



IDAHO FEDERATION OF  
*Families*  
FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

#### Board of Directors

Angela Hicks, **President**  
Lynne Whiting, **Vice President**  
Fred Kirn  
D'Anna Smith  
Christina Lymberopoulos  
Rob Gregory

#### Office Staff

Courtney Lester - **Administrative Director**  
Trish Wheeler - **Key Family Contact**  
James Sawyer - **Youth Coordinator**  
Cindy Shotton - **Administrative Assistant**  
Lacey Sinn - **Promotions & Education  
Coordinator**

#### Family Support Specialists

Barbara Hill – Region III  
Nikki Tangen – Region IV  
Angie Wilder – Region IV  
Sue Brown – Region V  
Patricia Green – Region VI  
Kristi Howell – Region VII  
Nancy Wahobin - Tribal

#### Special Thanks to the Following:

Eli Lilly Foundation  
Doubletree Club Hotel

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE...

We will have a question and answer column. Providers, parents, and youth will give insight and suggestions to topics you want answered. What questions do you have about children's mental health? E-mail us at [info@idahofederation.org](mailto:info@idahofederation.org) or mail it to 1509 S. Robert Street, Suite 101 Boise, ID 83705. Entitle it "**Newsletter Q & A.**" Names will be withheld. We look forward to hearing from you!



# SUMMER

[www.idahofederation.org](http://www.idahofederation.org) 2006

## SIBSHOPS RETURN

Sibshops you ask? What is it? (For whom is it geared?) Well if you don't know... you soon will. After hearing all the talk and fielding many requests, your work has paid off. Sibshops are returning! These workshops are specifically designed for brothers and sisters of a child with special needs (Sibshops are not intended nor appropriate for the child with special needs). Don Meyer, the creator of Sibshops, will be doing the initial instruction and the (follow-up) training will be done by a Family Support Specialist from each of the seven regions throughout the state.

Meyer acknowledges "that being the brother or sister of a person with special needs is for some a good thing, others a not-so-good thing, and for many, somewhere in-between. They reflect a belief that brothers and sisters have much to offer one another — if they are given a chance. Sibshops are a spirited mix of new games (designed to be unique, off-beat, and appealing to a wide ability range), new friends, and discussion activities."

This first training for Sibshop instructors will take place August 23rd-24th in Boise and will include a Family Support Specialist from each region of the state. While we have concluded filling each of the trainee positions, we are still in search for parents, service providers, and two categories of youth.

The first category includes older ages ranging from 16-19 years; these youth will participate as a panel for the trainee facilitators. The second category of youth will include ages ranging from 8-13 years; these youth will participate in a Sibshop demonstration. This demonstration is where the facilitator trainee sees firsthand how the training works and should be delivered in future Sibshop classes. Remember these youth should not have special needs.

#### The Goals of Sibshops are as follows:

- Goal 1:** Sibshops will provide brothers and sisters of children with special needs an opportunity to meet other siblings in a relaxed, recreational setting.
- Goal 2:** Sibshops will provide brothers and sisters with opportunities to discuss common joys and concerns with other siblings of children with special needs.
- Goal 3:** Sibshops will provide siblings with an opportunity to learn how others handle situations commonly experienced by siblings of children with special needs.
- Goal 4:** Sibshops will provide siblings with an opportunity to learn more about the implications of their sibling's special needs.
- Goal 5:** Sibshops will provide parents and professionals with opportunities to learn more about the concerns and opportunities frequently experienced by brothers and sisters of people with special needs.

We are very pleased with the shared enthusiasm this upcoming training has produced from our parents, youth, service providers, and our Sibshop facilitator trainees. Let's keep the excitement going by spreading the news about this great training opportunity for either your children or those of someone else you know. Parents or service providers who are interested in observing this event please contact us at 1.800.905.3436 for details.

If you know a family or youth who is interested, please contact us at the above number. We will accommodate as many families as possible. Please call to ensure space.



# Helping the Child Who is Expressing Anger

When you hear about children killing other children, you may think, "I don't know a single child who could do such a thing."

Too often the daily news confirms that children and teens can be violent, even deadly. As parents, families, teachers and members of the community, what can we do to help children cope with angry feelings--from frustration to rage?

Some young people turn to violence, because they do not see other ways to endure what they are feeling at that moment. They may not anticipate the repercussions of their violence.

## These tips may help when you recognize a child who is withdrawing or exploding over everyday frustrations:

**Listen** to what the child is saying about his or her feelings and be willing to talk about any subject. Young people today are dealing with adult problems such as love, sex, relationships, failure and rejection. Unfortunately, their minds and bodies simply are not ready for these stresses.

**Provide** comfort and assurance. Tell the child that you care about his or her problems. Show confidence in his or her ability to tackle life's ups and downs.

**Tell** the child that everyone experiences anger. Tell him or her about the last time you felt really angry and how you dealt with that anger in a positive way.

**Encourage** the child to shift gears—to spend some time doing things he or she really likes to do—playing sports, walking someone's dog, or reading a book. A different activity can refocus thoughts and help alleviate some of the angry feelings.

**Teach** basic problem-solving skills. When upsetting situations arise, the child who has practiced these skills will be more likely to think through the consequences of different actions and will, ultimately, make a better choice than violence.

**Look** at how you handle your own anger. Are you setting a good example? Would you want to be imitated by a child who admires you?

**Acknowledge** good behavior. When a child deals with his or her anger in a positive way, praise the positive choice. Take every opportunity to reinforce strengths. Build the child's awareness of his or her own talents and abilities.

If none of these approaches seems to work, and the child stays angry or withdrawn for a long time, seek help. Talk to your family doctor or pediatrician. Together, you may decide that your child and family need help from someone with more mental health training.

Free information about children's and adolescents' mental health is available from the CARING FOR EVERY CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH: Communities Together Public Education Campaign of the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Call 1.800.789.2647 or go to [www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/child/](http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/child/) on the Internet.

**“There is no friendship, no love,  
like that of the parent for the child.”**

**- Henry Ward Beecher**



## Youth Program Transformation

by James Sawyer, Youth Coordinator

In reflection, the past few months have been witness to tremendous growth in our youth program here at the Idaho Federation of Families. One of our greatest accomplishments was the implementation of the Youth Track at the Idaho System of Care Conference, May 1st and 2nd. We had significant increase in youth attendance which totaled nearly fifty from all around the state; while last year we had nine total youth. Youth were able to attend classes that focused on their self-understanding/self-esteem, future life and career goals, and team building activities. Some of the youth then shared their experience in front of an all-conference assembly. I would like to thank all the youth who participated, without whom we would not have had such a successful event. Also I would like to thank all of you who were instigators in getting information out about the youth track; this includes parents, clinicians, community members, local and regional mental health councils, and SDAG participants.

Another great accomplishment observed these past few months has been the Youth Peer Support Groups. We have been holding peer support groups in limited locations since the middle of February. During this time we have made strides to boost the number of groups that meet, as well as to focus on having groups available in a variety of locations across the state of Idaho. We are currently hoping to have groups started in northern Idaho in June. These meetings are based on the Wellness Model and are designed for youth around the ages 14-18. The wellness model looks at the overall well-being of the youth participants. Each group is staffed with a facilitator to ensure quality of content and care of group members. We are still seeking great facilitators. If you or someone you know is interested in learning how to become a facilitator, or to find out more information on these groups, check out our website at [www.idahofederation.org](http://www.idahofederation.org)

# Fun “Rookie” Recipes

“Children of all ages and gender, benefit from spending time in the kitchen.” Summer is the perfect instance to take advantage of this, so take a moment to set aside regular “kitchen time” with your family. There are many important advantages to cooking with your child. First, the time spent together and second, cooking with your kids is a great way to introduce and practice “basic math, reading, and comprehension skills.” “Using a recipe also helps develop their ability to follow directions, one of the most important skills a child needs.” We have included several fun/quick recipe ideas to help you get started.

Source: <http://www.amazingmoms.com>

## Chocolate-Dipped Fruit Kabobs

This is a chocoholic’s dream. Fruit dipped in chocolate.

**Prep. time:** 10 minutes

**Cooking time:** 10 minutes

**Serves:** 6

Source: Nestle® Very Best Baking

### INGREDIENTS:

1 cup (6 oz.) NESTLÉ® TOLL HOUSE® Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels

18 pieces bite-size fresh fruit, (strawberries, apple, banana, kiwifruit )

6 (4-inch) wooden skewers

### DIRECTIONS:

LINE baking sheet with wax paper.

**MICROWAVE** morsels in small, uncovered, microwave-safe bowl on HIGH (100%) power for 1 minute; stir. Microwave at additional 10- to 15-second intervals, stirring until smooth.

**DIP** fruit about halfway into chocolate; shake off excess. Or, place melted chocolate in small, heavy-duty plastic bag. Cut tiny corner from bag; squeeze to drizzle over fruit. Place fruit on prepared baking sheet. Refrigerate for 5 to 10 minutes or until chocolate is set.

**THREAD** three pieces fruit on each skewer.

### ADDITIONAL RECIPE IDEAS:

Banana Dippers / Fruit Pizza

Ants on a Log / Nachos / Worms in Dirt

All recipe ideas were found throughout cookbooks both on and off the internet.



## From the Director

Often I’m invited to speak about what the Idaho Federation of Families provides to parents and youth. I realize many of our new families may not be completely clear on what services we supply. The Federation works hard to serve families and youth throughout Idaho with advocacy, training, support, information, and referral. We serve families with youth who have emotional, behavioral, and mental disorders. One important service we suggest parents take advantage of is the guidance our Family Support Specialists (FSS) offer. All FSS are parents who have navigated the children’s mental health system themselves and have extensive knowledge in many helpful areas. Each Family Support Specialist serves an entire region and can attend meetings (school, DHW, court, etc.) with a family, as well as offer peer-to-peer support groups. In addition, the Federation offers trainings and sponsorships to attend trainings. This year we will begin Sibshops training for providers who will then conduct statewide workshops for siblings of children with special needs. The Federation helps find available resources for families, information on diagnosis, how to access services, and parental rights. We are excited to offer these services at no charge. We pride ourselves on being available to any person who calls us. If we don’t have the answer, we will find one.

Recently, the Idaho Federation of Families helped sponsor the May System of Care conference. We sponsored both the ‘Youth Track’ and family dinner event where the Federation and the System of Care honored outstanding individuals and agencies dedicated to children’s mental health services in Idaho.

The Board of Directors held an April retreat in Boise where vision of our organization was revisited and altered to read: *Families and youth are respected and valued members of a stigma free community.*

The Idaho Federation of Families continues to see growth statewide as we work toward a parent and family driven children’s mental health system in Idaho.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the Federation, have a wonderful summer vacation making new memories as a family.

Enjoy! Courtney Lester, Administrative Director

## A Parent’s View: System of Care Conference

By: Barbara Hill

Attending this May’s System of Care conference, as both a parent and Family Support Specialist, was an enlightening experience. It was outstanding to see so many families and agencies involved, participating, and working together. Keynote speaker, Harold Briggs and his son Adam were motivating. The Federation awards dinner was very gratifying. Witnessing the youth involvement was really inspiring and extremely exciting. I would like to give a big thank you to all the parents, youth, and their families for their participation in this year’s councils and conferences; you are greatly appreciated for always contributing when called upon. Without this key group we would not be as effective as we have become. Parents of Region III would like to thank James Sawyer for all he has contributed to our youth. We would also like to thank the Idaho Federation for many hours spent arranging travel and lodging for the families attending the conference. We acknowledge and applaud the efforts of the Local and Regional councils, ICCMH, and agencies as they continue to better mental health care in the state of Idaho. Finally, we would like to extend our gratitude to the System of Care for encouraging statewide family participation. We embrace the changes that are taking place within Children’s Mental Health and look forward to generating other new and improved opportunities where family voice is heard.

# Mental Health Research: Into the Future

by: Thomas R. Insel, M.D., Director

National Institute of Mental Health | National Institutes of Health

In the six decades that NIMH has led the nation's research effort in mental health, advancement has been dramatic. We understand now that the major mental disorders are brain disorders, with specific symptoms rooted in abnormal patterns of brain activity. We realize that the devastation of autism and schizophrenia are not the result of bad parenting or early psychic conflict. We recognize that mental disorders, unlike most chronic medical disorders, generally begin in childhood, with 50 percent of affected adults reporting onset of symptoms before age 14. We now have reliable diagnostic tools as well as effective medications and psychological therapies for depression and anxiety disorders; we have treatments that can predictably reduce the hallucinations and delusions of schizophrenia, as well as psychosocial interventions that enable people with schizophrenia to remain in their communities, to work and lead productive lives. The number of patients in state hospitals has decreased from 600,000 to less than 60,000.

While research funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), part of the National Institutes of Health, has resulted in profound advancement in most of the major mental illnesses, in 2006 we recognize that not all treatments work for everyone. After six decades of progress, mental disorders remain unacceptably common, causing more disability in people under age 45 than any other class of non-communicable medical illness.

... we recognize that not all treatments work for everyone.

**How can we do better?** The NIMH has raised the bar on the nation's research effort to reduce the public health burden of mental disorders by going for cures and strategic preventions. Since mental disorders are brain disorders, the path forward is to exploit the power of genomics and neuroscience to solve these mysteries of the mind. Genetics can now help us to understand how one person is susceptible to an illness and another is resilient. Neuroscience now allows us to study the brain in children and adults with mental disorders just as we study the heart in those with cardiac disease. Genetics and neuroscience together are giving us the tools for predicting risk, validating diagnosis, and identifying targets for new, more effective treatments.

Of course, environmental factors – such as loss of a loved one, traumatic events, or physical attributes of the fetal environment – exert a powerful influence on the development of mental disorders, possibly triggering the leap from genetic predisposition to illness. Researchers are now asking how environmental factors during critical phases of development exert long-term effects on how and when genes are activated. Exploring how genes interact with the environment to result in depression is not much different from understanding how environmental toxins contribute to cancer or how diet influences cardiovascular disease. However, for mental disorders, the trigger may be stressful experiences, the exposure may only have an impact at specific stages of development, and the effects may be limited to a narrow range of cells in the brain.

... identifying those who will respond best to the treatments available now.

But doing better must mean more than discovering biological markers for diagnosis or new targets for treatment to help people in the future. We must use current treatments more effectively, identifying those who will respond best to the treatments available now. Over the past seven years, NIMH has completed several practical clinical trials that are the largest and longest of their kind, involving more than 10,000 patients at more than 200 sites. These "effectiveness studies" were designed to examine not only changes in symptoms but changes in functioning, to determine whether a treatment improves quality of life, care giving burden, or use of health services.

**These studies have already demonstrated the effectiveness of antidepressant medication for adolescents with depression and the value of an off-patent, inexpensive antipsychotic medication for adults with chronic schizophrenia.** These clinical trials are part of a rigorous effort to discover what therapies work best, and for whom. Current research is discovering how individual differences in biology could determine how that person reacts to a certain medication. Discovering these individual differences will help improve both diagnosis and treatment. For a person with mental illness, one can imagine that in the future a physician would perhaps use a memory task together with brain imaging and a genetics test to diagnose and select a specific treatment — just as a contemporary cardiologist uses a stress test and echocardiogram to diagnose heart disease and select the proper treatment.

It is critical to realize that this vision of personalized care does not mean designing exotic therapies for a few privileged patients. The ultimate goal is personalized or individualized care for the full spectrum of people with mental disorders. As researchers learn more about the brain mechanisms of mental disorders and related behavioral and environmental factors, treatments will become more specific.

These are some of the issues that will be addressed by the newest generation of NIMH researchers. In the 60 years of NIMH's history, there has never been a more exciting time. Payoffs are imminent. For instance, years of basic research on depression have led to development of a new class of medication that, in initial trials, works in hours rather than weeks. We are on the verge of significant advances that will move us closer to predictive, preventive, and personalized mental health care grounded in research.

One of the most elusive elements of improving mental health, however, will be the integration of psychiatry with the rest of medicine. **Stress and depression, for example, are among the risk factors for heart disease and other serious medical conditions.** The mechanisms underlying these relationships aren't yet clear, but integration will be a significant step toward improved care of the whole person by an effective treatment team, while also reducing the stigma felt by those with these devastating diseases.

# IDAHO PARENTS UNLIMITED, INC.

Idaho Parents Unlimited, Inc. (IPUL) is a statewide non-profit 501(c) 3 organization which houses the Idaho Parent Training and Information Center, the Family to Family Health Information Center, and VSA arts of Idaho. The following is a short description of each of our current projects.

**The Parent Training and Information Center** works to ensure that parents of children with disabilities receive training and information on their rights, responsibilities, and protections under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The project has regional parent education coordinators who can direct parents to the resources in their area. They provide workshops on topics of importance for parents and professionals. Recently IPUL has started providing workshops by mail upon request. One on one telephone assistance is available to parents on a wide range of disability and education topics.

**VSA arts of Idaho** works to empower and engage people with disabilities in the creative process through opportunities which are fully inclusive, educational and participatory. The largest activity under this project is "Creative Access." This helps schools provide art education residencies that include children with disabilities in enriched learning experiences.

**The Family to Family Health Care Education and Information Center** works to help sustain the health and well-being of Idaho's families, their children and youth with special health care needs. The project helps families learn to navigate the complex healthcare system. This includes public sources such as Medicaid or CHIP A and B and private health insurance.

IPUL provides a **statewide parent conference** every other year and a parent leadership program. "**The Parent Network,**" IPUL's **quarterly educational newsletter** is sent to nearly 10,000 parents and professionals in Idaho. Although IPUL's headquarters are in Boise, the agency has staff and contractors throughout the state.

You can get additional information by calling 342-5884 in the Boise area or toll free at 1-800-242-4785. Contact us through our website at [www.ipulidaho.org](http://www.ipulidaho.org) or our offices at 600 North Curtis Rd., Suite 145 Boise, Idaho 83706.

## Summer Arts & Crafts

The DIY kids show you how to create this clever time capsule - a decorated shoebox filled with your favorite memories!

### Materials:

Shoebox  
Contact paper (clear and designed patterns)  
Clear tape  
Markers  
Pencil  
Scissors  
Paper



figure A



figure B

**Note:** Items to store might include photos of friends, family, your house or pets, drawings, newspaper and magazine clippings and lists of how much different things cost or your favorite songs and groups — even lists of your favorite movies and television shows. Include any personal items that mean something to you and that say something about who you are.

- 1) Wrap your box and the lid separately with a contact paper that has a design on it. For a neat job measure out a piece of contact paper that will wrap all the way around your box. Peel back paper and set the shoebox in the middle (figure A). You may need a friend to help keep the paper from curling up.
- 2) Wrap the long sides first and cut a flap for the extra paper to fold inside your box. Now cut the end flaps and fold in the excess from the long sides, first then fold up the end pieces. Fold extra over the edges for more a finished look (figure B).
- 3) Next, cut smaller pieces to finish lining the inside of your box and lid.
- 4) Now, on paper, draw and color in pictures to decorate your box. Cut them out and tape them on.
- 5) Cover the box again, in the same manner, with clear contact paper.
- 6) Select the most memorable items for the year. Things about you, your family, your town, and pop culture and place your items in the box.
- 7) Finally, store your time capsule in a dark, forgettable place, but not totally and all together forgotten!

### Tips:

- Have an adult supervise when you use scissors.
- Either by hand or by computer — make a list of things you like.  
Example: Favorite books, favorite movies or what things cost.

**Products:** Available at craft and all-purpose stores nationwide.

### Resources:

Make Your Own Time Capsule  
Model: 0816749760  
Author: Mary Packard  
(March, 1999) (1999)

### Other Art & Craft Ideas:

Vacation/Summer Memory Book / Make a Frame / Stone Painting / Scavenger hunt  
Make a puppet / Decorate your classroom treat container / Decorate your own bookmark / Puff paint your own designer shirt / Sidewalk chalk a masterpiece  
Create an Egg Shell Mosaic

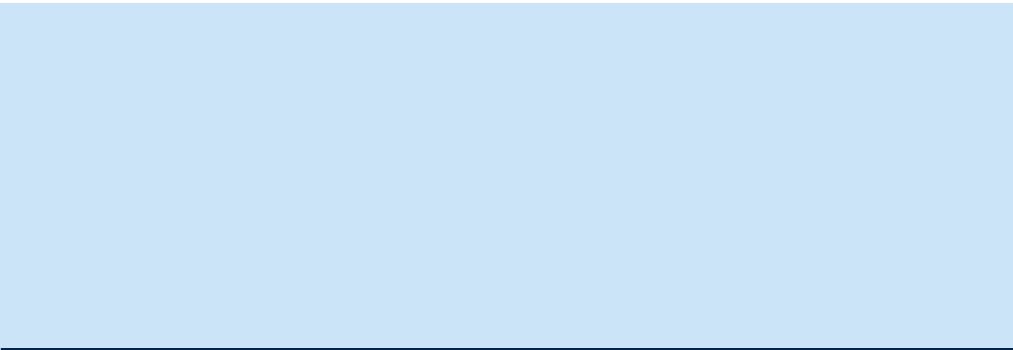


IDAHO FEDERATION OF  
*Families*  
FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

1509 S. Robert Street  
Suite 101  
Boise, ID 83705

Phone: (208) 433-8845  
Toll Free: (800) 905-3436  
Fax: (208) 433-8337

[www.idahofederation.org](http://www.idahofederation.org)



address correction requested

## Welcome to the Family!

The Federation would like to welcome our new additions around the state.

Angie Wilder - **Family Support Specialist**  
Region IV  
Rob Gregory - **Board Member**  
Lacey Sinn - **Promotions & Education**  
Coordinator



We must teach children to dream  
with their eyes open.  
- Harry Edwards

## Employment Opportunity

Local evaluation specialist needed for all areas of Idaho.

This is a temporary position through the Idaho Child Welfare Research & Training Center. For more information about this job description and the application procedure please contact Dr. Rick Phillips at 1015 S. Highland Dr. Spokane Valley, WA 99212 or at [rickphillips.eagle@sisna.com](mailto:rickphillips.eagle@sisna.com)

## Help Needed

The Federation is looking for a Family Support Specialist in Regions I, II, and IV. These are part-time positions. Please contact us for more information or visit our website at [www.idahofederation.org](http://www.idahofederation.org)

## Did you know

the Federation has a resource library available? We lend books, pamphlets, videos, and other information for parents. These resources are free of charge to families and we are always willing to help research additional resources if we do not have what you need. Our website also offers an extensive list of resources available both statewide and locally.

[www.idahofederation.org](http://www.idahofederation.org)

