



*"Improving the quality of life for all citizens of St. Joseph County through collaborative efforts."*

**2019**

# **Annual Report to the Community**

Access to Healthcare

Adult Services Network

Child Death Review

Early Childhood Workgroup/  
Great Start Collaborative

Housing Task Force

Project Connect Committee

Substance Abuse Task Force

Task Force on Family Violence



# 2019 HSC Members

## Executive Committee

### Chair, Rebecca Burns

Health Officer, BHSJ Community Health Agency

### Vice Chair, Tim Stoll

Executive Director, SJC Commission on Aging

### Past Chair, Kathy Olsen

Marketing & Community Information Coordinator,  
Michigan Works! Southwest

### Member at Large, Charles Rose

Dir., Department of Health & Human Services

### Member at Large, Tonya Howden

Dean of Student Services, Glen Oaks Community College

### Fiduciary, Kristine Kirsch

Exec. Director, CMH & SAS

### St. Joseph County Commission

Kathy Pangle, County Commissioner

## HSC Body

### David Casterline

CEO, Three Rivers Health Foundation

### Penny Brockway/ Stephanie Lemmer

St. Joseph County Superintendents Association

### Teresa Belote

Superintendent of Schools, SJC ISD

### Kelli Tackett

Executive Director, Keystone Place, Inc.

### Tom Robertson /Judge David Tomlinson

St. Joseph County Juvenile Court

### Michelle Williamson

CEO, Community Action Agency

### Stacy Linihan

Covered Bridge Healthcare

### Ashley Walker

Aetna Better Health of Michigan

### Susan Vosmik

St. Joseph County Transportation Authority

### Matie James

Citizen Representative

### Rose Ludwick / Elizabeth Alderson

Director, Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services

### Kelly Hostetler

St. Joseph County United Way

### Stephanie Giolitto

Great Start Collaborative Coordinator

### Tami Farnum

Supportive Services for Veteran Families

## Message from the 2019 Human Services Commission Chair

*Greetings!*

*As Chair of the St. Joseph County Human Services Commission, I want to thank all the task force and workgroup members for their work and commitment to St Joseph County.*

*Our task forces and workgroups strive to enhance and fill gaps in human services within our community, making our community stronger.*

*This year's annual report highlights their accomplishments during 2019. We have continued to take great strides this year as we grow SJC Resources Google group and the HSC website's human resources calendar. The task forces have also been instrumental in keeping the Resource Guide updated. Both are products of the St. Joseph County Human Services Commissions' workgroups and task forces.*

*Please join us as we celebrate our progress and move into 2020!*

*Rebecca Burns, BHSJ Community Health Agency*

## Mission & Vision

The **MISSION** of the SJC HSC is to “coordinate and leverage collaborative efforts to improve the quality of life for all citizens.”

Our **VISION** is to facilitate “seamless and efficient access to services that support individual, family, and community needs.”

## The Purpose of the HSC

The St. Joseph County Human Services Commission (HSC) was established by the St. Joseph County Commission in 1995 as the single multi-purpose collaborative for St. Joseph County. Their resolution authorized SJC Human Services Commission to:

- Forge alliances
- Create a shared vision
- Mobilize resources for services to families whose needs are being met by multiple agencies

Currently HSC is comprised of 18 member agencies working together to coordinate health and human services across systems. HSC fosters collaboration and relationships among agencies to prevent duplication of services and provide better service to our citizens.

The HSC does this work through established task forces and workgroups.

To learn more about the work of the HSC, contact Collaborative Coordinator Laura Brott, at 269-625-1820 or [BrottL@michigan.gov](mailto:BrottL@michigan.gov).

# Brott Recognized as Health Hero and Honored by Michigan Health Week Partnership



*Pictured: MDHHS Director Robert Gordon, Laura Brott, and Representative Aaron Miller*

**LANSING, MI** – As part of National Public Health Week, 15 individuals and organizations were presented with the 2019 Hometown Health Hero and Jean Chabot Health Policy Champion awards for their contributions to protecting and improving the health of Michigan residents on April 10 at the state Capitol.

The Michigan Public Health Week Partnership hosted the event to honor those who are helping Michigan achieve its goal of “Creating the Healthiest Nation: For science. For action. For health.” This year’s awards focused on healthy communities, violence prevention, rural health, technology and public health and climate change.

“The work of public health belongs to all of us,” said Robert Gordon, MDHHS director. “Today I’m honored to celebrate a few individuals who have pointed the way. Some are Democrats, some are Republicans. Some are health professionals, some are regular citizens who lives have been touched by tragedy. Some work in Detroit and some work in northern Michigan. All have found a way to make our people healthier and our state stronger.”

## **Laura Brott – St. Joseph County Human Service, Centreville**

Brott has found innovative ways to connect service providers with the residents in St. Joseph County in need of their services. She was integral to a website redesign that integrated a community calendar and the development of a comprehensive resource guide for service providers so appropriate referrals could be made beyond their own agencies. Annually, she has been instrumental in coordinating the annual Project Connect/Veterans Stand Down event; putting residents in touch with county services, health screenings, vaccinations and food assistance.



*Pictured: HSC Chair Rebecca Burns of BHSJ Community Health Agency and Laura Brott. Brott also received a framed letter of recognition signed by Representative Miller, Senator LaSata, and Governor Whitmer.*

## The **SJC Resources Google Email Group**

was created among the task forces and workgroups in November 2016 and has grown to 430 caring individuals and professionals working on the front lines in St. Joseph County across many human services agencies, groups, and faith based organizations. The group email service is used to share agency updates, upcoming events, and request help finding a service or meeting a need.\*

**Front line workers in St. Joseph County can request to join the SJC Resources email group by emailing [BrottL@michigan.gov](mailto:BrottL@michigan.gov)**

*\*In 2019, there were 91 requests and offers for household goods, 96 requests and offers for miscellaneous items (ramps, medical equipment, food, car seats & more), and 48 requests for housing or available housing postings.*

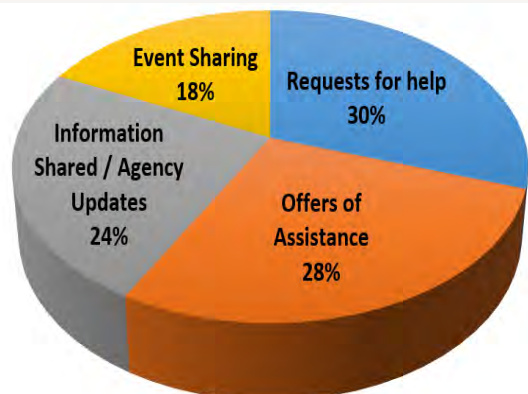
### 580 total Google Group posts during 2019:

Requests for Help 175 posts

Offers of Assistance 161 posts

Information Shared & Agency Updates 141 posts

Event Sharing Posts 103 posts



## “Connection” Tools at your Fingertips

*“Our agency appreciates all the resource tools and services the HSC provides for our county. We use them virtually every day.” - SJC Resources Google Group member*



New in 2019, IN THE LOOP is published to Facebook and Google Group twice a month, listing events coming up within the next 30 days in St. Joseph County, pointing viewers to the calendar on the HSC website for further details.

*“I think this is the best tool yet! I share it everywhere!” - SJC Resources Google Group member*



With over 425 frontline workers across the county in this email chain, SJC Resources continues to meet non-traditional needs within our county.

*“Needs are met quickly without the hindrance of paperwork!” -  
SJC Housing Task Force member*



Resource Roundtable quickly connects current agency and organization staff, providing a snapshot of services available in the county and the faces that provide these services. Over 100 frontline workers attended the roundtable in 2019.

*“Turnover among agency frontline workers can be high and the Community Resource Roundtable is a great way to make connections to other workers and their services.”  
-2019 Roundtable attendee*



As of 2019, **St Joseph County Human Services Commission** is on Facebook! This is one more avenue to connect to the public and push information out about the many events and resources in St. Joseph County. The page has 940 page followers.



St Joseph County’s comprehensive **Resource Guide** is located on the HSC website. This is a live document regularly updated with current services. Popular pages includes the food resources, free store hours, parent resources, and apartment complexes & landlord lists.

*“I sure appreciate this county’s grassroots effort to collect information about the services available and share the information with frontline workers and the public”  
- SJC Resources Google Group member*



The HSC calendar of supportive events and services was launched in January of 2019. It includes community events, food pantry and free store hours, support & recovery groups, and much more. As of 2020, users can now add events directly to their calendars from the site.

*“I am on this calendar ALL the time. Thank you!! - SJC Task Force on Family Violence member*

The HSC website was accessed by 6,000 users in 2019.

**Add the HSC website onto your mobile phone home screen or add as a favorite on your desktop!**



# 2019 Project Connect & Veteran Stand Down

Project Connect is a collaboration of the SJC Human Services Commission, its task forces, and other agencies serving St. Joseph County. The 13th Annual Project Connect was held October 4, 2019 at the Centreville Fairgrounds in Centreville. It was held in conjunction with a Veteran Stand Down.

## Event Impact:

- 342 households attended
- 865 persons were Impacted (includes household members not present)
- 87% of attendees reside within St. Joseph County
- 279 out of 287 households indicated they received help they needed or were connected to a resource to help with their current needs
- 205 new households attended that did not attend in 2018
- 231 households attending in 2018 did not return to 2019 Project Connect
- 88 veterans attended
- Average household size was 3 persons
- Average age of attendee was 46-55 years old
- 16% of households had less than 12 years of education
- 19 households currently homeless
- 11 households in process of being evicted
- 123 attendees currently unemployed
- 69% of attendees sought food assistance
- 23% of attendees sought healthcare assistance

Project Connect is a community resource fair for individuals and families who are low income, homeless, and/or veterans to give them a hand up and improve their quality of life. Free items, services, information, and help is available on site at this one-day event.

## At 2019 Project Connect:

- 17 rides provided to and from event courtesy of SJCTA
- 500 meals served
- 102 haircuts provided
- 88 service agencies participated
- 342 hygiene kits provided
- 342 community help cards distributed
- 14,133 lbs. pounds of fresh food distributed through Fresh Food Initiative
- 378 food boxes distributed
- 178 shots administered
- 363+ health screenings provided

## Project Connect Planning Committee

*Chair: Laura Brott, SJC Human Services Commission  
BrottL@michigan.gov*

Chuck Asher, Community Action  
Cynthia Cotter, Senior Services, Inc. of SW MI  
Rod & Betty Detweiler, Firm Foundations Ministries  
Cathy Hopkins, Community Volunteer  
Marsha Keefer, South Michigan Food Bank  
Nikki Notestine, SJC Commission on Aging  
Cindi Pennington, KMG Prestige  
Tiyanna Payne/ Maria Bosnak, US Department of Veterans Affairs  
Susan Pyles, DHHS- MYOI Program  
Amanda Schemmel, Covered Bridge Healthcare  
Mike VanLente, Walmart- Sturgis  
Chris Yorks, St. Joseph County Transportation Authority



## Access to Healthcare

**Chair: Cameron Bullock, Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services**

*cbullock@stjoecmh.org*

### Participating Agencies:

- Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Sturgis Hospital
- Gesundheit Student Clinic
- Great Start Collaborative
- BHSJ Community Health Agency
- SJC Intermediate School District
- Three Rivers Health
- Fairview Rehabilitation Community
- SJC Human Services Commission
- Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services
- Aetna Better Health of Michigan
- Covered Bridge Healthcare
- Revolution Health
- Southwest Psychological Solutions
- SJCTA

### Collaboratively accomplished:

- ◆ Integrated StepUpSJC.net into sjchumanservices.com to form one site which includes both a calendar of human services and resources available in St. Joseph County.
- ◆ Monthly newspaper articles on health topics.

## Adult Services Network

**Chair: Abigail Reardon, Area Agency on Aging 3C**

*areardon@bhsj.org*

**Co-Chair: Tim Stoll, St. Joseph County Commission on Aging**

### Participating Agencies:

- Absolute Homecare
- Aetna Better Health of Michigan
- Alzheimer's Association
- Area Agency on Aging 3C
- Care-N-Assist
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Disability Network of Southwest Michigan
- Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services
- Fairview Rehabilitation Community
- Grace Healthcare
- Heartland Hospice
- Safe Haven
- SJC Human Services Commission
- SJC Veterans Services
- SJC Commission On Aging
- ServiceMaster
- Three Rivers Health Wound Clinic
- Three Rivers Home Health and Hospice
- Thurston Cares

### Collaboratively accomplished:

- ◆ Services to Victims of Elder Abuse Program 2018/2019
  - 75 participants served
- ◆ Vulnerable Adult Interdisciplinary Team
  - 33 cases reviewed
- ◆ 70 community partners involved in the ASN google group and 15 regularly attend the monthly meetings
- ◆ 5 ramps built in 2019 through ramp initiative

“

The Adult Services Network provides opportunity to discuss issues affecting the older and vulnerable adult population in St. Joseph County and identify programs to implement.

Tim Stoll, Adult Services Network Co-Chair

”

## Child Death Review

**Chair: Holly Cerny, Constantine Public Schools, hcerny@constps.org**

**Vice Chair: Matthew Deming, DHHS, Demingm2@michigan.gov**

**Participating Agencies:**

- BHSJ Community Health Agency
- Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services
- Michigan Public Health Institute
- Michigan State Police
- SJC Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- SJC Human Services Commission
- SJC Intermediate School District
- Sturgis Fire Department
- Sturgis Hospital
- Sturgis Pediatrics
- Sturgis Police Department
- Three Rivers Health
- Three Rivers Police Department

This interdisciplinary team of medical staff, law enforcement, and other professionals review child deaths within St. Joseph County to determine if these deaths of 0-18 years olds were preventable. When appropriate, they suggest community-wide prevention education to prevent future deaths.

- ◆ 15 cases were reviewed in 2019.
- ◆ Prematurity, drowning, fire, and suicide contributed to preventable deaths of children reviewed in 2019.

## Great Start Collaborative/Early Childhood Workgroup

**Chair: Stephanie Giolitto, Great Start Collaborative/ISD, sgiolitto@sjcisd.org**

**Participating Agencies:**

- Aetna Better Health of Michigan
- Area Preschool Provider
- BHSJ Community Health Agency
- Burr Oaks Schools
- Centreville Public Schools
- Southwest Child Care Resources
- Colon Schools
- Community Action
- Community Mental Health & SAS
- Constantine Public Schools
- Council for Prevention of Child Abuse/Neglect
- Covered Bridge Healthcare
- Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services
- Foster Parent Liaison
- Hispanic Parent Coalition
- Kinship Care
- Mendon Schools
- Michigan Alliance for Families
- Nottawa Community School
- SJC Human Services Commission
- SJC Intermediate School District  
*Great Start Readiness Program*  
*Early Headstart & Childcare Partnerships*  
*Early On*  
*Special Education*  
*Parent Coalition*
- SJC Probate Court
- Sturgis Pregnancy Helpline
- Three Rivers Schools
- United Way

### **Collaboratively accomplished:**

The SJC Great Start Collaborative/Early Childhood Workgroup continued implementing its 4-year strategic plan.

- ◆ Awarded 24 preschool scholarships for three year olds in St. Joseph County (FY18/19).
- ◆ Partnerships with 6 childcare/preschool providers.
- ◆ Held 4 playgroups each week in four different communities.
- ◆ Launched the Great Book Hunt to promote summer reading.
- ◆ Held one community baby shower with safe sleep and shaken baby syndrome trainings. 80 families were educated and 63 gift bags were given away at the Fall event.
- ◆ 350+ attended Mom2Mom Sale/Baby Expo. 52 Sellers and 10 Community tables, and 4 educational sessions.
- ◆ Received a grant from Sturgis Foundation to provide CDA training.
- ◆ Provided 3 showings of the movie "Resilience" and started the community group, Building a Resilient Community to continue the work.



## Housing Task Force

**Chair: Jan Reed, Department of Health and Human Services, [Reedj4@michigan.gov](mailto:Reedj4@michigan.gov)**



- Community Action
- Community Mental Health & SAS
- Covered Bridge Healthcare
- Disability Network
- Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services
- Elm Tree Apartments
- Fair Housing Center SWM
- Habitat for Humanity
- Hope House
- Hope United
- Integrated Services
- KeyStone Place
- KMG Prestige
- Michigan State Housing Development Authority
- Michigan Works! SW
- Operation 6:12
- SJC Commission On Aging
- SJC Great Start Collaborative
- SJC Human Services Commission
- SJC Realtor/Renter Association
- St. Joseph County Transit Authority
- Salvation Army
- Senior Services
- Sturgis Neighborhood Program
- True North
- United Community Assistance Program
- Woda Management

### 2019 Statistics

- ◆ 125 homeless people on Point-In-Time Count Day
- ◆ 600 literally homeless people served in St. Joseph County in 2019
- ◆ 434 children served in shelter
- ◆ 597 people served with rent assistance, equaling \$468,663.31
- ◆ 244 households served with utility & security deposit assistance equaling \$134,387.64
- ◆ Emergency housing assistance provided for 698 people
- ◆ Over 400 cases coordinated through Interagency Services Team with focus of minimizing barriers to help people get housed and stay housed
- ◆ Used Mental Health grants to house 19 households with severe and persistent mental illness
- ◆ 865 people impacted through Project Connect

### Areas of Focus:

- Provide oversight to our county's Housing Assessment and Resource Agency (Keystone Place); money received, spent, and outcomes to assure a comprehensive community-wide service and housing delivery system.
- Hosted a community forum to address the lack of housing. The forum resulted in pursuing a county-wide master housing plan.

## Task Force on Family Violence

**Chair: Deborah Hackworth, Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services**  
[deborahh@dasasmi.org](mailto:deborahh@dasasmi.org)

### Participating Agencies:

- Aetna Better Health of Michigan
- Area Agency on Aging
- Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Covered Bridge Healthcare
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services
- Great Start Collaborative
- Hope House
- Riverside Church
- SJC Human Services Commission
- SJC Sheriff's Department
- SJC Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- Sturgis Pregnancy Helpline
- Three Rivers Pregnancy Helpline

### Collaboratively accomplished:

- ◆ Held annual Domestic Violence Candlelight Vigil— approximately 75 attendees.
- ◆ Continue to compare emergency response calls to DASAS with cases submitted to Prosecuting Attorney's office.
- ◆ Community partner presentations at meetings to learn about and discuss systematic practices and effects on survivors.
- ◆ Maintain Task Force Facebook page to push out more information to public about healthy relationships.
- ◆ Co-hosted Intersection of Domestic Violence & Co-Occurring Trauma Conference with Substance Abuse Taskforce.
- ◆ Held "Take Back the Night" Rally at Glen Oaks Community College.
- ◆ Task force was instrumental in promoting prevention education throughout the year .



Annual Candlelight Vigil



# Substance Abuse Task Force

**Chair: Mikayla Finnerman and Mark Olsen**  
**Community Mental Health & SAS**  
mfinnerman@stjoecmh.org  
molsen2@stjoecmh.org



## Participating Agencies:

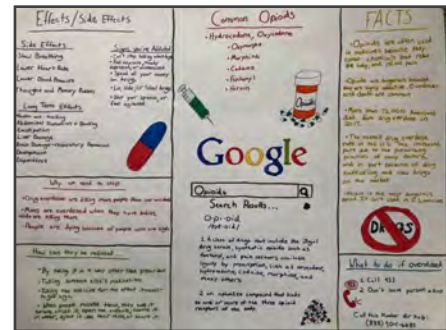
- Aetna Better Health of Michigan
- BHSJ Community Health Agency
- Celebrate 1 Church/Destiny Church
- Covered Bridge Healthcare
- Department of Health & Human Services
- Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services
- Great Start Collaborative
- Michigan State Police
- St. Joseph County Community Corrections
- SJC Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse
- SJC Human Services Commission
- St. Joseph County Probation Division
- St. Joseph County Transportation Authority
- Riverside Church

## Collaboratively accomplished:

Held 4 campaigns in FY 18/19: RX Drugs, Methamphetamine, Underage Alcohol Use, and Marijuana Use

- ◆ Grew email to reach over 400 community members and front line workers.
- ◆ Social Media interactions grew to over 2000 people reached on Facebook.
- ◆ Expanded community sectors on Task Force.
- ◆ Provided Narcan training and kits to 15 people in the county for Opioid Campaign Presentation.
- ◆ Provided Naloxone OD Prevention/Rescue Train-the-Trainer session to First Responder Agencies in the County.
- ◆ 9 students participated in Poster Contest: reached 4,543 people through contest on Facebook.
- ◆ Provided education to 44 alcohol/tobacco retailers:
  - ◆ 18 tobacco compliance checks completed
  - ◆ 15 Alcohol compliance checks with local law enforcement
- ◆ Provided Education to 28 Vaporware Retailers:
  - ◆ 5 compliance checks completed
- ◆ Held February 2019 Voices of Hope and Recovery Event for Meth Campaign– 124 attendees.
- ◆ Presented to 40 Sturgis High School students on Underage Drinking and Teen Pregnancy.
- ◆ Offered Prime For Life Classes in Spanish through Covered Bridge Healthcare.
- ◆ Collected 1,250 pounds of prescription drugs at drug take back boxes in St Joseph County during FY2018-2019.
- ◆ Established Prime For Life curriculum for Juvenile Day Treatment Center students.

## Student prescription drug campaign poster contest entries



## Strategic Planning

The St. Joseph County Human Services Commission Membership engaged in strategic planning with consulting firm Omni Tech International, Ltd in 2017 to determine how our collaborative can best serve the people of St. Joseph County.



### Implementing a Strategic Plan for 2017-2020

Much of our strategic plan focuses on changes internally to strengthen communication within our collaborative as well as communication with other bodies and agencies in SJC. The end result is residents receiving services because both the frontline workers serving them know what is available in our county and residents know how to access these services.

### Strategic Plan Items Accomplished in 2019

HSC addressed the lack of housing in St. Joseph County by holding a community forum and pursuing a community housing plan.

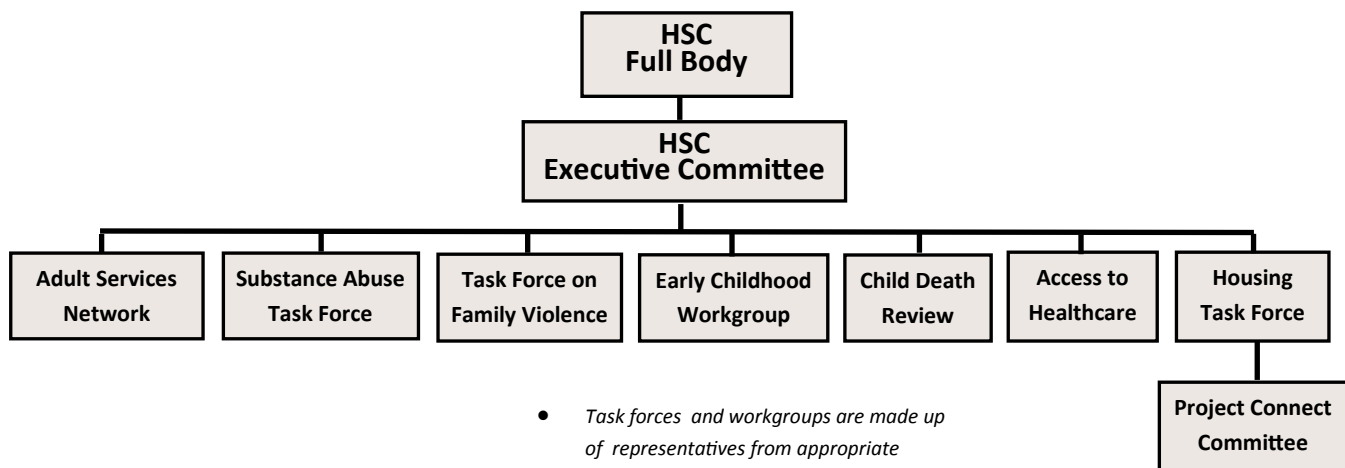
In 2019, HSC launched a new website with a county-wide human services calendar, produced an annual report with outcomes of each workgroup, and tracked connections made and needs resolved within the SJC Resources Google Group.

### Focus for 2020

HSC will continue to work on the county-wide master housing plan as well as building its network with community groups and marketing its resources website to agency workers and the public, county-wide.

The St. Joseph County Human Services' Strategic Plan for 2017-2020 can be viewed at [www.sjchumanservices.com](http://www.sjchumanservices.com)

## SJC Human Services Commission—Organizational Diagram



- Task forces and workgroups are made up of representatives from appropriate community agencies (middle managers, service staff, and consumers) as recommended by their directors and interested citizens.
- The HSC provides feedback to the workgroups on their goals and activities, and offers assistance and resources as needed and available.

To get involved in the HSC work groups, contact Laura Brott, 269-625-1820 or email [BrottL@michigan.gov](mailto:BrottL@michigan.gov)