

CLAIMING CHILDREN



FEDERATION OF FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH ••• SUMMER 2001

Providing a National Voice for Families of Children with Mental Health Needs

Barbara Huff, Family Member

As I travel throughout the country and meet people outside of the Federation family, I am often asked what I do. Each time I respond I am reminded of the far reaching effects of our work. What began as a dream for a group of families more than a decade ago has developed into a thriving family-run organization that derives its heart and soul from families whose passion it is to make it easier for those who follow.

The Purpose of the Federation

Our capacity as an organization to speak on behalf of children with mental health needs and their families continues to increase. The purpose of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health (FFCMH) – which is the **only** national family-run organization focused exclusively on the needs of children and youth with emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders and their families – is to:

- Focus attention on the unique needs of these children and

youth from the time of their birth through the transition to adulthood.

- Conduct activities to promote access by such children and their families to community-based services and support.
- Inform and encourage efforts of research, prevention, early intervention, education, family supports, transition services, and other services or programs that would benefit such children and their families.
- Provide leadership and develop necessary human and financial resources in the field of children's mental health.

Focus on family participation and support in a system of care is fundamental to the Federation. Therefore, the Federation works to develop and implement policies, legislation, funding mechanisms, and service systems that utilize the strengths of families by:

- Ensuring that they are equal partners in the planning, imple-

(continued on page 2)

INSIDE

<i>A National Voice for Families of Children with Mental Health Needs...</i>	1
<i>The Great Family Reunion.....</i>	4
<i>Message from the President</i>	5
<i>The Vision and Mission of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health.....</i>	6
<i>Policy Initiatives</i>	7
<i>Training and Technical Assistance</i>	12
<i>Youth Involvement.....</i>	14
<i>Research and Evaluation</i>	15
<i>Federation Publications.....</i>	17
<i>Award Winners</i>	18
<i>Becoming a Member of the Federation.....</i>	19



In Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General, it was estimated that 21 percent of U.S. children ages 9 to 17 have a diagnosable mental or addictive disorder associated with at least minimum impairment. This estimate translates into a total of four million children and youth who have a major mental health problem that results in significant impairments at home, at school, and with peers.

The Federation maintains an extensive network that links thousands of families through chapters in every state. This network enables the Federation to connect families with policy makers, agencies, and providers in all the child serving systems in the country. In so doing, it enables these systems to become knowledgeable about the strengths and needs of the children and families they serve and to receive grass roots input on service quality and critical issues.

The Federation (continued from page 1)

mentation, and evaluation of services.

- Viewing the child as a whole person and the family as a whole unit rather than emphasizing the disability.
- Educating and empowering families and children to make decisions about their own lives.
- Encouraging innovative programming that increases options and promotes the integration of services.

The Federation provides an opportunity for change by enabling family members to work with professionals and other interested citizens to improve policies, programs, and services for children with emotional, behavioral, or mental

disorders. The Federation aims to develop a cohesive, enduring union of groups and individuals who will speak with one voice to policy makers, professional organizations, legislators, and the general public about the mental health needs of children and families.

Who Are Our Families?

The families of the Federation come from all walks of life. Emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders cut across all income, educational, racial, ethnic, and religious groups. They are found among single parent and two parent families. They are found in birth, adoptive, blended, and foster families, and in kinship care. Yet, families raising a

(continued on page 3)

Funding Sources for the Federation

The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health operates with funds from federal and state agencies, private foundations, and individual contributions. Funding sources include:

- The Annie E. Casey Foundation has provided funding for infrastructure and organizational development.
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation and Casey Family Programs have supported a variety of projects, focusing primarily on organizing and developing leadership for families with children who are at risk for or who have mental health problems.
- Membership dues, contributions, and our annual conference yield small amounts of unrestricted funds.
- Most of the Federation's technical assistance work is supported by sub-contracts with organizations that receive federal funding to operate national programs or projects in which the Federation is an active partner.
 - ◆ The Child, Adolescent, and Family Branch in the Federal Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), is the funding source for our collaborations with the Technical Assistance Partnership at American Institutes for Research, the National Technical Assistance Center on Children's Mental Health in the Child Development Center at Georgetown University, and ORC Macro International.
 - ◆ The Division of State and Community Systems Development, also in CMHS, directly supports our work with state block grant planning councils as well as our sub-contract with the Targeted Technical Assistance project at the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD).
 - ◆ The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the Department of Education funds our sub-contract with the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice at American Institutes for Research and the Families and Advocates Partnership for Education Project at the PACER Center, Inc.



The Federation (continued from page 2)

child with an emotional, behavioral, or mental disorder have many things in common. They share the need for an accurate assessment of their child's strengths and needs. They seek appropriate therapeutic, education, and recreation programs and other services for their children. Families also need services that support their efforts to help their children learn, develop, and grow within their own homes and communities.

About This Issue of Claiming Children

This issue of *Claiming Children* describes the capacity of the Federation to support our work as family members.

From our vision and mission statement; to our leadership structure; to our core activities (annual conference, technical assistance and training activities, advocacy and policy initiatives, publications, and research), the Federation has the capacity to meet its goal of a better life for children with mental health needs. There is an urgency in our work, if not for our own child then for the children of others. The Federation offers a platform for us to combine our efforts, strength, and passion for change that each of us brings on behalf of children and their families. As you read through the articles in this issue, I invite you to reflect on how the Federation is helping us complete our life's work.

Board of Directors

The Federation's Board of Directors numbers no fewer than 12 and not more than 21 directors. Seventy percent of the directors must be parents and other family members. At least one member of the Board must be a consumer or former consumer of children's mental health services, and at least three members must be members of racial minorities. (Currently, eight different cultural and ethnic backgrounds are represented on the Board.)

In addition, the Board includes at least one representative from each geographic region of the United States:

- Northeast: CT, DE, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT
- Southeast: AL, FL, GA, KY, MD, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV, DC
- North Central: IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI
- South Central: AR, KS, LA, MO, OK, TX
- Northwest: AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY, HI
- Southwest: AZ, CA, CO, NV, NM, UT

The officers of the Federation are elected by the Board and consist of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and member-at-large. All officers must be family members of children whose emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders occurred prior to adulthood. There can be one exemption at any given time, but, the president must always be a family member.

The Executive Committee is comprised of all elected officers and the immediate past president. It has the power to:

- Exercise the authority of the Board in the ongoing management of the Federation, and in emergency situations may hire an executive director.
- Poll the board on issues that require a decision prior to the next Board meeting.
- Designate those persons authorized to disburse funds on behalf of the Federation.

In addition, the Board designates standing committees to carry on the continuing functions of the Federation. Committees may include: Membership, Finance, Development, Diversity, Conference Program, Nominating, Personnel, and Youth.

- The Federation staff includes individuals who are:
- **Full-time and based at the national office.** These individuals carry out a variety of activities and projects.
- **Full-time and based in the field or elsewhere.** These individuals provide technical assistance through Federation projects.
- **Part-time and field-based consultants.** These individuals work on a variety of Federation activities and projects, such as family-driven research teams, parent mentor programs, review teams, etc.

"I have gained a lot of self-advocacy working for the Federation. I like working for the Federation because of all the people I get to speak with on a daily basis - be it a family in crisis or a friendly call from colleagues in the field."

Marion Robinson
FFCMH Administrative
Assistant

"I've always been involved with one advocacy initiative or another. Since discovering the Federation, I have been very happy to be able to use my past experience and skills to be a part of this vital change effort for children and their families."

Michael Kelly
FFCMH Administrative
Assistant



Mark your calendar for the 13th Annual Federation Conference at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, DC, November 30-December 2, 2001. This promises to be a great family celebration!

"My wife and I attended the Federation's 12th Annual Conference. Our experience was wonderful. We are parents of a child with emotional/mental problems. We also work with other children in the community, counsel families, and make referrals to various agencies. [As a result of the conference] my wife and I are even more energized to work with children with mental health problems. The Federation of Families is truly a blessing to our nation."

Rev. James Robinson, ND

The Great Family Reunion

Sandra Spencer, Family Member

For 12 years, the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health has held a national conference in the Washington, DC, area. This conference is different from any others you may have attended. More than 1,000 family members of children with mental health needs as well as providers, researchers, and administrators gather with one goal in mind: Making life better for children and their families.

Like any family gathering, a reunion is a time to exchange stories, celebrate success, offer support and comfort, and share words of encouragement and wisdom. Networking is a key feature of Federation conferences. Saturday night's social event offers opportunities to eat good food, dance to music provided by a live disk jockey, and share cultures with people from across the country.

The opening session always is a big treat. In 2000, a 70-member children's choir from a middle school in Eastern North Carolina opened the conference (see sidebar). In past years, opening perform-

ers have include a gospel choir from Harlem, a group of young African drummers, a Brazilian guitarist, Hawaiian hula dancers, jazz singers, and musicians. The 1998 conference featured a live performance of *Our Young Black Men Are Dying and No One Seems To Care*.

Keynote speakers are inspiring and thought provoking. Federation conferences always have dynamic keynote speakers:

- **LouAnne Johnson** (1999), author of *My Posse Don't Do Homework* and subject of the hit movie *Dangerous Minds*.
- **Judge Glenda Hatchett** (2000) star of the television program, *Judge Hatchett*, which highlights her quest for the fair and ethical courtroom treatment for youth with mental, emotional, or behavioral challenges.
- **Maya Angelou** (1995) poet, movie producer, and author of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and many other books that have topped the best seller charts.
- **Geoffrey Canada** (1998), **Cornell West** (1997), and **Jonathan Kozol** (1996) have been keynote speakers.

Children with mental health problems and their families need support in many areas and from many sources and systems. Federation conference themes focus on these areas of need. Past themes have included juvenile justice, education, cultural competence, mental health, child welfare, and family support and empowerment.

There are plenty of opportunities for learning in more than 25 workshops and plenary sessions on creating, supporting, and sustaining family-run organizations and systems of care. A committee reviews responses to a call for papers and selects workshop presenters. The

(continued on page 5)

Flood Victims Celebrate Their Courage in Song

Hurricane Floyd hit the East Coast of the United States in the fall of 1999 and severely affected thousands of families, including members of WE CARE, the Federation's statewide affiliate in North Carolina. Many lost everything they had. Federation members from around the country sent clothing, school supplies, food, and money. A middle school choir wrote a song and produced a recording telling of their experience and the courage it took to make it through the worst flood of the century. They performed this song called "We'll Arise" at the Federation conference. As they sang, a videotape showed the devastation. It was a moving moment so representative of the support and inspiration that pervades a Federation conference.



A Message from President Gail Daniels

We should carefully read our Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health Vision and Mission Statement sentence by sentence. Periodically, we should return to it and read it again. We should consider how much it is a part of our lives and how we should go about turning our visions into the plans that will ensure that all child-serving systems are engineered to deliver timely, compassionate, culturally competent, respectful, and effective practices for children's mental health, practices that produce immediate results while contributing to sustained positive outcomes.

In support of this vision, the FFCMH serves, with humility and determination, to provide and sustain leadership for a broad and deep nationwide network of family-run organizations.

As we focus on the phrase – “Where do we fit and how do we deliver?” – we must keep in mind that there are thousands of us across the country, striving to ensure that families find and get the right diagnoses for their children and obtain needed services and support so these children grow up resilient...and capable of fulfilling their dreams and potential. We must identify with our collective power to navigate the expansion of resources and opportunities. Our strategy to organize and network should never be underestimated. However,

organization is a must. With organizing and networking comes growth and evolutionary circumstances allowing us to jointly discover and share new models, new technologies, new tools, and new visions.

We must not only recognize the potential that is within each person, regardless of race, gender, age, culture, financial, social, or educational status, but we also must encourage participation from the whole of us: those who are employed within the family organizations and those who volunteer their talents and their time, so that we can continue to network and to better respond to the needs of families requiring guidance, training, support, and personal advocacy. This is how our society should function. There must be a place of dignity, value, purpose, service, occupation, and meaning for all of our citizens.

What we do now is really part of a master plan expanding into a future that will have an influence on our families, communities, institutions, and legislative bodies within a society that will be governed and maintained by our children's children's children. Therefore, we must be patient, committed and consistent (even when it appears that the odds are against us).

We must advocate for what is right, just, and fair. We are part of a great love story and our lives and our mission are divine.

The Great Family Reunion (continued from page 4)

values and philosophy of the Federation require that each proposal include a family member or youth as part of the presenting team. Great care is taken to ensure that presentations are outcome-based, family friendly, culturally competent, and allow for skill-based learning and audience participation.

We take time to recognize and acknowledge outstanding leadership and dedication. The **Claiming Children** and

Making a Difference awards are presented at the Friday evening banquet and silent auction.

Each year, families tell us how much they learn and how much fun they have at Federation conferences. Participants feel renewed, empowered, and refueled. They return home ready to embrace the challenge of improving life and services for our children and their families.



The Vision and Mission of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

Vision of the Federation

Throughout America, there is awakened awareness of the struggles, challenges, and untapped possibilities for children and adolescents with mental health needs. Effective family-driven advocacy ensures that children's mental health remains a highly visible, national priority. Individuals, families, institutions, communities, and legislative bodies at all levels work collaboratively and creatively to promote success for each child. Families find and get the right diagnoses for their children and obtain needed services and support so that these children grow up resilient, emotionally strong, and capable of fulfilling their dreams and potentials. Children thrive at home as well as enjoy full access to beneficial education, medical, mental health, and spiritual resources. They are welcomed and respected in their communities, neighborhoods, schools, and places of worship. Diversity is celebrated. Racism, poverty, and discrimination are no longer barriers to receipt of services nor are they factors in the quality of these services and resulting outcomes.

The concerns and voices of families raising children with mental health needs drive agency and legislative responses and actions. These families connect and speak with passion and the truth of their experience through a state, regional, and national network of family-run organizations. Secure funding, rich talent pools, and broad experience propel these organizations to champion enlightened change processes at federal, state, and local levels. Consequently, when advocacy groups or individual family members visit with their legislators and other policy makers, they enjoy informed, sensitive, and action-directed dialogue. When families speak, people listen.

All child-serving systems are engineered to deliver timely, compassionate, cultur-

ally competent, respectful, and effective practices for children's mental health, practices that produce immediate results while contributing to sustained positive outcomes. Partnered with family-run organizations, these systems are dedicated to anticipating and preparing to meet continuing and emerging needs. They are also accountable and responsive to each and every individual family raising children with mental health needs. In sum, these systems support families to raise their children in dignity and with joy.

Mission of the Federation

In support of this vision, the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health serves, with humility and determination, to provide and sustain leadership for a broad and deep nation-wide network of family-run organizations. We harness the passion and we honor the cultural diversity of our national membership and help focus it as a potent force for change on behalf of children with mental health needs and their families. We are passionate advocates at the national level for the rights of these children and families. We are equally passionate in transferring our insights and experiences to statewide family organizations, local chapters, and other family-run organizations so that skillful and effective advocacy can occur at state and local levels as well. We extend a lifeline to this network so that our partner organizations might draw strength from us and, in turn, better respond to the needs of families requiring guidance, training, support, and personal advocacy. Through our evolving relationships with these organizations, we jointly discover and share new models, new technologies, new tools, and new visions that enrich the capacities of our partners, strengthen our network, and allow us to serve with pride in this leadership role.

The mission of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health requires that the organization work closely with the full array of agencies, systems, programs, and providers that influence or directly provide services and supports to children with mental health needs and their families.



Policy Initiatives

Pat Hunt and Trina W. Osher, Family Members

The Federation's policy goals are:

- To identify, define, and advocate for a national policy agenda based on the experiences of children with mental health needs and their families.
- To educate national policy makers about issues affecting children with mental health needs and their families.
- To develop family leadership capable of effectively participating in establishing and implementing public policies that produce better outcomes for children with mental health needs and their families.

The Federation works to achieve these goals by establishing and promoting a policy agenda of our own, collaborating with other advocates on issues we share in common, providing technical assistance to our affiliates, and facilitating the exchange of information among our affiliates.

Establishing the FFCMH National Policy Agenda

The Federation's annual pre-conference Policy Day is both an educational forum and an advocacy event. Morning workshops provide participants with knowledge and skills to perceive and create opportunities for policy change, learn how they can influence policy, and develop grass roots advocacy networks. Attendees also receive a status report on pending and recent national policy initiatives.

Policy Day's afternoon forum affords participants an opportunity to shape the Federation's national policy agenda. Work groups identify problems families are facing and suggest national policy solutions for the Federation to consider. The Federation's current national policy agenda includes the following topics:

- Restraint and seclusion.
- Co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.
- Mental health and juvenile justice.
- Special education and safe schools.
- Custody relinquishment.
- Statewide family network development.
- Funding children's mental health.

Collaborating with Other Advocates

The Federation is formally connected to two well-established coalitions.

The Federation is one of more than 40 members of the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG). The MHLG affords us opportunities to exchange political intelligence, form cooperative advocacy efforts, coordinate strategies, and discuss public policy issues related specifically to mental health. Our voice reminds other members of the concerns and needs of children, youth, and families.

The Federation is one of approximately 100 national disability organizations that belong to the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD). CCD members work together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. Our active membership on the Education Task Force ensures that full attention is paid to the mental health of children and that children with serious emotional disturbance and their families are equitably treated in federal education laws and policies.

The Federation informally joins with other groups to work on specific issues as they come to the forefront. Our current informal coalition work focuses

(continued on page 8)

The Federation is fully involved in the national policy arena concerning children, youth, and families. This is accomplished through direct interaction with members of Congress and their staffs, as necessary, to provide information and explain critical issues.

Participating in advocacy coalitions extends our influence and helps to keep us abreast of critical policy developments in Congress and federal agencies.



Policy Initiatives (continued from page 7)

on juvenile justice, school violence, privacy, and seclusion and restraint.

Relationships with Federal Policy Makers

The Federation's national office staff (along with the Policy Information Network, our grass roots network of families) inform national policy through direct interaction with members of Congress and their staffs. Through meetings, letters, phone calls, and public hearings we provide information and explain how the issues being debated in Congress affect constituents. Such presentations have played a significant role in the establishment of the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program, the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), increases in the State Mental Health Block Grant, and promotion of the Family Opportunity Act.

The Federation has built positive working relationships with staff in leadership positions in the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and the Federal Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS). We are called upon frequently when these agencies seek public input and comment on issues of importance to children, youth, and families.

Exchanging information

The Federation's Policy Information Network (PIN) links families with an interest in policy who belong to our state affiliates or the Native American Tribes that comprise Inter-Tribal Voices of Children and Families. Communication between our national office and families on the front line is fundamental to all other policy work.

The Federation draws on the first-hand knowledge of family experience to describe widespread problems that require a national policy response. Ideas for solutions to these problems also come from families working at the grass roots level who know what is working well. Personal stories gathered through the PIN form the basis of testimony presented at public hearings to justify policy change. The PIN lets families and family-run organizations share policy changes occurring in their own states – both the good and the troubling developments – seek advice and support, and learn from one another's successes and failures. Being at the hub of the PIN allows the national office staff to be well informed and responsive to emerging trends and critical issues.

Through the PIN, the Federation disseminates information about the policies, programs, practices and research that underpin systems of care and other reforms affecting children with mental health needs and their families.

Providing Technical Assistance to Affiliates

In the fall of 2000, the Federation and four other national organizations concerned with mental health policy joined forces to create the Targeted Technical Assistance project. The project provides guidance for all stakeholders – including families raising children with mental health needs – in the development and implementation of public mental health system policy. Drawing on a network of policy experts available through five national mental health organizations, the Targeted Technical Assistance project is developing policy documents and tools and offer on-site technical assistance related to policy formulation and implementation, decision making, leadership development, and strategic planning. For the first year, the Federation is developing materials on recruiting, supporting, and

(continued on page 9)

The Federation recognizes that much can be done in partnership with federal agency leaders to influence the implementation of national children's mental health policy. For example, the Federation's president and staff served as advisors and authors for the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health in 1999, and contributed to the action agenda by attending the Conference on Children's Mental Health in 2000.



Policy Initiatives (continued from page 8)

retaining an authentic family voice on state mental health block grant planning councils, and is planning to formulate principles for family involvement for youth with mental health needs in the Juvenile Justice system

The Federation's 2001 National Policy Agenda

Ongoing Federation Policy Initiatives

During the past two years, we have made progress on several of our national policy agenda topics. But there is still work to be done as the following status report indicates.

Restraint and seclusion. The inappropriate use of restraint and seclusion can lead to serious injury, psychological trauma, and even death. Currently, there are no national uniform standards governing restraint and seclusion use in facilities that serve children and youth with mental health needs. The Federation is encouraged that federal agencies are working on regulations that would apply to a broad group of health care facilities. To protect children and end tragic abuse, laws and regulations must:

- Limit the use of restraints and seclusion to emergency safety situations.
- Require face-to-face evaluation prior to initiation and during the application of restraints or seclusion.
- Require the reporting of deaths and serious injuries to state protection and advocacy agencies.
- Permit monitoring of facilities by parents, families, and others.
- Ensure staff training on preventive practices, including de-escalation techniques and crisis management.
- Encourage best practices, including “restraint free” facilities.

Co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders. Youth

with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders have multiple health and social needs requiring services that cut across several systems of care. No single system is equipped to help these youth effectively. We are encouraged that the recent reauthorization of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration included a program for combined treatment for adults and youth with co-occurring disorders. Congress's next step should be to appropriate funding that supports such a program and allow SAMHSA to:

- Encourage states to commingle some funds from the mental health and substance abuse block grants to provide integrated treatment for youth with co-occurring disorders.
- Streamline the reporting and auditing requirements for block grant funds that are used to provide integrated treatment for youth with co-occurring disorders.
- Collect data about youth with co-occurring disorders; the services, supports, and treatment programs serving them; and their long-term functional outcomes.

Mental health and juvenile justice. For more than 25 years, federal law has protected children and youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. Federal law recognizes the state's obligation to address the developmental needs of young people by requiring that children be separated from adults and taking a rehabilitative rather than a punitive approach to the treatment of juvenile offenders. Juvenile crime bills introduced in the last few years have been harmful to children and fail to address their mental health needs. Congress should enact juvenile justice legislation that:

- Specifically designates funds for prevention, early intervention, and rehabilitation services.

(continued on page 10)

The Federation has strong relationships with leadership in the Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Federation staff provide input on critical policy issues by sitting on many task forces and panels convened by these agencies individually and collectively.

During the past two years, we have made progress on several of our national policy agenda topics. But there is still work to be done.



The Individuals with Disability Education Act was substantially rewritten in 1997. Regulations issued in 1999 include detailed provisions regarding disciplinary actions, suspensions, and expulsions as well as requirements for functional behavioral assessments, positive behavioral interventions, and strategies and supports in the general curriculum.

Policy Initiatives (continued from page 9)

- Protects the rights of children and youth and ensures their health and safety while under the jurisdiction of juvenile justice authorities.
- Continues to require states to address the disproportionate confinement of minority youth.
- Ensures that the mental health needs of all children and youth in the juvenile justice system are identified and addressed in a prompt and appropriate manner.

Special education and safe schools.

There have been repeated attempts in Congress to weaken protections in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) related to discipline and ensuring a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities whose behavior is disruptive. The Federation, in coalition with many other disability advocacy groups, has worked diligently to prevent these proposals from becoming law. Congress must:

- Maintain the current federal provision of a free, appropriate public education.
- Ensure that increased state flexibility to implement the law does not compromise any of the protections afforded by the 1997 amendments.
- Increase federal funding for special education.

Custody relinquishment. Requiring parents to relinquish custody in order to obtain essential mental health services and supports for their children wastes public funds and destroys families. The Family Opportunity Act, currently before Congress, could help alleviate this problem by enabling families to “buy-into” Medicaid for children who meet the SSI eligibility criteria except for their income. It will not solve the problem entirely, however. Congress

still needs to enact legislation ensuring that:

- States cannot require parents to transfer legal custody of a child with a mental health problem for the sole purpose of obtaining necessary treatment, services, or out-of-home placements, or to enable the child to become eligible for Medicaid.
- States are allowed and encouraged to use federal funds to pay for home-based and community-based services for children and their families to prevent or forestall temporary out-of-home placement when appropriate.
- States are required to develop community-based services to help families raise children who have mental, emotional, or behavioral disorders.

Statewide family network development.

Statewide family networks are critical to achieving full participation of families in planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating services for children with emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders. During the past 15 years, there has been increasing evidence to suggest that engagement of trained and empowered family members is an essential ingredient of systems of care, and that it can result in increased family satisfaction for family units and better outcomes for children. Resources to build and sustain core operations for such networks are sorely lacking. Congress needs to establish a permanently funded program of statewide family networks to:

- Foster collaboration among families and others to ensure effective services for children with mental health needs.
- Promote leadership and management skills development for board members and staff of statewide family networks.

(continued on page 11)



Policy Initiatives (continued from page 10)

- Provide information and training specifically for families raising children with mental health needs.
- Use evidence of effective treatments, services, and supports to promote needed system changes to achieve better outcomes.

Congress also must:

- Appropriate sufficient funds to ensure there is at least one statewide family network run by families raising children with emotional or behavioral disorders in every state and territory and for at least 10 Native American family organizations; and
- Appropriate funds for a national technical assistance center to be the hub connecting statewide family networks, providing them with training, technical assistance, and information on critical and emerging issues and national trends.

Funding for children's mental health.

The Community Mental Health Services Performance Partnership Block Grants to states are insufficient to provide essential and appropriate community-based care to meet the needs of children with emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders and their families. While encouraged by the outcomes of the Children's Mental Health Services Program, we lament the fact that the vast majority of children who need mental health services live in communities that have not yet developed an adequate array of community-based services and supports or systems of care. The federal government must help states fill this significant gap without diverting scarce resources from mental health programs currently serving other populations. Congress must:

- Increase funding for the Community Mental Health Performance Partnership Block Grant.
- Require states to spend a third of their

total Community Mental Health Performance Partnership Block Grant funds on community-based services and supports for children with mental health needs and their families.

- Increase funding for the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Programs to \$100 Million.

Policy Topics Under Development

Many new topics emerged at the November 2000 Policy Day. Concern for three topics was very widespread. Therefore, the following three topics are currently under consideration for development into formal policy positions for our organization. They are:

- **Native American family access to services.** Native American children, youth, and their families cannot access certain funding for necessary services and supports, training, education, and advocacy. National office policy staff plan to work closely with Native American families to develop this agenda item.
- **Restricting family access to youth in care.** Parents who are seeking hospitalization, residential care, or "level" type programs for their children, often are asked to accept conditions that interfere with physical access to, and/or communication with, their children. In order to preserve their family relationships, parents may have to choose between the urgently needed service and the undue restrictions that interfere with their relationship.
- **Comprehensively serving children and families when a parent has mental illness.** Parents who are adult mental health consumers and are raising children who also have mental health needs require additional supports to get their needs met, retain custody of their children, and care for their children.

"Thank you for providing family members with tools to train other families on IDEA. Your remarks were so helpful and demonstrated to legislators that families are organized on a national level and are a voice to be heard. Your presence was a great example of the valuable assistance that the Federation provides in helping us build a network of families across the state that will address our issues."

Paige McDonald, NY



The Federation trains and supports a technical assistance field team that helps family-run organizations address their specific needs.

“Leadership for many family members is the result of a personal empowerment process, in which the journey begins with family members claiming their strengths and overcoming personal challenges that prevented a better life for themselves and their families. And while many family members on this empowerment journey are not seeking leadership, they model behaviors that other family members similarly situated can identify with, learn from, and replicate. Thus, many new family member leaders are born and they are representative of every type of community, with various cultures, races, ethnicities, languages, gender orientations, and socioeconomic backgrounds.”

Mary Telesford, DC

Training and Technical Assistance

Elaine Slaton, Family Member

The Federation visions itself as a lifeline to the deep, diverse, and broad network of family-run organizations across the country. The essence of that lifeline is the Federation’s training and technical assistance. Regardless of the form it takes, Federation training and technical assistance focuses on supporting family members and family-run organizations in leadership roles, working to make systems more compassionate and responsive to the needs of children and youth with mental health issues.

Principles for Training and Technical Assistance

Four key principles shape our approach to developing and delivering training and technical assistance. It is field-based, developed by teams of family members, developed in partnership with others, and it should be accessible to all families.

Technical assistance should be field based. Through our field-based technical assistance and training we bring the expertise of families with real experience to the forefront. This key perspective comes from diverse families creating knowledge, identifying lessons learned, and developing creative strategies in their own communities. Highly valued and valid support for family leaders and family-run organizations comes from other family leaders and organizations with similar experiences. Our best technical assistance providers are family members working and living in the field.

Technical assistance should be developed by teams of families. Teamwork ensures that every bit of family expertise is tapped, resulting in a product that is useful to a wide variety of stakeholders. Extensive grass roots networking enables the Federation to draw on family leaders from many walks of life

in creating teams to tackle critical and emerging issues.

Technical assistance should be developed in partnership with others. Families and family-run organizations can accomplish much more if advocacy and systems change work is done in partnership with professionals and technical experts. The partnerships formed to develop and deliver training and technical assistance expand the knowledge base of professionals and families and promote the value of partnering at community, tribal, and state levels. We provide parent-professional partnership training.

Technical assistance should be accessible to all families. Federation families rarely say “no” to one another. While funding can limit travel, materials dissemination, and other tangible forms of training and technical assistance, we make it a point to be available to help families grapple with and develop strategies to address the challenges they face in organizational development, policy reform, systems change, and advocacy. We find creative ways of reducing costs to make our training and technical assistance as accessible as possible to every family organization.

Training and Technical Assistance Topics

The Federation currently is involved in a number of technical assistance and training areas. Brief descriptions of selected topics follow.

Family Leadership Development

The Federation supports developing family leaders through peer-to-peer mentoring, typically offering advice and support by telephone. Leadership also is developed at national meetings and through formal curricula.

(continued on page 13)



Training and Technical Assistance (continued from page 12)

The Family Strengths Institute held in 2000 for the *Starting Early Starting Smart* program exemplifies family leadership development. In preparation for a national meeting that would bring families and professionals together, experienced family leaders from the field mentored and supported young family members. Together they formed an advisory committee that planned and implemented the Institute's agenda and oversaw the development of a family involvement guide. Not only was the Institute a huge success, but the young family members gained new skills and competencies that will assist them as they work in their communities.

The Federation has made significant contributions to the development of several national and community-based leadership training programs, such as the Communities CAN Leadership Training for professionals and families and a local training for families in Houston.

Family Networking and Organizational Development

The Federation supports family networking and organizational development by providing networking and outreach to diverse populations and by training family organizations in issues of infrastructure development, business management (such as board trainings, policies and procedures development, strategic planning, accountability strategies), and creative problem solving.

Federation support to American Indian and Alaskan Native families in their creation of Intertribal Voices of Children and Families exemplifies how we support the development of family organizations. That work included outreach to Native families with information about and support for participating in national

meetings, a focus group done in collaboration with the National Indian Child Welfare Association to identify technical assistance needs of Native families, logistical support to help them meet in person and by conference call, and Board training to assist in the creation of policies and procedures.

Families Driving Systems Change

The Federation provides training and technical assistance to keep the family voice strong and central to systems change efforts in this country. Our work is designed to help increase the capacity of professionals, policy makers, and other decision makers to effectively engage families in their work. For family-run organizations and others we offer consultation and on-site meeting facilitation, focus groups, seminars, and workshops on understanding and utilizing a wide range of information in making policy decisions. We have produced written documents, guidebooks, and monographs (these are described elsewhere in this newsletter).

"The World of Evaluation: How To Make It Yours" exemplifies how the Federation puts its four principles of technical assistance into action when developing and delivering training and technical assistance. This three-course curriculum was generated using a field-based, family professional team. The curriculum is accessible for families from all walks of life.

For More Information

If you have questions or would like to access the Federation's training and technical assistance, please contact the national office in Alexandria, VA at 703-684-7710 or ffcmh@ffcmh.org.

"I am writing to let you know how helpful you were during the site visit closing session. I had been struggling to understand and formulate what needed to be different about our program. Your comments regarding what should be available for any parent of a child with mental health needs made everything fall into place for me."

Mary Armstrong, FL



Voices of Youth

Youth Involvement

Kenny Rodgers, Youth Advocate

Just as the Federation of Families was getting started, I was in the process of recovering from a complete emotional breakdown. This breakdown was caused by a special education teacher tying me up with restraining belts and locking me in a closet for 30 minutes. My parents were frantic. They needed help. They had lots of questions and no one seemed to have any answers.

Mom went to the first Federation of Families meeting in Washington, D.C. Well, I think it was actually in Alexandria, Virginia. But still, she connected with a lot of parents who also were struggling with their children. They put a large piece of paper on the wall and they wrote their children's name on the paper. Mom wrote my name real big and took a picture. She brought the picture to me and told me that things were going to change. We had no idea how much.

From that time on, I have literally grown up in the Federation. Mom was able to talk with parents all across the United States and compare notes on modifications, medications, diagnoses, etc. Each year she would go off to Washington and come back charged up and ready to go for another year.

When I was in the 7th grade, I came to Washington with Mom and helped her present a workshop. I was scared to death. The room was packed and it was hard to breath. I remember reading my part and then getting up and going back to my room. When I came out again, everyone was friendly and told me how brave I was. Bravery had nothing to do with it. Mom said that I had been getting a free ride long enough and now it was my turn to give back. But I have to admit, I felt good when the other parents talked to me and thanked me for sharing. It made me feel that I had a part in helping other kids all across the United States.

After that, I came to Washington with Mom every year and helped present workshops. On the 10th anniversary of the Federation, I even got to give a thank you speech. This was no small task. This was right after lunch and the room was packed. I got seven standing ovations and all I could think was I wish these people would quit interrupting me so I could finish my thank you. I have since learned that a standing ovation is a good thing.

Over the years, the Federation has allowed me to step out and encourage other families by sharing my experiences or information that I have gathered. They taught me how to lobby at the Capitol and encouraged me to talk to them about the issues that I felt strongly about – like relinquishment of parental rights and shorter time in the juvenile justice detention centers for youth with mental health issues. They have recommended me to be on panels dealing with children's mental health. The Federation has helped me speak all over the United States about children's mental health issues. This has been great fun. I have met some wonderful people and have been encouraged by the strength and courage that their families have.

I know that without the help of the Federation of Families I would not have been able to attend my high school, much less graduate in the top 15 percent of my class. I am even in my third quarter at Film/Video College with a 3.6 grade point average. But that is another article.

When I first became involved with the Federation, there were no other youth coming to the conferences. Now, it is not unusual to have several workshops with youth presenters and panels. I hope that the Federation takes the next big step and includes a track just for the youth. I have some ideas on that if you want to call me.

(continued on page 16)

Youth Committee Leadership Opportunities 2001

- Provide articles for the "Claiming Children" newsletter.
- Develop process for nomination of "Celebration of Youth Award."
- Be well informed on issues that are affecting children and families for the purpose of training others, becoming consultants, and providing information to families and children.
- Lead the way to establishing partnerships between young people, families, and professionals.
- Present at conferences.
- Engage in fundraising activities to promote the committee.
- Become actively involved in other committees and organizations as they relate to children's mental health.



Research and Evaluation

Trina Osher, Family Member

The Federation's mission of ensuring active and effective family voice and participation in decision making concerning systems serving children with mental health issues and their families extends into research and evaluation. The Federation actively engages in partnerships with formally trained researchers and evaluators to design and conduct research and evaluation on issues of interest and importance to families and to influence research agendas and funding. This work takes several forms, and they will be described in the following sections.

Publishing

The Federation publishes monographs, chapters in books, and articles in research journals that infuse a family perspective into the field of research and evaluation. Our efforts to change how researchers think about and work with families began with a chapter on family perspectives in a book on ethics in mental health research on children. The monograph, *New Roles for Families in Systems of Care*, demonstrated that family members were capable of conducting extensive interviews and document reviews and compiling this data into clear findings and recommendations. Federation staff and members contributed to the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health and the Conference on Children's Mental Health that resulted in *A National Action Agenda*.

Collaborating with Researchers and Evaluators

The Federation collaborates with researchers and evaluators to ensure that studies are sound and useful and treat our children and families with dignity and respect. Increasingly, researchers and evaluators are inviting Federa-

tion staff and members to serve on advisory and oversight committees and to participate in doing the work. In this capacity, we participate in establishing logic models for research projects, review data collection instruments, conduct focus groups and interviews, discuss the interpretation of results, and present findings from these studies.

Commenting on Research Papers

The Federation provides commentary on research papers delivered at national conferences in order to create a general awareness and respect for what family members think of research studies and the applicability of results to improving the quality of services and eventually our life experiences. The Federation's involvement promotes constructive dialog with researchers and familiarizes families with the research community.

Research and evaluation results are a powerful advocacy tool. But, in order to use them, family members must know how to read research articles and use the results to support the policies and practices for which they are advocating. *The World of Evaluation: How To Make It Yours*, a curriculum developed to do just that, is described in another article in this issue. Partnering with researchers in the development and teaching of this curriculum has taught us that the community of formally trained researchers needs to reorient its values and develop new skills to be able to work with the families we have trained.

The Research and Training Center on Family Support at Portland State University has invited the Federation to assist them in designing a curriculum to train researchers and evaluators to work in partnership with family members. We hope this partnership will result in a companion curriculum to our evaluation training program for families.

(continued on page 16)

- Federation staff have published articles in numerous mental health journals.
- Among these are the *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, the *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, the *Journal of Behavioral Health Services and Research*, *Reaching Today's Youth*, and *Behavioral Health-care Tomorrow*.



The Youth Committee needs more ideas to share in the Youth section of Claiming Children. If you have editorials on youth work, or art, poetry or personal or fictional stories that you would like to share or if you are interested in being on the Youth Committee; please contact: Stephen Easter, Youth Committee, FFCMH, 1101 King Street, Suite 420, Alexandria, VA 22314.

"We took the World of Evaluation: How To Make It Yours training outside the room. We talked about it in the hallways, in the bathroom, and during meals."

Training Participant, MO

Youth Involvement (continued from page 14)

All I can say is that without the help and support of the Federation of Families, I would be sitting in the middle of my bed watching videos instead of out in the world making videos. I want my videos to help raise awareness of children's mental health issues.

About the Youth Committee

Stephen Easter of Boise, ID, is the chair of the Federation's Youth Committee. Stephen is a 20-year-old sibling of a young man with emotional challenges. He has assisted his family in advocacy activities through state and national

Federation activities for the past 10 years. As a college student, Stephen is focused on working with young people at risk. Through the Idaho Federation, he has been actively assisting youth seeking support on mental health and substance issues. He demonstrates strong advocacy and leadership abilities.

Stephen wishes to thank and acknowledge the Youth Committee members for the work that they have done prior to his joining the Board: **Julie LaMonaca**, OR, chair; **Angela Nelson**, IL, *Claiming Children* liaison; **Jessika Glick**, RI; **Sean Hudson**, NM; **Danielle Smith**, KS; and **Antonio Chambers**, GA.

Research and Evaluation (continued from page 15)

Designing and Conducting Research

Our newest and perhaps our boldest undertaking is designing and conducting a study of how family members are experiencing systems of care. The Federation and ORC Macro, Intl. are collaborating on a family-driven research

project to examine some aspects of how families are experiencing systems of care. The perspective that drives this study is that systems of care need to make sure that families have the information they need about all the options so that they can choose and follow their own path to healing. The research team includes family members, youth, and researchers from diverse backgrounds and communities. The entire study – including determining the study questions, selecting data collection tools, securing approval from institutional review boards, training data collectors, collecting and analyzing data, and preparing a report of findings – is being designed and conducted by this team. Project completion is expected in three years.

The work we are doing in research and evaluation is shifting the paradigm from one where families are the subjects of study to one where families take leadership and responsibility for the quality of the studies done to learn about us, our children, and the services and system we use. This will transform the way research and evaluation on children's mental health is conducted in the future.

Resource

Family Participation in Evaluating Systems of Care, published in Volume 9 (Number 1) of the *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, was the Federation's first formal research collaboration. Federation staff, researchers from Macro International, Inc., and a mental health project administrator designed and conducted a study documenting the participation of family members in evaluating the activities of 22 system of care grant communities from the perspectives of family members, evaluators, and project directors. Focus groups conducted in communities where family participation was perceived as high by all three groups revealed that high levels of family involvement improved the quality of the data collection and the research effort overall.



Federation Publications

Claiming Children

The Federation's newsletter is published several times a year. Each issue focuses on a specific area of interest to families raising children with mental health needs. Seventeen thousand copies of *Claiming Children* are distributed in Spanish and English to all members, chapters, and state organizations.

A Family Advocate's Guide: Managed Behavioral Health Care for Children and Youth

This 40-page guide, written jointly by the Federation and the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, offers principles on how managed care should work for children with mental, emotional or behavioral disorders. (Also available in Spanish.)

Your Family and Managed Care

A companion to the *Family Advocate's Guide*, this clearly written 16-page booklet explains the workings, advantages, and pitfalls of managed care for children with mental, emotional, or behavioral disorders. (Also available in Spanish.)

Learning from Colleagues: Family/Professional Partnerships Moving Forward Together

A product of the Peer Technical Assistance Network, this 48-page monograph presents research and commentary on the issues involved in utilizing a family/professional partnership systems approach in situations involving children who have developed or are at risk of developing serious emotional, behavioral, or mental health disturbances and their families.

Family Guide to Systems of Care for Children with Mental Health Needs

A collaboration between the Federation and Vanguard Communications, Inc., this bilingual (Spanish and English) booklet is published by the Caring for Every Child's Mental Health: Communities Together Campaign sponsored by the Center for Mental Health Services.

Staying Together: Preventing Custody Relinquish for Children's Access to Mental Health Services

This 32-page advocate's guide offers several suggestions for state policies to reduce the practice of requiring families who have exhausted all their insurance and private resources to relinquish custody of their children in order to get mental health treatment paid for with public funds.

Offering Technical Assistance to Native Families: Clues From a Focus Group

This 24-page report provides information about the culturally specific technical assistance needs of Native American families.

Blamed and Ashamed

This unique monograph documents the treatment experiences of youth with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders from the perspective of the youth and their families.

Opportunities for Parental Involvement in Special Education Afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997

This tool for families is based on excerpts relating to parent involvement that are taken from Public Law 105-17 (known as IDEA '97). Using a table format, it presents suggestions for how parents can responsibly take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the referenced sections of the law. (Also available in Spanish.)

New Roles for Families in Systems of Care

Volume I of the 1998 series of monographs, *Systems of Care: Promising Practices in Children's Mental Health*, provides background on how families raising children with mental health needs have found and developed their voice to become strong partners and assertive leaders in developing a better system of care. (The Executive Summary of this and the six other volumes in the 1998 series also are available in Spanish.)

Why Children Are Not Little Adults: Making Managed Behavioral Health Care Appropriate for Children and Youth

This handout suggests what managed behavioral health care should do to be responsive to the developmental stages of childhood, the central role of families in raising and caring for children, and the variety of agencies typically serving children.

Principles of Family Support

This handout defines family supports and describes how to provide them in order to help families maintain close involvement with their children (even when they are in out-of-home placement) and to help families when their children are ready to return home.

How to Order

For ordering information, contact the Federation headquarters at 1101 King Street, Suite 420, Alexandria, VA 22314, 703-684-7710.



Award Winners

Each year at the Federation Conference, awards are given to individuals who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to improving the lives of children with mental health needs and their families. Following are brief introductions to the award winners for 2000.

President's Award



Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota was honored for his compassion, wisdom, and vision in working to improve mental health services for youth within the juvenile justice system. Wellstone, a long-

time advocate for children and a champion of the fight against mental illness, introduced the Mental Health Juvenile Justice Act, a comprehensive bill to address the failure of the juvenile justice system to identify and treat children with mental health or substance abuse disorders. The legislation takes a community-based approach toward identifying and treating children with mental health or substance abuse disorders who come into contact with the juvenile justice system.

Claiming Children Award

Chris Spicer, a parent of a child with mental health needs, as well as a foster parent for persons with developmental delays, was awarded the **Claiming Children** award, which honors a family member. For many years, Spicer resided in Lane County, Oregon, where she started the first support group for families of children with mental health needs. At the state level, she was a voice

for children and their families in the development of the Intensive Services Rule, which restructured children's mental health services and established a new system of care throughout the state.

"Her legacy will live on because of the love, care, commitment, and concern Chris demonstrated," Judy Rinkin, a friend of Spicer's stated. "Lane County has a new system of care because of Chris' work, her never-say-no attitude, and her perseverance when times looked very bleak for her, her son, and other family members."

Chris Spicer passed away in October 2000.

Making a Difference Award



Brenda Scafidi, director of Child and Youth Services for the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, has been presented the **Making a Difference** award for her professional contributions to

the field of children's mental health.

Dr. Scafidi was one of the main authors of the System of Care Grant in Mississippi. Because of her support, the Department of Mental Health contracts with MS-FAA for several programs, including Family to Family Crisis Support, Family Time Out Respite, and Developing Families as Allies which provides education and support.

According to **Tessie Schweitzer**, "Brenda is one of the best. She never fails to consult families and the MS-FAA staff when planning new programs. She makes sure that the family voice is always heard and that family partnerships and cultural diversity are a part of every training."

The Federation also honored **Suzanne Brown** for her faithful dedication to ensuring kind, expert, and safe child care services at the Federation's Annual Conferences.

New Membership Categories

Becoming a Member of the Federation

The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health has a new membership structure. During the past several months, membership committee and Federation staff members have listened to members across the country about our member enrollment and support processes. Based on what we've heard, we have restructured in an effort to be more efficient and more responsive to you, our members. You may find as you review the following information that a category to which you belong has been eliminated. Have no fear! You will have an option to make necessary changes on your next renewal date.

In addition to three personal categories – Individual, Youth, and Family – there are now three organizational categories. A description of organization membership categories follows.

State Organization: Only one organization per state will be recognized as a state organization after its application is reviewed and approved by the Federation's Board of Directors. These are family-directed organizations that:

- Endorse and promote the Federation's mission and philosophy.
- Exist solely to address the needs of children and youth with mental health issues and their families.
- Have demonstrated capacities to link with other chapters throughout the state and advocate for children and youth with mental health needs and their families.

These organizations are required to use the name "Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health" on their **letterhead and on brochures**, but **not** necessarily as part of their organizational name (e.g., Keys for Networking, Inc./Kansas Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health; Georgia

Parent Support Network, State Organization of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health). Additional details are available from the Federation.

Chapters: Chapters are recognized after their signed agreement forms and annual dues of \$100 are received in the Federation's national office. These are family-directed organizations that:

- Endorse and promote the Federation's mission and philosophy.
- Exist solely to address attention to the needs of children and youth with mental health issues and their families.
- Coordinate and collaborate with their state organization.

These organizations identify themselves as a "chapter" of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. Additional details are available from the Federation.

Partner Organizations: This new membership category is for all organizations that are not Chapters or State Organizations, but wish to endorse and partner with the Federation through membership. The dues structure is as follows:

- With an annual budget of \$500,000 or less – \$150 annual dues.
- With an annual budget of more than \$500,000 – \$250 annual dues.

One element of Federation membership will not change – the Federation's commitment to making membership available to all. Therefore, individuals, youth, and families of children with mental health issues who are unable to pay may submit a membership form with a notation that they are unable to pay.

(continued on page 20)

• FFCMH National Office Staff

• Executive Director

• Barbara Huff

• Board of Directors

• President

• Gail Daniels, Washington, DC

• Vice President

• Barbara Sample, Billings, MT

• Secretary

• Sandra Spencer, Greenville, NC

• Treasurer

• Jane Adams, Topeka, KS

• Board Members

- Pedro Briones, Washington, DC
- Sharon Brown, Houston, TX
- Antonio Chambers, Atlanta, GA
- Kathy Dennis, Chicago, IL
- Stephen Easter, Boise, ID
- Lucille Eber, LaGrange, IL
- David Fassler, Burlington, VT
- Karen Hart, Monterey, CA
- Gene Karp, Arlington, VA
- Julie LaMonaca, Billings, MT
- Ira Lourie, Rockville, MD
- Neal Mazer, Santa Barbara, CA
- Angela Nelson, Chicago, IL
- Sue Smith, Atlanta, GA
- AngelaVaughan-Lee, Baltimore, MD

• Board Consultants

- Al Duchnowski, Tampa, FL
- Barbara Friesan, Portland, OR

- *Claiming Children* is edited and produced by Warger, Eavy & Associates. Trina Osher serves as the Federation editor. Address correspondence regarding the newsletter to the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health at 1101 King Street, Suite 420, Alexandria, VA 22314.

• <http://www.ffcmh.org>

- The publication is supported through a subcontract with the National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health, Georgetown University Child Development Center, funded by the federal Center for Mental Health Services' Child, Adolescent and Family Branch, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.



Become a member of the Federation. See Membership Form in the center insert of this issue.

Becoming a Member of the Federation (continued from page 19)

Frequently Asked Questions

How do we officially become a chapter of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health?

Submit both your signed agreement and your annual dues to the Federation's National Office.

How do we officially become a state organization of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health?

Obtain an application kit from the Federation. Submit the completed application and all required addendum items to the Federation. Your application will be reviewed by the membership committee and voted on at the next Board meeting. You will be notified in writing when a decision is made by the Board.

How do chapters and state organizations keep the Federation's official contact list updated?

Submit a signed contact revision form to the Federation's National Office.

How will we know when to pay our dues again?

You will receive a reminder by mail each year when your membership is due. If you have questions about your renewal date, call the Federation office.

How many individual memberships come with chapter or state organization status?

None. Individual memberships do not qualify for chapter or state organization status. However, as a chapter or state organization, your organization will be entitled to one vote and one member rate registration for the Federation's annual conference.

**FEDERATION OF FAMILIES
FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH**

1101 King Street, Suite 420 • Alexandria, VA 22314