

SPAN Awarded Grant to Continue to Serve as Family to Family Health Information Center for NJ

The US Department of Health and Human Services announced on May 17 that SPAN was selected to continue to serve as New Jersey's Family to Family Health Information Center (F2F) for the next two years. F2Fs are statewide, family-led organizations that provide information, education, training, outreach, and peer support to families of children and youth with special healthcare needs and the professionals who serve them.

F2Fs work to improve performance on the six core outcomes for children and youth with special healthcare needs (CYSHCN): Families are engaged at all levels and satisfied with services; there is early and periodic screening to identify all special healthcare needs; children have access to a "medical home" to coordinate all needed care, and to community-based services organized for easy access; there is adequate public and private insurance and healthcare financing to pay for all needed services; and youth with special needs make effective transition to adult systems of care. For resources on the six core outcomes, go to [/www.spannj.org/cyshcn/index.html](http://www.spannj.org/cyshcn/index.html) .

SPAN's F2F is led by Mercedes Rosa; Lauren Agoratus (Central/South) and Shirley Johnson (North) are the Regional Coordinators. Family Voices of NJ @ SPAN has housed New Jersey's F2F for 8 years, helping over 100,000 families of children with special healthcare needs navigate health insurance, healthcare, and community services. In a recent focus group of immigrant parents assisted by SPAN's F2F, families shared the powerful impact of the assistance they received:

- ♦ I waited so long to get help until I called SPAN's F2F. With their help, my child got services and started preschool on time.
- ♦ I am happy we received so much information about child development and booklets (Bright Futures) so that we can monitor our child.
- ♦ I learned so much about my child's development when I learned from SPAN's F2F who can help. I found out what was wrong, but also what was right, and that was very good for my family.
- ♦ I learned so much about partnering with my doctors and what is a "Medical Home."
- ♦ I have learned so much from SPAN's F2F. I used to be so intimidated because I am not from the country and now I know that I have rights. Mercedes and Yolanda taught me about my rights as an immigrant and rights that my child has as well.
- ♦ Span has helped me in my journey in and through EI and helped me become an advocate.

Visit SPAN's F2F webpage at <http://www.spannj.org/Family2Family/> and Family Voices-NJ at <http://www.spannj.org/familywrap/familyvoices.htm> . If you need help accessing services for your child with special healthcare needs, contact us at 800-654-SPAN.

For more information on F2Fs around the country, and other HRSA maternal and child health programs, visit <http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov/>. For additional information on the Affordable Care Act, visit <http://www.healthcare.gov/index.html>.