



## VALUING DIVERSITY: What special observances and numbers show us

*As we continue to work with many diverse families of children and youth with special health care needs, it is important to explore our own family cultures and become familiar with the cultures of others in order to better serve all families. We hope that the information, resources and tips we share will ultimately help families receive comprehensive, coordinated, culturally and linguistically competent, family-centered, community-based health care in their home communities.*

In 1968, Congress authorized President Lyndon B. Johnson to proclaim a week in September as **National Hispanic Heritage Week**. The observance, expanded in 1988 to a month-long celebration (Sept. 15 – Oct. 15), celebrates the culture and traditions of U.S. residents who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America and the Caribbean. September 15 was chosen as the beginning for the celebration because it is the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively.

Data from the US Census Bureau helps us learn a little bit more about the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. As of July 1, 2004, there were approximately 41.3 million Hispanics (9.3 million families) living in the US, not including residents of Puerto Rico, almost double the 1990 census figures. There are 13 states with at least half a million Hispanic residents—AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, IL, NV, NJ, NM, NY, NC, TX and WA. There are 31 million US residents age five and older who speak Spanish at home, and among those, more than one half say they speak English “very well.” The number of Hispanic-owned businesses in 2002 was 1.6 million, up 31% from 1997. Hispanics are represented in a wide variety of occupations including 38,500 physicians and surgeons; 50,400 postsecondary teachers; 53,400 chief executives of businesses; 38,100 lawyers; and 5,000 news analysts, reporters and correspondents. Others work in service occupations, sales and office jobs and construction.

Many Hispanic families care for children with disabilities and special health care needs. As we continue to advocate for more accessible health care for all CYSHCN, we learn from these numbers that there are many people we can learn from and can call upon when designing systems that are culturally and linguistically competent. Not only family members but also Spanish-speaking professionals and community members can help us reach families where they live and work. As noted above, there are also special observances, festivals and community events that can expose us to the rich history of Hispanic cultures.

## UNITING VOICES

Family Voices continues to expand its network of family/parent leaders in all the states and territories so that more families of CYSHCN have the information and resources they need to:

- advocate for and access family-centered, community-based, culturally and linguistically competent health care; and
- make informed choices about their children’s health care.

How can you be part of this dynamic, grass roots advocacy organization? By visiting the **Family Voices in your State** page on our website, [www.familyvoices.org](http://www.familyvoices.org), and by learning who the lead Family Voices Network members are in your state. If you have skills you’d like to share, or are able to help with specific state events, please let your FV Network members know. Together, we can change systems and make a difference in the lives of children and youth with special health care needs.



## ReCap of FV Talk

This information is a summary collected from Family Voices Talk listserv

### Resources, News, & Stories

- [http://www.ncwd-youth.info/intersection/current\\_issue.html](http://www.ncwd-youth.info/intersection/current_issue.html)  
The Current issue of the electronic newsletter of the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) includes a brief on financial literacy that includes further weblinks to specific financial information.
- <http://missourifamilies.org/features/healtharticles/health46.htm>  
A brief article that illustrates that distinguishes between Medicare, Medicaid and Medigap.
- [http://iospress.metapress.com/\(pwyohl45pwytnq45tqjtf3vv\)/app/home/issue.asp?referrer=parent&backto=journal,1,36;linkingpublicationresults,1:103174,1](http://iospress.metapress.com/(pwyohl45pwytnq45tqjtf3vv)/app/home/issue.asp?referrer=parent&backto=journal,1,36;linkingpublicationresults,1:103174,1)  
A special issue of the AJournal of Vocational Rehabilitation which focuses on workplace discrimination and disability.
- <http://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051216/GPG0101/512160561/1207/GPGnews>  
Internet site makes it easier to remember vaccinations for kids.
- <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/guide/index.html?pid=10625>  
A comprehensive guide that compiled a wealth of information about family involvement from over 100 national organizations. It contains Web links to recent (published in and after 2000) research, information, and tools. Compiled in 2004–2005 the guide contains resources about family involvement in early childhood education, elementary, middle school, and high school. It includes family involvement in several contexts:, including home, school, and out-of-school time programs.

## GRAND OPENING OF THE FAMILY VOICES STORE

Looking for the perfect birthday or “thank you” gift for a friend, relative, special caregiver or community partner? Look no further than the **NEW** Family Voices Shop. Explore a nice selection of gift items and FV apparel by going to <http://www.cafepress.com/shopfv>. What a great way to spread the word about Family Voices!

**Stories are the single most powerful tool in a leader's toolkit.**

**--Howard Gardner**

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Send an email to

[fridayschildnews-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:fridayschildnews-subscribe@yahogroups.com)

To become a member of our family and for more information please visit our website: [www.familyvoices.org](http://www.familyvoices.org)



2340 Alamo SE, Ste. 102 Albuquerque, NM 87106  
Phone: 505-872-4774 Fax: 505-872-4780  
Toll-Free: 1-888-835-5669  
Email: [kidshealth@familyvoices.org](mailto:kidshealth@familyvoices.org)