



DD Community Forum

Wednesday, February 9, 2022

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

[Register Here](#)

The next DD Community Forum will be on February 9, 2022.



The forum will be hosted by Advocates in Action and will be held on Zoom, or you will also be able to call in to the forum.



**You don't need to
shovel to
join us for the
virtual forum!**

Update On ISPs During COVID

With the recent surge in COVID cases, individuals still have the option to develop their ISPs via video meetings rather than in person. The individual has the choice of whether to meet in-person, virtually, or a hybrid of the two. Social caseworkers are available to attend meetings in whatever the chosen format is.

If someone is unable to sign an ISP in person, digital signatures can be accepted. If a digital signature is not possible, then the plan writer can note “no signature due to COVID”, as long as the DD social caseworker knows that the individual was involved in the plan development and the individual agrees to the plan.

As a reminder, the COVID interim ISP can no longer be accepted to extend the prior ISP. A full ISP must be submitted.

We will let you know when these accommodations change, based on the status of COVID cases in the community and the federal and state executive orders regarding the pandemic emergency.

RFP Award for Rate and Payment Methodology Changes

The Rate and Payment Methodology change project has been awarded to Health Management Associates (HMA). HMA is an independent, national research and consulting firm specializing in publicly funded healthcare and human services policy, programs, financing, and evaluation. They have more than 400 experts with vast experience in every facet of the healthcare system.

The award was made after a Request for Proposal was issued and the proposal responses were evaluated and scored following State of RI procurement rules. HMA was the highest scoring of the five proposers.

On September 1, 2020, Burns & Associates (B&A), became a division of Health Management Associates. Burns & Associates was the company who worked on the last rate model in 2011, though no one from that project will be part of this one. B&A is a leader nationally in the design, operation and evaluation of Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) programs. They have done work similar to this project in a number of other states, including Oregon, Maine, California, Georgia, and Hawaii.

This project will involve much stakeholder input, so watch for additional information and opportunities to get involved in the near future.

Consent Decree Status Hearing

A status hearing on the Consent Decree will be held on Thursday, February 3, 2022 at 9:30 AM.

At the Division



Kelly Petersen, a DD social caseworker since 2015, has become the social casework supervisor for the Providence/West Bay/Kent region.

Lena Sousa and **Tim Cronin** are two new social caseworkers who started with BHDDH in November. Both are working in the South County/West Bay/Kent region.

Gail Reynolds, a social caseworker for many years with the DD SIS Unit, retired in December 2021.



At-Home, Rapid COVID-19 Tests are Available for Free

On Friday, January 14, 2022 the White House announced that free at-home, rapid COVID-19 tests are now available for order online. Those who do not have internet access or who need additional assistance with ordering can call **1-800-232-0233 (TTY 1-888-720-7489)** to place their orders.

The [Eldercare Locator](#) and the [Disability Information and Assistance Line \(DIAL\)](#) can assist older adults and people with disabilities with placing orders, connect people to accessible instructions, and help with administering the tests.

- Older adults can call the Eldercare Locator at **800-677-1116** or [visit the website](#) to chat live or browse resources.
- People with disabilities can contact DIAL by calling **888-677-1199** or by emailing DIAL@usaginganddisability.org.
 - The DIAL information specialists are trained to work with people of various communications abilities, including spending as much time as needed to understand callers.
 - Deaf and hard-of-hearing people can reach DIAL using the 711/Video Relay Service (VRS). To use this free service, simply dial 711 to be connected via text with a communications assistant. (For people who do not communicate through speech, sign language or VRS, email is the best option to communicate with DIAL.)
- Both phone lines are staffed **Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m to 8:00 p.m. ET.**

Two important notes:

- There are enough kits to fill orders for every residential address in the country.
- Orders will begin shipping at the end of January, for both people who placed their orders via the online form in the days when only the online form was available and those who began ordering when the phone lines became available.

Pursuing Your Dreams Advocates in Action Conference Encore

Thursday, February 10

1:00-2:00 PM

Register here: www.tinyurl.com/EncoreDreams



Come hear ideas about how to dream BIG and what you can do to make those dreams come true!

Everyone who attends this Conference Encore will be eligible to win a \$25 Amazon gift card!



Stay Tuned for more Conference Encores coming in March and April of 2022!

What Does It Mean To Be Person-Centered?

Is it about language, community integration, or choice and responsibility?

The answer to all is yes. While Person-Centeredness is a significant shift in how to approach supports, it's not hard to understand. The goal is that the lives of people receiving supports look more like the lives of everyone else.

Let's think about language. Often, when people providing services talk about people with disabilities, they still use clinical language even when they aren't in clinical settings. They say or write things like, "Stacey has verbally aggressive behaviors, but she is high-functioning. She toilets independently, enjoys outings, needs partial physical support to do math, and requires verbal prompts for personal interaction."

What if we talked about Stacey like we talk about a friend?

"Stacy speaks for herself. She is a lot of fun when going out but appreciates a kind reminder to respect others' space. When making purchases, her friends help her make sure everything is correct."

See the difference?

That same idea can guide supports for helping people with community integration or helping someone balance choice and risk. Paid staff should offer meaningful support where it's needed and not overstep.

When supports are needed from others, Person-Centered Thinking skills and tools lead to confident and effective Person-Centered practices that help ensure the person stays in control of their life as much as possible.

Adapted from an article by IntellectAbility



COVID Vaccination Help

Do you need help getting information or scheduling an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccination or booster?



We can help you get the information you need to decide when, how and where to get a vaccination or booster.

We can help you arrange an appointment at a pharmacy, clinic or drive thru site to get your vaccination or booster. If going to one of these sites is very difficult for you, it is possible to arrange to be vaccinated in the comfort of your home.

If you need assistance or have questions about getting access, scheduling an appointment or finding transportation for a vaccine or booster shot, you can call 401-216-9660 or email vaxhelp@AccessibleRI.org Then we will call back to assist you.



Disability Rights
RHODE ISLAND



Financial Planning Resources

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families must plan for the future, including having a plan for how a person with IDD will pay for the things they want and need.

To help you begin to understand some of the resources you may want to consider as you develop a financial plan, The Arc's Center for Future Planning has developed a series of new videos on the following topics:

- [An Overview of ABLÉ Accounts](#)
- [An Overview of Special Needs Trusts](#)
- [Special Needs Trusts and ABLÉ Accounts: How Are They Different?](#)
- [Pooled Special Needs Trusts](#)
- [How Death Affects the Money Left in ABLÉ Accounts and Special Needs Trusts](#)

[These videos are also available in Spanish.](#)

Questions? Contact futureplanning@thearc.org.



The Arc promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

Increase in SSI Benefits, Changes in TCI/TDI/UI Programs & Increase in the Medicare Part B Premium



The monthly benefits for the [SSI \(Supplemental Security Income\)](#) program for low-income seniors and people with disabilities have been increased effective January 1. The maximum monthly payments are \$880.92 for an individual and \$1,340.38 for a couple (if both spouses are eligible).

Rhode Islanders who want to take [TCI \(Temporary Caregiver Insurance\)](#) to take care of a loved one or bond with a new child are now eligible to take 5 weeks instead of the previous 4 weeks as of January 1, 2022.

The maximum weekly benefit rate for TCI and [TDI \(Temporary Disability Insurance\)](#) has increased to \$978, and the minimum benefit rate is increased to \$114. For [Unemployment Insurance \(UI\)](#), the maximum weekly payment is increased to \$661 and the minimum benefit is \$62. The actual benefit amounts depends on the worker's earnings.

The standard monthly premium for Medicare Part B is increased to \$170.10, an increase of \$21.60. The premium is generally automatically deducted from the person's Social Security check.

You can learn more about [SSI and Medicare Premium Payment program](#) and the other programs at the [Guide Pages](#) on the Institute for Economic Progress website.



The Economic
Progress Institute

The Economic Progress Institute
600 Mount Pleasant Avenue, Bldg #9, Providence, RI 02908
Telephone: (401) 456-8512 | Email: info@economicprogressri.org
www.economicprogressri.org

Webinar: Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others During the Pandemic: Self-Care and Stress Inoculation

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

2:00 PM

[Register Here](#)

The human stress response is important; it's designed to alert us of danger and keep us safe. But COVID-19 has kept many people in active stress response for nearly two years – far longer than our bodies and minds are meant to handle. Proactively taking care of yourself and managing stress are crucial aspects of staying healthy during this time. Join Karla Vermeulen, Ph.D., for a live webinar to learn more about stress and techniques to combat the effects of stress.

Karla Vermeulen, Ph.D., is the Deputy Director of the Institute for Disaster Mental Health and an Associate Professor of Psychology at SUNY New Paltz.

This webinar will be recorded and available to the public within one week.

Study Seeks Young Adults With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to Validate a New Functional Outcome Measure

Researchers at the University of Florida are seeking young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to use a new web-based, self-reported outcome tool to report how they do everyday activities at home, school, work, and the community.

The research team believes young people with developmental disabilities have a right to be involved in planning their future and evaluating the outcomes of educational programs and healthcare.

The app, called PEDI-PRO, will provide teens and young adults with developmental disabilities the opportunity to identify the everyday activities and tasks they want and need to get better at doing. The PEDI-PRO will also provide teens and young adults the chance to self-evaluate the progress they make over time: either in school, after receiving specialized training or therapy, or after receiving healthcare services.

[Watch a video about PEDI-PRO here.](#)

For more information, contact Jessica Karger at:

PHONE:
(352) 273-9365

EMAIL:
yell@php.ufl.edu or
Jessica.Kramer@php.ufl.edu

WEBSITE:
<https://yell.ot.php.ufl.edu/>



A flyer for the PEDI-PRO app study. At the top left is the UF logo and text: "Youth & Young Adult Empowerment, Leadership & Learning (YELL) Lab", "Department of Occupational Therapy", "UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA", and "Study ID: IRB201903395 Date Approved: 11/19/2021". At the top right is a circular seal that says "UF IRB-01 Approved University 10-2019". The main text reads: "Try our new app for young adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities". Below this is a photo of a hand holding a smartphone displaying the app's home screen. At the bottom of the photo is a blue banner that says "Earn \$30 for participation".

What will you do?

- Answer questions on the app
- Meet with us one time for 1-2 hours

This study is for

- 14-22 years old
- Young Adults with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Down syndrome, and other disabilities

Contact

352-273-9365
yell@php.ufl.edu



SCAN ME

Take a picture of this flyer

Jr. Jessica Kramer, Principal Investigator IRB#201903395

Looking For Activities To Keep Busy This Winter?

[Click here for a comprehensive list](#) of some great virtual tours, zoo cams, some doodling and celebrity readings, and other activities, and it's all free! There is even a NASA tour of Mars!

[The ARC's virtual program library](#) is a free hub of on-demand activities that can be done from home by people with disabilities, their families, and service providers. The library is expanding all the time and has activities in a wide variety of areas, such as arts, life skills, health and wellness, virtual clubs, and more. Browse listings to find activities like:

- Participating in dance, yoga, and other movement activities
- Learning about internet safety
- Virtually touring places like Disney World and museums
- Making your own Jeopardy templates
- Finding self-advocacy support

More Virtual Experiences available 24/7: [Webcams, online tours, exhibits, sneak peeks, activities, games, and lots more](#)

Learn about and visit [15 of the Best \(and Most Offbeat\) Attractions in Rhode Island!](#)

See [16 Creative Things To Do In Winter \(Even During A Pandemic\)](#).

Paint the snow!

If you have snow on the ground, why not make the most of it? For the artist in all of us, you can snow paint. All you need to make safe snow paint is food coloring.

You Need:

- liquid food coloring
- tap water
- recycled plastic spray bottles, any size (ideally with adjustable squirt / spray nozzle)



What You Do:

1. Fill a spray bottle with about 2 cups of warm-ish tap water (not too warm or it will melt the snow)
2. Add about ten drops of food coloring--more for some if you want bold color. Screw on tops, shake to mix. TIP: spray a bit on a paper towel to check for intensity--if too faint, add more coloring.
3. Take the bottles outside to make snow art! Use the "Squirt" or "Stream" setting for fine detail, and mist settings for larger areas. Experiment with spraying close-up or farther away for effect. TIP: You'll get nicer results if you can pack and smooth down an area about four feet square.

Contacting DD Staff

See the full Division Contact List attached to this newsletter.

Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00
for questions or support

(401) 462-3421

Para español, llame

(401) 462-3014

Send general questions to the
AskDD email address.

BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov

Please do not email critical issues.

Sign Up for Our Email List

If you aren't receiving email updates
and newsletters from BHDDH, you can
[sign up here](#) or on our website. Go to

<https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmentaldisabilities/events/newsandupdates/> to sign up or to see
past quarterly newsletters and issues of DD News.



SIGN UP FOR THE BHDDH NEWSLETTER

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, BH Link is here for you

BH Link's mission is to ensure all Rhode Islanders experiencing mental health and substance use
crises receive the appropriate services they need as quickly as possible in an environment that
supports their recovery. Call 911 if there is risk of immediate danger. Visit the BH Link website
at www.bhlink.org or for confidential support and to get connected to care:

CALL (401) 414-LINK (5465) If under 18 CALL: (855) KID(543)-LINK(5465)

Visit the 24-HOUR/7-DAY TRIAGE CENTER at 975 Waterman Avenue, East Providence, RI

Stay Informed with Information on COVID-19

Rhode Island Department of Health COVID-19 Resources

Hotline (401) 222-8022 or 211 after hours;

Email RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov

Website <https://health.ri.gov/covid/>

Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Information

Website cdc.gov/coronavirus

Videos <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/videos.html>

Includes a link to ASL videos

RI Parent Information Network (RIPIN)

Website <https://ripin.org/covid-19-resources/>

Call Center (401) 270-0101 or email callcenter@ripin.org

Advocates in Action – for videos and easy to read materials

Website <https://www.advocatesinaction.org/>

Website offers BrowseAloud, which will read the website to you

Division of Developmental Disabilities - All Staff Contacts

Name		Title	Phone	Email
Kevin	Savage	Director	462-0581	Kevin.Savage@bhddh.ri.gov
Heather	Mincey	Assistant Director	462-1218	Heather.Mincey@bhddh.ri.gov
Christine	Botts	Deputy Administrator	462-2766	Christine.Botts@bhddh.ri.gov
Tracey	Cunningham	Associate Director, Employment	462-3857	Tracey.Cunningham@bhddh.ri.gov
Brenda	DuHamel	Associate Director, Admin Services	462-3010	Brenda.DuHamel@bhddh.ri.gov
Cindy	Fusco	Chief Implementation Aide	462-3016	Cynthia.Fusco@bhddh.ri.gov
Melissa	Greenlief	Administrator, Comm Services	462-2459	Melissa.Greenlief@bhddh.ri.gov
Susan	Hayward	Administrator, YIT	462-2519	Susan.Hayward@bhddh.ri.gov
Anne	LeClerc	Associate Director, Prgm Perf	462-0192	Anne.LeClerc@bhddh.ri.gov
Tracy	Levesque	Clinical Administrator	462-0209	Tracy.Levesque@bhddh.ri.gov
Gerard (Jay)	MacKay	Administrator, Comm Services	462-5279	Gerard.Mackay@bhddh.ri.gov
Jacqueline	Reilly	Programming Services Officer	462-0126	Jacqueline.Reilly@bhddh.ri.gov
Case Management Units				
East Providence/Pawtucket/Central Falls region				
Marguerite	Belisle	Casework Supervisor	462-0714	Marguerite.Belisle@bhddh.ri.gov
Amie	Adams	Social Caseworker II	462-2480	Amie.Adams@bhddh.ri.gov
Carl	Desjarlais	Social Caseworker II	462-1555	Carl.Desjarlais@bhddh.ri.gov
Stacey	Perry	Social Caseworker II	462-2418	Stacey.Perry@bhddh.ri.gov
Suzanne	Porter	Social Caseworker II	462-1972	Suzanne.Porter@bhddh.ri.gov
Mary Beth	Silveria	Social Caseworker II	462-2438	Marybeth.Silveria@bhddh.ri.gov
Heather	Soares	Social Caseworker II	462-6097	Heather.Soares@bhddh.ri.gov
Northern RI/West Bay/Kent Region				
Janice	Bijesse	Casework Supervisor	462-4290	Janice.Bijesse@bhddh.ri.gov
Mary	Cameron	Social Caseworker II	462-1307	Mary.Cameron@bhddh.ri.gov
Jackie	Camilloni	Social Caseworker II	462-3022	Jackie.Camilloni@bhddh.ri.gov
Megan	Gilbert	Social Caseworker II	462-2524	Megan.Gilbert@bhddh.ri.gov
Dayna	Hansen	Social Caseworker II	462-2505	Dayna.Hansen@bhddh.ri.gov
Natalie	Sam	Social Caseworker II	462-2529	Natalie.Sam@bhddh.ri.gov
Erin	Simonelli	Social Caseworker II	462-2502	Erin.Simonelli@bhddh.ri.gov
South County/West Bay/Kent Region				
Meredith	MacDonald	Casework Supervisor	462-1329	Meredith.Macdonald@bhddh.ri.gov
Lauree	Champagne	Social Caseworker II	462-2728	Lauree.Champagne@bhddh.ri.gov
Timothy	Cronin	Social Caseworker II	462-1721	Timothy.Cronin@bhddh.ri.gov
Jennifer	Gouveia	Social Caseworker II	462-0098	Jennifer.Gouveia@bhddh.ri.gov
Jill	Murphy	Social Caseworker II	462-2409	Jill.Murphy@bhddh.ri.gov
Lena	Sousa	Social Caseworker II	462-1834	Lena.Sousa@bhddh.ri.gov
Joseph	Tevyaw	Social Caseworker II	462-2474	Joseph.Tevyaw@bhddh.ri.gov
Providence/West Bay/Kent Region				
Kelly	Petersen	Casework Supervisor	462-3402	Kelly.Petersen@bhddh.ri.gov
JoAnn	DiMuccio	Social Caseworker II	462-2523	JoAnn.DiMuccio@bhddh.ri.gov
Meaghan	Jencks	Social Caseworker II	462-2113	Meaghan.Jencks@bhddh.ri.gov
Souphalak	Muriel	Social Caseworker II	462-2512	Souphalak.Muriel@bhddh.ri.gov
Yolande	Ramos	Social Caseworker II	462-1059	Yolande.Ramos@bhddh.ri.gov
Judy	Smith	Social Caseworker II	462-1327	Judith.Smith@bhddh.ri.gov
Vacancy		Social Caseworker II	462-2563	
Eligibility Unit				
Karen	Lowell	Eligibility Supervisor	462-2209	Karen.Lowell@bhddh.ri.gov
Marisa	Abbruzzi	Social Caseworker II (RICLAS)	462-6099	Marisa.Abbuzzi@bhddh.ri.gov
Christine	Harding	Eligibility Caseworker	462-3233	Christine.Harding@bhddh.ri.gov
Lori	Lombardi, RN	PASRR	462-0089	Lori.Lombardiburns@bhddh.ri.gov
Kim	Wright	Information Aide	462-2584	Kimberly.Wright@bhddh.ri.gov
SIS Unit				
Donna	Standish	SIS Supervisor	462-2628	Donna.Standish@bhddh.ri.gov
Wendy	Cormier	SIS Caseworker	462-1302	Wendy.Cormier@bhddh.ri.gov
Kristen	Miga	SIS Caseworker	462-0449	Kristen.Miga@bhddh.ri.gov
Vacancy		SIS Caseworker	462-2510	
Transition Unit				
Susan	Hayward	Administrator, YIT	462-2519	Susan.Hayward@bhddh.ri.gov
Carolee	Leach	Prof. Services Coordinator	462-1723	Carolee.Leach@bhddh.ri.gov
Support Staff				
Stephanie	Andreozzi	Implementation Aide	462-1859	Stephanie.Andreozzi@bhddh.ri.gov
Lori	Vandall	Clerk Typist	462-6086	Lori.Vandall@bhddh.ri.gov



Access to Integrated Employment Specialist
Closing Date: February 17, 2022

The Sherlock Center is seeking a full-time team member to support our Work Incentives and Benefits Counseling Initiative!

Responsibilities of this position include providing in-person and remote **benefits counseling to educate SSI and SSDI beneficiaries, individually or in groups, about how employment will affect their benefits.** Candidates must possess or be eligible for Community Work Incentives Counselor Certification (CWIC) from an approved SSA program. Responsibilities also include helping to develop projects that promote access to integrated employment for adolescents and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In 2021, the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities, RI College, was awarded a regional **Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA)** grant from the [Social Security Administration \[r20.rs6.net\]](https://www.ssa.gov/understanding/social-security-administration) to provide benefits counseling to beneficiaries living in Rhode Island and Connecticut. To meet the expanded service area, the Sherlock Center is seeking to hire a full-time **Access to Integrated Employment Specialists.**

The base of employment is Rhode Island College, Providence, RI. Individuals hired for this position will provide in-person and remote services to beneficiaries residing in RI and CT. Interested applicants must currently reside in Rhode Island, Connecticut, or Massachusetts or be willing to relocate.

Bachelor's degree required. Applicants must obtain SSA Suitability Clearance upon hire. Bilingual in English/Spanish encouraged to apply.

[View Posting \[r20.rs6.net\]](https://www.r20.rs6.net)
[Apply via RI College \[r20.rs6.net\]](https://www.r20.rs6.net)



Stay Connected!

[www.sherlockcenter.org \[r20.rs6.net\]](https://www.sherlockcenter.org)



[r20.rs6.net]



[r20.rs6.net]

TOPIC: Customized Employment

Defining Customized Employment

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES FOR POSITIVE OUTCOMES

To better understand customized employment practices, researchers conducted five focus group with 28 professionals, including national experts and people who implement customized employment for people with disabilities. The research revealed the best practices for employment specialists to follow while assisting individuals with disabilities in obtaining employment, include:

- Build rapport and get to know the individual; mindfully listen to them
- Identify the individual's interests, skills, and abilities; along with conducting in-depth interviews with family and friends,
- Observe the individual during daily activities in different community settings and doing job-related tasks,
- Arrange for the job seeker to observe local businesses that potentially match the job seeker's interests, skills, and abilities and conduct informational interviews with those employers, and
- Collaborate with the job seeker, family, and friends to develop and negotiate a customized job description.



Inge, Katherine J.; Graham, Carolyn W.; Brooks-Lane, Nancy; Wehman, Paul; Griffin, Cary (2018). Defining customized employment as an evidence-based practice: The results of a focus group study. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 48 (2), 155-166.

For more on this topic and article, Read the Plain Language Summary at:

<https://idd.vcurrtec.org/resources/content.cfm/1392>

VCU-RRTC on Employment of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities is funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant #90RT5041). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS). If special accommodations are needed, please contact Vicki Brooke at (804) 828-1851 VOICE or (804) 828-2494 TTY.