



Issue 1, Summer 2005

## Welcome!

Families' CAN (a division of Compeer of Greater Buffalo, Inc.) is proud to present the premier issue of their quarterly newsletter! We will be bringing you news, views and opportunities from families, providers and community partners in Erie County.

Families' CAN is the Families' Child Advocacy Network, family run and family driven for all parents, grandparents, foster parents and caregivers raising a child with social, emotional and/or behavioral disabilities. Families in Erie County have a voice in the design and delivery of services to help our children experience success in their community. We are looking for parents/caregivers who would like to be a part of the evolution of our system of care!

This is the Families' newsletter. Families can share their stories of their journey to recovery. Poetry, book reviews, suggestions for helpful websites, and community connections are always welcome. Don't forget to visit our web site!

## Family Voices Network

Families' CAN is a partner with Family Voices Network. Family Voices Network is the initiative funded through a multi-year federal grant awarded beginning in 2004 from SAMHSA (Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration). This multi-year grant allows for the development and delivery of multi-system services using the wraparound process. An important component of the system evolution is the family voice at every level of the system of care. Families were involved in the original design of Family Voices Network (FVN). Families are invited to the table today, involved at every level as a true partner in the delivery and design of the wraparound/SPOA intake process and related services. If you are interested in participating on any committee as an ambassador for Families' CAN, representing the family voice in our county, please contact us. Meeting times and locations are varied. Child care and transportation stipends may be available for family members.

## Summer Picnic

Join us on August 11, 2005, from 3:30-6:30pm, for an informational meeting and chicken barbecue! We are joining Compeer of Greater Buffalo (our parent agency) for their annual picnic at Island Park in Williamsville. We have arranged for bus transportation from Temple Beth Zion (70 Barker Street) for interested family members who would like to attend the meeting and picnic. The bus will leave the parking lot at 2:45 pm. At 6:30, the bus will return to 70 Barker St. Respite workers will be available for the children from 3:30-5pm. Please RSVP by August 5th to reserve your dinners and transportation. Call Debbie, the Families' CAN program assistant, at: 884-2599.



**"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."**

**Margaret Mead**

## DID YOU KNOW...?

Families' CAN is part of a network of organizations promoting the value of the family voice in system development. We are the voice of Erie County families raising children with special social, emotional and behavioral needs, but there is so much more! We are connected regionally with the Children's Mental Health Coalition of Western New York, Inc., or CMHCWNY. The CMHCWNY is our regional coalition serving the 19 counties of the western region of New York and is a chapter of our state level family driven organization: Families Together in NYS, Inc.

Families Together in NYS, Inc. (FTNYS) is our voice in Albany. Staff members work tirelessly promoting changes in legislation and preserving our rights with our Legislators, Assemblymen, Senators, and other state level agencies. They are an important voice for our children and families, helping our children remain at home and in their community, and ensuring that families are viewed by their strengths and working together for recovery. FTNYS is a state chapter of the national organization: Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health (FFCMH).

The FFCMH works at the federal level, developing policy and working to ensure that the family voice is heard for all of us! The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health is a partner with SAMHSA for all Systems of Care Initiatives in the United States.

*For additional information, please contact Families' CAN or visit the following web sites:*

The Children's Mental Health Coalition of Western New York: [www.raisingminds.org](http://www.raisingminds.org)

Families Together in NYS, Inc.: [www.ftnys.org](http://www.ftnys.org)

Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health: [www.ffcmh.org](http://www.ffcmh.org)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

### Monthly Roundtable Discussion Group

Family members and caregivers are invited to join our monthly roundtable discussion group. We are currently meeting on the third Monday of each month from 6:30-8pm at the Temple Beth Zion, 70 Barker Street, Buffalo, NY. In the short time we have been meeting, family members have developed a list of priorities for training and education for families and a survey that was mailed out through the county to evaluate the SPOA/FVN intake process. The evaluation team from the UB Dept. of Family Medicine attends the meetings to listen to the families and to educate everyone on the role of families in the national and local evaluation of the system of care!

Coming soon: We are in the process of developing a morning session of the monthly Roundtable meetings for parents who are not available in the evenings.

### Training Series

Families' CAN will be hosting a three day training series this fall. We need your input! Currently in development, the series would include: Parent as Leaders, Advocacy for Empowerment, Families in Evaluation and the System of Care, and Empowering the Voice of Youth in Erie County. Let us know when you would attend our events. Days, Evenings, Weekends? Would you like to attend the training in one 3 day seminar? Would you rather have the training one day a week for three weeks? Please let us know what would work for YOU! Call our office or email your preferences to: [debbie@compeerbuffalo.org](mailto:debbie@compeerbuffalo.org).



### To our community partners:

We would like to include your educational events in our newsletter. Please submit events by email to

[debbie@compeerbuffalo.org](mailto:debbie@compeerbuffalo.org)

The Federal grant that funds Family Voices Network requires an evaluation to help determine:

If services work for children and families

Whether children and families experience improvement and if the improvements last over time

How the service delivery system can be improved

How to best develop services that are community based, child and family centered, and culturally sensitive \*The University at Buffalo Department of Family Medicine has been contracted to evaluate how Family Voices Network works with families. This evaluation will help find out if services that families receive effectively serve them. Parents or caregivers and youth who participate in the interviews will receive compensation for their time. Examples of questions include:

How satisfied are you with the services you have received?

How do you feel your child is doing at home, school and in the community?

How involved are you with your child\*s service planning and delivery?

What services did you receive?

Once the evaluation project is underway and data is collected from families, the evaluation team will provide brief reports on how our community is doing.

Part-time interviewers will be hired to conduct interviews. If you are interested in evaluation of services, have 3-4 hour periods of time available during the week, have good interpersonal skills, an adaptable and flexible personality, a detail-oriented nature, dependable transportation, and a desire and ability to learn a new computer software system, please email a cover letter and resume to: [jkernan@buffalo.edu](mailto:jkernan@buffalo.edu)

## **Families of Erie County: Congratulations on Summit Day 2005!!!!!!**

May 4, 2005 was an extraordinary day in WNY! A Summit Day press conference was held at the Olmstead Center in Buffalo, in celebration of National Children\*s Mental Health Week.

Erie County took this opportunity to unveil the Family Voices Network, a federal Substance Abuse & Mental Health Service Agency (SAMHSA) initiative dedicated to expanding access to care and reforming the delivery of services and supports for our children, families and youth.

Across the country, Erie County joined 63 other System of Care communities in a nationwide effort to increase awareness, educate the public on system reform, and reduce stigma.

The Family Voices Network partnered with Family Advocates throughout the county, as well as the WNY Children\*s Mental Health Coalition, the Lancaster, Sweet Home and Tonawanda Family Resource Centers, CPC of WNY\*s Amherst site, Families CAN!!, the Senior Class of Stanley G. Falk Cambridge Campus, and our Care Coordination Agencies, to bridge Summit Day with the traditional Green Ribbon Day activities that occur the first Tuesday of May every year.

Summit Day 2005 was a huge success. We had three very special families who shared their stories and described how the System of Care reforms benefited them. Many of our guests, made up of stakeholders from the child serving agencies, other families, and school and faith-based representatives, were caught up in the emotions of the day.

--Wendy Ricigliano, Family Voices Network, Director of Communications

*\*\*Any families that are willing to share their stories are welcome to call 858-2690. \*\**

**70 Barker Street Buffalo, NY 14209 716-884-2599 [www.familiescanwny.org](http://www.familiescanwny.org)**

# SAVE THE DATE!

The Children's Mental Health Coalition of WNY, Inc.  
Annual Conference

October 8, 2005

*Featuring:*

Debrena Jackson Gandy: Best Selling Author of *All the Joy You Can Stand* and *Sacred Pampering Principles* and Dr. R. Bruce Baum: Ed.D. Certified Laughter Leader, Local Humorist/Professor. This conference will be held in Rochester, NY.

**For more information please contact the Children's Mental Health Coalition at  
716-871-8997.**

