



Questions & Answers

Will there be a DSP rate increase in July?

Yes, the rates will be adjusted for a minimum Direct Support Professional (DSP) starting wage of \$18 per hour effective on July 1, 2022.

How will the rate increase affect those who self direct?

The funding package for those who self-direct will also increase to account for a wage of \$18/hour. Self-directed hourly wages for staff must also be at least \$18 per hour. You will need to work with your Fiscal Intermediary if you need to raise your DSP wages.

Will the ability to pay parents/guardians through self direct be ending in June?

This is not ending in June. There will be a lot of advance notice if it ends, but we are working with the Medicaid office to permanently allow parents and guardians to be paid.

Please note the following:

1. Some flexibilities that Medicaid has approved during the PHE will be able to continue for 6 months after the PHE ends. This includes hiring parents/guardians.
2. The current PHE was renewed on April 16, 2022. It will be reviewed again in July unless it is terminated before then.
3. States will have 60 days notice before the federal PHE for COVID ends.

This means that once the federal government announces the end of the PHE, there will be 60 days before the PHE actually ends, then Medicaid flexibilities can continue for another 6 months. So we will have 8 months of continuation after the end of the federal PHE is announced. There is no indication yet of when that announcement might happen.

New Video Series on Technology and Digital Access

[Click Here to Watch Videos](#)

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights offers a video series about various topics on digital access in education, including how people with disabilities use technology, applicable Federal regulations, and identifying and remediating barriers to access. There are 20 videos in the series, with most running about 3 to 5 minutes. Whether you are in the educational field or not, these videos have wide ranging coverage for those who want to know:

- What makes technology accessible for individuals with disabilities?
- And how can I make my site or platform more accessible?

Coming and Going



Jamie Fitzgibbons is a new addition to the SIS unit and is really happy to be here! Previously, Jamie was a child protective investigator at DCYF.

Tracey Cunningham-Martins, former Associate Director of Employment at the Division, has become the Executive Director at AccessPoint RI. The former Executive Director of AccessPoint RI, Tom Kane, has retired. We wish them both luck in their new endeavors!

We also want to note that Claire Rosenbaum will be retiring from the Sherlock Center on Disabilities as of June 30, 2022. Claire has

been a strong advocate committed to improving the system for all. She has been a partner who could be relied on to be honest about what is and is not working and who has worked hard to make things better. We thank you, Claire, very much for your leadership. We wish her well and hope she has a long and enjoyable retirement.

Person-Centered Decision-Making and Alternatives to Guardianship

Tuesday, June 21, 2022

3:00 to 4:30 PM

[Click here to register](#)

This webinar will explore how systems are expanding alternatives to guardianship, such as supported decision-making where people choose supporters to help them make important decisions in their lives. During this webinar national experts, state representatives, advocates, and people with disabilities from Colorado, Georgia, and Wisconsin, will outline strategies and discuss a new NCAPPS resource to expand supported decision making.

The new resource is titled [How to Expand Supported Decision-Making \(SDM\) and Increase Informed Choices](#). The purpose of this publication is to introduce SDM and to suggest ways that more people can benefit by relying on supporters to help make decisions and to reduce reliance on guardianship. The strategies discussed are intended for use by a range of audiences interested in increasing people's ability to make informed decisions.



The [National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems \(NCAPPS\)](#) is an initiative from the Administration for Community Living and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services that helps States implement person-centered thinking, planning, and practice.

Fee Waiver for State ID

The fee for a State ID may be waived for DD participants. Your social caseworker must complete a Fee Waiver form for the DMV and submit it with your application for the State ID to the DMV. If you are currently in the DMV system, your duplicate or renewal ID can be processed with scanned copies of the application/renewal form and the waiver form without an appointment.

If you are getting your first ID or the DMV doesn't have a photo on file for you, then you will need an appointment to go to the DMV (any branch, any day, any time). Bring in the completed forms and other documents required. See the checklist on the DMV website for acceptable documents that are required for people who are new to the RI DMV.

The DMV has even made arrangements to have people brought in before the DMV opens, especially if there are multiple clients or those who may need an accommodation. Contact your social caseworker if you have any questions.

Your Feedback is Needed for a Survey about Transportation Options in Rhode Island

The [Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council](#) is conducting a survey about the following publicly-funded transportation services in our state:

- RI Public Transportation Authority (RIPTA) Fixed Route and Flex Bus
- The Ride Program- RIPTA ADA Paratransit and contracted services for the RI Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Non-Emergency Medical (NEMT) and Elderly Transportation Program (ETP), which are currently provided by MTM
- Local Van Services provided by Cities and Towns
- Rhode Island's Commuter Rail and Train Service

The information you provide will help the Coordinating Council better understand how publicly-funded transportation services meet the needs of ALL Rhode Islanders and identify areas for improvement in our state.

[Click Here to Take the Survey](#)

This survey is open to everyone.

If you don't use any of these public transportation options, you can still take the survey to give your feedback on why they don't work for you.

Housing Choice Voucher Program Centralized Wait List Update Process

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires each public housing agency to annually update the Housing Choice Voucher Program Centralized Wait List (CWL) Portal. The annual update process is vital to ensure that everyone's information is up to date so that participating housing authorities can move more efficiently through waiting lists and house more Rhode Islanders.

RI Housing will begin the annual update process June 1st with an electronic notification going out to all applicants on each participating housing authority's waiting list. The correspondence requested that they log into the CWL Portal and confirm their continued interest. This notice also reminds them to update their contact and preference information. Each applicant will receive two notices, each allowing 10 days for the action to be taken.

On June 20th RI Housing will send a final email reminder to all applicants reminding them to log in and update their information, thus saving their spot, and the deadline to do so. If you are on a waiting list and do not update your information, you may be removed from the list.

If applicants have technical issues with their accounts, including password resets, they should contact RI Housing at waitlist@rihousing.com or call (401) 443-1618.

Participating Housing Authorities

Bristol Housing Authority
Central Falls Housing Authority
Coventry Housing Authority
Cumberland Housing Authority
East Greenwich Housing Authority
East Providence Housing Authority
Johnston Housing Authority
Lincoln Housing Authority
Newport Housing Authority
North Providence Housing Authority
Pawtucket Housing Authority
Providence Housing Authority
Rhode Island Housing
Smithfield Housing Authority
South Kingston Housing Authority
Warren Housing Authority
Warwick Housing Authority
Woonsocket Housing Authority

For more information

If you are not on the Centralized Wait List and would like more information or to apply for housing choice vouchers:

<https://www.waitlist-centralri.com>

For a list of public and privately owned subsidized housing options:

<https://www.rihousing.com/wp-content/uploads/Rental-Resource-Guide-10-1-19.pdf>



Pride Month and Individuals with I/DD

From: <https://ilaonline.org/pride-month-and-individuals-with-intellectual-and-or-developmental-disabilities/>

Pride month is celebrated annually throughout the Americas and worldwide by the LGBTQ+ community, their families, and supporters. It is a significant time of honesty, respect, healing, understanding, and tolerance, and a time to honor pioneers in the LGBTQ+ movement who sacrificed and fought for equality, and those who continue to advocate for inclusion, especially among individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD).



Current state legislation, education, and social media are helping to lift barriers. However, those within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community still often face prejudice, misunderstanding, and intolerance. For those members who also live with I/DD, these challenges can seem insurmountable without the steady support of their peers, families, and support workers.

Continuing Challenges to Inclusion

Inclusion is happening gradually, although great strides have been made in the past decade. For those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, there is still considerable ground to cover to safeguard their protection and rights, while creating a sense of acceptance and belonging.

Funded Programming Supports Diversity

Within the LGBTQ+ family, social equity barriers are more pervasive for people of color with I/DD. Various projects and programs are available and funded through agencies like the Administration for Independent Living (ACL) and National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) to help those with I/DD overcome stigmas about diversity while tackling emotional roadblocks.

Programs also focus on local community inclusion and work with individuals with specific conditions such as autism to understand more about their sexuality and sexual health. Many programs help to identify barriers to community inclusion and overcome misconceptions.

Anniversary of the Rainbow Flag

This year marks the fifty-third anniversary of the Stonewall Inn Riots, which kick-started June as Pride Month. Yet, people with disabilities are still impacted by biases that continue to permeate even LGBTQ+ culture, with some cases directly violating the Americans with Disabilities Act. As a result, there are still those with I/DD struggling with inclusion within their community.

Reason To Celebrate

Despite lingering issues surrounding the rights and freedoms of those in LGBTQ+ and I/DD communities, there is still a solid reason to celebrate and feel pride. With more programs now being offered to help people gain a stronger foothold within their community and achieve a greater sense of self-identity, there is more support available than ever.

Helpful Resources

With approximately five million people with I/DD currently part of the LGBTQ+ community, it's more important than ever to ensure the necessary resources to help them to shine. Large and visible entities like [GLAAD](#) are showcasing individuals with I/DD and providing unconditional support and a voice to people within the LGBTQ+ I/DD community.

Rainbow Support Groups for LGBTQ+ Adults with I/DD

The online Rainbow Group meets at Zoom twice each month and is open to LGBTQ+ adults with I/DD and their friends and allies from all US states. Visit their website to access the Zoom link and learn more about Rainbow: www.wearemass.org/rainbow-group.

[Pauline Bosma Talks About The MASS Rainbow Groups](#) (video) Pauline Bosma is the Rainbow Program Coordinator for the self-advocacy organization Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong (MASS). Pauline is a self-advocate who works at the intersection of LGBTQ+ issues and identities and intellectual/ developmental disabilities.

What LGBTQ+ People With Intellectual Disabilities Want Everyone To Know

Excerpted from [The Conversation](#), an online magazine



From *Rainbow Rights*

They are a group often overlooked, described as “invisible”, or perhaps assumed not to exist at all. People with intellectual disability face additional barriers to access and participation in community, which means their voices are often missing from LGBTQ+ events, in government consultations, and in disability spaces.

We [*the authors of this article*] partnered with Inclusion Melbourne and Rainbow Rights & Advocacy, an advocacy group of LGBTQ+ people with intellectual disability to hear about what mattered to them, and what they wanted other people to know. We spoke with dozens of LGBTQ+ people with intellectual disability over hundreds of

hours. We did this work alongside peer researchers: LGBTQ+ people with intellectual disability who facilitated the online group and individual sessions and co-created the research resources.

We asked how LGBTQ+ people with intellectual disability can be better supported to – in the words of one person – “say who you are”, and gathered their comments together into key statements. It is our belief our study (to be published later this year) is the first in the world to include only people with intellectual disability and to co-design all stages of research.

Where all too often people with intellectual disability are seen as the ones in need of education, our approach was the reverse. We asked for their advice to share with those who need to listen: policymakers, service providers, families and their supporters.

This Pride month is about celebrating diversity. But we have some way still to go. The stigma around intellectual disability and LGBTQ+ identities means people may choose not to come out to the people or support services that surround them. People told us support workers needed more training to understand their rights and LGBTQ+ identity, and provide support in line with quality standards. These affirm that “the culture, diversity, values and beliefs of that participant are identified and sensitively responded to”.

[Read the full article here.](#)

THE CONVERSATION

Bailey Brook Farm launches William's Naturals Hand Crafted Dairy Soap

From [RINewsToday](#)

There are generations of family memories at the Bailey Brook Farm, home to Cher, Paul and their 3 children and at one time, 50 milking cows. In recent years producing Rhody Fresh Milk, the family is now creating new memories producing soap, staying true to the healthy, all-natural criteria that earned them entry into the Farm Fresh RI hub signifying healthy, local food.



"It was our daughter, Rachel's idea, notes mom, Cher. "Take daddy's cow milk and make soap. Many of our farmer friends make goat milk, let's talk with them," thought Rachel. It would become a project that would include her brother, Will, a jovial 31-year-old farm hand with Down Syndrome and developmental disabilities.

After much research, discussion, and many recipes, mom tried her first batch. "It wasn't perfect. It must be precise, but it's fun" she reported. Not surprisingly, in subsequent batches, nothing less than the "special" cow offering high butterfat for maximum creaminess would do. Twenty bars of Irish lemon grass soap, an Irish recipe using four different oils, and William's Naturals Hand Crafted Dairy Soap business had begun.

Working a farm is arduous. Adding the time-consuming soap manufacturing process to the family's heavy workload would seem impossible. "Making soap is a labor of love. Will loves it," says Cher with an unmistakable warmth in her voice. "He loves the smell," listing the current line-up of soaps, such as lavender with tea tree, lavender with walnut, lemon cream, and honeysuckle.

Cher lists the chores, those that include tending to the cows occasionally escaping at 2:00 am, the frequent medical appointments for Will, and this new venture. She acknowledges, "it's a hard, but fun life. This new adventure is good. It keeps Will going." She proudly recalls him saying that he's "living a happy and comfortable life. And, when the ladies come to buy soap, he smiles," referring



to his former grade schoolteachers in particular. His job is to apply the signature cow's stamp on each cured bar, cut them to size, wrap them and prepare them for sale.

Logically, product sales began with ten bars at the Bailey's farm East Greenwich. Across the street they sold both soap and cornstalks at the popular and historic Fry Farm. Cher's sister-in-law soon will soon include an assortment of products in her local store in Exeter, Emma Acres. Also, a Warwick-based farmer who purchases hay from the Bailey farm has invited them to sell soap in their store this spring.

As for the business itself, last spring, Cher and Will enrolled in the RI Developmental Disabilities Council's (RIDDC) free Self Employment Business Project, a series of eight classes, plus one-on-one technical counseling and support, and launched the business in July.

While unquestionably beneficial to the business's success, carving out that additional time would be a challenge. So would be the ever-rising costs of all natural ingredients. Cher calculates that it takes 570 grams of frozen milk, plus the select ingredients, curing for three weeks on a special shelf made by her husband from leftover wood in the barn, just to yield 20 bars. Creating inventory is another critical issue.

Beyond the RIDDC business basics class, Cher values the encouragement others offered throughout the project and found particularly helpful the personal stories other entrepreneurs and the presenters shared. "I just sat, listened to other's ideas, and wrote everything down. Then, we went out to the fields, and took beautiful cow pictures." Even during Cher's few moments to sit, she is committed to learning – this time about marketing her business. Those cows not only produce great milk and creamy soap products, they're photogenic and make great shots to promote the products.



We Be Jammin' opens new shop in Pawtucket

By ZACK DELUCA Valley Breeze Staff Writer zack@valleybreeze.com; From [The Valley Breeze](#)

With their new location in the Hope Artiste Village, We Be Jammin' brings with it unique flavors and a return of community events.

We Be Jammin' is owned by Jason Wood, a 33-year-old man with autism and limited verbal skills. Smithfield residents Debbie and Russell Wood helped get the business started for their son, who loves being out in the community and meeting new customers.

Jason, who greets customers with a smile, aged out of school and day programs at age 21. At that time, his mother said, they had to decide as a family what his day was going to look like. They wanted to find a way to keep him active and socially stimulated, so the idea for We Be Jammin' was born.

"By starting the business, and putting him out in the community at farmers markets and things like that, he's forced to use his skills," Debbie said. "He's exposed to the community, and socialization is a part that children with autism are usually missing – but not my social butterfly."

The business began as a part-time venture in 2014, and expanded to be full-time in 2019. The grand opening of their second brick and mortar location at unit 8233 in the Hope Artiste Building, 1005 Main St. in Pawtucket, took place in late April. Debbie Wood said this new location allows their business to reach more customers in the northern part of Rhode Island.

She said people are drawn to their family's story, their mission of giving back to their community, and the quality of their products. The company boasts specialty jams, salsas, BBQ sauces, marinades, glazes, pickles, relish, beets, salad dressings and more.

Before We Be Jammin' started, Jason and Debbie attended classes with the Rhode Island Developmental Disabilities Council's Self-Employment project. The course helps individuals with disabilities turn their ideas into businesses.

Dawn Cochrane, Jason's full-time day support specialist, said she has been working with the Woods for eight years, or since the launch of the company. "We had six flavors when she started," Debbie Wood said. "Now we have 104," Cochrane added.

According to Wood, part of Jason's autism diagnosis is that he has tactile defensiveness, and is sensitive to different touches and food textures. What he does enjoy is crunchy foods, like toast, crackers and chips. "So how do you get fruit in him? We decided, let's try to put a little bit of jam on his toast — thinking never in a million years he would tolerate it," Wood said. "... He did it, and he kept doing it."

Similarly, she said Jason did not like to eat most meats. However, they found he would eat these foods when he could dip them in ketchup and other condiments. By finding this balance with crunchy textured foods and healthy servings of fruit jams and other condiments or toppings, they've been able to give Jason a healthy diet that he enjoys.

Debbie Wood has also owned the Warwick-based Wood Boat and Motor Inc. boat dealership since 2002, located at 3630 West Shore Road, Warwick. The property houses the original We Be Jammin' storefront, which was introduced in 2019 as an outdoor farm stand.

The Woods also run We Be Jammin' events, a business where they help organize and run up to 60 public events per year. They said they plan to host monthly public indoor events at the Hope Artiste Village building on June 12, July 10, August 14, Sept. 4 and Oct. 8, 2022.



We Be Jammin' is owned by Jason Wood, a 33-year-old man with autism, pictured with his full-time day support specialist Dawn Cochrane, left, and his mother Debbie Wood, right, at their new store in unit 8233 of the Hope Artiste Village, 1005 Main St., Pawtucket. Breeze photo by Zack DeLuca

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

For Information on the Consent Decree

For information on the Consent Decree and BHDDH, see <https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/consent-decree>.

COVID-19 Information

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/>
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

Main Phone #: (401) 462-3421 **TDD:** (401) 462-3226 **Website:** <https://bhddh.ri.gov/>
Fax: (401) 462-2775 **Spanish Line:** (401) 462-3014 **BH Link:** 401-414-5465

To report abuse/neglect:
 (401) 462-2629

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Case Management Units

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LUNCH AND LEARN: Working While Disabled—Work Incentives Sessions

Registration Now Open!
Work Incentives sessions for SSI and SSDI Beneficiaries

Working with Benefits - Yes, You Can!

June 22, 2022, 12-1 pm

SSI Overview:

July 20, 2022, 12-1 pm

SSDI Overview:

August 10, 2022, 12-1 pm

ALL SESSIONS will be offered on Zoom with subtitles in English.



REGISTER ONLINE at <https://bit.ly/2KkUCVQ>

The Sherlock Center provides Work Incentive Information and Benefits Counseling services to SSI and SSDI beneficiaries and those that support them (family, guardian, rep payee, professionals). These sessions will be of value to anyone looking for a basic introduction to disability-related work incentives and/or has related questions. The Work and Benefits Introduction is for those starting to think about working and have general questions. The SSI or SSDI sessions provide details about the specific work incentives and other related information. All sessions provide an opportunity for you to ask questions about the following topics:

- Ticket to Work
- SSI or SSDI Work Incentives
- Resources about Work Incentive Information
- Access to Benefits Counseling
- Working and Impact on Health Insurance Medicaid/Medicare
- Other questions related to benefits and working

Upon registration please share your questions.

NOTE: These sessions will not address how to apply for SSI or SSDI benefits.

TIP: Unsure if you receive SSI or SSDI? You can confirm which benefit you have at <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/>

Presented by Certified Work Incentives Counselors.

REGISTRATION IS LIMITED! Advance registration is required. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the session. You can access the session by computer, mobile device or listen using a cell or landline phone.

Accommodation requests or registration questions: Contact Elaine Sollecito at esollecito@ric.edu, 401-456-2764.

Session questions: Contact Vicki Ferrara at vferrara@ric.edu, 401-456-8092 or Joshua Hughes at jhughes@ric.edu, 401-456-4734.



PERSON-CENTERED THINKING FACILITATOR TRAINING

**Online Course
July 5 – September 20, 2022**

This free course is available to those supporting persons with I/DD living in R.I.

Register by June 24, 2022

Course Description:

Rhode Island is in the process of expanding and refining Person-Centered practices throughout the state. One of the most important components of Person-Centered Thinking is the facilitator who advises and assists the person to actively participate in developing a plan for all domains of their life.

This course focuses on the knowledge and skills a facilitator needs to help individuals to:

- Prepare for the plan
- Develop the plan
- Implement the Plan

To get the most from this course, it is recommended that learners identify an individual with whom they might engage in person-centered planning. The course will provide the opportunity to practice the skills and knowledge learned and to reflect on learner experiences.

TIME COMMITMENT:

Training takes place over 3 months and will require approximately a 40-hour commitment to successfully complete the course. Learners must complete 11 online modules, quizzes, 3 assignments, and participate in 4 instructor-led group sessions via Zoom (1.5 hours each).

Course Details:

The Sherlock Center is now offering **Person-Centered Thinking Facilitator Training** as an online course. The next course runs from **July 5–September 20, 2022**. Learners will use Moodle, an online platform, to independently access course materials and assignments. Learners will also participate in four (4) scheduled virtual group sessions with the instructor.

The required group sessions will take place from 10:00 –11:30 AM on the following dates:

- **July 12, July 26, August 23 , September 20**

Learners are required to complete an Orientation to Moodle and initial readings prior to the first group session on **July 12**. Details will be provided following registration.

Technology Requirements:

To access Moodle and participate in the group sessions, learners will need a computer, laptop or tablet with internet access and a camera. We recommend using the latest version of **Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge, or Safari** for the best Moodle experience.

Every effort has been made to create this course and course documents in an accessible format. All course materials will be provided electronically using Moodle and/or email. It is recommended that learners install a free version of Adobe Reader on the device that will be used for the course.

Registration: <http://bit.ly/2xeV6pT>

Register online by **June 24** using the link above. Priority registration will be given to support coordinators, managers and other front-line supervisors, as well as families and people with lived experience. You will receive a confirmation by email once your registration is processed. Registration and course information is also available on the Sherlock Center website at www.sherlockcenter.org.

If you need a reasonable accommodation (e.g., ASL/CART) to participate in this course, please indicate your request on the registration form as soon as possible.

For registration questions, contact Elaine Sollecito at esollecito@ric.edu or Leave a message at 401-456-2764.



SELF-EMPLOYMENT ONLINE Classes for People with Disabilities, Families and Community Agencies



NEXT CLASS STARTING July 12, 2022

Do you know a person with a disability who has a hobby or idea for a possible business or who needs more support for an existing small business? If so, our **FREE ONLINE ZOOM Business Classes** can help the person to learn all about self-employment and available resources for their business idea and financial future!

Traditional employment in jobs may not be the best option for some people with disabilities. Small business ownership is another option and great choice to do work that has *real meaning* for the person. It is something people can control themselves, and to sell a product or a service they really love to make a living. There are over 100 people with disabilities in RI who have started their own businesses in the last few years. Here's what Michael Coyne, business owner of "Red, White and Brew Café" in North Smithfield, RI has to say:

WHY CHOOSE SELF-EMPLOYMENT?

1. I love being my own "BOSS", meeting new people and spending my time working on something I really enjoy every day!
2. I decide my own flexible work schedule and hours.
3. The Business Classes helped me to learn skills for problem solving, communication, marketing, and self-advocacy. I met other great people with disabilities who also own their own businesses and I received a grant to buy the materials/supplies I needed for my business.
4. I have assistance through my personal support network, my Business Team and RIDDC who are there to help me with my business.
5. I am no longer "volunteering" my time at a job, but instead I have my own business making money and I have increased my income!



The RI Developmental Disabilities Council (RIDDC), in partnership with CWE and others developed a **FREE Business Development Series of 8 Classes, ONLINE through ZOOM Meetings**. The first Class is **Tuesday, July 12, 2022 from 1:00 pm-2:30 pm** and others scheduled every week. We want to assist people to learn the right business skills and access resources to become profitable RI small business owners!

The Classes provide practical business advice, resources and ongoing peer and staff support to participants, families and staff through experienced Business Advisors. They know how to work with people to develop good business plans, marketing ideas, and set goals the person can achieve in the industry he/she launches.

The Series includes the following Classes: 1. Is Entrepreneurship (Self-Employment) Right for You?, 2. Steps to Start a Small Business, 3. Identifying Your Target Market, 4. Developing an Effective "Elevator Speech" about Your Service/Product(s), 5. How to Write a Good Business Plan, 6. Finances, Bookkeeping, and Community Resources, 7. Marketing Your Business Idea, and 8. Using Social Media to Promote your Business.

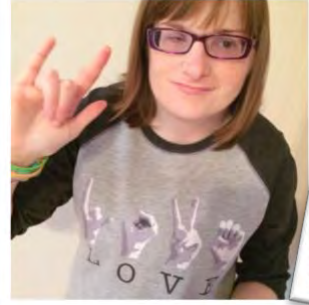
To Register for this Class or For More Information Call Claudia Lowe at 738-3960 or Sue Babin at 523-2300. (Participation Is Limited!)



This project is funded by DLT's and the Governor's Workforce Board's "Real Jobs RI" initiative.

RI's Self-Employment Project

Learn How You Can Start Your Own Business!



Why Choose Self-Employment?

Self-employment offers people with disabilities and others flexibility and control that traditional jobs do not, such as meaningful employment in an area the person has a *real passion* for, setting their own flexible work hours, being their own “Boss”, determining their actual place of employment, working at their own pace, and increasing each person’s self-esteem.

Traditional 9-5 wage jobs and various types of workplace environments may not be the best option for some individuals with disabilities. “*Self-employment and the spirit of individual enterprise*” can match a person’s dreams, hobbies and skills to start their own business earning competitive wages, facilitate diversity and inclusion, and build each person’s financial future!

What does the Project Include?

The Project provides ongoing support for aspiring entrepreneurs to develop their business idea, launch or grow their small businesses, and improve their financial futures. It includes:

- 8 Business Development Classes through ZOOM Meetings in interactive formats people can understand
- Project Staff and Peer Mentor Support
- 1-1 Business Support from Business Advisors for marketing; Business Planning; Business Card, Facebook or Website design; Accounting/Finances, etc.
- Mini Grants for materials/supplies
- Weekly Entrepreneur’s Forum with practical information and networking ideas
- Opportunity to participate in various local community Vendor Marketplace Events
- Completion of a Business Planning Portfolio



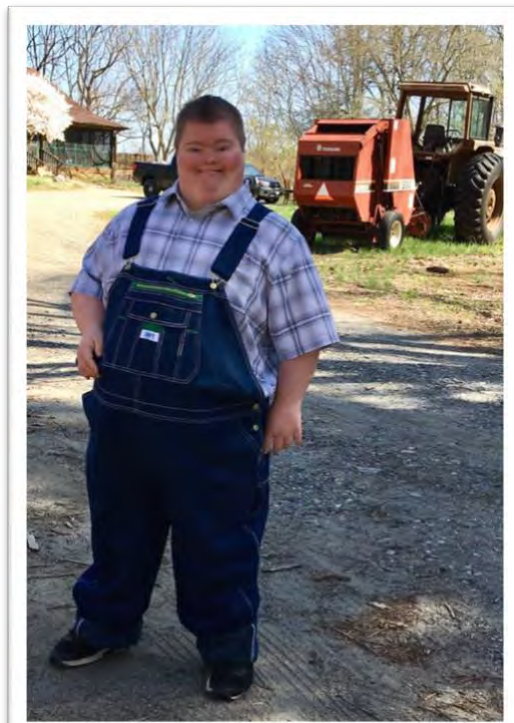
In RI there are many individuals with disabilities who have figured out creative ways to leverage their talents, skills, resources and connections into their ideal job... not through finding jobs, but by creating their own employment and small business!



What Do You Need to Get Started?

- A hobby, talent or skill that you want to pursue as a possible small business
- An interest in learning more about the steps to start a business and necessary ongoing business support
- Ability to connect on a laptop, computer or I-Pad for 8 weekly ZOOM Business Classes
- Family, friends, people with business experience, or support staff who can be a part of your Business Team to assist you with the business classes, homework and other business development resources you may need to explore

ANYONE can be a small business owner with the right resources and support!



How Did this Project Start?

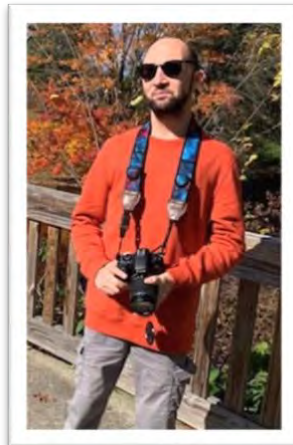
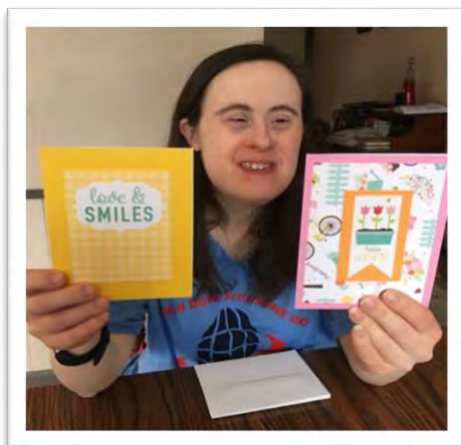
The RI Department of Labor and Training (DLT) and “*Real Jobs RI*” has provided funding to the RI Developmental Disabilities Council (RIDDC) since 2018 to administer this Project and organize the ongoing business development support people with disabilities need to successfully start up or grow a small business. The Council provides additional in-kind resources to support the operational components and other activities to help promote entrepreneurs with disabilities and their businesses.

Where Can I Get More Information?

The next round of the Business Development Series and 8 Classes starts in early July 2022.

To see more information on this Project and read about some great success stories of people with disabilities and their individual businesses in RI check out the RIDDC’s website at www.riddc.org and click on the Self-Employment tab. You will be inspired by these entrepreneurs who have made their dreams into reality through business ownership!

You can also contact Sue Babin, Project Director at 401-523-2300 or Project Staff Claudia Lowe, Sheila Coyne or Karyn Carfagna at 401-737-1238 for more information.



SPOT ON NEWS

Monthly Email Newsletter brought to you by the Cheetah gang
cheetahgreetings.com 401-738-3960 @cheetahgreetings



World Central Kitchen

WDSO 2022

Every year on March 21, we take the opportunity to teach others all about Down syndrome on World Down Syndrome Day (WDSO). This year, I chose to donate the proceeds of a very special card to the World Central Kitchen.

Jose Andres is the chef and owner of the non profit World Central Kitchen (WCK). It was founded in 2010 and according to the website, "The World Central Kitchen is first to the frontlines, providing meals in response to humanitarian, climate, and community crises"

ALL ABOUT ME!

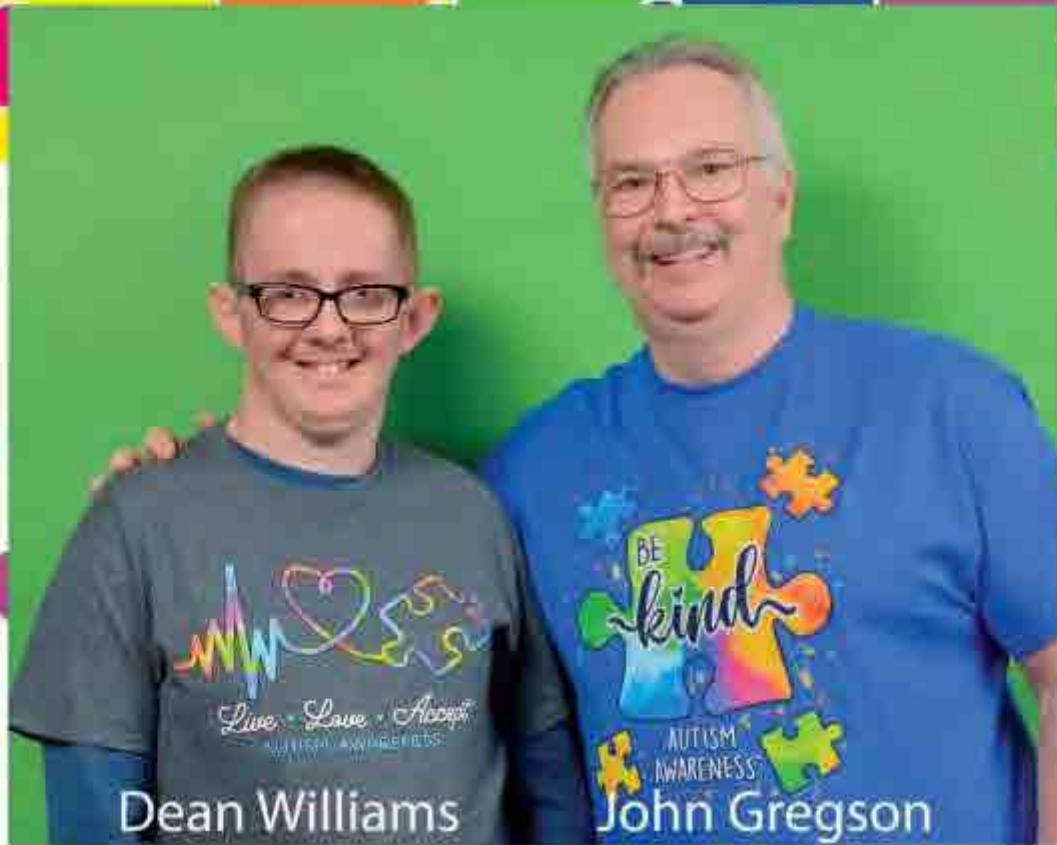
Cheetah Greetings has exciting news! Katie is launching her All About Me Portfolio! This customizable portfolio can be used to identify current goals, needs, wants, and other things that are important to YOU!



PERSON CENTERED PLANNING

The All About Me Portfolio can be used as a guide to help facilitate Person Centered Planning when creating an ISP. Make your voice heard in a way that works best for you. Cheetah Greetings will work with you to make sure you are in charge of YOUR life! Contact us and take charge TODAY! Email cheetahgreetings@gmail.com or see contact info above 🙌





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Top Ways Teachers and Service Providers can Support a Person with a Disability

Who is Coming Out LGBTQ



Quotes from people with developmental disabilities:



- “Being in the closet, it is so much pressure living this day to day lie of not being who I am.”
- “I hear staff tell gay jokes all the time? They just assume that because I have a disability, I am straight.”

- “I did not know I was gay. I was more focused on having autism and how that made me feel different. Feelings I felt for boys were difficult to understand and identify. I did not know if these feelings were part of my sexuality or part of my disability. For example, some people with autism have obsessive feelings toward a person.”



- “I want to go to my peer support group for self-advocates who are LGBTQ and my staff insist that they be in the room. Why do people not respect my privacy?”

- “I worry if I am going to look the part when I go into the LGBTQ world. You’ve got to be pretty and smart. We are people with disabilities. Are we going to get a look? Will we be judged?”
- “I have no privacy now. How will my parents deal with me when they find out that I am gay?”
- “Telling my whole story was such a relief. Sometimes just being able to hear yourself talk about your feelings can help so much.”



Ways to Respond and Be Supportive



- Talk to us about self-care. Help us to find ways to feel better when feeling stressed and anxious. Ask what can we do to feel calmer and more relaxed? Self-care activities distract us until we are in a better place.
- Support us to identify people we can trust when feeling down. It helps to know which people we can trust at school, work, a faith community, a doctor's office or at an agency.
- Help us make friends. Friends can understand and react differently from family. Relationships are learning opportunities. We move in, out, and within them in different ways.
- People should not assume our disabilities determine everything we do. Sexuality and disability are a part of who we are. But that does not mean those things define everything about us.
- Get the facts. Learn about bullying and discrimination of LGBTQ students. These students are more likely to feel depressed, drop out of school and hurt themselves because they are often harassed.
- Words matter. Learn respectful terms used by the LGBTQ community. Be a role model and set a welcoming tone. Ask the person what words they want others to use.
- Accept people where they are; support people in discovering who they are. No judging – do not push your values on someone else.



- ❑ When you get to know a person with a disability, see the whole person including their sexuality. Be ready for someone to ask questions about being LGBTQ. If you don't have much of an idea about it, know who to ask.



- ❑ **Stop Bad Behavior** – More than half LGBTQ students who have been harassed do not tell because:
 - they do not think adults will do anything about it
 - and/or they fear the situation could get worse

Teachers and service providers must stop harassment whenever and wherever it happens. Step in, stop it and explain why it is harmful. For more information read this excellent booklet describing [The Top 10 Ways To Make Schools Safer For All Students](#).

- ❑ Support [sexual self-advocacy](#). The fundamental principles of self-advocacy that people with developmental disabilities can have control over their own lives, make their own decisions, solve problems and speak for themselves extend to sexuality and relationships.
- ❑ Treat adults as adults. Have respect for an individual's right to make choices and mistakes. People have the right to choose their own partners – same sex, opposite sex, with or without disabilities.
- ❑ Everyone has a right to the facts about health and sexuality information provided in an accessible manner. Take action to ensure that students and adults with disabilities get sex education.





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The Self-Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SARTAC) seeks to strengthen the self-advocacy movement by supporting self-advocacy organizations to grow in diversity and leadership. The resource center is a project of Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), the oldest national self-advocacy organization in the country. SARTAC is a Developmental Disabilities Project of National Significance, funded by the Administration For Community Living – Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD). The information in this manual was written to provide guidance for self-advocates and their allies to assist in understanding policy issues affecting their lives. It is not to be used to determine a person's legal rights or an organization's legal responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, as amended or any other federal, state or local laws written to protect the rights of people with disabilities.