



# KPFC

Quarterly Newsletter

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♥ *KPFC's vision* is that all families raising youth and children affected by behavioral health challenges will achieve their fullest potential.

♥ *KPFC's mission* is to empower families affected by behavioral health challenges to initiate personal and systems change.

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## An Opportunity for Parents and Youth Interested in Strengthening Their Leadership Skills

KPFC will be hosting the next Kentucky Family Leadership Academy on **March 21st through the 23rd, 2014** at the Natural Bridge state park. The Leadership Academy is for parents/primary caregivers of children with emotional, behavioral, mental health, and/or substance use disabilities and youth(16-24 years old) that have an emotional, behavioral, mental health and/or substance use disabilities. All young adults under 18, or who are over 18 and have a guardian, must have a parent or guardian that will attend the conference with them.

The Family Leadership Academy is **free** to all participants. The goals of the Leadership Academy are to:

- Strengthen the parent's and youth's current leadership skills,
- Help the parents and youth to become more comfortable sharing their story in an appropriate manner,
- Increase the parent's and youth's ability to become leaders in their own communities, and
- Build understanding with the parents and youth of what a "family-driven" and "youth-guided" System of Care looks like and what their role is in creating it in their communities.

If you would like more information about the Kentucky Family Leadership Academy or you would like a registration form, please contact the KPFC office at (800)369-0533 or [janet@kypartnership.org](mailto:janet@kypartnership.org).

## KPFC Recognizes a Parent and a Professional Who Have Gone Above and Beyond to Help Children and Families

This year's recipient of the Libby Fernandez Award which recognizes an outstanding parent leader was **Jennifer Gray**. This year's recipient of the Betty Triplett Award which recognizes an outstanding professional was **Joan Miller**. Please see page 9 to find out more about the winners!

If you would like to receive our FREE Quarterly Newsletter, contact us!

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KPFC is supported by grants from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, Kentucky System to Enhance Early Development, and by private and agency donations.

## **Mike Denney is a True Champion**

On December 14, 2013, at Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children, Inc.'s Fourteenth Annual Awards Luncheon, Michael D. Denney was recognized with the "KPFC Champion Award." Mr. Denney, retired director for the Family Resource and Youth Service Centers (FRYSC), was on

KPFC's board of directors for five years. After hearing two of KPFC's Kentucky Youth MOVE members speak to the State Interagency Council regarding youth voice and youth

perspective, Mr. Denney became even more passionate about the work of KPFC. While on the board, he brought humility, joy, and heart to the board and to KPFC's staff. Mr. Denney remains a strong advocate for KPFC as well as the youth and families we serve! Thank you for your service and dedication Mike! Congratulations!



*(L) Jim Reed (R) Mike Denney*

## **KPFC is thankful for all of the individuals who help keep our events, trainings, and programs going**

**A great big thank you to the following donors. Your generous contributions support KPFC's mission of empowering all families affected by behavioral health challenges to initiate personal and system change.**

Rachel Adams

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Donna Cecil

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Betty Lou Whelan

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Susan Davis

Kate Tilton

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Laura Beard

Kat Wyatt

Tena Robbins

Ronica Shannon

Diane Koonce

Brandon Kelley

Carmilla and Tim Ratliff

# Upcoming Events

## NAMI Family-to-Family Classes

Family-to-Family is a 12 week class for family and friends of individuals with serious mental illness. Family-to-Family is taught by trained NAMI family members.

Northern KY	(859)392-1730	<b>Jan 14</b>
Lexington	(859)272-7891	<b>Jan 15</b>
Bowling Green	(270)618-3128	<b>Jan 18</b>
Paducah	(270)994-3230	<b>Feb 7</b>

## Children's Advocacy Day **Jan 16**

Children's Advocacy Day at the Capitol is an effort to unite advocates from across the state to raise their voice on behalf of children's safety, health, education and economic well-being. Children's Advocacy Day at the Capitol is a unique opportunity to send a clear message to Kentucky's legislators: the Commonwealth's real common wealth is kids. That means that the laws and budget passed in Frankfort should reflect the priority we place on children's education, health, and safety. Children's Advocacy Day is a time to voice your support for Kentucky's children. To register for this event visit the Kentucky Youth Advocates website at [www.kyyouth.org](http://www.kyyouth.org) or call (502)895-8167.

## The Different Faces of Substance Abuse **Jan 28-29**

This conference will be held at the Griffin Gate Marriot in Lexington and will focus on strengthening grassroots efforts to curtail prescription drug abuse across the state. Go to [www.facesofsubstanceabuse.org](http://www.facesofsubstanceabuse.org) for more information.

## NAMI's Advocacy Day in Frankfort **Feb 11**

This is your chance to discuss your concerns about mental health issues with your legislators. If you are interested in attending the event, contact NAMI at (800)257-5081.

## KY Family Leadership Academy **Mar 21-23**

The next Kentucky Family Leadership Academy will be held at the Natural Bridge State Park and is for:

- Parents/primary caregivers of children with emotional, behavioral, mental health, and/or substance use disabilities
- **Young adults (16-24 years old)** that have an emotional, behavioral, mental health and/or substance use disabilities. These transitional-age youth must be at least 16 years old and be able to participate in the group process. All young adults under 18, or who are over 18 and have a guardian, must have a parent or guardian that will attend the conference with them.

The cost of the Leadership Academy is free to all participants. If you would like more information about the Leadership Academy or you would like a registration form, please contact the KPFC office at (800)369-0533 or email [janet@kypartnership.org](mailto:janet@kypartnership.org).

## Family-To-Family Teacher Training **Apr 12-13**

Contact NAMI if you would like to attend this training to become a Family-to-Family teacher. Please email [namiky@bellsouth.net](mailto:namiky@bellsouth.net) for an application.

## Suicide Prevention **Apr 10**

The KY Center for School Safety has partnered with the KY Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and the KY Suicide Prevention Group to provide QPR training that is being implemented as the state model for suicide prevention. Go to [www.kysafeschools.org](http://www.kysafeschools.org) for more information or call (877)805-4277.

## Arc of Kentucky Conference **Apr 25-26**

Mark your calendar! Come join the ARC of KY for two days of educational opportunities and networking! The conference will be held in Louisville, KY. For more detailed information, please visit [www.arcofky.org](http://www.arcofky.org) or call (800)281-1272.

# Military Families Who Have Children with Behavioral Health Difficulties Can Often Face Tremendous Challenges

By Kate Tilton

Military families must confront many challenges that often include financial difficulties, deployment, injury, frequent moves, uncertainty and fear. Families who have children suffering from behavioral health disorders must navigate even greater difficulties that require additional supports and resources. A research study conducted by the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Honolulu and published in the *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* concluded that almost 17 percent of children who had a parent deployed on active duty were diagnosed with a mental health disorder.



The most frequent issues cited were stress disorders, sleep disorders, anxiety, behavioral problems, and depression. The study also found that the longer or more numerous the deployments, the more problems a child would experience. Military families in Kentucky are especially in need of a system of care that utilizes a network of community based services and supports that works to help families find resources, connect with other parents, and improve their child's functioning at home, in school, in the community and throughout life. Although including military families in the system of care may seem difficult due to their frequently changing circumstances, we must find ways to embrace families in the armed forces and recognize both the sacrifices they have made for our country and the contributions they bring to our communities.

## Finding Our Way

By Stacy Jantzi, KPFC Board Member

Our experiences as a military family with two children, one with unique and special needs, has been a true learning experience. I believe the first step any family should take when they are unsure if there is something "off" with their child - whether military affiliated or not - is to seek professional help. A pediatric specialist is a great place to start. This will get the ball rolling and in doing so bring about more resources than you can imagine. Be open to them, embrace the support groups to help your family transition from the uncertain state you were in to the now knowing state. Speaking from experience, the diagnosis of Autism for our son turned into a grieving process that was not expected. We heard rumors of it, but the reality was far worse. We wondered how he would become accepted by society and achieve the success we wanted for him. Then, through the healing and growth, we realized that his dreams, goals, and successes will be just that - his! But we were going to be sure that he was and is provided the best interventions possible. This is where the military becomes an even smaller world, there is a significant population of military families with children on the spectrum. A fortunate side effect of a very unfortunate trend in diagnoses is the support available on and off of a military base. One of the first places to seek support is through the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) (usually in the hospital or Army Community Service - ACS). The program provides details of additional therapeutic supports available to the child and family and an introduction to Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC), which is also another avenue for mental health support. But the most profound support is support that you find a connection through, whether that is meeting another family with similar circumstances or just connecting because spouses are in the same unit at home or abroad. Those relationships provide even more insight and information and will likely direct you to an organization like KPFC. The combination of knowledge, experience, history, and training makes KPFC an asset to have as a current, retired, or non-military affiliated family because they will find your family the support needed or the direction you need to take to provide your children and family the best possible future.

## Transition Checklist for Military Families with Special Needs Students

For military families preparing to transition with a special needs student, the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) has provided an extremely helpful checklist of things to do before you leave your current duty station:

- Contact your local special education counselor/director and request assistance as to what should be done before the transition to the new school. Write or contact the special education director for the district that you are going to and request local policies.
- Schedule an Annual Review and Dismissal (ARD) meeting to discuss the progress your child has made since your last Individualized Education Program (IEP) review. Ask for written suggestions that may help your child and the staff at the new school.
- Request a copy of your child's complete educational record to include a copy of the latest IEP. Hand carry all records, samples of your child's work, and other information related to your child's education.
- Contact your local Special Needs Identification Program (SNIP) Coordinator who can assist you with identifying resources at your new duty station.
- Be sure to take any special equipment and refill medication prescriptions your child may need for the next few months.
- Contact the School Liaison Officer to assist with transitioning your child to the new school.

This checklist has been reprinted with the permission of the National Military Family Association which provides many additional resources for military families. Please visit their website at [www.militaryfamily.org](http://www.militaryfamily.org) and pay special attention to their Military Kids page under the Get Info tab.

## General Tips for Communicating with Children of All Ages

- Be careful about sharing your emotions with children. Some parents share too much (losing control in front of kids) or share too little (no emotion or giving the message that you can't talk about it). Children take their cues from you.
- Keep up the routine. Activities, such as games, schooling, bed times, are important to keep regular. Continue to celebrate birthdays or other special occasions with enthusiasm.
- Have your spouse before or while deploying record chapter books on a recorder to be played back to young children. This helps with separation and attachment issues. Likewise, help your children create scrapbooks, video or journals to send or share upon return.
- Listen to your children and their concerns. Children may think a lot and have worries/concerns about their parents that are difficult to express. Be available when they are ready to communicate.
- Limit television and other media coverage to help reduce anxiety and worries.
- Take care of yourself! Find time to rest, see a movie or do something just for you. Accept help from family or friends if feeling overwhelmed or in need of time out. We are all more vulnerable to stress when we are tired, and can manage better when we are rested and in tune with ourselves.
- Seek professional help from your military or civilian community in the event of special circumstances such as serious injury or death of loved ones. Help is available from people who are experienced in such matters and care.

To see the full tip list, please visit the Military Pathways website at [www.militarymentalhealth.org](http://www.militarymentalhealth.org).

**Go to page 9 to see resources for military families and to see how communities can help!**

## Another Successful Year for the Early Childhood Family Conference

### Early Childhood Spotlight

By Laura Beard

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Childhood Conference was held Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> at the Campbell House in Lexington, KY. Sixty-one children and their caregivers attended this year. There was an increase in the number of infants and toddlers in attendance and an additional class was created to accommodate them.

Adult participants enjoyed a keynote address and an additional eight hours of training on early childhood topics such as discipline, budgeting, positive behavior approaches, systems of care and family driven and youth guided. The children met Ronald McDonald, The Fairy Godmother and Ellie Mae the Clown. Other activities for the children included arts and crafts, clogging lessons and a presentation of the Wizard of Oz by the Kentucky Youth MOVE Council.

A great big THANK YOU goes out to KY SEED, KPFC, Public Health Early Childhood Systems Grant, Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, KY-SPIN, Pathways, ECU OT students and staff, Kids Kingdom Childcare and Small Wonders Stepping Stones for supporting the conference through funding and or providing staff for the conference. We also want to thank our parent leaders who volunteered their time and energy to make the weekend a success!

The highlight of the weekend was the Fall Festival and Thanksgiving Meal. Some very special guests showed up for the evening and are pictured with some children below.



## The Kentucky Youth MOVE Council is Seeking New Members

### Transition-Age Youth Spotlight

By Kate Tilton

The Kentucky Youth MOVE Council (KYM) is an eighteen member council made up of youth and young adults between the ages of 14 and 26 who have a behavioral health diagnosis. The council works to effect change across the state for children, youth, and young adults. They advocate on many issues that effect young people some of which include stigma reduction, youth leadership development, ending suicide and bullying, and increasing access to youth peer support. Some of the ways KYM members use their voices include sitting on committees and councils as youth representatives, serving as youth trainers, speaking to audiences on issues of concern, planning the KPFC Youth & Parent Conference and partnering with state government to improve services and supports for youth. If you would like an application please contact Kate Tilton at (800)369-0533 or email [ktilton@kypartnership.org](mailto:ktilton@kypartnership.org).

## Parenting Pre-Teens Can Be a challenge

### School-Age Children Spotlight

by Carol Cecil

Do you remember how awkward it felt when you were a pre-teen? You were no longer a little kid who could play with Barbie dolls and Matchbox cars, but you also weren't old enough to date or drive. This can be a challenging time for your child and for you! Up to this point, you were the greatest influence on your child. Your child probably thought you had all the answers and could fix anything. Now reality sets in and your child understands that you aren't perfect---just human! Once they figure this out, they often times use it against you.... "Don't you remember when you said....." or "I can't believe you said that.....(eye roll)." Just like when your child was about two years old, his/her job was to separate from you. At two years old, your child learned they had autonomy from you—you were two different, physical beings. As a pre-teen, your child starts to understand that they can have their own opinions, values, and beliefs, and, they don't have to be the same as yours. What is your new role for parenting this strange but lovely creature? First, know that your child still needs you. Secondly, recognize that your child might also need some space. Do not judge your child for sharing his/her opinions, values and beliefs that differ from yours. Do ask questions! Lots of questions! "What makes you think that? Can you share an example?" As well as the typical questions, "Where are you going? Who will you be with? Whose parent will be with you? What will you be doing? What time will the activity be over? When will you be home?" As much as I dreaded this age with my children, I also found that I loved their maturing sense of humor and vocabulary, their ability to play more complex card games, and the rich discussions we could have about life. Sit back and hold on....the ride is just beginning!



*Carol Cecil, KPFC Executive Director*

## Dads' Mini-Conferences to Be Held Across the State

### KPFC Dads' Spotlight

By Christopher C. Cecil

Opportunities for Family Leadership within the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities is supporting mini-conferences in Bowling Green, Ft. Campbell, Williamsburg, Frankfort and Fort Knox to support the continuing development of Dad Support Groups. These groups focus on dads and male role models who are involved in the lives of children with behavioral health disabilities to provide them the opportunities to connect with, and learn from, other dads. This is a very exciting time for the Fatherhood Initiative, so please pass the word to all of the dads you know that might be interested in attending or helping to plan the retreats in their area. The more the better! Also, if you know dads who need support because they have challenging children in their lives, please have them call KPFC at (800)369-0533 and we will guide them to the help they need.



## Communities Can Help Support Military Families Too

### What's Happening

Military families live in almost every community. Some parents in the military are on active duty and wear a uniform every day. Others may be in the National Guard or Reserves and only wear a uniform when they are called to active duty. All military families face unique stresses that can make the difficult job of parenting even harder:

- The military parent must deal with periodic absences and the stresses associated with preparing for duty or reentering civilian life.
- Children must adjust to a parent being away from the family (and, in some cases, in harm's way) and then to the parent's reintegration into the family. Many military children also deal with frequent moves, changing schools, and new caretakers.
- A spouse, partner, or extended family member may face new and increased responsibilities while a military parent is away.

### What You Might See

- A parent in uniform in your neighborhood, school, place of worship, or other community setting
- A civilian mother or father parenting solo for extended periods
- A grandparent or other family member caring for a child with a deployed parent
- A change in a child's behavior, either acting out or withdrawing, when a military parent is absent

### What You Can Do

- Express appreciation for the family's service to our country. Invite parents and children to share their positive experiences of military life.
- Get to know your military neighbors. Include them in neighborhood and community activities. Don't wait for your neighbor to ask for help—offer to mow the grass, share a meal, help with small household repairs, or care for the children for a few hours.
- Share information about community resources that provide support in times of need. Ask military parents what would help them most when they are facing a military-related separation, and help them to connect with these supports early.
- Help military parents and the other caregivers in their family understand how transitions, separation, and anxiety can affect their child's behavior. Knowing that acting out or withdrawing are normal can make these challenges easier to deal with.
- Invite military children in your neighborhood to share their thoughts and feelings about the separations and transitions they may be experiencing. If you plan activities for children in your community, remember to include a way for children with a faraway parent to participate.

The tips above were provided by the Child Welfare Information Gateway. The Information Gateway connects professionals and the general public to timely, essential information and resources targeted to the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families. Please visit their website at [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov).

## Additional Resources for Military Families

- **Sesame Street** provides a toolkit for military families called "Talk, Listen, Connect" that can provide resources and support. Go to [www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/tlc](http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/tlc) to access the toolkit. Sesame Street also hosts an additional website that is entirely dedicated to military families called "Military Families Near and Far." Go to [www.familiesnearandfar.org](http://www.familiesnearandfar.org) to access the site.
- **Our Military Kids** provides tangible support to the children of deployed and severely injured National Guard and Military Reserve personnel through grants for sports, fine arts and tutoring. Visit their website at [www.ourmilitarykids.org](http://www.ourmilitarykids.org) for more information.
- **Military One Source** provides information and resources such as tip sheets, newsletters and mental health counseling. Starting on January 7, 2014, there will be a free electronic filing tax service that will provide tax consultants who will be available to answer tax questions. Visit their website at [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil).
- **Kiplinger** has produced resource for military families that focuses on some of the unique financial challenges that service members face, as well as the special benefits that help them save for the future and protect their families. To view the "Financial Field Manual: The Personal Finance Guide for Military Families" go to [www.kiplinger.com/web\\_docs/military/Military\\_Families\\_Final.pdf](http://www.kiplinger.com/web_docs/military/Military_Families_Final.pdf).





## In Honor of Libby Fernandez Outstanding Parent Leader

**Jennifer Gray** is the recipient of KPFC's Libby Fernandez Award. Jennifer created a non-profit, sensory friendly, film organization for families with special needs in Kentucky. At the screenings, all families are admitted free-of-charge. Not only are they able to watch a movie, but a great deal of literature about disabilities, support groups and community and state organizations is provided.

In the beginning, Jennifer wanted to take her son to the movies, but knew that it would be impossible because of his sensory issues. She had heard of sensory-friendly film screenings, but the only one in Kentucky was in Newport, and that was too far for her family to travel. She didn't want to risk driving that far, paying the admission price, and then possibly having to leave. It was then that she decided to take things into her own hands. A year later, Kentucky Sound Down was born.

Since the first screening in 2011, the organization has served families from all over the state, and at the last event in Corbin, more than 100 people were in attendance! In addition to Kentucky Sound Down, Jennifer has dedicated countless hours of her time supporting other parents. She uses her family's experiences with autism to spread awareness, educate, and inspire others. Her dedication and her success have not only changed the lives of children for the better, but she has inspired so many parents to advocate and create programs for their children within their regions of Kentucky. Congratulations Jennifer Gray!



## In Honor of Betty Triplett Outstanding Professional

**Joan Miller** is the recipient of KPFC's Betty Triplett Award. She is a Lexington mental health professional who works with children, adolescents, young adults and their families. A large portion of her practice has evolved into the highly specialized area of childhood attachment and trauma; an area few mental health professionals have adequate knowledge and training in to address the intricate needs of this population. Joan does not just treat children and families, she invests in them. Joan Miller understands the unique needs of these children and the families who are raising them.

As an adoptive mom, Joan offers personal insight into living with a child who has been traumatized, and knows how difficult it can be for parents to find needed support. To help end the isolation many of her families feel raising a traumatized child, Joan set up a series of Saturday morning training sessions in Trust-based Relational Intervention (TBRI), with childcare provided by well-trained professionals. One of the primary purposes of these sessions is for parents to meet other parents facing similar issues, and to form a circle of community and support. Along with two other volunteer, adoptive moms, Joan Miller also started the non-profit, Bluegrass Adoption Support Network in 2011. The group has sponsored workshops for parents and professionals and brings in nationally recognized speakers and trainers. Joan Miller is the heart and soul of what the Betty Triplett Award stands for and recognizes in a professional. Congratulations Joan Miller!

## How can KPFC help you?

We can provide a three-hour workshop or a one-day/two-day training crafted specifically for your parent group, school PTA/PTO, or professional organization.

## KPFC Trainings and Workshops

Surviving Challenging Behaviors	Question, Persuade and Refer (suicide prevention)
Educational Advocacy	Launching Your Transitional-age Youth/Young Adult
Adolescent Issues	Bullying Prevention
Reactive Attachment Disorder	Successful Youth Engagement
Baby Love (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome)	Youth Mental Health First Aid
Partnering with Parents	Understanding Mental Health Disabilities
Engaging Partners	Bridges Out of Poverty
The Other Side—A Youth Perspective	Becoming a Love and Logic Parent
My Story—Successes and Challenges	Creating a Family-Driven and Youth-Guided System
Parenting or Teaching a Child with Bipolar Disorder	of Care

Please contact Carol Cecil at [cwcecil@kypartnership.org](mailto:cwcecil@kypartnership.org) or (800)369-0533 for more information.

You can make a difference for children and their families  
by supporting  
Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children, Inc.

### Easy Ways to Help KPFC

Purchase a \$5 Kroger gift card for \$5. Use this Kroger card as a Kroger debit account. All of the purchases you make on this card, Kroger donates 4% of your amount to KPFC. Contact KPFC's office to obtain a Kroger card.

Make a cash donation in the amount of:

\$10  \$15  \$25  \$50  Other

Make a donation in memory or in honor of a loved one. Amount enclosed:  \$25  \$50  Other

\_\_\_\_ In honor of \_\_\_\_\_ OR \_\_\_\_ In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

If you are a state employee, you can write KPFC in on your Kentucky Employee Charitable Campaign application; this will allow you to donate a small amount out of each paycheck to KPFC.

For more information about how to include KPFC in your will, contact the KPFC office.

Please send this form along with your check or money order payable to KPFC to:  
KPFC, 207 Holmes Street, First Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601

**Your donations are tax deductible!**