



Save the Date – Next DD Community Forum

Tuesday, September 19 from 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM

[Click Here to Register](#)



Join BHDDH for the Fall DD Community Forum on Tuesday, September 19th from 3:00-4:30 PM to get the latest news from the BHDDH Division of Developmental Disabilities.

Everyone must register in advance. After you register, you will receive a confirmation email with your unique login details to join the forum.

When you register, you can enter your questions or comments about the RI DD System. Director Kevin Savage and the DD team will answer questions and share other information and updates at this quarterly online event.

The forum will be hosted by Advocates in Action and will be held on Zoom. You will also be able to call in. If you can't join us, the forum will be recorded to watch later. [Click Here to find recordings of past forums.](#)

An ASL interpreter will be present at this event. For other accommodation requests, please email MichelleWhite@AdvocatesinAction.org. If you have any questions or need assistance registering, call Advocates in Action toll-free: 1-877-532-5543, or email aina@AdvocatesinAction.org.



Increase Your Safety Skills with the R3 App

The University of Rhode Island (URI) just created a new app to support people with disabilities. The app is called R3: Recognize, Report and Respond. The purpose of the app is to help people with disabilities learn more about the different kinds of abuse including how to get help.



R3: Recognize, Report, Respond 17+
To Stop Abuse
Disabled Persons Protection Commission
★★★★★ 5.0 • 5 Ratings
Free

The finished app uses a combination of straightforward text, images, videos, and interactive follow-up activities to teach users to recognize different types of abuse—sexual, verbal, physical, financial and neglect—and teaches them how to report and respond to the abuse. Users can report abuse in multiple ways. Also, the app helps all users contact a designated trusted person who can help. The app is available for free download through the Apple and Amazon app stores. To learn more, [read the full article on the URI website here](#).

Supporting Direct Support Professionals

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are important to the DD system of care. DSPs help support people with disabilities to become more independent and achieve their goals at home and in the community. Unfortunately, the number of DSPs in the workforce right now is low. This means many people with disabilities may have a delay or disruption in their DD services.

Plans have been created to increase the number of DSPs in the workforce. In Rhode Island, the [Statewide Workforce Initiative \(SWI\)](#) is a collaboration of state agencies including BHDDH, the Department of Labor and Training (DLT), The Sherlock Center at Rhode Island College, provider agencies and self-directed individuals who employ DSPs, schools and colleges, and DSPs themselves to focus on recruitment, retention, and professionalization of the DSP career.

The SWI has a goal to create a sustainable, comprehensive and diverse DSP workforce who will have the knowledge and skills to provide high quality services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities. The SWI's online hub provides information on what it's like to work as a DSP, how to find a DSP job, think of ways for DSPs to be more supported and happier in their jobs, and create opportunities for DSPs to continue to learn and grow in their jobs.

There are also new national laws that have been proposed to support DSPs:

[The Supporting Our Direct Care Workforce and Family Caregivers Act](#)

If passed, this law will provide agencies with funding to create, recruit, train, retain, and promote DSPs. The law will also provide funding to support family caregivers that are doing DSP work.

[Recognizing the Role of Direct Support Professionals Act](#)

If passed, this law will recognize DSPs for their hard work. The law will do this by changing the way the country identifies the DSP profession. The DSP profession will be identified as a healthcare support occupation under this law.

Announcing IntellectAbility's Podcast on IDD Health



In a new podcast titled *IDD Health Matters with Craig Escudé, MD*, host and president of [IntellectAbility](#), Dr. Craig Escudé speaks with a wide range of leaders, self-advocates, agency directors, clinicians, administrators, and others from across the globe involved in designing and facilitating service delivery to people with IDD.

“The idea is to highlight the work being done to address challenges and to improve support services, especially relating to health and wellness, for people with IDD,” states Dr. Escudé. “Additionally, we want to help people see this field as a place where you can have a rewarding and fulfilling career. You’ll be amazed by the number of guests that started in this field as a direct support professional and now run an agency or state program.”

Currently Released Episodes

Currently released episodes include conversations with **Dr. Rick Rader** with the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry, who is a physician and pioneer in the field of healthcare for people with IDD, **Gabrielle Sedor**, Chief Operating Officer of ANCOR, **Micheal Seereiter**, CEO of NY Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation, and **Mary Sowers**, Executive Director of NASDDDS.

Upcoming Guests

- Diane Moore, Executive Director of DDNA
- Dr. Maggie Nygren, Executive Director of AAIDD
- Pam Merkle, Executive Director of the Association on Aging with Developmental Disabilities
- Dr. Julian Trollor, Chair of Intellectual Disability Mental Health and Head of the Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry at UNSW in Sidney, Australia
- You’ll also hear interviews with direct support professionals and self-advocates who will share their stories and journeys related to their experiences in the field.

You can listen to the podcast by [clicking here](#) or searching on any platform for *IDD Health Matters*. New episodes are released every Monday.








The podcast is presented in collaboration with Friends for Life Residential Care based in Toledo, OH. CEO, Tony Stuart sought out Dr. Escudé as the host of this new podcast because “I was impressed by Dr. Escudé’s knowledge of and compassion for individuals with IDD as a physician because I saw a lack of empathy and understanding of the individuals I serve at Friends for Life at nearly every medical appointment.” Tony decided to start podcasting about the field of IDD services because “I saw a lack of meaningful conversation about how to make the individuals we serve more independent and able to function in day-to-day society.”

ABCs of Disability Planning Podcast

From Eric Jorgensen, founder of *The ABCs of Disability Planning Podcast*:
“Frequently families like mine don't know what's available to help us, we're too focused on getting through our day-to-day. But even if we had time, we would need to know what to look for. There had to be a better way, so I launched ABCs of Disability Planning. It's my mission to introduce a new organization or individual that is serving those with disabilities every week.”



Look for the podcast on Apple, Audible, Spotify, iHeart, and other platforms. Some episodes are also available on YouTube. The picture below shows the last few episodes.

-  **Protecting and advancing the rights of individuals with...** Jul 31, 2023
Together for Choice's Mission is to unite to protect and advance the rights of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to live, work and...
[See more](#) 51:01
-  **Excellence powered by a neurodivergent team - Aspiritech** Jul 24, 2023
More than 90 percent of the Aspiritech team members are on the autism spectrum. TAspiretech hires and trains team members and aims to pair them with a client and ...
[See more](#) 45:23
-  **Developmental Disabilities and Sexuality. Elevatus helps you ha...** Jul 17, 2023
Developmental Disabilities and Sexuality. Elevatus helps you have these essential conversations. As national leaders in the field of sexuality and intellectual, ...
[See more](#) 50:43
-  **Raising Kellan - Empowering, connecting, and educating parent...** Jul 10, 2023
Raising Kellan Started in 2019. Most non-profits about children with a disability begin with a heart-rending story and the endless search on how to fix the disability. ...
[See more](#) 41:50
-  **No parent should feel alone. Ever. Parent to Parent USA is her...** Jul 03, 2023
Parent to Parent's Vision: Parent to Parent USA will support a network of viable, sustainable, fully-functioning, and effective Parent to Parent programs in all ...
[See more](#) 41:07

Focus on Ability Short Film Festival

Rhode Island had two entries in the international film festival [Focus on Ability](#).

RI APSE entered in the category of International Documentaries, with “[Customized Employment a Success Story](#)”. The Community Provider Network of Rhode Island also entered with “[What Disability Employment Can Look Like](#)”.

[Learn more about the Film Festival.](#)

[Click here to learn more about RI APSE](#) or email riapse@apse.org.

[Click here to learn more about CPNRI.](#)



For the 15th consecutive year NOVA Employment presents the Focus on Ability™ Short Film Festival (FOA). This festival asks film makers to "Focus on the Ability" of people with a disability and tell a story on film for the world to view.

The 2022 festival saw 281 finalists from across 19 countries.

The 2023 Focus on Ability Short Film Festival is set to be the biggest yet, and generous sponsors have donated over \$100,000 worth of cash and prizes to encourage film makers and people with disability to tell their stories.

To be a part of the festival, entrants must simply make a short film or documentary that is less than 5 minutes long, has a disability theme or has people with disability as the main actors.

Previous years films have been both educational and inspirational. Feedback from people who have viewed the films has shown that these entries have the power to change attitudes and challenge perceptions.

For full festival details and to view the over 2,500 films from years past head to www.focusonability.com.au



184 Films Tagged *intellectual disability*



Question Your Assumptions, Focus on Ability



Through my Eyes

Filmmaker: Alexander, Jessica



Mission Possible

Filmmaker: SGSCC Disability

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
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 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**

Call 911 if there is risk of immediate danger

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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Working While Disabled—Work Incentives Sessions

Working with Benefits - Yes, You Can!

August 16, 2023, 12-1 pm

SSI Overview:

September 20, 2023, 12-1 pm

SSDI Overview:

October 11, 2023, 12-1 pm

Work Pays! An Introduction to YOUTH SSI Work Incentives

October 25, 2023, 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.



Supporting Meaningful Employment Training Series

A Person-Centered Approach to Career Planning, Job Development and Retention



In-Person Training

All sessions will be held in person at the Sherlock Center on Disabilities, Providence. See SME Training Schedule for details.

ACRE Certificate

To earn an ACRE Certificate, learners must attend an orientation session, 12 instructor-led modules, 3 mentor/fieldwork sessions and successfully complete fieldwork assignments. SME Training Schedule is below.

The Sherlock Center offers two paths to earn an ACRE Certificate. The recommended path is to register for the full ACRE series, which allow learners to complete the required modules and fieldwork assignments within 6 months.

The alternative path is to build an ACRE Certificate by completing three SME mini-series and required fieldwork assignments within a 24-month period. Complete details are available on the SME Training page of the Sherlock Center website www.sherlockcenter.org.

Learner Technology Requirements for Online Mentor/Fieldwork Sessions

Learners will participate in instructor-led sessions using Zoom. To participate, learners will need a computer, laptop or tablet with reliable internet access with sufficient bandwidth, and a camera. It is recommended that learners have dedicated time and space when attending sessions.

Learner Time Commitment

Each training module is 3.5 hours. Learners are also required to participate remotely in an orientation session (1.5 hours) and three mentor/fieldwork sessions (1.5 hours each), in addition to satisfactory completion of fieldwork assignments.

To support course completion, learners are expected to begin fieldwork during the course and meet projected assignment due dates. Learners are encouraged to access 1:1 fieldwork support offered through the Sherlock Center.

REGISTRATION

Register Online: <http://bit.ly/2Lt4vTP>

Registration and training schedule are also available on the Sherlock Center website www.sherlockcenter.org. Register by **September 6**.

Fees: Sessions are offered free of charge to participants working for a RI organization/school, including Self-Directed Supports staff/representatives.

Requests & Questions: If you need a reasonable accommodation (e.g. ASL Interpreter, large print), please make your request known when you register. For registration questions, email Elaine Sollecito at esollecito@ric.edu 401-456-2764. For training questions, email Vicki Ferrara at vferrara@ric.edu.



Build an ACRE!
SESSION MODULES

Module 1: Foundations in Community Employment Services and Supports

Module 2: Work Incentives to Support Employment and Retention

Module 3: Vocational Assessment I - Getting to Know the Job Seeker

Module 4: Vocational Assessment II - Person-Centered Employment Planning - the process

Module 5: Vocational Assessment III - Strategies for Community Exploration & Individualized Job Search Planning

Module 6: Employment Law, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Disability Disclosure

Module 7: Job Development I - Job Search Practices to Support Meaningful Employment

Module 8: Job Development II - Employer Assessment and Individualized Approach to a Job Match

Module 9: Job Development III - Employer Relationships and Negotiations

Module 10: Job Retention and Coaching I - Foundations in Job Retention Success

Module 11: Job Retention and Coaching II - Teaching the Job - Task Analysis and Systematic Instruction

Module 12: Job Retention and Coaching III - Fading Support, Quality Services and Career Development

