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(Individual & Family Support of South Alabama, Inc.)

# Happenings

May

## Local Volunteer Councils—the heart of the Individual & Family Support Program

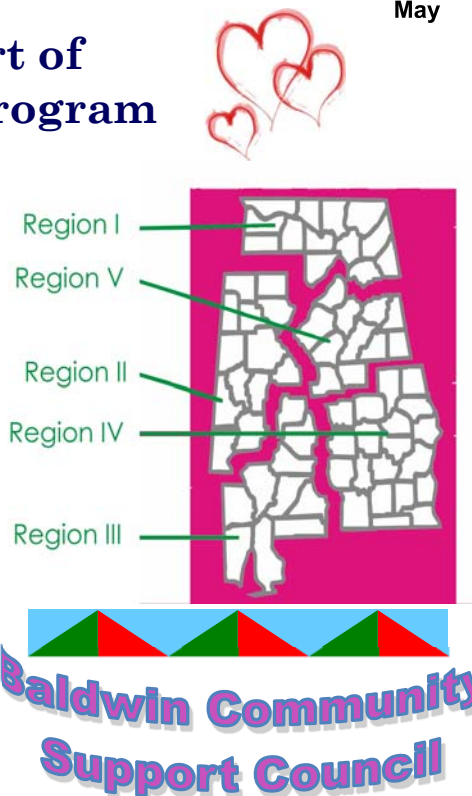
In 1993 the Alabama Legislature created the Individual & Family Support program. Managing the program was assigned to local volunteer councils (*Community Support Councils*) and 5 regional councils (*Regional Support Councils*). A State Council was also created to serve as a forum to link all 5 regional efforts. Council members must be parents of children with developmental disabilities or adults with developmental disabilities.

This very unique structure puts the direction of the assistance program in the hands of those who best understand the unmet needs of these Alabamians. Joining with other local resources, these councils provide critical help to individuals and families.



There are over 14 million children with special health care needs under 18 years of age in the United States. One in five families with children across the U.S. has at least one child with special health care needs.

These children experience 4 times the number of hospitalizations, 7 times the number of yearly doctor visits, and 5 times the number of prescriptions.



The **Baldwin Community Support Council** serves Baldwin County, a large and diverse area. In an effort to grow this important council, a luncheon information meeting was held on April 23rd in Foley. The Individual & Family Support program was explained and a lively discussion took place about the need for this kind of assistance in Baldwin, one of the most rapidly growing counties. Four new membership applications were received from the interested volunteer parents. The Baldwin council is excited about the many possible opportunities to get the folks in Baldwin communities to support our efforts in this area. Since 1994 this council has reached out to families throughout the County.

### Family Support

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