

# Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change

## Family Matters

Spring 2006

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### What's Happening with MFOFC

The last year has had many issues that MFOFC has addressed with legislative advocacy, training, system advocacy and advocacy by individual members.

Our legislative advocacy in collaboration with Arc of Massachusetts and Massachusetts Standing Strong has two components. The first is ensuring quality services for young people as they turn 22. Young people with disabilities who are turning 22 today are in a unique position in history. They represent a generation who have grown up in their communities, have lived with their families, have developed relationships with other children and community members and have attended local public schools. Many of these young people have been active in their communities and have had work experience. Some are looking forward to continuing their education in some form.

Our state system of services is also in a unique position in history. There is an opportunity to capitalize on the education and experience of these young people by providing sufficient Turning 22 funding so that individuals can continue to progress as they move into adulthood. There is also an opportunity to continue to support families so that ALL young people with disabilities can grow up in their communities and take advantage of a public school education. New dollars are needed to provide more realistic funding for young people with disabilities who are turning 22 – to match the funding to the higher numbers of students – numbers which have risen 50% with no increase in funding.

Our second legislative issue is to increase funding for families newly eligible for DMR services. Many families with young children are just starting on the road of supporting their children to receive the benefits of living and being educated in their community. The overwhelming number makes it imperative that more dollars be available for family support so young people with disabilities can benefit from the care and commitment of their families.

MFOFC has been able to expand training to offer the Family Leadership Series across the state. Metro Boston started a series in the spring of 2005 and graduated 30 family members in November 2005. Each region also has training tailored to the families they support. For more information on training opportunities please visit our website [www.mfofc.org](http://www.mfofc.org). MFOFC has also trained over 300 families across the disability spectrum in flexible supports and the part they play in ensuring that all families receive support relevant to their lives. A grant from the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council enables us to provide those trainings.

MFOFC has continued to advocate with DMR to maintain the flexibility of family supports, to ensure that young people turning 22 are able to enjoy a life in the community after graduation from school and to improve the relationship that DMR personnel have with families. Individual members have worked hard this year to impact the services provided by the new autism division, as members of the Statewide Family Support Council on a variety of subjects and in countless other ways that we are not aware of. The board of MFOFC is excited at the prospect of families across the state, now including the Metro Boston region, learning about and advocating for family members with disabilities to have a life filled with connections in the community.



## ***Chapter 171 - The Annual Agency Action Plan***

### **Chapter 171 of the Acts of 2002 - An act supporting families and individuals with disabilities and special health care needs.**

Once individuals and families have a *general* understanding of the Chapter 171- Flexible Support Law, it is each of our responsibility to get involved with its implementation. (To access a copy of the law please visit MFOFC's website at [www.mfofc.org](http://www.mfofc.org))

After learning about the law the next step in get involved with the implementation of Chapter 171 law is to read the current year's Agency Action Plan(s) written by the agency(s) that support your family. Individuals and Families should be able to identify each of the following areas in the plans:

- Agency background and overview that provides information to help the readers understand what the agency does to support individuals and families in the Commonwealth.
- A description of the agency's flexible/family support practices (what is currently offered and available to individuals and families and how the services can be accessed).
- Examples of how substantial consultation was received to write the current years plan along with plans to obtain substantial consultation for the coming years plan.
- There should be a description of current practices and goals to support growth in the following areas:

Family Empowerment

Family Leadership

Family Support Resources and Funding

Access to Service and Supports

Culturally Competent Outreach and Support

Interagency Collaboration

The plans need to provide families with the ability to monitor progress of the previous year's plan. This should be done by describing previous year's goals, and the progress made on those goals in the current year's plan. Individuals and Families should be able to follow progress from year to year by reading the Agency Action Plans each year.

Agencies need to obtain *substantial consultation* from individuals and families about the services and programs that are being provided as well as proposed services, programs, and policies that will effect individuals and families who receive their services.

(Agency Action Plans can be found at [www.mfofc.org](http://www.mfofc.org))

# Chapter 171 - Substantial Consultation



The next step to get involved with the implementation of Chapter 171 is to understand and participate in providing “substantial consultation”.

Substantial consultation is a main component of the Chapter 171 Law. It is each agencies responsibility to obtain substantial consultation before writing their Annual Agency Action Plan. There are many different ways for agencies to receive substantial consultation and many ways for individuals and families to get involved in providing it. Below are a few examples of ways substantial consultation can be obtained.

**Advisory Boards** - Advisory boards should have members from a cross section of constituents including but not limited to— individuals and family members as well as ethnically diverse members that represent populations served by the agency. Advisory boards must have significant conversation around and about individual and family supports. Advisory boards that are used as a method of substantial consultation need to have access to the draft Agency Action Plan and may distribute the draft to other family members for review. The Advisory Board members can then get feedback from the families and present it at the Advisory Board meeting.

**Surveys** - When individuals and families receive surveys from their service providers they should take the time to fill them out and return them. It is also important to make sure you comment when given the opportunity on the survey about what is working as well as what is not working or what you would like to see done differently.

**Focus Groups** - Members of the focus groups should be provided with a copy of the Chapter 171 law. Focus group members need to understand that they are being asked to provide input on a program or policy that is in the development stage or about a program or policy that is being reexamined. At this stage of any process there is room for out-of-the-box thinking and ideas that may or may not be in line with the current service delivery models.

**Meetings with Individuals and Families** - Meetings between staff members of the agencies and individuals and families can be a very useful way for agencies to not only connect and build a bond of trust but the receive great feedback on the needs of the individual or family. This process offers staff the opportunity to have a connection with individuals and families to help keep the importance of the job they are doing in the forefront of their mind.



~~Dream the  
impossible and then  
make it happen!~~

Author Unknown

## Chapter 171 - The Next Steps

### *What to do to get involved? - Who to contact with questions?*

Once individuals and families have reviewed the law and the agency action plan and have a general understanding of substantial consultation it is time to get involved.

The next steps to get involved with the implementation of Chapter 171 are:

1. **Review this year's Agency Action Plan**  
(plans can be found at [www.mfofc.org](http://www.mfofc.org))
2. **Contact the agency liaison to find out how to provide substantial consultation**
3. **Follow up & participate in providing substantial consultation**
4. **Continue to review the Agency Action Plan annually and comment to the agency's liaison**  
(comments should be about both what is working as well as what is not working for your family)
5. **Get involved legislatively ~ get on the ARC Mass email alert list**  
([www.arcmass.org](http://www.arcmass.org)) Know what is going on in our state around disability issues, budgets, and legislative priorities.
6. **If you have not already done so, participate in a Family Leadership Series put on by MFOFC.**

### Agency Liaison Contact List

#### **DMR**

Central West - Doug McCallum 413-284-1555

Northeast - Amy Nazaire 978-774-5000 ext. 386

Southeast - Beth Moran Liuzzo 508-866-5000 ext. 350

Metro - Ellen Kilicarlsan 781-314-7532

**DMH** - Marion Freedman-Gurspan 617-626-8081

**DPH** - Suzanne Gottlieb 617-624-5979

**MCB** - Sandra Daly 617-727-5550

**MCDHH** - Stanley Potrude 617-740-1611

**MRC** - Betty Maher 617-204-3600

**Office of Medicaid (Mass Health)** - Annette Shea 617-573-1751

Questions about the law? Contact Tanya Wheeler @ 413-562-7395 or email questions to [Tanya.wheeler@comcast.net](mailto:Tanya.wheeler@comcast.net).

## EOHHS ~ Planning and Review Teams (PRT)

When families with children under the age of 22 need services from multiple EOHHS agencies there are often challenges in coordinating the services. The process of who will provide case management/financial assistance etc. can be complicated. The Planning and Review teams were developed to work with families of children who need these multiple agency services.

The PRT principles are based on a set of core values:

Supports need to be:

strength based,  
child focused,  
family centered,  
inclusive of kin and the community,  
responsive to individual needs,  
diversity responsive,  
working in partnership with families,  
outcome focused,  
oriented towards sharing and continued learning.

The design of the PRT to work within these principles are:

Communication “that works” builds on respect, clarity, and a diversity of perspectives;

Agencies are expected to respond with what is possible in addition to what they are obligated to provide:

PRT meetings will be scheduled to maximize family member participation.

PRT Plans are responsive to individual child and family needs, with special attention to new information reflecting dynamic family situations.

Commitment is made to address identified barriers systemically.

Learning from successes, as well as mistakes is a powerful tool for future growth

The family referral criteria to get involved with the PRT are:

Standard agency options, including creative solutions have been fully utilized

Specific EOHHS agency policy or practice presents barriers to solution identification

Multi-agency service planning has been attempted at the local level, but was not successful by a single agency or through collaborative inter-agency discussions at their different administration levels

All reasonable efforts have been made to include available family members in a multi-agency meeting convened to address the development of a family action plan

Child/youth must be under 22 years of age

Child/youth is at risk of:

Out of home placement, including long term placement, OR

Homelessness, OR

Is ready to return to live in the community

Service needs require multiple EOHHS agency participation

Families/Guardian must agree to a PRT referral

For more information contact - Susan Nadworny at [snadw@aol.com](mailto:snadw@aol.com)



*“Limitations live only  
in our minds. But if we  
use our imaginations,  
our possibilities become  
limitless.”*

*Author Unknown*



## Craig's Life and Vision

I am writing this on behalf of my son, Craig Kinney. Craig was born on May 30, 1987. He has lived in Marion, a small town located in Southeastern Massachusetts, all his life. Our vision for Craig was typical of any child, to go to school and grow-up in our community. Craig began preschool at the age of three. We had a choice between our local integrated preschool or a collaborative. We chose our local preschool. Craig attended preschool for two years and continued at our local elementary school for the next 7 years. Craig was fully included from kindergarten to sixth grade, he did receive the support of a 1x1 paraprofessional, special education teacher, SLP, and OT, but they went into Craig's classroom. I was very adamant that Craig be included in every aspect of school. Craig joined the school band, plays, field trips etc. As a result of our efforts Craig was treated with respect and as just another member of his class. He learned how to read, write, add, subtract and gained a great interest in science. Craig enrolled in karate class, swimming lessons and participated at our local YMCA camps in the summer. There was never a time when I or Craig believed that he needed a special program due to his disability.

Craig began Junior High and a new school in 2000. Again, he was fully included. In February of that year Craig developed strep throat. By May of 2001 Craig became a medically involved child. He no longer could speak, required a 1x1 nurse, medical equipment and relied on a tracheotomy tube to breathe. He did miss a great deal of school that year, but continued to be involved with the outreach of support by his classmates. When he returned to school I again persisted that Craig be fully included. It would have been very easy to have separated Craig from many everyday activities and classes in general. He did require suctioning at a moment's notice. The school, community and fellow classmates welcomed him back. We spent additional time planning "what if" and there were numerous times that "911" was called. The most important part was that Craig was included.

Craig had successful reconstructive surgery on his trachea in January 2005. He can talk again, go out without his cart of medical supplies and not require a nurse at all times. It is wonderful to hear him sing.

Craig began High School and is presently a Senior. He has been fully included in all classes and has been supported in finding a wonderful job. Craig began working over two years ago. He works after school two days a week and more hours during the summer time. His title is Duplicating Screening Machine Operator. Lockheed Martin Sippican Inc. welcomed him into their working community and values his work. He has been able to enjoy and develop friendships with classmates by going out to movies, wrestling events, shopping and other interesting events. Craig still enjoys science classes as well as chorus and music classes.

Craig will be leaving the high school this year. He will participate in graduation with his class. Craig will continue to receive funding from the school until he is 22. Next year will be an exciting year for him. He has decided to continue working and has expressed an interest in pursuing college classes. Craig would like to take science and music classes. I don't know what the next four years will be like, but I am sure that Craig will do what Craig wants to do. His vision has been to be just like anyone else his age. We do have to plan and work at helping Craig achieve his goals, but it is Worth It!

At the age of 22 Craig and I will pursue exactly what his childhood opportunities have been - to be a full active included member of society. To work, live, pursue his education in a fully inclusive environment. Our family has been supported by The Department of Mental Retardation through the use of Family Support. Family Connections has supported our family since Craig was 5 and Family Partnerships of the Southeast supported our family during Craig's intensive medical involvement. The Department has been a wonderful asset to enable Craig to reach his goals of being fully included.

I am aware that The Department of Mental Retardation's Turning 22 funding has not been adjusted to meet the needs of all the individuals turning 22. Craig's life is the most important thing to our family. Dad, mom, and two sisters are dedicated to supporting Craig to aspire to the most productive life possible. Craig's support needs and how the supports are delivered will decide his future. We feel very strongly that his future supports will need to be individualized to meet his needs. A day program would not be the future he would desire. Craig has shown everyone that with individual supports he can do anything anyone else can do. We as a family would not settle for anything less. I hope that we can work together to make effective changes to the Turning 22 funding to enable our children to succeed in the future.

Respectfully Submitted; Sandra L. Kinney

## Autism Update

There is no doubt about it: Autism rates have skyrocketed. Ten years ago, the rate of autism was approximately 1 in every 10,000 children. Contrast this with a recent study released by the Centers for Disease Control (2006, May 4) which estimates that every 1 in 175 children have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In Massachusetts, the number of children affected is even higher: **1 in 122** (Center for Environmental Health, Environmental Epidemiology Program & Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 2005).

Over the last few years, our state Autism Support Centers have experienced a large influx of families looking for services and support. There are waiting lists for many programs and resources such as the DMR/DOE grant and Flexible Family Support money. Specialists who diagnose and treat kids with autism have been inundated with new patients. Some have wait lists of well over a year; some have had to stop taking new patients altogether. Thousands of children who have Asperger's Syndrome (AS) and Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) were not entitled to services under DMR because they did not meet strict eligibility criteria. Our public schools are understaffed, under funded, and overwhelmed.

In order to help families and professionals deal with some of the complex issues surrounding the care and support of children with ASD, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services initiated a new program under DMR: The new Division of Autism. In order to ascertain the needs of the autism community, DMR held public forums throughout the state where caregivers and professionals were invited to voice their opinions on what supports and services they would like to see addressed by the new Division.

Armed with this input, the Division determined that a top priority would be to include the many children who were previously deemed ineligible for services under DMR guidelines. Kids between the ages of 3 – 18 who have PDD-NOS, Asperger's, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, Rett's Syndrome, and Autistic Disorder now qualify for services under the umbrella of the new Division.

The needs of this expanded population are diverse and complex. To begin to meet those needs, the Division has developed several important initiatives. Details as outlined in the **DMR/ASD Updates** newsletter (2005, 2006) are reprinted and updated below:

**Develop and enhance provider supports and staff capacity at the Autism Centers across the state.** (*Funds have been provided to the ASD support centers for the hiring of additional staff.*)

**Publish a state-wide Autism Resource Guide available both in print and on-line.**

(*The design and planning efforts are underway for the **Autism Resource Guide for Families**. If you have any suggestions about what you think would be helpful to include in the guide designed for families, please contact the Division at 617-624-7769.*)

**Create a state-wide program for First Responder Training.** (*The **First Responder Training Initiative** is moving ahead thanks in large part to the efforts of those at South Norfolk County Arc's Family Autism Center, The Autism Resource Center in Central MA, the Autism Alliance of MetroWest and the Autism and Law Enforcement Education Coalition (ALEC) an effort initiated by the Norfolk County District Attorney's Office.*)

**Develop a Pediatrician Awareness Program.** (*The **Pediatrician Awareness Project** is gearing up for a late Spring Continuing Medical Education (CME) Course with a focus on using various diagnostic screening tools to help with early identification of developmental disabilities, especially autism. The conference will to be held at UMASS in Worcester for pediatricians, family practitioners and nurse practitioners.*)

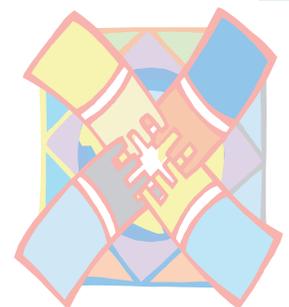
(Continued on pg. 8)



*"Don't let the negativity given to you by the world disempower you.*

*Instead give to yourself that which empowers you."*

**Les Brown**



## Autism Update (cont.)

### **Establish new social skills programs and vacation camps for children with autism spectrum disorders.**

*(Mini-Grants totaling \$250,000 have been awarded to 27 organizations in Massachusetts for the purpose of providing programs such as training seminars for parents and educators, recreation and social skills programs, and vacation camps.)*

### **Provide consistent communication with families and stakeholders through the DMR/ASD Updates.**

*(To date, three newsletters have been published. To access these newsletters online, follow the links in the "References" section at the end of this article.)*

### **Develop and implement Medicaid Home and Community Based Services Waiver specifically for children on the autism spectrum.**

*(In October 2005, Governor Romney signed legislation which requires that DMR apply for a Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver to serve children with Pervasive Developmental Disorders. A waiver program is designed to provide certain supports to individuals in home and community settings. This program is partially funded by the federal government which reimburses the Commonwealth for a portion of the cost of the services and supports provided to individuals who are in the waiver program. At this time, the Autism Division, the DMR Office of Policy, Planning and Children's Services, MassHealth and others with expertise in this arena are working together to determine the eligibility criteria and services that this waiver will include.)*

Because of the advocacy efforts of parents, professionals and individuals with ASD, the Division received \$1.2 million (less a \$200,000 earmark for the Melmark School) for fiscal year 2006-2007. On May 18, 2006, the Senate released its budget, allocating \$3 million for fiscal year 2007-2008.

While this may sound like a substantial increase in available funds, it should be known that, in addition to the \$200,000 Melmark School earmark, an additional \$2.2 million has been earmarked for the implementation of the Autism Medicaid Waiver. While the Medicaid Waiver is an important part of the Division's plans, it's earmark would cause the loss of \$400,000 available for all other programming.

As of this writing, the Division's funding issue is still unfolding and is currently being addressed and analyzed by members of Advocates For Autism of Massachusetts (AFAM). For updates, please visit [www.AFAMaction.org](http://www.AFAMaction.org).

For more information on the Division of Autism, please contact: Cariann Harsh, DMR Autism Spectrum Division @ 617-624-7769 or via E-mail: [Cariann.Harsh@state.ma.us](mailto:Cariann.Harsh@state.ma.us).

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## ***JOB OPENING - Metro Boston Area Coordinator - 20 hrs. per week***

- Reaching out to service providers, family groups, and advocates in the Metro Boston area to increase their awareness of involvement with MFOFC. Development and planning of the Family Leadership Series (FLS) in the Metro Boston region according to the FLS curriculum.
- Maintain and expand the Metro Boston FLS network to plan the Family Leadership Series, increase communication, and promote collaboration on priority areas.
- Scheduling regular meetings (both networking and special topic/speaker focused)
- Working with other MFOFC Regional Coordinators to support MFOFC statewide.

**Qualifications:** Must be a self-starter, who is organized, and enjoys communicating with individuals and groups. Sensitive and aware of issues facing families raising a child with a disability. Must have own transportation, since the region includes downtown Boston and many towns inside the I-495 loop. Computer savvy and a second language would be an asset.

The person will be able to use experienced MFOFC board members as resources to promote consistency. A Board member from the Boston Region will act as a supervisor and coach, with additional support from the MFOFC board (e.g. regarding FLS curriculum). Please send a letter of intent, resume, and references to: MFOFC - P.O. Box 61 – Raynham, MA 02768 or email: [mfofc@comcast.net](mailto:mfofc@comcast.net)

## Area Updates

### Central Updates

The long New England winter has finally ended! We stayed very busy here in Central MA as we patiently (okay, not so patiently) waited for this beautiful spring weather to arrive.

Anne Hurst, the North Central Area Coordinator sponsored a well attended Health Care for All Event. She also worked in collaboration with ARC Community services to host the annual Children's Christmas party and Easter party. Many families attended these events and both had special guests...Santa and the Easter Bunny of course.

In the South Valley area Becky Annis has been hard at work exploring the possibility of starting an ARC in Milford. She has visited several other ARC facilities around Massachusetts to gather information, ideas and resources. Becky has also been instrumental in assisting with the coordination of this year's series, which was held in the South Valley area.

Speaking of this year's series; we had 30 participants, which is our largest number ever and on April 29<sup>th</sup> we completed the final weekend. On the Friday of the last weekend, we met up at the State House with the leadership participants from the Northeast and enjoyed a wonderful presentation by Mary Lou Maloney.

Another big hit during the series was the Hospitality Suite that was facilitated by Kathy Hamelin, our Alumni/Mentor coordinator and this years Mentors, which were, Kathy Black, Lynda Vautour, Ann Berube, Crystal Guzman, Duane Smith and Beth Farwell. There was a lot of networking, laughter and lasting connections made. We concluded this years series with a graduation ceremony that occurred on May 8<sup>th</sup>. Participants, their families and friends came together and celebrated their success!

As the year moves on and spring turns to summer I will begin to make plans for 2007 Leadership series, which will begin in the late fall. I look forward to continuing the important and powerful work that we do for individuals with disabilities and their families through CMFOC.

### WE'RE BACK - METROBOSTON REGION TAKES OFF

A renewed effort of family members and committed DMR funding has revitalized the Metro Boston Region of Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change. A three weekend Family Leadership Series for 27 parents was successfully held last year at the Westin Hotel in Waltham MA. Graduates of the series attended the ArcMass / MDDC Legislative Breakfast held at the MA Statehouse.

Scholarship funding of over \$1800.00 was obtained and provided to 33 parents to attend the Federation for Children with Special Needs' annual conference held in March 2005.

This spring, partnering with the Greater Boston ARC, three evening workshops were held. Some of the topics covered included: an overview of state agencies, information about the MFOFC and the family leadership series, working with school systems, after school programming, and future planning.

With secured funding from the Department of Mental Retardation for a permanent regional coordinator position and continuing yearly Family Leadership Trainings we are moving ahead on planning for our next Family Leadership Series. The first weekend has been scheduled for June 24<sup>th</sup> and June 25<sup>th</sup>, again at the Westin Hotel. We also will be publishing and mailing out a quarterly newsletter containing local events of interest to parents of children with special needs.

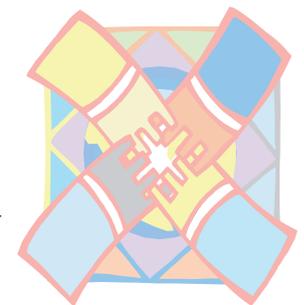
Please contact us to learn more about our activities and how you can become involved. You can contact Cathe Carpenter at [cathecarpenter@dedhamuu.org](mailto:cathecarpenter@dedhamuu.org) for more information.



*Opportunities present themselves to those that are willing to introduce themselves to opportunities."*

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*Adelyn Ortlieb*



## Northeast Region Update

The Northeast Chapter of Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change has been busy. We started out in the fall with a successful two day *Partnering for Success -Journey to Adulthood Transition conference*.

We finished up our thirteenth Family Leadership conference with a visit to the Statehouse on April 28. We are having a Reunion of all of the past years Leadership Graduates in May and are looking forward to hearing about all of the advocacy and leadership roles they have undertaken this past year.

We are working hard on the *Building a Home Conference – A conference on the Complex Issues Families Face in Securing Supportive Living Arrangements for their Children*. This will be held on Saturday, November 4, 2006 at the Boston University Conference Center, Tyngsboro MA. Jay Klein is our keynote speaker. He is the director of the Center for Housing and New Community Economics (CHANCE) and the National Home of Your Own. Jay is widely respected for his ability to translate best practices into everyday realities for people with disabilities and their families.

Workshop topics for this conference will include Available Resources at the Federal, State and local levels, Home control and ownership through proper estate planning, Overcoming barriers, From Dreams to Reality-how to make it work, real life stories, The role of brothers and sisters, Letting go and getting out -viewpoints from parents letting go and young adults getting out and on with their lives and their futures. These are just a few of the ten workshops we have scheduled.

*Please save the date for this informational day, network and gain a greater understanding of the possibilities. More information will be available soon - Registration will begin in August.*

## Southeast Region Update

The **Southeast Region** completed its 15<sup>th</sup> Family Leadership Series (FLS) on the weekend, April 7 and 8. This year's group of participants included 26 family members with children between the ages of 3 through 19 years old. The group was also diverse in terms of culture, geography and the range of disabilities represented.

Our fourth and last weekend, which completed the series, was held Friday, April 7, ending on Saturday, April 8. On Friday, we traveled into Boston for a visit to the State House. Our visit began with a tour of the State House followed by training on Legislative Advocacy presented by Mary Lou Maloney, Legislative Director with the Arc of Mass. After lunch, we ended our trip to the State House with a visit to our legislators to share with them the importance of family support and what it means to our families.

Upon returning to the hotel, this year's participants had the opportunity to meet and spend time with some of the SE Region's Area Coordinators who are graduates of earlier FLS.

In the short amount of time since this year's FLS began during the weekend of October 20-21, participants have accomplished so much in their advocacy using the information received from the Series. We are confident that these *Leaders* will add to the growing number of family members of children and adults with disabilities who are taking a place at the table *to articulate their needs and concerns when it comes to Family Support*.

## Western Region Update

Uniting Families for Change (UFC) the western Mass chapter of Massachusetts Families Organizing For Change has had a successful six year. Recruiting for our 13<sup>th</sup> Family Leadership Series started in September. A group of 22 enrolled and attended the first two days in Nov. We now have a four weekend schedule that allows use to take more time with some of the topics we have covered it the past We completed the training in April with a graduation ceremony open to family members and members of UFC. In November and December we, in conjunction with Multicultural Community Services, an agency that provides family support in the Greater Springfield area, trained six families regarding options for adult children preparing to move into more independent living. We used Tools For Tomorrow, a training tool develop with a federal grant in conjunction with Arc Mass, Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong, and the Massachusetts Developmental Disability Council. This spring Allan Bergman a former lobbyist at the national level on disabilities provided information to UFC members on current issues affecting people with disabilities and their families. The governing Board has also decided to offer all members a "Refresher" to allow past leadership graduates to brush up on their leadership skill, to have a chance to network and get information about the "state of the state" for disability issues.

# Support Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change by Shopping Online at iGive.com!

**iGive.com Mission - To enable the economic power of individuals to benefit their chosen communities.**

**iGive.com Vision - In the near future , all consumer transactions will contain a percentage that benefits causes close to home.**

iGive.com is an online “shopping mall” that enables you to have a percentage of each purchase made through the iGive mall go to your chosen charity. Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change has signed up with iGive.com to raise funds for MFOFC. iGive has over 650 stores in their mall such as: Barnes & Noble, American Eagle, Ann Taylor, Circuit City, Gap, Dell, Gateway, Home Depot, Little Tikes, and many, many, more!!



## HOW IT WORKS

1. Join to Support Massachusetts Families Organizing For Change

It's FREE, private, & easy.

<http://www.iGive.com/html/refer.cfm?memberid=431461&causeid=33863>

2. Shop the Mall at iGive.com

You'll see familiar stores like Lands' End, Office Depot, JCPenney, Neiman Marcus, Expedia, Barnes & Noble, and eBay to mention just a few!

3. Watch the \$\$ roll in for Massachusetts Families Organizing For Change!

Up to 26% of EACH purchase gets donated!

Remember, shop within 45 days of joining, and get an extra \$5 donation, FREE.  
(This is a limited time offer!)

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Use this link to JOIN FOR FREE and begin supporting  
Massachusetts Families Organizing For Change:

<http://www.iGive.com/html/refer.cfm?memberid=431461&causeid=33863>  
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*“Never doubt that  
a small group of  
thoughtful,  
committed citizens  
can change the  
world; indeed it’s  
the only thing that  
ever has.”*

*Margaret Mead*

## Trainings on Chapter 171 - Available NOW!

There are many ways to get involved with the implementation of Chapter 171.

- Contact the agency that provides services to you or your family member and request a copy of their Family Support Plan, review the plan and give feedback to the agency.
- Educate yourself on flexible supports and what they are so you know what you are able to request
- Get involved legislatively; set up a meeting with your legislators, introduce yourself, let them know what challenges you face as an individuals with a disability or special health care needs or as a family member of a person with a disability or special health care needs.
- Contact MFOFC for more information on Chapter 171 and other current advocacy efforts.





**Massachusetts Families  
Organizing for Change**

**P.O. Box 61  
Raynham, MA 02768**

**1-800-406-3632**

Check us out on the  
web at:  
[www.mfofc.org](http://www.mfofc.org)

## **MFOFC Regional Coordinators**

### **Boston-Metro**

Regional Coordinator  
c/o P.O. Box 61  
Raynham, MA 02768  
[mfofc@comcast.net](mailto:mfofc@comcast.net)  
508-824-6946

### **North Shore**

Susan Nadworny  
16 Warwick Road  
Melrose, MA 02176  
[snadw@aol.com](mailto:snadw@aol.com)  
781-665-5179

### **Western**

Gwen Gosselin  
3 State Street  
Westfield, MA 01085  
[ufc1991@mcsnet.org](mailto:ufc1991@mcsnet.org)  
413-562-4885

### **Central**

Laura Casey  
P.O. Box 358  
Winchendon, MA 01475  
[CaseyBlack922@aol.com](mailto:CaseyBlack922@aol.com)  
978-297-2240

### **Southeastern**

Emily Murgo Nisenbaum  
56 Bridge Street  
Fairhaven, MA 02719  
[tngemily@aol.com](mailto:tngemily@aol.com)  
508-999-4436

### **Statewide Coordinator**

Dianne Huggon  
1-800-406-3632  
[mfofc@comcast.net](mailto:mfofc@comcast.net)