

# Family Empowerment Task Force Newsletter, Fall 2011, Vol. 1, No. 1.

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## News

The **FETF Conference at the Capitol** was a great success. On June 18, 2011, a group of 77 parents, siblings, guardians, caregivers and self-advocates who receive services from DDS gathered in the Old Judiciary Room of the Connecticut State Capitol Building to plan specific actions for the coming year. Families proposed twelve distinct projects for the FETF. Communications with families, residential services, transportation and employment were identified as most important. Read all about it on line at [www.arcocft.org/813](http://www.arcocft.org/813).

At the time of this printing, the fate of the **DDS budget** is still not known. We await the second vote by state employees on the concession package. *In this difficult budget environment, our voices are critical to continued public funding for support of people with intellectual disabilities.*

Commissioner Macy is posting updates on the budget at [www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=433828](http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=433828).

The Commissioner has also created a new Consumer Corner at [www.dds.ct.gov/consumercorner/site/default.asp?ddsNav=1](http://www.dds.ct.gov/consumercorner/site/default.asp?ddsNav=1)

In our on-line communities, families are engaged in several interesting threads of discussion, including:

- Priorities for the FETF
- Safety and quality assurance in group homes
- Individual Budgets
- DDS Respite Services
- Money Follows the Person

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## Join us on the Internet

**Facebook:** CT DDS Family Empowerment Task Force

**Yahoo:** <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/family-empowerment/>

**Email:** [family-empowerment@comcast.net](mailto:family-empowerment@comcast.net)

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## Support the FETF

You may support the FETF with a donation to the Arc of Connecticut. Make your check payable to The Arc of Connecticut and please note on the check that it is for the FETF. Mail your donations to the FETF, c/o The Arc of Connecticut, 43 Woodland Street, Suite 260, Hartford, CT 06105. Thank you.

## Upcoming Events

**FETF Family Picnic**, Saturday, September 17, 2011, at Hammonasset Beach State Park – Please join us for an old fashioned pot luck family picnic. Meet and share with other families. Learn more about the FETF. Learn about how other families are managing the changes in DDS services.

We are planning **local meetings** in October for families in each county where we will share more information about the FETF. Dates and locations will be announced soon. You may request an informational meeting near to you by sending an email to [family-empowerment@comcast.net](mailto:family-empowerment@comcast.net).

The Keep The Promise Coalition will be offering a class on **ESSENTIALS OF LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY** on October 5<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> in a hearing room at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. A tour of the Capitol and LOB along with a box lunch is included. The cost is \$20 and the registration form is available on line at [www.ctkeepthepromise.org/perch/resources/essentialsregform2011cb.pdf](http://www.ctkeepthepromise.org/perch/resources/essentialsregform2011cb.pdf)

At the **2011 Convention of the Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress**, representatives from DDS and from our private provider network will discuss the concerns about adult services that we raised at our Conference at the Capitol back in June. The convention will be on Saturday, November 12, at the Water's Edge in Westbrook. There is a registration fee and lunch will be provided. Registration information will be available on line under the Convention tab at [www.ctdownsyndrome.org/](http://www.ctdownsyndrome.org/)

The FETF is planning a **Holiday Party** for some time in December. Stay tuned for details.

For more information about upcoming events, check our groups on Yahoo or Facebook – or send an email to [family-empowerment@comcast.net](mailto:family-empowerment@comcast.net)

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## About the FETF

The Family Empowerment Task Force (FETF) is an informal, unincorporated, organization of parents, siblings, guardians, caregivers and self-advocates that works to sustain, enhance and grow the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) that are offered by DDS through its private provider network by: 1) Developing a supportive network of families and individuals who receive services; 2) Educating families about DDS services; and 3) Educating legislators and public officials about the needs of families.