

# Family Connections

Volume 2, Issue 4

April 2009  
Alcohol Awareness Month!

## What is Family-Driven Care?

The Illinois Federation of Families is a chapter of a national organization called the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. NFF/IFF promotes the concept of **family-driven care**. Family-driven care means that families have primary decision-making power in the care of their children and also play an influential role in the policies and practices of agencies. These agencies are not only small private agencies, but large public/state agencies that influence how money is distributed and policies are carried out.

Family-driven care is a popular buzz word in children and teen mental health and substance abuse. State and private agencies are beginning to recognize the importance of family influence in how they deliver services. Illinois is moving along in the same direction. Families are becoming increasingly involved in children's mental health. The Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership, which is a legislated advocacy group, includes parents who have children with mental health needs, at all levels of its administrative structure and on its statewide committees. IFF participates in some of those committees and also employs parents who have significant experience raising children with mental

health needs. Although mental health has led the charge in Illinois, as far as parent involvement, that tide is changing. Parents all across the state are stepping forward to get involved in having an impact on the way adolescent substance abuse services are delivered in their communities and in the state.

Many agencies are becoming increasingly motivated to include families in some of the decision-making because they recognize that good outcomes for their programs depend on family involvement. These days agency funding is moving toward being based on proving that the services they provide work. Agencies need statistics that show their programs work. The trend toward Evidenced-Based Practices (EBP) is an example of this (see March 2009 newsletter for more information on EBP's). Families can have a significant influence on services and policy, because they know what works for families and what the limitations are for families. Agencies also recognize that if they want to have good outcomes, they have to have families that are invested in services. Family buy in is one key to success.

See how it's flowing together? Agencies are recognizing that increased fam-



ily involvement means their services become more effective which means their outcomes are better which means they can keep their funding (or get more) which means they can provide more services. Truthfully different agencies and different areas of the state do incorporate parents better than other agencies and other areas of the state. But the good news is that the trend has started in Illinois in both mental health and in substance abuse. There is no time like the present to get involved in changing and improving services to families in Illinois!

More information go to: <http://icmhp.org> for the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership, [www.iffcmh.net](http://www.iffcmh.net) for the Illinois Federation of Families, [www.ffcmh.org](http://www.ffcmh.org) for the National Federation of Families and <http://systemsofcare.samhsa.gov> for information on national trends in Family-Driven Care.

## Quote of the Month

Whatever they grow up to be, they are still our children and the one most important of all the things we can give to them is unconditional love. Not a love that depends on anything at all, except that they are our children.

-Rosaleen Dickson

## Inside this issue:

Family Driven Care 1

National Dialogue 2

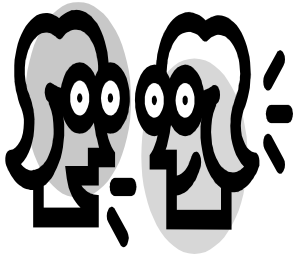
Parent Meeting 2

Parent Conference 2

Events 3

Underage Drinking 3

Teen Drinking in Illinois 3



## A National Dialogue

The last weekend in March, 2009 65 parents from 34 states descended on Rockville, MD to talk about Adolescent Addiction. These parents were all affected by the disease of substance abuse and addiction. The parents were joined by representatives from Georgetown University and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The parents as a whole identified two areas that were common and the top challenges in many states. They include 1) a lack of education and support for family members and

2) a lack of access to substance abuse treatment for youth and families.

Families from each state and tribe represented developed plans so that they could go back to their state/tribe and begin to work on the issues. They also made plans to meet with heads of agencies and other parent organization to work towards making affirmative changes in their states/tribes.

All these families recognized that the key to a youth's success in treatment is family involvement. These families

are willing to get involved in all areas in order to improve the infrastructure of treatment both in the nation and in their own states/tribes.

Mary Martin and Laurie Spellmeyer represented Illinois at this conference. Both ladies came back fired up for change in Illinois. Mary lives toward the middle of the state, while Laurie lives in the southern region. Both mothers have plans to engage other parents in their communities and are working with IFF to effectively engage parents across the state.

### Parent Meeting

On

**May 30,  
2009**

## Save the Date!

Intrigued by all this talk of parent involvement? Well then set aside **May 30, 2009**. IFF with the help and guidance of parent leaders Mary Martin and Laurie Spellmeyer are hosting **the first parent meeting** for parents and caregivers affected by the disease of substance abuse.

Details will follow at the beginning of May.

Already know you are interested and want to make sure you are included on future mailings? Send an e-mail to [sfrankiff@yahoo.com](mailto:sfrankiff@yahoo.com).

## Downstate Conference for Parents

The Illinois Federation of Families in Partnership with

Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Mental Health invite parents to a

Springfield Parents Conference!

**June 27, 2009**

Parenting Youth With Emotional Challenges: Effective Interventions

The Conference will be held at University of Illinois-Springfield



## Fundraisers for Prevention and Treatment!

Prevention First's Night out at the Ball Game!

White Sox vs. Angels

Wednesday, August 5, 2009 @ 7:11

U.S. Cellular Field

Discount tickets are especially priced for this event. Lower box seats are \$32 and includes one raffle ticket.

The fundraiser raises money for the statewide organization Prevention First. For more information go to [www.prevention.org](http://www.prevention.org).

Alternate Route 8K!

Alternatives, Inc in Chicago is hosting their annual 8K race on

May 17, 2009 @ 8 am.

Interested in running for youth? Go to [www.alternativesyouth.org](http://www.alternativesyouth.org) for more information.

**Is your agency holding a fundraiser or event that is open to the public? E-mail the details to [sfrankiff@yahoo.com](mailto:sfrankiff@yahoo.com) to be included in the next newsletter.**

## Underage Drinking

National statistics show that by the age of 18, 70% of teens have had at least one drink. As kids grow older the chances that they will use alcohol increases dramatically. Approximately 10 percent of 12 year olds say they have used alcohol at least once. By the time they reach 13 that number doubles. By age 15, approximately 50 percent of kids have had at least

one drink.

Teens do not drink as often as adults, but when they do they drink more than adults. Teens are more likely to "binge drink", which means consuming 5 or more drinks in one sitting. Obviously drinking that much alcohol in one sitting is dangerous and could lead to serious problems or death.

Even though many still say, drinking by teens is a "right of passage", as parents, we have to remember, teens can not legally drink alcohol on their own. Likely the alcohol they are consuming has been provided to them by an adult.

Interested in learning more? Go to [www.toosmartostart.sahmsa.gov](http://www.toosmartostart.sahmsa.gov).

**April  
Is  
Alcohol  
Awareness  
Month!!**

## Teen Drinking in Illinois

- According to the Illinois Youth Survey alcohol is the number one drug of choice for youth. The percentage of 8th graders who used alcohol during the past month, increased from 19.1% in 2004 to 29.0% in 2006.
- Among sixth graders, use in the past month was reported as 8.1% in 2004 and 13.04% in 2006.
- The 10th grade percentage went up slightly and 12th grade remained the same.
- Compared with national data for 8th, 10th and 12th graders, Illinois's percentages are higher.
- For binge drinking, the 12th grade rate was 35.1%. The national average for 12th graders was 26.5%.

## Illinois Federation of Families

Stephanie's Phone: 773-726-8083  
E-mail: [sfrankiff@yahoo.com](mailto:sfrankiff@yahoo.com)

---

Visit Us on the Web at  
[www.iffcmh.net](http://www.iffcmh.net)

Fill out the family survey at  
[www.Illinoistreatmentworks.org](http://www.Illinoistreatmentworks.org)

---

Wondering how to receive  
this Newsletter?  
Contact Stephanie at  
[sfrankIFF@yahoo.com](mailto:sfrankIFF@yahoo.com).



The Illinois Federation of Families is an advocacy organization that helps families and children with mental health needs seek a better quality of life.