing through this newsletter...  
A newsletter for and by parents with sons & daughters with disabilities and education advocates.

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## Changes coming for Medicaid in Kansas

In early November, Gov. Sam Brownback and his administration's top social service officials unveiled their proposal for reforming the state's Medicaid program. In a nutshell, it would expand managed care to all

currently on Medicaid, including nursing home residents, the disabled and the mentally ill. It also would prompt reshuffling of departments at four state agencies.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) has been issued to select at least three managed care companies to provide all Kansas Medicaid services. All three companies will operate statewide, and Medicaid beneficiaries will be able to choose a company to work with. The new Medicaid program will be called KanCare and is scheduled to go into effect in January 2013.

The plan is slated to save \$853 million all funds over five years, and there will be no reductions in eligibility or provider rates. Currently only the HealthWave (Medicaid/CHIP) program operates in a managed care environment in the state. The move to the KanCare program for Medicaid will mean it is for all Medicaid services, including long-term care services. The managed care contractors will be encouraged to use established community organizations, such as hospitals, Community Mental Health Centers, safety-net clinics, Centers for Independent Living, Area Agencies on Aging, and Community Developmental Disabilities Organizations.

As a part of the reform process, three state agencies will undergo additional reorganization. The Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) will be re-named the Department for Children and Families and will add some family preservation and other services now in the Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the Juvenile Justice Authority (JJA). The Medicaid Home and Community Based Services waivers and mental health program now in SRS will move to the Department on Aging, and that agency will be re-named the Department for Aging and Human Services. Additional Medicaid fiscal and contractual management will be consolidated within KDHE as well.

To learn more about the state's Medicaid reform plans, please visit this link:

[www.khi.org/news/2011/nov/08/brownback-announces-managed-care-all-medicaid/](http://www.khi.org/news/2011/nov/08/brownback-announces-managed-care-all-medicaid/)

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# Cambios vienen para el Medicaid en Kansas

**A**l principio de Noviembre, el Gobernador Sam Brownback y sus administradores de la oficina de servicio social revelaron su propuesta para reformar el programa estatal de Medicaid. En resumen, expandiría el servicio de cuidado manejado a todos los que actualmente se encuentran en Medicaid, incluyendo residentes de asilos, los discapacitados y los enfermos mentalmente. También incluiría el mover cuatro departamentos de agencias estatales. Una Propuesta (RFP en Ingles) se ha expedido solicitando por lo menos tres compañías que provean servicio de cuidado manejado a los que reciben los servicios del Kansas Medicaid. Las tres compañías operaran a nivel estatal, y los beneficiarios del Medicaid podrán escoger una compañía para trabajar con. El nuevo programa de Medicaid se llamara KanCare y esta programado para efectuarse Enero del 2013.

El plan esta proyectado ahorrar \$853 millones en el transcurso de cinco años, y no habrá una reducción en como ser elegible ni las tarifas de los proveedores. Actualmente solo el programa HealthWave (Medicaid/CHIP) opera en un ambiente con servicios de cuidado manejado en el estado. Al mover al programa KanCare para Medicaid significa que es para todos los servicios de Medicaid, incluyendo servicio de cuidado de largo tiempo. Las compañías proveyendo el cuidado manejado serán motivados a utilizar organizaciones comunitarios ya establecidos, como los hospitales, Centros Comunitarios de Salud Mental, clínicas de seguridad, Centros de Vivienda Independiente, Agencias sobre el Envejecimiento y Organizaciones Comunitarios sobre la Discapacidades.

Como parte del proceso de reforma, tres agencias estatales serán reorganizadas. El Departamento de Servicios Social y Rehabilitación (SRS) será llamado el Departamento para Niños y Familias e incluirá preservación de la familia y otros servicios que son proveídos por el Departamento de Salud y Ambiente (KDHE) y la Autoridad de Justicia Juvenil (JJA). El programa de Medicaid y Servicios Comunitarios basado en ayuda financiera y programas de salud mental en SRS, serán movidos al Departamento para los Ancianos, y esta agencia será llamada el Departamento para Ancianos y Servicios Humanitarios. Contratos adicionales de Medicaid serán consolidados en KDHE también.

Para aprender mas sobre el programa estatal de la reforma del Medicaid, por favor visita esta pagina:

**[www.khi.org/news/2011/nov/08/brownback-announces-managed-care-all-medicaid/](http://www.khi.org/news/2011/nov/08/brownback-announces-managed-care-all-medicaid/)**

## A Note From the Director's Desk...



Dear Parents and Education Advocates:

**G**reetings and holiday wishes from all of the staff at Families Together! Whether you are celebrating a particular tradition or just spending time with family, this can be a busy time of the year. The break from school routines can bring additional challenges. Make sure you are making plans to help your sons and daughters cope with the changes.

This fall, Families Together was blessed with several great fundraisers to help fund our work for you and other families. Thanks to all who participated, made monetary contributions, or in-kind donations. A special section in this newsletter is devoted to recognizing our donors. We have made every effort to be accurate in this listing of donors. Please let us know if we missed you, or there are misspellings. We apologize for any oversight.

A special thanks to the Anonymous family. They have been great contributors, but we don't have an address to send them a formal thank you note. Among their donations is one that is received online monthly. Thank you so much for remembering us every month.

The Families Together staff is very excited about some new offerings for training in the coming year. Please stay tuned to the Monday Memo and this quarterly newsletter for more information.

Merry Christmas to all from the Families Together staff.

*Connie*



# Family Story

## Family Success Story

*By Laura C., Gardner, KS*

I am a mom of three great kids: two sons and a daughter. My sons are on the Autism Spectrum. My oldest son is 18 and has Aspergers Syndrome with ADHD. My second son is 16 and has Aspergers with a receptive language disorder.

Our success as a family is built on some basic principles. Our faith and our attitude have pulled us through some rough times. It will pull us through the challenges ahead. But that's not the entire key to this success story. The way we've parented our children has also made a difference.

My husband and I have focused on three main areas over the years. They include treating our boys as typical kids, having expectations, and fostering an environment of success.

We treat all our children as typical kids. We love and accept our boys where they are at in their development. Within those parameters, we have and continue to set reasonable boundaries. Our philosophy is that if you don't set a boundary early, as hard as it might be, you'll be paying for it later.

The second area we focus on is having expectations. We have the expectation for our kids that they will do their best at the level where they are. As parents, we do our best to encourage and support our kids, meeting each child at his or her own level. A very important part of that support and encouragement is to **never** play the "should have" game. That is the game where you second guess all of your decisions with the thought of "I should have done this" or "I should have done that". We don't play that game. Instead, we keep moving forward!

Lastly, we are intentionally fostering an environment of success for each one of our kids. What makes a successful environment is networking, teamwork, and opportunity. All three pieces are interconnected and you can only have success with all three in place.

Networking is a very important part of our kids' success. The same "rules" apply as those found in the business world...it's who you know. It's who we know that can help us with what we need for our kids. It's who you know in your team that can open a door of opportunity.

Teamwork includes our family, friends, caregivers, educators, and doctors. Without a team, opportunities are missed, networking is missed, and success falls flat on its face.

We look for every opportunity to help our kids learn and grow as individuals. There are many opportunities everywhere you turn. One example is Special Olympics. This program not only helps our boys to be physically active but it also helps them learn how to work as a member of a team, socialize with peers and adults, and learn many a lesson on winning and losing.

We have never given up on our special needs boys. We are their best advocates, encouragers, and support system. Without this realization, our efforts for success for our children would be in vain.

*This article was printed in English in the Fall edition.*

## De Padre a Padre

### Carta de parte de un padre apoyado

Nuestra hija, Jane, es una chica de Kansas que conoció y se enamoró de un joven, John, lo conoció en el K-State cuando era un estudiante de intercambio extranjeros trabajando en su maestría y ella era un estudiante del último año. John trabaja para una empresa en Suiza, lo cual los llevó a ese país. Nuestra nieta Anna, nació en agosto del 2008 en Suiza.

Alrededor de 5 los meses ellos sabían que posiblemente algo andaba mal con Anna, ella no se sentaba o viraba. A los 11 meses le diagnosticaron Parálisis Cerebral. No obstante ellos comenzaron fisioterapias en el momento de los 5 meses debido a la preocupación y la persistencia de Jane y John.

Yo, abuela y maestra retirada he tenido alguna experiencia con niños con necesidades educativas especiales de tenerlos como estudiantes. Varios profesores de Educación Especial me ayudaron enseguida. Yo quería encontrar a una familia que tuviera un niño con 1 año y 1/2 o 1 año mayor que Anna con CP(Parálisis Cerebral) y que la familia estuviera buscando agresivamente terapias para su hijo y que sería una conexión positiva para Jane y John--aunque las millas podrían separarlos a ellos.

Yo fui referida a las Familias Unidas por el Programa de Infant/Toddler de el condado de Riley. Inmediatamente yo estaba impresionada con la clase de respuesta alentadora que recibí cuando llamé a la oficina de Topeka. Me dijeron que una "pareja" pudiera ser que cumpliera con los requisitos dentro de una semana (esto fué probablemente en agosto del 2010), yo recibí una llamada de vuelta que decía que estaban trabajando con la "pareja" y me mantendrían informada sobre el progreso en la búsqueda de la familia.

Dentro de otras dos semanas recibí una llamada de Tammy desde el área de Kansas City. Ella ha sido MARAVILLOSA! Enseguida Tammy le envió un correo electrónico a Jane y las dos se iban a encontrar en Kansas cuando Jane y Anna llegaran en la Navidad. Lamentablemente, debido al tiempo muy limitado Jane y Anna(parcialmente debido a las demoras del tiempo), Tammy y Jane no llegaron a conocerse una a la otra (ni los niños).

Nosotros le enviamos inmediatamente después de la Navidad un correo electrónico y acordamos reunirnos en Topeka(a medio camino para cada uno de nosotros) en enero, cuando Tammy y sus hijos iban a venir a la oficina de Familias Unidas. Mi esposo, Tom y yo acordamos reunirnos con Tammy, su hijo y su hermana gemela, durante el almuerzo en el mall en Topeka.

Tom y yo trajimos nuestra computadora, Tammy y Jane llegaron a conocerse cara a cara a través de Skype y Jane llegó a conocer a el hijo de Tammy también. Lamentablemente, era demasiado tarde para que Anna estuviera ahí (hora Suiza), por lo que no conseguimos presentarle a Anna al hijo de Tammy.

Tammy y Jane tuvieron una primera buena conversación y Tammy rápidamente dió seguimiento con un correo electrónico detallado de su Programa y del progreso y las terapias de su hijo. Ella ha enviado nombres de equipos, fotografías familiares, explicaciones del progreso de su hijo en diversas etapas de su vida, lo que le gusta y que es útil para el, vídeos de como se ha desarrollado y así gran cantidad de sitios de la Web, iPad/iPhone y aplicaciones. No puedo decirles cuánto ha ayudado solamente con conectarnos con una tal persona positiva y buena como Tammy. Yo pienso que Jane a encontrado "alma gemela" y aunque ambas están extremadamente ocupadas y tienen millas entre sí, saben que una y otra están ahí. De hecho, Anna ha sido equipada "nivel" es ésta última semana y pienso que es parcialmente por la experiencia de Tammy con su hijo y el ánimo llevadero de Tammy.

Yo quiero dar las gracias a Tammy y a Familias Unidas por ponernos juntos. Es bueno saber que alguien que ha pasado a través de esto se encuentra allí con nosotros.

### Carta de parte de un padre de apoyo

Cuando yo me puse de acuerdo con el Programa de Padres a Padres coincidí con los padres y abuelos de un niño con Parálisis Cerebral, yo no me esperaba encontrar viejos amigos por primera vez.

No importa si usted es el "padre de apoyo" o el "padre apoyado", hay algo que decir para compartir los retos, alegrías, frustraciones, y las celebraciones. Hay sentimientos involucrados que otros simplemente no lo entiendo, no importa que tan duro que quieren y que no importa lo mucho que lo intenten. El criar a un niño con una discapacidad, nosotros no sólo estamos en una caminata a las colinas de Flint, pero en un embarque de una expedición en los Alpes Suizos.

Nosotros seguimos aferrados a cada triunfo, cada victoria, a la espera de la próxima. A través de alguien que está en el mismo viaje nosotros compartimos el camino, la llenura, la ambición, el apoyo y el aliento que nos permita continuar a subir hacia la próxima cumbre. Al compartir el viaje con aquellos que no entienden, ya no estamos viajando solos, pero sabemos que hay otros con nosotros en el camino, nos ayudamos unos a otros.

\* Los nombres han sido cambiados para proteger la confidencialidad tanto de los padres de apoyo o padres apoyados y sus hijos.



# Your Questions Answered!

**Q:** Can the evaluation team use severe discrepancy between ability and achievement to determine eligibility for a learning disability?

**A:** The use of severe discrepancy between ability and achievement to determine eligibility for learning disability should no longer be used. The evaluation of a severe discrepancy is not good practice and does not contribute meaningfully to the understanding of a student's instructional needs. Additionally, it is not an eligibility requirement. Given the research results regarding the use of discrepancy, eligibility decisions should focus on student achievement within the context of age and/or grade-level standards and not on within-child deficits.

**Q:** Is there anything that the district may not consider in deciding least restrictive environment (LRE)?

**A:** The district may not make placement decisions based only on such things as the category or severity of the child's disability, convenience of staff, the choices for placement options currently available, the availability of educational or related services, space availability, availability of staff, bus routes or administrative convenience.

*Source: Kansas Special Education Services Process Handbook, June 2011*

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## Tips for Getting Through the Holiday

**J**uggling gifts, kids, food, parties, nice clothes and coats this time of year has sometimes left the holiday season feeling a little bitter. Running from in-laws to grandparents with my outlaw kids got to be too much, not just for me, but for my kids too. We finally had to lay down the law with these helpful tips.



Be realistic. My kids are not going to sit through midnight Mass, not even the 10 p.m. Mass. Especially not in their holiday best for pictures after, so we hit the 5:30 p.m. Mass and sit in the cry room so that we can keep answering the inevitable question of, "Is it almost over?" We also have a kid friendly menu selection available during the holidays. There is nothing worse than hurt feelings because of textured food that some kids have difficulty "processing".

Stick to routine. Thank goodness for smartphones and apps. Visual schedules and social stories travel with us at all times, the holidays are no exception. Just in case, assign a designated safe spot for your child—and sometimes, yourself for meltdowns.

Pack an emergency backpack. We fill ours with snacks, meds, quiet but engaging toys, iPod with earbuds, handiwipes, extra clothes (often pajamas), color books and crayolas. We never leave home without it! It's perfect for shopping, long lines and in-laws!

It's about YOUR family. It is alright to say "no, not this year" to each and every invite you receive. What works best for your family is just fine! (For fun, I make the "regret" phone calls to friends and family while my son is having a meltdown...they really do understand.)

And finally, find some magic. Every family is unique and so are traditions. Remember to take the small moments of peace and breathe in the reason for the season: otherwise, you'll be too overwhelmed to appreciate anything!

# We'd like to extend our appreciation to Families Together donors for their generous contributions!



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Betty Williams  
Todd Willoughby  
Barbara Wilson  
Allen Winfrey  
Lorraine & Larry Winfrey  
Rita Winfrey  
Stephen & Kathryn Winkler  
Winkler Manufacturing, LLC.  
John & Joan Winter  
Ronald & Kara Winter  
Gary & Toni Wolff  
Women's Guild Plymouth Congregational Church  
Brent Wooten  
Barbara & Bradley Woydziak  
Donald & Carol Woydziak  
John & Sonja Woynick  
Lee Wurtenberger  
Lida Wurtenberger  
Arneita Wyer  
Elvin & Betty Lou Wyer  
Donna Yadrich  
Stephen & Cathie Yager  
Matthew Yoho  
Brook Young  
Don & Elizabeth Young  
Kyle & Krystal Young  
Loretta Young  
Melanie & Raymond Zeller  
Scott & Monica Zienkewicz  
Stan & Connie Zienkewicz  
Marie Zienkewicz



# Finney County Health Summit

Saturday, November 5, 2011 Families Together, Inc. hosted the Finney County Health Summit at Garden City Community College. This conference was held for parents of children with special health care needs, to help them navigate their way through the health care system. The keynote speaker was Aileen Simborio from KSN-TV. She shared a news story that was done on the Guzman family and what they have learned working with Families Together and the benefits of being surrounded with support. Amber Sellers, with Lifetime Smiles, UMMAM Dental Clinic, spoke on Oral Health and did fluoride treatments. Dawn Kebert, Basics Teacher, NAMI Kansas, spoke about the challenges of transition and "letting go". Heather Smith, KDHE, presented on Health and Transition and the steps to take to help youth towards health care independence. Julia Thomas and Rachel Gadd-Nelson, with Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy, spoke during two sessions. One session was for parents and it addressed parents teaching their children to advocate for themselves. The next session was youth only and was to teach youth to use their own voices to address their wants and needs to everyone around them. Families Together staff presented Family to Family Health, Sexuality, Stress Management and Substance Abuse Awareness. Some of the comments received after the Health Summit included: "Thank you for the conference, it helps us to better prepare as parents to take care of our kids." "Thank you for the conference, it has helped me." "Thank you for the information, it's very important to share with my kids." Families Together, Inc. would like to thank the following for their generous contributions to make the Finney County Health Summit possible: The Finnup Foundation, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Walmart and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas.

Sábado, 5 de noviembre 2011 Familias Unidas Unidas, Inc. fue anfitrión de la Cumbre de Salud del Condado de Finney esto se llevo a cabo en el colegio Garden City Community College. Esta conferencia fue puesta para los padres de niños con necesidades especiales de salud, para ayudarles a navegar a través del sistema de la salud. La oradora principal fue Aileen Simborio de KSN-TV. Ella compartió una historia que se hizo sobre la familia de Pedro Guzmán y lo que han aprendido trabajando con Familias Unidas, y los beneficios de estar rodeado de apoyo. Amber Sellers, con Lifetime Smiles, UMMAM Dental Clinic habló sobre la salud oral y dio tratamientos de fluoruro. Dawn Kebert, Maestra de Conceptos Básicos, NAMI Kansas, habló sobre los retos de la Transición. Heather Smith, KDHE, presentado sobre la Salud y la Transición y los pasos para seguir y ayudar a su joven hacia la independencia de la Salud. Julia Thomas y Rachel Gadd-Nelson con Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy habló durante dos sesiones. Una sesión para los padres y se dirigió a los padres para enseñar a sus hijos a defenderse por sí mismos. La siguiente sesión fue sólo para los jóvenes y se les enseñó a usar sus propias voces para hacer frente a sus deseos y necesidades de todos a su alrededor. El personal de Familias Unidas presento entrenamientos sobre "Familia a Familia" salud familiar, Sexualidad, Manejo del Estrés y Conciencia de Abuso de Sustancias. Algunas de las observaciones recibidas después de la Cumbre de la Salud fueron: " Gracias por la conferencia, nos ayuda a preparar mejor como padres para cuidar de nuestros hijos", "Gracias por la conferencia, que me ha ayudado", "Gracias por la información, es muy importante compartir con mis hijos. "Familias Unidas, Inc. agradece a los siguientes por su generosa contribución en hacer esta "Cumbre de Salud del Condado de Finney" posible. Finnup Foundation, Departamento de Salud y Medio Ambiente de Kansas, Walmart y Blue Cross Blue Shield de Kansas.

## Health TEC

Save the Date for our exciting Health TEC on March 31, 2012. This event represents a collaboration between Families Together, Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) and the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy. These agencies have partnered to provide families, youth with special health care needs (13 and up), providers and school nurses with the opportunity to learn about health issues that affect CYSHCN. This one day event will be held in Salina, Kansas and cover a wide variety of health topics in an interactive format. Some of the topics that will be covered are: Individualized Health Care Plans (IHP); Health Care Transition and Communicating with your

Doctor; Sexuality; and, Emergency Preparedness and Advocacy. Sessions will be customized for families, professionals, and youth with special health care needs. Our Keynote speakers will be Brad and Hali Thompson (father and daughter) who will share their experiences with transitioning to adult services. Many other surprises will be going on so please join us for a fun and informative day! Registration will be available on the Families Together website in the next couple of weeks.



# RESOURCES



## FAMILIES TOGETHER TOLL FREE NUMBERS:

Wichita	1-888-815-6364
Topeka	1-800-264-6343
Kansas City	1-877-499-5369
Garden City	1-888-820-6364
Spanish line	1-800-499-9443

[www.familiestogetherinc.org](http://www.familiestogetherinc.org)

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE INFORMATION NETWORK

1-800-332-6262

An information service for children and adults with disabilities, their families, and their service providers.

[www.makeadifferenceks.org](http://www.makeadifferenceks.org)

## KPIRC

Kansas Parent Information Resource Center  
(A resource for parents of any child)

3500 SW 10th Room 011E • Topeka, Kansas 66604  
785-783-2975 • e-mail: [jgroff@kpirc.org](mailto:jgroff@kpirc.org)  
website: [www.kpirc.org](http://www.kpirc.org)

## NICHCY

*National Information Center for  
Children and Youth with Disabilities*

**NICHCY Website**  
[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

- ★ All text-only publications have been reformatted to a new easy-to-read layout
- ★ A side-bar menu makes navigation easy
- ★ The ALL-NEW resource library featuring the Technical Assistance & Dissemination (TA&D) Network makes finding information a breeze

Call us or visit  
our website!

1-800-695-0285  
[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

# Check out these Websites!



Does your child need help with math or reading? Try the following site: [www.ixl.com/math/grades](http://www.ixl.com/math/grades) Pre-K to Algebra. Please send your feedback about this website to Teresa at [Teresa@familiestogetherinc.org](mailto:Teresa@familiestogetherinc.org).

Terri Mauro shares with readers 10 questions to ask your doctor after receiving a new diagnosis. These questions will help sure you get a clear idea of the next steps both the doctor and you need to take. It may be hard to think of what to say or ask after the doctor gives you a diagnosis for your child. It is a good idea to write down all the things you want to know and don't understand and take it with you to the appointment.

<http://specialchildren.about.com/od/gettingadiagnosis/tp/10questions.htm>

Managing a Special Needs Trust: A Guide for Trustees is a reference guide for anyone who is managing a special needs trust for a person with a disability and/or working with families on future planning for a family member with a disability. The book explains how special needs trusts relate to the complicated public benefit programs that assist people with disabilities. (Use the code FTI, when ordering.)

[www.disabilitiesbooks.com/](http://www.disabilitiesbooks.com/)

New findings are showing that dry mouth increases the risk of dental decay and gum disease. Children and youth with special needs often take prescriptions and over-the-counter medications that cause dry mouth. Here are steps to take to address dry mouth and keep teeth and gums healthy.

[www.deltadentalins.com/oral\\_health/dry\\_mouth.html](http://www.deltadentalins.com/oral_health/dry_mouth.html)

 **HAPPY**   
**HOLIDAYS!**

## SEAC Wants to Hear from You

The purpose of the Kansas State Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) is to provide policy guidance to the State Board of Education with respect to special education and related services for children with disabilities in the state. The council is made up of stakeholders throughout the state and the majority of the members are individuals with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities. SEAC seeks and values input from parents, educators, and community folks from across the state to help guide the council on issues and topics that need to be addressed. You can provide input through written and/or verbal public comments. There is time set aside at each SEAC meeting for public comment so please let your voices be heard! For a complete listing of SEAC members, meeting dates and locations, and procedures for public comment please use this link [www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2466](http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2466) or contact the Families Together center nearest to you.

## Family Enrichment Weekends

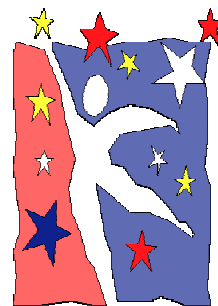
Join us for a fun-filled informative weekend! Family Enrichment Weekends are overnight events for families that include a child, birth through 21, who has a disability, and is still attending school. Parents attend workshops and discussion groups while the kids participate in fun, age-appropriate activities. The kids are matched with a volunteer, usually college students, to assist them throughout their day. Families must submit their application early as these events fill up quickly. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, with a preference given to families who have not yet attended an overnight event. Families will be placed on a waiting list after the first 30 applications are received.

There is a Family Enrichment Weekend coming up on February 17-18, 2012 in Garden City. To get a registration form, please call the Garden City Center at **888-820-6364**.

There is another Family Enrichment Weekend coming up May 4-5, 2012 in Lawrence. Please call the Topeka Center to get a registration form. **800-264-6343**

We look forward to seeing you at one of these events!

## Education Advocate Update: IEP Attendance—An Important Duty



As the education advocate for a student, attending the IEP is perhaps the most important thing you do. It allows you further knowledge of the student and his or her educational needs and strengths and allows you to provide input into the program. The law supports your attendance by mandating a written 10 day notification prior to the meeting. The content of the notice must indicate (a) the purpose; (b) date; (c) time; (d) location; (e) persons from the school who will attend; and, (f) inform the parents of their right to invite others to the meeting.

If you receive this notification and the time is not good for you, contact the school and reschedule. The law also says that meetings are to be held at a mutually agreed upon time and place. If you are unable to physically attend the meeting, you and the school may agree to use alternative means of participation such as video conference or conference calls. However, it is preferable for you to attend in person when possible. Always remember— you are there to do what you feel is beneficial for the student and should advocate from that position. You may contact Families Together at any time to review or prepare for an IEP meeting. We are happy to assist you.

### **The Kansas City Office Has Relocated!**



***We are excited to announce our new Location in Lenexa, Kansas!***

***10563 Lackman Road  
Lenexa, KS 66215  
913.287.1970***

## Winter Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Contact
Jan. 26, 2012	Education Advocate Training, Lawrence	800-264-6343
Feb. 17-18, 2012	Family Enrichment Weekend, Garden City	888-820-6364
March 3, 2012	Team Empowerment Conference, Wichita	888-815-6364
March 31, 2012	Health Team Empowerment Conference, Salina	800-264-6343
April 21, 2012	Team Empowerment Conference, Kansas City	877-499-5369
May 4-5, 2012	Family Enrichment Weekend, Lawrence	800-264-6343



**The Families Together centers will be closed for the holidays beginning Friday, December 23. We will return on Tuesday, January 3.**

Return Service Requested

Families Together, Inc.  
501 Jackson, Suite 400  
Topeka, KS 66603