

# PARTNERING TOGETHER



## Strengthening Families, Navigating Life

Welcome to this special edition of Partnering Together. This edition will highlight the Strengthening Families, Navigating Life Family Enrichment Conference– a combined effort to bring you a fun, educational, inspiring statewide meeting. The conference will continue to be an annual event so if you missed it this year, start planning now to attend next year. To stay in the loop, sign up for email updates by going to [mofamilypartnership.org](http://mofamilypartnership.org).

This edition will also introduce you to your Family Partner. Beth Doody has been with the Family Partnership for a year and represents the Southwest region of the state. The three other

Family Partners are new: Michelle Dover, Northwest region, Pat Fox, Northeast region and Crystal Bell, Southeast region. Please take the opportunity to reach out to your Family Partner by phone or email and introduce yourself.

Care to join a statewide advocacy group, become a parent support volunteer or expand your own leadership skills? Just contact the Family Partnership for one-stop shopping. From film screenings and discussions to monthly webinars and regional events, the Family Partnership offers something for everyone. ●





# FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN MO FAMILY TO FAMILY & SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Are you a parent or immediate family member of a child with special health care needs? Do you believe in supporting other families like yours? Do you enjoy networking with service and support professionals to promote supporting families and systems change? How about developing family leadership skills, educating on advocacy and natural supports? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then Family Partnership is for you.

A collaboration between Missouri Family to Family (MOF2F) and Special Health Care Needs (SHCN), the Family Partnership provides a myriad of possibilities for families to grow and thrive. Each of the four regional Family Partners

are parents of children with special health care needs who have utilized SHCN services. They are simply an email or phone call away and are here to connect you directly to your local and statewide supports.

With its roots laid as an initiative of The Department of Health and Senior Services and UMKC, the Family Partnership boasts a strong foundation of leadership and parent support. Through collaboration with MOF2F the initiative has expanded at all levels. In its ongoing evolution Family Partnership is now backed by over 500 statewide family leaders and 130 affiliate organizations who serve and support families with special health care needs or developmental disabilities. ●

## Your Family Partner may have changed!

### FIND YOUR FAMILY PARTNER

#### NORTHWEST REGION

**MICHELLE DOVER**

(816) 809-9403

[michelle@mofamilypartnership.org](mailto:michelle@mofamilypartnership.org)

#### SOUTHWEST REGION

**BETH DOODY**

(660) 200-5371

[beth@mofamilypartnership.org](mailto:beth@mofamilypartnership.org)

#### SOUTHEAST REGION

**CRYSTAL BELL**

(573) 776-0697

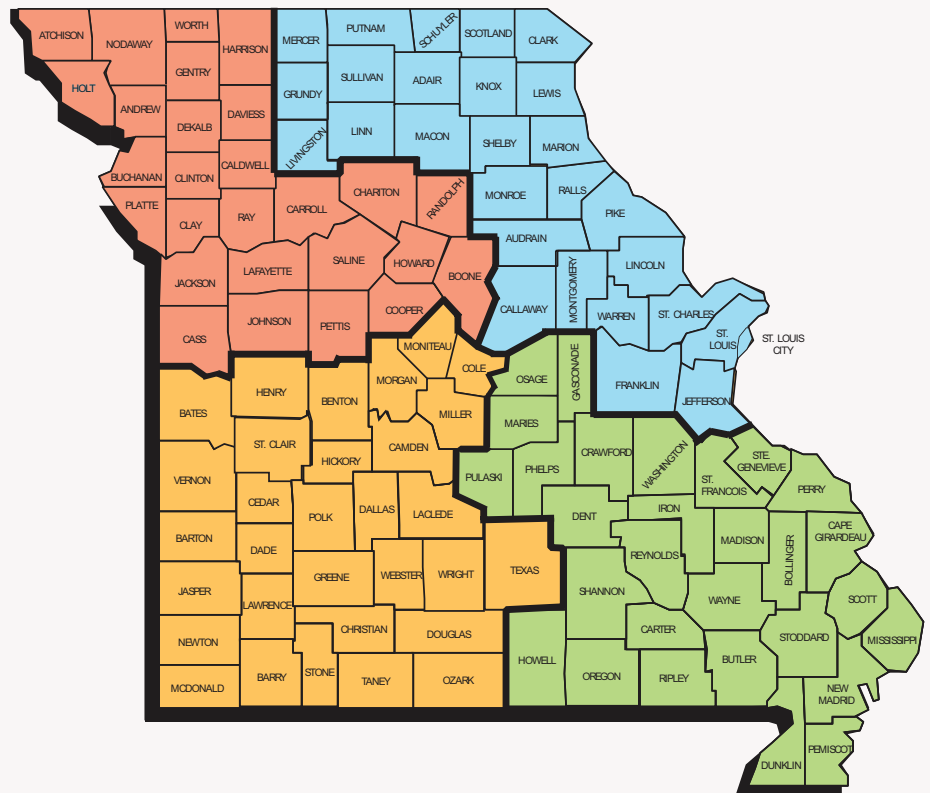
[crystal@mofamilypartnership.org](mailto:crystal@mofamilypartnership.org)

#### NORTHEAST REGION

**PAT FOX**

(314) 504-7636

[pat@mofamilypartnership.org](mailto:pat@mofamilypartnership.org)



To learn more about your Family Partner, see page 7.

Sign up for email updates at [mofamilypartnership.org](http://mofamilypartnership.org) to find out the latest news about the Family Partnership!



## Strengthening Families, Navigating Life

a Family Enrichment Conference  
April 11-12, 2014  
Tan-Tar-A Resort, Osage Beach, MO

### HOSTED BY

The Family Partnership, MO Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems, MO First Steps, Project Launch, the Children's Trust Fund, and MO Family to Family are excited to host *Strengthening Families, Navigating Life*: a Family Enrichment Conference.

### THE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

The Family Partnership was formed by Special Health Care Needs (SHCN), of the MO Department of Health and Senior Services, to enhance the relationship between SHCN and the families it serves. The Family Partnership also provides peer support and resource information to families of individuals with special health care needs and identifies ways for families to connect with each other. Family Partnership members include individuals with special health care needs as well as parents, legal guardians or siblings.

For more information, go to [mofamilypartnership.org](http://mofamilypartnership.org).



# CONFERENCE AGENDA

## Friday, April 11

4pm	Hotel Check-in available
4 - 7pm	Exhibitor Area open
5 - 7:30pm	Conference Registration
7 - 9pm	Opening Kickoff



## Saturday, April 12

6:30am	Yoga [Breakfast on your own with conference vouchers]
9 - 9:15am	Welcome
9:15 - 10:15am	<b>Keynote Presentation</b> Missouri Strong, Family Strong
10:15 - 10:30am	Break, Hotel Checkout (by 11am)
10:30 - 11:30am	<b>Navigating Life: Breakouts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seeing the World through the Lens of Trauma</li><li>• SUCCESS in Telling Your Story</li><li>• Charting the Life Course: Living the Good Life</li></ul>
11:30 - 12pm	Break
12 - 1pm	<b>Lunch: Regional Networking with Your Family Partners</b>
1 - 2pm	<b>Strengthening Families: Breakouts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Art of Effective Advocacy</li><li>• Fathers Matter: Calling all Dads! (Moms welcome too)</li><li>• Family Leadership: Getting to your "Why"</li></ul>
2:00 - 2:15pm	Break
2:15 - 3:30pm	<b>Closing Session</b>

## Friday night

[Salon C]

### Celebrate the Power of Diversity

Over 50,000 people from LA to NYC have been inspired by the men of Handicap This! Mike Berkson and Tim Wambach demonstrate the value of inclusion, challenge bullying, and celebrate the power of diversity. They raise awareness about people living with different abilities, and motivate any individual to go after their own goals and dreams.

Learn more at [handicaphthis.com](http://handicaphthis.com)

## Saturday Keynote

[Salon C]

### Missouri Strong, Family Strong



**Presenter:** Carla Snodgrass, MPA  
Friends National Resource Center

Our early experiences as children and youth have a direct impact on who we become as adults and shape the way we respond in times of crisis. It is important to develop resiliency to persevere through crisis with skill-building techniques, strategies and openly sharing your experiences.

Tools are available to identify both emotional and community supports to help your family cope with stress and discover ways to enhance positive emotional ties and positive interactions with your children. You can also develop your own voice and leadership skills within your community to create an environment of success for you and your family.

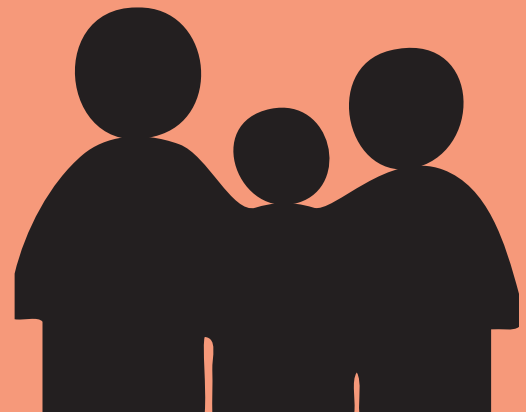
Discover resources and find more information at [friendsnrc.org](http://friendsnrc.org)

## Saturday Lunch

[Salon C]

### Regional Networking

The Family Partnership initiative presents a great opportunity for you to network with other families similar to your own. Connect with your Family Partner to discuss how the Family Partnership can build a strong family network within your region. Your family network is a direct link between your family and community and the services available through the Bureau of Special Health Care Needs. Building a strong regional network is a great way to get your voice heard at the state level with the strength of your community family voice.



## Seeing the World through the Lens of Trauma [62/63]

Patsy Carter, Department of Mental Health

Research has revealed the connection between traumatic experiences in childhood and negative health and social outcomes through adulthood. Traumatic experiences in early childhood can affect brain development that can negatively impact relationships, emotional and behavioral control, and the ability to learn.

Learn about trauma in children and how to help lessen negative outcomes at [nctsn.org](http://nctsn.org)

## SUCCESS in Telling Your Story [74/75]

Beth Doody & Michelle Dover, Family Partners



Your family story is powerful and can help other families- how adept are you at sharing it with a variety of audiences? How do you frame your story for curious young children or need-to-know policymakers? How about at an IEP meeting, or when applying for services? It is important to build and perfect your family story to educate, inform and connect with the right audience at the right time.

Find *SUCCESS in Telling your Story* and other tools and information at [ngsd.org](http://ngsd.org)

## Charting the Life Course: Living the Good Life [60/61]

Susan Bird, Missouri Family to Family

From early childhood through adult life we are shaped and influenced by our life experiences. Household chores shape our work ethic. Earning and spending childhood allowance influences our financial habits. Interactions on the playground grow our personality. Are you ensuring that your child with special needs is living life with similar experiences?

Find *Charting the Life Course* and more resources to plan for the future and explore your options with your family at [mofamilytofamily.org](http://mofamilytofamily.org).

Want to connect with another mom or dad who has a great vision for the future? Visit [sharingourstrengths.com](http://sharingourstrengths.com) to begin your journey.

## Building a Strong Family Voice: The Art of Effective Advocacy [62/63]

Lori Williams, MPACT

Parents often feel ignored by professionals or as if their opinions and concerns go unheard. It is often difficult to navigate the maze of special services and create a plan that will help children achieve successful outcomes.

Discover ways to work collaboratively to solve problems, the role of good record keeping and how to communicate more effectively with the professionals working with your child along with other resources at [ptimpact.org](http://ptimpact.org).

## Fathers Matter: Calling All Dads! [74/75]

Sam Blue, Project LAUNCH & Gerardo Martinez, KC LINC

Fathers make a difference in their families and influence their children's lives. It is important to learn from others about being strong and flexible, developing strong friendships, and enriching your child's communication skills. Understanding that being a great parent is part natural and part learned is also key. Connecting with other parents - both moms and dads, can make all the difference in your world, especially when you give your children the love and respect they need. Take the steps to be a leader in your community!

Here are some national and local resources to help you dig deeper:

- National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse - [fatherhood.gov](http://fatherhood.gov)
- National Fatherhood Initiative - [fatherhood.org](http://fatherhood.org)
- Fathers' Support Center, St. Louis - [fathersupportcenter.org](http://fathersupportcenter.org)
- Kansas City Local Investment Commission (LINC) - [kclinc.org](http://kclinc.org)

## Family Leadership: Getting to your Why [60/61]

Jane St. John, Missouri Family to Family

It is easy to see what people do, and even sometimes how they do it- but as family leaders, are you proficient at defining WHY you are driven to do what you do? Make a difference in your community by learning to define your "why". Others will follow you when they relate to your personal belief or purpose.

Connect with the Missouri Family Leadership Certificate Series at [mofamilyleadership.org](http://mofamilyleadership.org).

Sign up to make a difference with MOF2F at [mofamilytofamily.org](http://mofamilytofamily.org).



***“Staying informed, connecting with others and strengthening your skills can assist you in your life journey..”***



## SIGN UP FOR UPDATES

Sign up for email updates and email versions of the Partnering Together newsletter to stay informed. The next version of the newsletter is about community living and resources and will only be available online and via email - don't miss it!!

## CONNECT WITH US

Visit [mofamilypartnership.org](http://mofamilypartnership.org) to receive up to date information about the Family Partnership.

Connect with your family partner to:

- make sure you are invited to regional events
- stay informed about local resources
- connect with other families similar to your own
- be heard at the state services level

Consider becoming a peer mentor through Sharing Our Strengths or enhancing your leadership skills through the Family Leadership Certificate Series. Find more at [mofamilytofamily.org](http://mofamilytofamily.org).

# Getting to Know the Family Partners

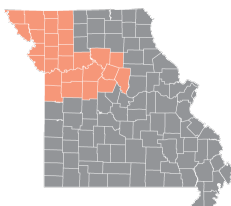


## MICHELLE DOVER

Northwest Family Partner  
michelle@mofamilypartnership.org

I am so excited and privileged to be a Family Partner and am looking forward to playing an active role in providing information and support to families caring for loved ones with special health care needs. I am the mother of two wonderful boys, Edward and Max. My youngest son, Edward, was diagnosed before birth with a rare neurological anomaly that we were told would be incompatible with life. He is now 13, and although he has severe disabilities and requires round the clock care, he has a full and amazing life. We have been blessed to receive services, support and excellent care from the compassionate and dedicated staff at the Bureau of Special Health Care Needs throughout Edward's life.

I believe that whenever and wherever we can we all need to help all people live a quality life with dignity and opportunities for growth and joy. Parenting my children is my primary job, however, I manage to find time to practice law part time in Kansas City with an emphasis on estate planning for clients with special needs. Sometimes you will find me curled on the couch reading, running by the river or practicing yoga with my friends. ●

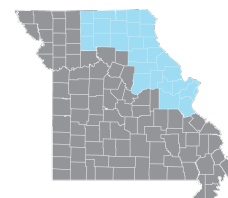


## PAT FOX

Northeast Family Partner  
pat@mofamilypartnership.org

I am the mother of three children. My youngest, Patrick, was diagnosed with both Special Health Care Needs and Developmental Delays. Through Patrick I was involved with First Steps early on and the Bureau of Special Health Care Needs for the past 10 years. I volunteered with the Delta Gamma Center as an Abilities Awareness Specialist and served on the Missouri Blind Task Force. I have also been a parent mentor with Sharing our Strengths since 2004.

One of my favorite accomplishments was working with the Special School District to help our home district include Patrick and other children with similar needs. I also helped make changes for the better in the hospital setting. Although Patrick passed away last November I am excited to be a part of the Family Partnership and am looking forward to working with a team that helps better the lives of all children with special health care needs and developmental delays. ●

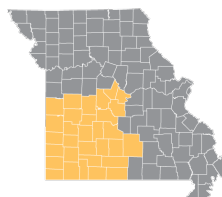


## BETH DOODY

Southwest Family Partner  
beth@mofamilypartnership.org

My husband Ernie and I live in rural Vernon County. We raised two adult children, have 5 grandchildren and are currently raising our special needs adopted daughter. I am so excited to have the privilege of serving special needs families in the Southwest region as your Family Partner.

We were given a rather bleak glimpse of our child's future by a number of professionals and spent years with doctors, specialists and therapists. After our daughter started losing her therapies due to sweeping budget cuts, we decided to make a few changes. We began homeschooling, which by far has been the best decision we ever made for her. We realized we were regaining a normal lifestyle. As our schedule became more relaxed and allowed our daughter to learn and grow at her own pace, her personality blossomed. Our daughter's special needs will always be with her, but she is making progress we were told would never be achieved. ●



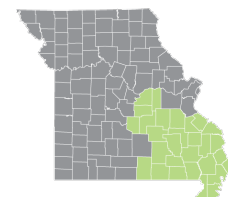
## CRYSTAL BELL

Southeast Family Partner  
crystal@mofamilypartnership.org

As a mother of two boys with special needs, I know firsthand how difficult finding resources and support can be.

When my oldest son, Peyton was born with Down Syndrome as well as other complex medical needs, I had no idea where to look for information and resources. I was equally frustrated when my youngest, Conner was diagnosed with Autism and ADHD.

That is why I'm so eager to be a part of Family Partnership. It excites me to be able to facilitate the connection of families and resources in their area. I look forward to helping families that deal with the daily challenges of supporting an individual with special needs. In addition to my newest mission, I keep myself busy running my housekeeping business. ●



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# PARTNERING TOGETHER

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## OUR PARTNERS



### Family Partnership

Formed by Special Health Care Needs (SHCN), of the Missouri

Department of Health and Senior Services, to enhance the relationship between SHCN and the families they serve. The Family Partnership also serves as a means to provide support and information to families of individuals with special health care needs and identifies ways for families to connect with each other.

[mofamilypartnership.org](http://mofamilypartnership.org) | 800-779-8652



### Department of Health & Senior Services, Special Health Services

Provides statewide health care support services, including service coordination, for children and adults with special health care needs who meet eligibility requirements. Programs include: Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, Healthy Children and Youth, Medically Fragile Adult Waiver, and Adult Brain Injury.

[health.mo.gov/living/families/shcn/](http://health.mo.gov/living/families/shcn/) | 800-451-0669



### MO Family to Family

Serves individuals with disabilities and/or special health care needs, their families, and professionals who support them. We can help you discover and navigate your family's life course with practical information and tools, connect and network with others who share similar experiences, find ways to make a difference that fit your time, interests and talents.

[mofamilytofamily.org](http://mofamilytofamily.org) | 800-444-0821



### MO Children's Trust Fund

Works to prevent child abuse and neglect and

strengthen families through grant distribution, education, awareness; and partnerships.

573-751-5147 | [ctf4kids.org/](http://ctf4kids.org/)

### Project Launch

Helping all children reach physical, social, emotional, behavior and cognitive milestones.

[projectlaunch.promoteprevent.org](http://projectlaunch.promoteprevent.org)

### MO Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems

Seeks to foster collaborative partnerships that support families and communities in developing children that are healthy and ready to enter school. Local stakeholder teams were identified or established in 12 communities to build capacity through increased community awareness and expanded and diversified funding. The ECCS team works closely with the MO Coordinating Board for Early Childhood to implement MO's Early Childhood State Plan.

[health.mo.gov/atoz/eccs/](http://health.mo.gov/atoz/eccs/) | 573-751-6001



### MO First Steps

Offers coordinated services and assistance to young children with special needs and their families. First Steps is designed for children, birth to age 3, who have delayed development or diagnosed conditions that are associated with developmental disabilities.

[dese.mo.gov/se/fs/](http://dese.mo.gov/se/fs/) | 1-866-583-2392



INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
A University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)

Missouri Family to Family is housed within Missouri's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Services (UCEDD) at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development. It is the state's HRSA Family to Family Health Information Center, and is a Parent to Parent USA Alliance Member. This newsletter was developed in partnership and with support from the Missouri Department of Mental Health, Division of Developmental Disabilities; the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Special Health Care Needs; the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council (PL106-402); and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Division of Services for Children with Special Health Needs (#B04MC26677, H84MC09484 and D70MC23046).