



THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc.

# HEALTH Connection

HSCSN has a new website! Visit us at [hscsnhealthplan.org](http://hscsnhealthplan.org).

SPRING 2020

HSCSN's Newsletter for Families with Children and Young Adults with Special Health Care Needs

## Sadness or Something More? Why You Should Talk with Your Teen

May is National Mental Health Awareness Month.

Most teens feel stressed or unhappy at times. But a mood disorder, such as depression, is not the same. It lasts longer and makes it harder for a teen to function well at home or school.

The American Psychiatric Association says signs of depression include:

- Feeling irritable or anxious.
- Losing interest in favorite activities.
- Feeling sad, hopeless, or empty.
- Trouble concentrating or remembering things.
- Not being able to sleep or sleeping too much.
- Eating too much or not wanting to eat at all.



**Mood disorders can even lead to suicide.** And a study in the *Journal of Psychiatry* found that adolescents and young adults with chronic illness are more likely to think about, plan, and attempt suicide. The risk may be

even greater for those who also have a mood or substance use disorder.

If you feel that your child may have depression or another mental health disorder, ask him or her

about it. Not doing so could put your teen at risk. You should also talk with his or her health care provider. Treatment may include medicine, talk therapy, or both.

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**If you think that a loved one is at risk of hurting himself or herself, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255).**



UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT

# Join Our Healthy Living Program

The Healthy Living Program offers free movement and weight management classes for parents and youth ages 16 and older. Transportation is available for HSCSN enrollees and their families.



## Healthy Living Program

### Classes include:

**Yoga**, Tuesdays 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.: Improve balance and strength while working on mental health.

**Jazzercise**, Saturdays 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.: Dance and get a full-body workout.

**Strength 60 (ABs)**, Thursdays 6:30 p.m. –7:30 p.m.: Burn fat and improve heart health.

**Where:** Family and Community Development Outreach Department (FCD)  
3400 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. SE  
Washington, DC 20032

**For more details:** Visit [hscsnhealthplan.org/hlp](https://hscsnhealthplan.org/hlp).

# Happy Summer! HSCSN Camps and Therapeutic Programs

Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc. (HSCSN) can help your child make the most of his or her time out of school. Enrollees are eligible for fun camps and therapeutic programs that take place between May 25 and September 7, 2020.

You can sign your child up for programs like:

- Melwood Camp Accomplish
- DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Therapeutic Day Camps
- Skills on the Hill
- Capitol Kids Therapy

These programs and camps focus on education, fitness, recreation, self-care, socialization, training, and more. For more information and to find out if your summer camp or program is covered, call HSCSN Customer Care at **202-467-2737**.



# Having a Baby? Do Not Forget the Folic Acid

Women who are pregnant, or who could become pregnant, need to get plenty of folate and folic acid. These B vitamins support the growth of babies' brains, hearts, and spines. They may also reduce the risk of babies being born too soon before their due dates. The March of Dimes warns that babies who are born too soon can have more health problems.

Along with eating foods high in folate, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that women take 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid each day. Unlike folate, folic acid is man-made and added to supplements and foods by their manufacturers.

## To get more folate, eat foods like:

- Beans and other legumes.
- Dark leafy greens and other vegetables.
- Fruits and nuts.



## You can get folic acid from:

- Bread and cereal.
- Corn and wheat flour.
- Pasta and rice.



## Asthma Myth

**Myth:** You should not exercise if you have asthma.

**Fact:** Staying active is important for your overall health and well-being. Talk with your health care provider if exercise causes your asthma to flare up. The American Academy of Pediatrics notes that your doctor might have you take medicine before you start exercising. This will help you breathe easier and avoid coughing and other symptoms. You should also:

- Do a short warm-up.
- Check air pollution and pollen levels. Workout inside when they are high.

# Help Your Child Avoid or Cope with Trauma

Happy times to hard spells, what takes place when a person is a child can still impact them as an adult. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) raise the risk for:

- Drug and alcohol problems.
- Burns, broken bones, or an injury to the brain.
- Diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and HIV.
- Anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- Early death, including suicide.

The more ACEs children are a part of, the more at risk they are for these problems. ACEs are events that may cause trauma, such as:

- Having a family member who has tried to end his or her own life.



- Having a family member who died by suicide.
- Living with a person who has mental health issues.
- Living in a home where there are drug or alcohol problems.
- Going through abuse, neglect, or violence.
- Seeing a family member be treated violently.

The best way to help children thrive is to prevent trauma. Parents and caregivers can find more information about ACEs at [www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/hildabuseandneglect/aces/fastfact.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/hildabuseandneglect/aces/fastfact.html).

## Keep Your Benefits Call Today!

Are you going to lose Medicaid eligibility this month? If you lose eligibility, you will not be able to:

- Take your child to the doctor.
- Get medicine your child needs.
- Use transportation services.

HSCSN can help you and your family with medical benefits. Call us Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at **202-467-2737**.



THE HSC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc.

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Chief Medical Officer, HSCSN

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For more information, visit [hscsnhealthplan.org](https://hscsnhealthplan.org).

For reasonable accommodations, please call **202-467-2737**.

# HSCSN's PALS Holiday Event



HSCSN's Parent Advocacy Leaders Support Group (PALS) hosted its annual holiday event on December 21, 2019, at River Terrace Education Campus. The event welcomed over 100 HSCSN families to participate in fun holiday activities like ornament decorating, photos with Santa Claus, and holiday themed games. Families and children alike enjoyed the event and left full of joy for the holiday season.

If you do not speak and/or read English, please call 202-467-2737 between 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. A representative will assist you. English

Si no habla o lee inglés, llame al 202-467-2737 entre las 7:00 a.m. y las 5:30 p.m. Un representante se complacerá en asistirle. Spanish

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Nếu bạn không nói và/hoặc đọc tiếng Anh, xin gọi 202-467-2737 từ 7 giờ 00 sáng đến 5 giờ 30 chiều. Sẽ có người đại diện giúp bạn. Vietnamese

如果您不能講和/或不能閱讀英語，請在上午 7:00到下午 5:30之間給 202-467-2737 打電話，我們會有代表幫助您。Chinese

영어로 대화를 못하시거나 영어를 읽지 못하는 경우, 오전 7시 00분에서 오후 5시 30분 사이에 202-467-2737 번으로 전화해 주시기 바랍니다. 담당 직원이 도와드립니다. Korean

Si vous ne parlez pas ou lisez l'anglais, s'il vous plaît appeler 202-467-2737 entre 7:00 du matin et 5:30 du soir. Un représentant vous aidera. French



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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR