



## Upcoming Public Information Sessions on Individual Budgets and Other Changes

The Division of Developmental Disabilities will be holding several public information sessions on some of the changes happening this summer, especially the new Individual Budgets. Please join us in person at one of the events below, or at a virtual session.

Wednesday, July 19, 2023  
5:00 PM to 6:30 PM  
**Rochambeau Library  
Community Room**  
708 Hope St  
Providence, RI 02906

Tuesday, July 25, 2023  
1:00 PM to 2:30 PM  
**Warwick Public Library  
Large Meeting Room**  
600 Sandy Lane  
Warwick, RI 02889

Thursday, July 27, 2023  
3:00 PM to 4:30 PM  
**Virtual Session**  
[Click Here to Register](#)

## Changes to the DD Funding Package

Over the next year, as people develop their new ISPs, they will see changes to how their DD funding is shown. The tier packages will be replaced by a total budget that is broken down into the following categories.

- **Flexible Individual Budget:** The part of the budget that individuals can control based on their plan. This includes community-based supports, center-based day supports, respite, transportation, assistive technology, professional services, and self-directed goods and services.

Community-Based Supports has a broader definition which includes the previous services of community-based day, prevocational services, and overnight supports. Time of day distinctions between services have been removed.

- **Fixed Budget:** The part of the budget that includes residential (group home, SLA) and fiscal Intermediary (FI) fees that must be paid. This also includes a dedicated line item for self-directed services for support brokerage. Funding can be added to this line item but the minimum amount can't be used for anything else.

There will also be a separate budget for certain services over and above the standard Flexible and Fixed Budgets.

- **Add On Budget:** Funding for services above the Flexible and Fixed Budgets. This includes employment, home modifications, vehicle modifications, peer-to-peer supports, family-to-family supports.

**Join us at the public information sessions above to learn more about the new budgets.**

# Webinar on Innovative Volunteer Models to Promote Social Connection

## Tuesday, August 1, 2023 from 12:00-1:00 PM

Join Commit to Connect for a webinar about innovative volunteer models that can be used to promote social connection and address social isolation and loneliness.

During this webinar:

- The [Give 5 program](#) will highlight how their volunteer model offers retirees civic engagement opportunities that build upon their interests and skills.
- [SAGE](#) will share how they created and sustained volunteer opportunities that help LGBTQ+ older adults remain engaged in their community.
- The [Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation](#) will highlight their peer mentoring program matching people with disabilities to spur connection.

The webinar will include closed captioning and American Sign Language interpretation. For questions, contact [info@committoconnect.org](mailto:info@committoconnect.org).



## Accessibility at RI Beaches

DEM's Division of Parks and Recreation has an ongoing program of renovating facilities to make them accessible to and usable by persons with physical disabilities. Accessibility is considered in all new design and construction projects. In addition to designated wider parking spaces, restroom accommodations, and ramped building entrances, the RI State park and beach system offers accessible picnic tables and sites at all major day use parks.

All state beaches with pavilions are equipped with ramps that allow access from the parking area up to the pavilion and down to the beach. To help navigate to the water, some locations also offer beach-accessible wheelchairs, walkers, and access mats designed to help people with limited ability access the beachfront. All are available without charge on a first-come, first-served basis.

Visit the RI State Parks website for more information on [accessible parks and beaches in Rhode Island](#) or for the [application for the no-fee beach pass for people with disabilities](#).

# The Americans with Disabilities Act and The Olmstead Decision



Supreme Court graphic with the words "Olmstead Decision" written above it (Disability Rights Washington, 2019)

The 1990s brought great things for the disability civil rights movement. The decade started with The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) signed on July 26, 1990. The ADA provides civil rights protections to people with disabilities and allows people to file lawsuits if their rights are being violated.

One of these lawsuits led to the Olmstead Decision of 1999. The Olmstead Decision made it illegal for people with disabilities to be segregated or separated from the community. With Olmstead, people with disabilities were granted the basic

human right to work, live, and participate in the community to the degree that they wanted to just like people without disabilities were able to do. For more information about Olmstead, view this video on [The Olmstead Decision Explained](#) from Disability Rights Washington or read about the [personal stories of a few of the thousands of people whose lives have been improved by the Olmstead decision](#).

## RI Governor's Commission on Disabilities Public Forums

In honor of the passage of the ADA, the Rhode Island Governor's Commission on Disabilities is hosting three public forums in July called "*People with Disabilities & Their Families Rights & Concerns*." For details about the public forums, including when and where they will be held, please see below or checkout the [official event website](#).

**Tuesday, July 25, 2023**

**4:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

Via Zoom Public Forum:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84337491662>

Meeting ID: 843 3749 1662

**Wednesday, July 26, 2023**

**1:00pm to 3:00pm**

Pawtucket Senior Center

420 Main Street Pawtucket, RI 02860

**Thursday, July 27, 2023**

**2:30pm to 4:30pm**

Cranston Public Library

140 Sockanosset Cross Rd, Cranston RI 02920

## July is Disability Pride Month!



The most valuable communities are those that include and celebrate people with differences. This difference between people is referred to as diversity, and it includes things like gender, race, and ability. [Researchers have studied the importance of diversity](#) for many years. They have found when diversity is high in groups people are more creative, solve problems in new ways, and are more open-minded about what they believe in and what they want to do with their lives. This July, the Division of Developmental Disabilities is calling attention to the many contributions people with different abilities bring to our community by celebrating Disability Pride Month.

The United States first celebrated Disability Pride Month in July 1990, when the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law. Though we should practice gratitude for all the good people with disabilities offer to the community every day of the year, Disability Pride Month offers great opportunities to really focus on their contributions and celebrate everyone's uniqueness.

If you are looking for ways to celebrate Disability Pride, check out these resources:

- The [website of Disability Unite](#), an organization that brings communities together.
- To learn why Disability Pride is important and for ideas on how to celebrate, read the article [Why and How to Celebrate Disability Pride Month 2023](#).
- Continue to gain disability awareness by following some the ideas listed in the article [12 Ways to Celebrate Disability Pride Month \(2023\)](#).

## The Assistive Technology Conference of New England will be in person this November 16th and 17th in Warwick, RI

[Click Here to Register for ATCNE 2023](#)

Early Bird Rates will apply through September 30th. Visit the [ATCNE website](#) for more information.

If you are an entrepreneur with disabilities who would like to participate in the Bringing Access to Life Expo, please visit the [Expo page](#).



The [Bringing Access to Life Expo](#) is a feature of the ATCNE added in 2015. The Expo features entrepreneurs with disabilities and offers conference attendees an opportunity to purchase products created by our guests.

# Employment Opportunities for Youth with Disabilities

In March 2023, The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) launched the Youth Employment Works strategy, which not only offers a road map for today's youth, but also aligns with best practices and evidence-based solutions specifically tailored toward addressing the unique challenges of youth with disabilities. The strategy centers on three goals to accelerate systems change and reduce silos across service providers:

1. Ensuring the workforce system offers seamless access to job opportunities and supportive services for young people entering the labor force from all pathways.
2. Encouraging partners across all public and private sectors to invest in workforce training and job services for all young people.
3. Guaranteeing all young people have access to paid work experiences aligned with high-quality career pathways that are safe and age appropriate.

The focus on youth ages 14 to 24 who are neither in school nor employed provides a unique opportunity to address the needs of youth with disabilities.

[Visit Mathematica for more information on Youth Employment Works.](#)

Other publications from Mathematica:

- [Spotlight summary on evidence on the effectiveness of programs in improving employment outcomes for young adults on the autism spectrum](#)
- [Transitioning to Adulthood: Building Better Interventions for Youth with Disabilities](#)  
Youth with disabilities, especially youth receiving Supplemental Security Income, face unique challenges that affect their employment prospects as they become adults. The transition to adulthood is an important time in their lives when better interventions could make longstanding impacts and narrow the educational and employment attainment gap between youth with and without disabilities.

A fragmented and complex system of supports makes it difficult for youth with disabilities to get the services that can help them the most. Localities vary a great deal in available education, health, employment, and other support services, and there is no single point of entry for youth to begin obtaining services. After high school or at a certain age, they stop receiving services in one system and need to transition to a new system, leading to confusion, information gaps, and the inability to track outcomes.

Recent research suggests that it is possible to smooth the transition to adulthood for youth with disabilities, especially by providing well-designed customized supports to specific populations.

- [Demonstration Projects Reveal Opportunities](#)
- [A Better Pathway for Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities](#)
- [Focusing on the Diversity of Youth with Disabilities](#)
- [Moving Forward: Solutions for More Successful Youth Transitions](#)
- [Let's Progress Together](#)

# RI Self-Direct Coalition Begins Streamlined, Cost-Effective Resource Support System for I/DD Community, Job Readiness

NEWS PROVIDED BY: [Communication Works Inc.](#)



The [Rhode Island Self-Direct Coalition \(RISDC\)](#), is excited to announce that they have officially begun to recruit, train and refer Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) who will provide practical daily assistance to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). This new organization provides information, resources, and guidance to individuals and families interested in Self-Direct services. Empowering individuals to make the best decisions about their lives is the primary goal.

Among the recipients of Rhode Island's Transformation Grant funded by The Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals ([BHDDH](#)), RISDC is alone in its unique initiative to train its newly recruited DSPs, using a healthcare learning management system familiar to and often adopted by larger support agencies. Early plans include preparing twenty-five people to respond to requests for assistance.

***Individuals with disabilities have life & employment goals or dreams of starting a small business. We want to support both DSPs and individuals with I/DD to help goals and dreams become a reality.*** — Sheila Coyne

While Self-Direction has many benefits, navigating the system can be overwhelming and confusing. To demystify the various processes, procedures, and offices with which the I/DD community interacts, RISDC will be holding monthly informational sessions to address various topics. Among the select topics are: Self-advocacy, Personal safety, Self-empowerment to promote a healthy, person-centered life.

They are forming an Employment Hub of Direct Support Professionals to be partnered with individuals seeking to expand their workforce. They will also be a starting point for local businesses that are looking to hire employees. RISDC will connect and align qualified applicants with developmental disabilities to job opportunities. RISDC will also help to increase awareness around the potential for individuals with I/DD to pursue self-employment.

RISDC Co-founders Sheila Coyne and Claudia Lowe, both have entrepreneurial adult children with developmental disabilities. Both children with their supportive parents completed the RI Developmental Disabilities Council's Self Employment Project and have completed marketing and business plans. Red White and Brew Coffeehouse/The Budding Violet is a combined coffee shop/bakery and retail store, co-owned by Michael and Sheila Coyne. Cheetah Greetings, owned by Claudia's daughter, Katie Lowe, creates hand-made personalized greeting cards, stamps, and pins.

Ms. Coyne noted, "We are in a workforce crisis. Now is the time to appreciate and support Direct Support Professionals. DSPs support people with developmental disabilities. Individuals with disabilities have life goals, employment goals or even dreams of starting a small business. We want to support both DSPs and individuals with I/DD to help goals and dreams become a reality."

Ms. Lowe added, "We have all faced situations and obstacles that have left us feeling alone and frustrated with the system. Our goal is to share appropriate, up-to-date information, avoid misinformation and improve the way self-directed communication is provided, hopefully making life just a bit better."

## Report Suspected Abuse

### Mandated Reporting

Reporting suspected occurrences of abuse, neglect, and mistreatment of individuals with developmental disabilities

To report abuse and serious incidents call the QA hotline at **(401) 462-2629**

The Quality Assurance (QA) Unit at BHDDH operates a 24-hour hotline, seven days per week, 365 days per year. Staff respond to reported incidents of abuse, neglect, mistreatment, and financial exploitation.

## For More Information on DD Initiatives

Consent Decree: see <https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/consent-decree>

Conflict Free Case Management: see the [EOHHS CFCM website](#) or [DD Initiatives-CFCM](#)

RI DSP State Workforce Initiative: see <https://riswi.org/> or [DD Initiatives-SWI](#)

## 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

## Contacting DD Staff

See the full Division Contact List attached to this newsletter.

Monday-Friday  
8:30 AM - 4:00 PM  
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](mailto:BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov)  
Please do not email critical issues.

## 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. Visit the BH Link website at [www.bhlink.org](http://www.bhlink.org) or for confidential support and to get connected to care:

CALL or TEXT: **988**

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

Visit the 24-HOUR/7-DAY Triage Center at **975 Waterman Avenue, East Providence, RI**

**Call 911 if there is risk of immediate danger**

## Division of Developmental Disabilities - All Staff Contacts

<b>Main Phone #:</b> (401) 462-3421	<b>TDD:</b> (401) 462-3226	<b>Website:</b> <a href="https://bhddh.ri.gov/">https://bhddh.ri.gov/</a>	<b>To report abuse/neglect:</b> <b>(401) 462-2629</b>
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# Americans with Disabilities Act

JULY 25, 2023

VIRTUAL FORUM VIA ZOOM LINK

JULY 26 & 27, 2023

IN PERSON

## PUBLIC FORUM: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES & THEIR FAMILIES, RIGHTS & CONCERNS



Zoom Public Form on Tuesday,  
July 25, 2023, at 4:30-6:30PM

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84337491662>

Meeting ID: 843 3749 1662 ---  
One tap mobile  
+16465588656, 84337491662#  
US (New York)  
+16469313860, 84337491662#  
US ---

Dial by your location  
• 833 548 0276 US Toll-free  
• 833 548 0282 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 843 3749 1662

FIND YOUR LOCAL NUMBER:  
[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/84337491662](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84337491662)

PAWTUCKET SENIOR CENTER  
420 MAIN STREET PAWTUCKET  
RI 02860

WEDNESDAY  
JULY 26, 2023  
1PM TO 3PM  
(IN PERSON)

CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
140 SOCKANOSSETT CROSS  
ROAD CRANSTON, RI 02920

THURSDAY  
JULY 27, 2023  
2:30PM- 4:30PM  
(IN PERSON)

RI GOVERNOR'S  
COMMISSION ON  
DISABILITIES

2 Cherry Dale Court  
Cranston, RI 02920

Website

[www.gcd.ri.gov](http://www.gcd.ri.gov)

## Data Highlight

### What Do NCI-IDD Data Tell Us About the Proportion of Family Care Givers Who Are Being Paid to Provide Support? \*1



**According to the results of the 2021-2022 Adult Family Survey (AFS), about one in two (1 in 2) respondents to the AFS reported they or someone else in the family was paid by the IDD agency to provide services to their family member. However, states ranged from 12% of respondents in Georgia to 90% in Arizona and Pennsylvania.**

**Why does it matter?** Much of the care and support for people with IDD is provided by unpaid family members. Of the approximately 7.3 million people with IDD who live in the U.S., 80% live with a caregiver who is a family member (The Arc, 2018). Caregiving can result in added stress for the caregiver, loss of income, and reduced health and quality of life. During the pandemic, these stresses increased. According to the 2020-21 National Core Indicators COVID supplement to the AFS, 28% of respondents experienced loss of employment and 73% experienced changes, cancellations or reductions services. To respond to the challenges faced by caregiving families, 22 states sought amendments to their HCBS waiver Appendix K (emergency provisions) to expand their ability to pay family caregivers beyond the provisions of their current waivers. Paying families also expands the pool of support workers in light of the current workforce crisis.

**Questions to ask:** Paying family caregivers recognizes the key role they play in supporting their family member. However, the policy does raise some important issues. Does paying the family member constrain the ability of the participant to achieve independence? Are families aware of and trained in their obligations ensure people are included in the community, have opportunities for employment, and to make choices? Do payments to family caregivers cover the actual cost of support? Are there assurances that paying families is not a substitute for funding other paid supports? Is monitoring in place to ensure that individuals receive needed supports? In terms of equity, who has the means and opportunity to become a paid caregiver?

#### **Want to know more?**

The Arc (2018). "New Data Reveals Our Nation Is Failing to Support People With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities." <https://tinyurl.com/yfrbprrx>

Friedman, C. and Rizzolo, M.C. (2016). Un/Paid Labor: Medicaid Home and Community Based Services Waivers that Pay Family as Personal Care Providers. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*. Vol. 54 (4),233-244.

Williamson, H.J. & Perkins, E.A. (2014) "Family Caregivers of Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Outcomes Associated with U.S. Services and Supports," *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* 52, no. 2, 47-159, <https://tinyurl.com/5n8437r3>

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\*NCI-IDD Data in this Data Highlight come from the Adult Family Survey (AFS) which surveys families that live with an adult receiving services from their state developmental disabilities service systems. These data are intended to start a conversation on an important and growing issue that needs more attention, reflection, and understanding.