



Focus on Families First

New York State to Cut Spending in Mental Health Services

With the current economic conditions in the US, New York State is feeling the squeeze. The Commissioner of New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) issued a statement regarding OMH's 2008-09 Financial Management Plan. Across the board, state agencies have been asked to reduce spending to ensure economic stability in the future. The New York State OMH's response to the request was to create a financial plan that will ensure a balanced budget for 2008-2009 and will hopefully support stability for beyond 2009.

County Community Services Directors have been charged with the task of overseeing the development of a plan that will reduce spending. According to an e-mail from NYAPRS's Harvey Rosenthal dated June 17, 2008, "In documents released last week to county mental health departments, the following community programs are vulnerable to local cuts, per new OMH guidelines connected to roughly \$16 million in local assistance reductions that are a part of Governor Paterson's efforts to reduce state spending:

- Recreation
- Respite
- Transportation
- Outreach
- Psychosocial clubs
- School support services without clinic
- Family Support Services (children and family)
- Advocacy support services
- Drop-In Centers

- MICA Network
- Case Management (Non-Targeted)
- Sheltered Workshop
- Local Government Unit Administration
- Emergency services
- MICA services

Excluded are:

- all residential programs;
- programs operated by a Peer Run Organization;
- intensive, supportive or blended case management, assertive community treatment, transitional manager and bridger programs;
- home and community-based waiver;
- outpatient; and
- comprehensive psychiatric emergency programs (CPEP)."

For more information, please contact

harveyr@nyaprs.org

JoAnne Caswell, Executive Director at Families First said, "Certainly Families First has been impacted, but fortunately the impact is not as great as we had feared."

Families Together in the Adirondacks Planning Fall Conference

Families Together in the Adirondacks, the local chapter of Families Together in New York State met for a Chapter meeting on June 18, 2008. Many topics were discussed including the recent turn of events in the state.

When discussing possible cuts to Family Support, one grandparent raising a special needs child said, "I remember how life was without Family Support—Terrible! I cannot imagine my family's life without Family Support." All in attendance were dismayed at the prospect of losing funding for Family Support.

The group went on to begin planning for the Fourth Annual Families Together in the Adirondacks Chapter Conference. For the past three years, the conference has been held in the fall. The group decided to stick with this custom as well as to try and have an "Adirondack" theme.

Various ideas for a title for the conference were tossed around. Some ideas were "Seeing the Forest AND the Trees", and "Communities and Families Developing Roots Together". A final decision will be reached at the next Chapter meeting, which will be held at Families First on July 23, 2008 from 10am-12pm. Anyone interested is welcomed to attend. Come join the voices of the Adirondacks! For more information please call Robin at Families First (518) 873-9544.

Families First to Participate in Elizabethtown Day Festivities

Make sure you mark July 19th on your calendar, which is the third Saturday in July and the annual celebration of Elizabethtown Day.

Traditionally, many community members participate in a town-wide yard sale, which begins at 8am. There is a parade at 3pm with floats competing to win the award for best float and events at the Cobble Hill Golf Course including a cookout and barbecue. There will also be a "Talent-less" talent show spoof 6 – 8 p.m.

Families First will host a FREE "Bounce-Around" house and kids can make FREE Sandy Candy from 4pm-6pm, also at the Golf Course. Come by and learn more about Families First and have some fun while you do it!

At 6pm, Families First will hold the \$10,000 Raffle Drawing. Tickets are on sale until 5:30pm, or until all tickets have been sold. They are \$20 each and only 1000 will be sold. Take a chance, you never know!!

Fireworks at the golf course after dark.

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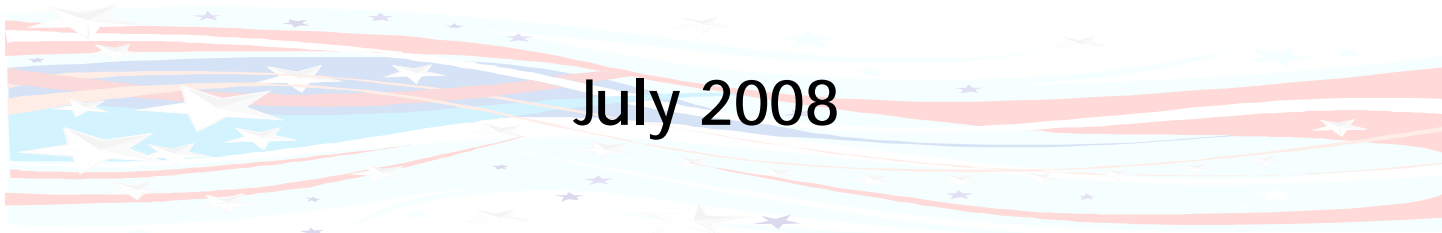
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Strengths Based



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Tips to Avoid Lashing Out at Your Children

You are going through a bad divorce. You don't know if you can make your mortgage payment. You can not find time to work, put food on the table, and spend time with your significant other and children. Your boss yelled at you. You spilled orange juice on your dress pants. You got a flat tire on the way home from work. Your child just tread mud throughout your clean house...

You feel frustrated, stressed, and angry... but this is no excuse to lash out at your children! There are other ways to deal with the stressors in your life.

Here are some tips:

- Pause and breathe – Take a few deep breaths. Close your mouth (and maybe even close your eyes)

and mentally count to 20. Take a moment to cool down and make sure that you do not say or do something that you will regret.

- Why are you angry? Do you have a good reason to be mad at your child, or is your child merely a convenient target to vent your frustrations on?
- Timeout – If you find that it truly is your child with whom you are angry, put him or her in timeout. While he or she is in timeout, calm down. Once you are calmed and your judgment is clear, then you can think of an appropriate punishment. You may find that time in spent in timeout is adequate. If you find that it is not really your child that you are angry with, but something or someone else, you can put yourself in time-out!
- Take a walk – Find someone to watch your children and take a

walk. Get out some of your energy. Calm yourself down.

- Talk to a friend – Sometimes, you merely need to vent. Tell your friend about your anger and frustrations instead of taking it out on your child.
- Set aside some “me time” – To properly care for your children, you must care for yourself. Take the time to have a nice and soothing bath, read a book, exercise, do a craft, listen to music, etc.
- Before you speak, think about if you were in your child's position. How would those words and actions affect you?
- Splash some cold water on your face.
- Call a family support helpline such as Prevent Child Abuse America's 24-hour prevention and parent helpline at 1-800-347-7472 (PIRC).

Information in this month's newsletter retrieved on June 17, 2008 from http://www.familysupportamerica.org/content/features/fr_sale.htm