

Exceptional Children Information for Parents



March 15, 2023

Spotlight on Family Support Network

The [Family Support Network™](#) (FSN) was created in 1985 by a pediatrician, Dr. Michael Sharp, and a social worker, Dot Cansler at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) School of Medicine to help meet the needs of families with premature infants or children with, or at risk for, developmental disabilities, behavioral disorders, or chronic illness. With funding from the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities, the team developed two Parent-to-Parent programs and an outreach training program to involve medical students with families with children who have special needs.

Over time, additional Parent-to-Parent programs were established across North Carolina to serve families all over the state. The Family Support Network™ of North Carolina became a statewide network comprised of community-based family support programs and the Family Support Network™ State Office at UNC. In 2008 the Family Support Network™ of North Carolina State Office relocated to UNC School of Social Work and expanded to become the Family Support Program. The Family Support Program (FSP) fosters innovation in systems, services, and supports so that families with children who have special needs lead the full lives that they envision. FSP services include Information and Referral, Education and Training, Model Program Development and Implementation, Consultation and Technical Assistance, Research and Program Evaluation, and Policy Development.

Today's Family Support Network™ is comprised of [12 affiliate programs](#) who offer 5 core services. Although our programs differ in many ways, each one is dedicated to providing our *core* services, espousing our *core* values, and keeping family centered support at the *core* of all we do.

You can find previous newsletters in the Parent Newsletter google folder at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/ECParentNewsletters>

Important Links

- [Office of Special Education Programs](#) (U.S. Dept. of Ed.)
- [N.C. Department of Public Instruction](#)
- [Office of Exceptional Children](#) (NC)
- [No Kid Hungry](#)

Upcoming Events

- Arc of the Triangle [Events](#)
- Autism Society [Workshops](#)
- Autism Speaks [Information Topics](#)
- CADRE [Parent Resources](#)
- ECAC [Events](#) & [Recorded Webinars](#)
- Family Support Network [Events](#)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness [Courses](#)
- NC Down Syndrome Alliance [Events](#)
- Special Olympics NC [Events](#)
- NC ABLE [Events](#)

Summer Camp Opportunities

FSN has recently published a list of various summer camp opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Visit their [NC Summer Camp Directory](#) page to search for an in-state or out-of-state camp for this summer.

Medicaid

In NC, the renewal (Recertification) process for Medicaid beneficiaries will begin April 1, 2023, as the flexibilities allowable during the COVID-19 public health emergency expire. Recertifications will be completed over the next 12 months, as beneficiaries are up for renewal. Recertification could result in a beneficiary's termination or reduction of benefits. Families can use the information in Medicaid CCU Toolkit in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) to ensure all eligible students are enrolled.

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