



# Connections

Information + Support

Families of Children with Special Needs

Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, & Yancey counties

Summer 2013

## FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK™ - HIGH COUNTRY

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### Our Staff

**Kaaren Hayes**  
Director & Outreach  
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Avery and Watauga

**Norma Bouchard**  
Outreach Coordinator for  
Alleghany, Ashe, Wilkes  
Counties

**Teresa Emory**  
Outreach Coordinator for  
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### Advisory Board Members

Jeannie Caviness  
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Helen Phillips  
Amy Roberts  
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**An Affiliate of  
Family Support Network™  
North Carolina**

### With Support From

Appalachian State University

Children's Developmental  
Services Agency—Blue Ridge

High Country United Way

Friends of Family Support  
Network™—High County

Partnership for Children from:  
Avery  
Mitchell-Yancey  
Watauga  
Wilkes

## A Brighter Tomorrow

As college students, it's not often that we are granted an inside look at the variety of resources in the area. After spending five weeks in the Parent to Parent FSN-HC office shadowing Kaaren Hayes, we feel fortunate to have been given the opportunity to learn more about this organization that has such a profound impact on the community.

One of Parent to Parent FSN-HC's greatest successes to date has been the support that ultimately resulted in the High Country's very first adaptive baseball league, called **ABLE (Adaptive Baseball League for Everyone)**. Melissa Shore is a parent of two boys on the Autism Spectrum that Parent to Parent has been supporting for the last few months. When Melissa first expressed interest in creating this type of baseball league, Kaaren Hayes immediately began to put Melissa in contact with various community members that could be of help to her. On April 21, 2013, **ABLE** threw out their first pitch and families in the High Country have been singing its praises ever since. "There were smiles on everyone's face: kids and parents alike," said Parent to Parent FSN-HC director, Kaaren Hayes.



When asked about Parent to Parent FSN-HC's impact on the community, **ABLE's** founder Melissa Shore had nothing but high praises for the organization. "For me personally, Kaaren Hayes has provided the support I have needed to become an advocate for children with autism and other special needs in this local community," Melissa told us, "Kaaren invited me to many local groups to talk about my idea to start an adaptive baseball league for children with special needs. Without her support **ABLE** Recreation would not have come to fruition!"

Pamela Sizemore, a service provider in Alleghany's Family Resource center, first became aware of the program through a meeting with Norma Bouchard, Parent to Parent's Ashe-Alleghany-Wilkes Outreach Coordinator. Pamela spoke strongly of Parent to Parent's resources and their support of families during the referral process. "Parents know that they are not alone," Pamela explained, "Parent to Parent provides that link to get families the resources that they need."

Children's Developmental Service Agency (CDSA) employee Shana McCurry first came to hear of Parent to Parent FSN-HC soon after joining the agency. "I can't say enough about our (Mitchell-Yancey) outreach worker, Teresa Emory" Shana told us. "I can't count the times I've been at the end of my resource "rope" and she's been able to find a way to help."

Service provider Sylvia Peterson, a resource specialist with the Mitchell-Yancey Partnership for Children, first learned about Parent to Parent FSN-HC while working at Blue Ridge Mental Health with children from birth-five years who were at-risk or affected by a disability. Sylvia feels as though both Mitchell and Yancey counties are much better places thanks to the work of Parent to Parent FSN-HC. "They are impacting families through valuable workshops that bring awareness, education, and healing to families," Sylvia shared through email, "Giving families someone that will listen and hear what they are saying, can help provide services that the parent needs, not just what someone else thinks they need."

In the last five weeks of our internship, we have been given just a taste of the impact that Parent to Parent is leaving on the High Country community. We truly believe that the High Country is a better place due to this fantastic organization and can be best summed up by Sylvia Peterson, "What a blessing it is to know that when life brings sadness and trials, there are people at Parent to Parent FSN-HC who can help make life a little better and give hope for a brighter tomorrow."

Ashley Gonzales and Whitney Wright  
Parent to Parent FSN-HC Interns, April-May 2013

CONNECTIONS



# High Country First In Families

High Country First In Families (HCFIF) is a program of Barium Springs, a Non-Profit Organization ([www.bariumsprings.org](http://www.bariumsprings.org)), serving self advocates of families with Developmental Disabilities or Traumatic Brain Injuries. HCFIF serves Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga and Wilkes. If you live in Mitchell and Yancey you can access the First In Families Lifeline through [www.fifnc.org](http://www.fifnc.org) or by calling Krysta Gougler at 1-919-251-8368, ext 103.

We offer support to families and individuals according to their self-defined needs. Examples of support include iPads, medical equipment, computers, summer camp, school trips, monthly bills, home furnishings or modifications, childcare or respite care. Support can also be the connecting of an individual to vocational, social, and educational opportunities in the community; whatever it takes for people to live and participate fully in their community. Developing these relationships makes the community become a richer place.

HCFIF can support any family in which one family member has a developmental disability or delay, is at risk of the same, or has a traumatic brain injury. Families or the individual must live in a county served by the Chapter and they must meet financial eligibility requirements. The residence must be a home, not a licensed facility.

**Need an HCFIF Application?** Want to see our latest Brochure?

Call 336/667-3333 & ask for First In Families or go online:

<http://bit.ly/HCFIFApp>



Norma Bouchard (Left) Parent to Parent FSN-HC  
Bethany Marshall (Right) HCFIF

"The partnership between *High Country First In Families* and *Parent to Parent FSN-HC* enables us to not only identify and reach more families, but bring more resources together across the Blue Ridge." – Bethany Marshall (HCFIF)

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
3rd Annual *Charles R. Duke*  
10K/5K & 1 mile Fun Walk & Roll  
**OCTOBER 26th**

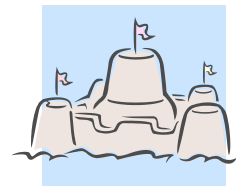
### 3 FUN FILLED ACTIVITIES FOR YOU AND YOUR KID(S)

**Take a Walk:** Find a park or a trail and let your child interact with the outdoors. Make it less about cardiovascular health, he or she may walk as slow or fast as they like. This gives her/him the chance to observe more, think deeper, and will help them enjoy the experience of nature.



**Fossil Find:** Take a trip to a sandy beach or to your backyard sandbox and bury some "fossils" (a.k.a. painted rocks). Provide your child with a small shovel and bucket to dig up these archeological finds. You and your child can take turns hiding and discovering these wonderful fossils.

**Backyard Water Park:** You can quickly create your own water park in the backyard for an afternoon of fun. If your child's tolerance is low for water play, sit them on your lawn (if they are sensitive to grass, put them on a shower curtain or towel for more comfort) and use your finger and a hose to create a variety of sprays for your child to experience.



### *Love and Logic Helpful Hint...*

When we describe what we will do or allow, that's setting a limit.  
When we tell a child what he/she should or shouldn't do, that is a possible fight.

#### Examples of **Turning Your Words Into Gold**

##### Unenforceable Statement

##### Enforceable Statement

Don't talk to me in that tone of voice!  
For Pete's sake! Take out the trash!

Try: I'll listen when your voice is as calm as mine.  
Try: I'll be happy to do the extra things I do for you, when your chores are done.