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## ASK E-Newsletter | November 2021

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### Contact Us

#### About Special Kids (ASK)

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### Giving Tuesday

On November 30th, ASK is participating in #GivingTuesday, a global day of unity and giving. Now is the time to consider your charitable and end-of-year giving, supporting the causes you believe will transform lives in our community - the causes you care about most.

#### Simply Text ASK2021 to 44-321 to donate

As you know, ASK has been busy supporting Hoosier families this year. Families have needed our organization's services more than ever. Parents have reached out to



We are excited to announce that About Special Kids and Family Voices Indiana are joining together to create a new organization to better serve families of children and youth with special healthcare needs and the professionals who serve these children in Indiana. ASK and FVI are two strong family-centered organizations who have functioned separately for many years. We have chosen to come together to strengthen our services, broaden our reach and maximize our funding. At the center is a commitment to better serve families and professionals through the power of shared experience and the value of professional partnerships.

On January 1, our collective doors will open as a new, combined organization.

## COVID-19 and Pediatric Mental Health

By: Amanda Gu, MD – Pediatrics, PGY-2

One significant effect of the pandemic we have seen in kids is on their mood and mental health. A meta-analysis was done this year looking at the effects of the pandemic on children's mental health. It showed that rates of anxiety and depression in kids are estimated to have doubled compared to prior to the pandemic. Right now it is estimated nearly 1 in 4 children and adolescents are suffering from depression and nearly 1 in 5 from anxiety. Although this study did not look specifically at children with developmental disabilities, we know that not only are these kids more likely to have anxiety and depression, these issues are also frequently under-identified and undertreated in this population.

If you have concerns about your child's mental health, it is important to seek help. However, it can be difficult to get help due to issues such as poor access, availability, and coverage to mental health services can all be issues. In order to help improve access to care, Riley Behavioral Health has the The Indiana Behavioral Health Access Program for Youth ("Be Happy") program. This program allows pediatric providers across the state to call and talk to psychiatric specialists about best management practices for general questions or specific cases. Families can also find information on providers for pediatric mental health providers at <https://www.in.gov/fssa/dmha/apply-for-services/mental-health-services/providers-for-children/>.

#### References:

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ASK, knowing our Parent Liaisons would understand their unique struggles raising children with special needs during these unprecedented and challenging times.

But we can't do this without you! Not only do we need your support, but we also need your help to spread the word about ASK. Please tell your friends and family why you believe in our work and encourage them to support us too! Join the movement on November 30th, and please donate now!

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depression and anxiety in children with intellectual disabilities. J Intellect Disabil Res. 2019;63(5):408-417. doi:10.1111/jir.12583



The ASK Offices will be closed on November 25th-26th in observance of Thanksgiving. Our staff wish you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving

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