



October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

BHDDH is proud to support the this year’s 75th observance of the National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Held each October, NDEAM celebrates the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities.

Community employment is a high priority for many people with intellectual and development disabilities (I/DD), and with appropriate supports and services it can happen. However, the majority of people with I/DD remain either unemployed or underemployed despite their ability, desire, and willingness to work.

BHDDH is committed to ensuring that people with I/DD have the right mix of supports necessary to enable them to find and keep community jobs based on their preferences, interests, and strengths, work alongside people without disabilities, receive comparable wages, and be free from workplace discrimination.



Down Syndrome Awareness Month & What it Means to Me!

From: <https://www.ndss.org/syndrome-awareness-month-means/>



The month of October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month where we celebrate Down syndrome and let everyone know our abilities and that we are capable of doing anything we set our minds to.

We have the same wants and dreams as everyone else. We can do anything anyone else can do. We are more alike than we are different. I can drive, go to college, maintain a job as the Manager of Grassroots Advocacy at the National Down Syndrome Society and be the first registered lobbyist with Down syndrome. We want to date and get married. We want the American Dream, same as anyone else.

My friends that are differently abled do things equally as well. My friend Johnny is self-taught and plays the Bagpipes, my friend Byron can sing like nobody’s business, my friend Carrie is a Zumba instructor. The point is, we all have the same abilities as everyone else, we may take longer to do them, but that is okay. We just try our best and our hardest. That’s all we want everyone to be aware of and please don’t squash our dreams!

Kayla McKeon, a self-advocate with Down syndrome, has a blog called Kayla’s Korner that can be found at <https://www.ndss.org/enqage/social-media/kaylas-korner/>



Congratulations to the Graduates of the Advocates in Action Leadership Series Class of 2020!

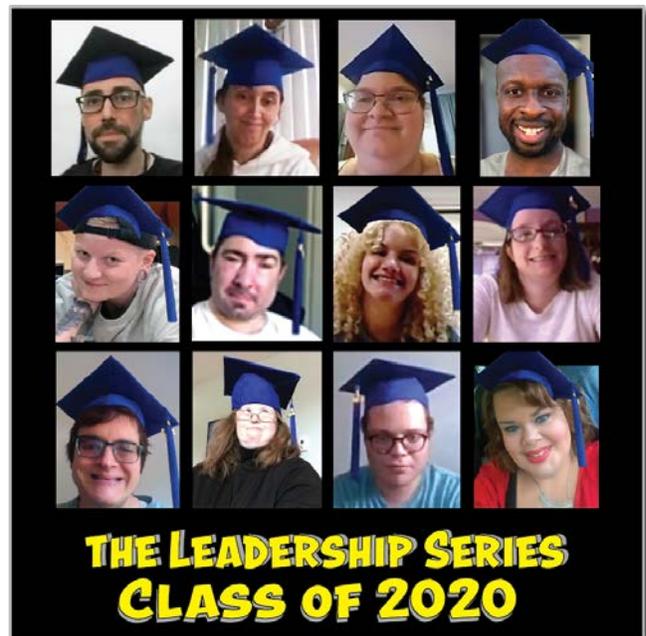
On September 25th, Advocates in Action held a virtual graduation ceremony for members of their 24th annual Leadership Series. The class of 2020 had to deal with a lot of curve balls this year as the Coronavirus Pandemic forced most members to stay at home beginning last March. Fortunately, they persevered and adapted, two great qualities of any leader!

The 12 graduates in this year's class stuck together and supported each other as they moved to an online platform and learned how to participate through Zoom. They even used their new-found virtual skills to host a webinar about disability rights and help attendees learn how to vote by mail.

Advocates in Action plans to host an informational session for those who are interested in joining next year's Leadership Series, and will be posting applications for the Class of 2021 on their website in early October at www.advocatesinaction.org. In the meantime, on behalf of BHDDH, Congratulations to this year's graduates!

Congratulations Graduates!

Stephen Alfano
Donna Beausoleil
Laurie Brahm-Doyle
Dontai Carmon
Caitlin Christy
Vincent De Jesus
Jodie Gendron
Dahiana Hernandez
Eleanor Ingraham
Leah Keith
Matty Krosschell
Megan Weber LaLanne



Speak Up With Your Vote!

**Thursday, October 8
6:00 pm**

Join Advocates in Action for their presentation "Speak Up With Your Vote!" Learn all the ins and outs of voting by mail and in person. This fun presentation will take you step-by-step through the voting process so you can vote with confidence.

Your voice and your vote matter! Mark your calendar for Thursday, October 8 at 6:00 pm.

Register now for FREE: [REGISTER HERE \[us02web.zoom.us\]](https://us02web.zoom.us)

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Awareness Month

Each October is **International AAC Awareness Month**. The theme this year is *Bridging the Silence through Solidarity* ([https://www.isaac-online.org/english/aac-awareness/international-aac-awareness-month/\[r20.rs6.net\]](https://www.isaac-online.org/english/aac-awareness/international-aac-awareness-month/[r20.rs6.net])). The goal of this month is to raise awareness and inform people of the many different ways in which people communicate using augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

During this month many organizations and device/software companies are celebrating by planning various events and activities as well as providing discounts on some of their products. Check out this chart for specific communication apps, their sale price and on what day/s they will be discounted: [http://bit.ly/appsalegraphicOct2020\[r20.rs6.net\]](http://bit.ly/appsalegraphicOct2020[r20.rs6.net])



What is AAC?

AAC is a set of tools and strategies that an individual uses to solve everyday communicative challenges. Communication can take many forms such as: speech, a shared glance, text, gestures, facial expressions, touch, sign language, symbols, pictures, speech-generating devices, etc. Everyone uses multiple forms of communication, based upon the context and our communication partner. Effective communication occurs when the intent and meaning of one individual is understood by another person. The form is less important than the successful understanding of the message.

For more information, visit the United States Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (USSAAC) at <https://ussaac.org/> or the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC) at <https://www.isaac-online.org/english/home/>. Also see the AAC Fact Sheet at the end of this bulletin.

ty includes
Communication symbol was
develop
their
ouia be used
a version to download
can be found on
the [CDAC Symbol Page](#).

Accessibility Includes Communication

- AAC MEANS COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE USE OF
- Gestures
 - Body Language
 - Sign Language
 - Pictures & Symbols
 - Communication Apps and
Speech Generating Devices



For more information visit www.ussaac.org.

National Council on Disability Annual Report **Focuses on Barriers to Economic Inclusion**

The National Council on Disability (NCD) has released its annual report. This year, NCD's report "reflects on the monumental social impact" of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on its 30th anniversary. The report also "focuses attention on the persistent barriers that must be addressed in order to ensure the economic inclusion of people with disabilities into mainstream society in the future." While significant progress has been achieved over 30 years, NCD found labor statistics continue to show extreme disparities between labor force participation rates of people with and without disabilities. The report focuses heavily on the following areas:

Services for Transitioning Youth. NCD found disparities between skills training and employment-related services available to transition-age youth with and without disabilities. Students without disabilities were more likely to receive opportunities in job shadowing, internships, part-time jobs, and volunteer work, which prepare them to enter the workforce successfully. To the contrary, students with disabilities were less likely to have these opportunities, putting them further behind their peers.

Public Benefits. NCD identified employment disincentives tied to federal programs and other benefits which perpetuate a "poverty trap," in which people with disabilities must choose to enter the workforce and risk losing the healthcare they need to live, or maintain their healthcare but remain impoverished indefinitely, due to the asset limitations imposed by federal means-tested programs.

Support of Entrepreneurship. Finally, the report identifies opportunities to expand employment for people with disabilities in the future by analyzing programs available under the Small Business Administration (SBA). With nearly 97 percent of businesses being classified as "small," NCD found that this underutilized federal agency has the potential to engage with the broadest number of businesses across the country that could benefit workers with disabilities.

NCD concludes the report with recommendations to the President, Congress, and the Administration. The report is available at [ncd.gov/sites/default/files/NCD_Progress_Report_508_0.pdf](https://www.ncd.gov/sites/default/files/NCD_Progress_Report_508_0.pdf).

Free Resources on COVID-19 from Relias

Relias' mission, to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of society and those who care for them, takes on new meaning amidst this global pandemic. Relias provides free and unlimited access to courses to help ensure your family and staff have information to help you control and prevent the spread of COVID. Offerings include courses suitable for families, DPSs, or other staff, including 3-D digital resources to help the public understand the science behind this complex virus. Many resources are available in English, Spanish, and accessible versions. For more information, see the [Relias COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention Toolkit](#) at or their webinars at <https://www.relias.com/resource/topic/coronavirus>.

Flu and COVID-19

Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses. Because some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone, and testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis. Flu and COVID-19 share many characteristics, but there are some key differences between the two. While more is learned every day, there is still a lot that is unknown about COVID-19 and the virus that causes it.

Should I get a flu vaccine this year?

Yes. Getting a flu vaccine is an essential part of protecting your health and your family's health this season. To protect your health when getting a flu vaccine, follow the RI Department of Health and CDC recommendations for running essential errands and doctor visits. Continue to take everyday preventive actions.

Can I have the flu and COVID at the same time?

Yes. It is possible have flu, as well as other respiratory illnesses, and COVID-19 at the same time. Health experts are still studying how common this can be. Some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, making it hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. Diagnostic testing can help determine if you are sick with flu or COVID-19.

Is there a test that can detect both flu and COVID?

Yes. CDC has developed a test that will check for A and B type seasonal flu viruses and SARS CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. This test will be used by U.S. public health laboratories. Testing for these viruses at the same time will give public health officials important information about how flu and COVID-19 are spreading and what prevention steps should be taken. The test will also help public health laboratories save time and testing materials, and to possibly return test results faster.

Will a flu vaccine protect me against COVID?

Getting a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19, however flu vaccination has many other important benefits. Flu vaccines have been shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalization and death. Getting a flu vaccine this fall will be more important than ever, not only to reduce your risk from flu but also to help conserve potentially scarce health care resources.

Does the flu vaccine increase my risk of getting COVID?

There is no evidence that getting a flu vaccination increases your risk of getting sick from a coronavirus, like the one that causes COVID-19.

Coronavirus or **Something Else?**

| Symptoms | Coronavirus Symptoms range from mild to severe | Flu Abrupt onset of symptoms | Cold Gradual onset of symptoms | Allergies |
|---|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
|  Fever | Common | Common | Rare | Sometimes |
|  Cough | Common | Common | Common | Sometimes |
|  Headache | Sometimes | Common | Rare | Sometimes |
|  Aches and Pains | Sometimes | Common | Common | No |
|  Fatigue | Sometimes | Common | Sometimes | Sometimes |
|  Sore Throat | Sometimes | Sometimes | Common | No |
|  Shortness of Breath | Sometimes <small>(in more serious infections)</small> | No | No | Common |
|  Sneezing | Rare | No | Common | Common |
|  Stuffy Nose | Rare | Sometimes | Common | Common |
|  Diarrhea | Rare | Sometimes | No | No |

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization



Community of Practice (CoP) in Autism in RI

Here are some CoP updates and possible resources, guidance, and professional development options. All face-to-face CoP events for this fall semester are cancelled, but a number of webinars will be offered.

Registration details are not yet available, but hold the date for upcoming webinars.

Wednesday, October 21 from 4:00 – 6:00

Tuesday, November 17 from 4:00 – 6:00



Web Resources

- The Autism Project’s Training and Education options: <https://theautismproject.org/training-education> [r20.rs6.net]
- UNC AFIRM’s toolkit - Supporting Individuals with Autism During Uncertain Times: <https://bit.ly/3bkY5Pw> [r20.rs6.net]
- A fact sheet from the Office of Civil Rights about COVID-19 and civil rights: <https://bit.ly/33DhrNa> [r20.rs6.net]
- Autism Society’s Tool Kit: <https://www.autism-society.org/covid-19> [r20.rs6.net]
- USDOE’s webinar on Online Education and web accessibility: <https://www.youtube.com/USDOE-OnlineEducationWebAccessibility> [r20.rs6.net]
- Virtual teaching resources from the Young Educators Society of RI: <https://www.yesri.org/virtual-teaching-ri> [r20.rs6.net]
- Administration for Community Living’s Information on COVID-19 for People with Disabilities and Older Adults: <https://acl.gov/COVID-19> [r20.rs6.net]
- OCALI’s free online learning modules: <https://autisminternetmodules.org/> [r20.rs6.net]
- AFIRM’s free online learning modules: <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/> [r20.rs6.net]
- IRIS free online learning modules: <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/> [r20.rs6.net]
- RIPIN new resource: <https://ripin.org/calendar/ripin-special-education-weekly-3/> [r20.rs6.net]
- Autism Project Social Skill Groups: <https://bit.ly/3ietcPN> [r20.rs6.net]

The goal of the CoP in Autism in RI is to bring diverse educators into a working relationship around a common interest in autism spectrum disorders to share information and improve practice. The CoP meets 3 to 4 times a year at Rhode Island College and hosts a variety of speakers who have presented on topics such as inclusion, social skills instruction, improving outcomes, and addressing challenging behavior. While the majority of group members are educators (teachers, related service providers, administrators, etc.), we also welcome individuals with disabilities, family members, community providers, clinicians, students and any other interested stakeholders.

Silver Linings



Nurse taps into rainbow of rocks and support for her patients

From: <https://www.wpri.com/news/street-stories/nurse-taps-into-rainbow-of-rocks-and-support-for-her-patients/>

There are times we all need something solid to hold onto.

When registered nurse Tracy Gelsomino saw one of her patients with what she called a “no worry stone,” she came up with an idea.

She sent messages to five rock painting clubs, asking for some tips about the craft. Within hours, there was an electronic avalanche.

“I told them I wanted rocks for my patients,” Gelsomino said. “Within 24 hours, my inbox had 75 messages.”

Offers to help were followed by loads of rocks.

“Some mailed,” Gelsomino said. “Some dropped on my doorstep. It’s absolutely incredible.”

They came from as far away as California to the west and Great Britain to the east. Many with messages on them and several with side notes of support for Gelsomino’s patients.



“Never in my wildest dreams did I ever expect this,” Gelsomino said. “I thought I’d be sitting at the kitchen table learning how to paint one rock, and in four weeks I have 400 rocks sent to me.”

Gelsomino works at Women & Infants Hospital as a nurse navigator, which is someone who guides breast cancer patients through their radiology and oncology appointments.

Now, she also offers them a choice of stones.

“We hold hands during our biopsy procedures, and they can hold this,” she said referring to one of the rocks. “It’s a nice reminder of what they’ve gone through and the courage they need.”

Gelsomino has been personally impacted by cancer, losing her father to the disease in 2017. Her mother was diagnosed with cancer earlier this year and is now in remission.

She said the rocks that came from everywhere are a wonderful reminder about how people are willing to help strangers.

“I think during the pandemic, you start to forget there’s some really good, amazing people in this world,” Gelsomino said. “It’s more than I can ever ask for. It really is. It’s beautiful and they need it and they love it.”

Finding the Silver Lining of COVID-19 as Someone with a Disability

from: <https://themighty.com/2020/09/covid-19-silver-lining-disability/>

by [Morgan Faith Neumann](#) September 14, 2020

Every pandemic has a silver lining. Fortunately, we don't have the history to truly back up this statement, but the silver I have found is a gleaming sliver of faith in my personal growth and future. Social distancing is impossible if you have disabilities as severe as mine. Without physical contact, I would be unable to use the bathroom, get dressed, shower or even roll over. When the fear of COVID-19 started to ravage New Jersey, I was frightened and anxious. Not only because I knew I wouldn't be strong enough to fight the virus, but because it meant contact with my personal care aides was too dangerous. I would have to leave my apartment and my version of independence and go home to my parents for my care.

College students all over the world will never forget the Spring Term of 2020. I had a great schedule and an internship I worked so hard to get. My responsibilities included improving the accessibility of our website for the disabled population and to create ways to increase the utilization of it within our community. As an intern, I was invited to attend weekly training sessions and staff meetings at Rutgers. Unfortunately, as with any activity that requires transportation sitting in my wheelchair for extended periods, the reality of attending those events was slim.

And then, COVID-19 hits! Effective immediately, all offices are closed and all meetings, training sessions, and conferences will be held virtually. Instantly, I went from making excuses and wishing I could go, to signing up for every lecture, networking event, and meeting I could fit into a calendar. Meetings with my supervisor also increased because she had more availability. I know this time with her was invaluable and helped me secure an offer for a second internship with her in the fall to continue my research.

Back at school, remote learning is a blessing for me. My chronic pain, inability to regulate my body temperature, and weak immune system make in-person classes very challenging. I love school and my grades and degree mean so much to me, but many times each semester my health will keep me from making it to class in person. While I understand how disappointing the current situation is for so many, I have enjoyed attending all my classes and learning from the professors directly.

Utilizing technology and maximizing its potential is critical for me. I need to rely on technological tools for my health, work, independence, emotional well-being and social integration. The pandemic has put the world's reliance on technology into overdrive and fast-forwarded our academic and medical fields into so many new ways of normal. Allowing doctors to treat patients over Zoom or enabling children to visit a virtual zoo are all examples of how technology can improve our lives. For me, it is a door that has been opened.

I am truly sorry for all the lives lost, the pain the sick endures and the economic suffering we all are facing. My mother was laid off, my younger sister had to leave her happy freshman life away at school, and my twin brother is graduating into a horrible job market and with no big graduation ceremony to mark his achievement. My entire family remains in constant fear that I will catch the virus or that one of them will catch it and not be able to care for me. I know our fear is felt worldwide and is a deep source of pain we will never forget.

I have always been told to look through all the bad, all the pain, and all the reasons why life is unfair to see the good. I have been given the gift of time with my brother and sister and parents. Under normal circumstances, the new memories we have made would have never happened. For me, this a gift that truly could never be replaced or replicated. Zoom meetings with my extended family and friends allow connections that were fading and have been reignited. I've realized my silver lining is a silver rectangular object some call a laptop.



ACTION CALENDAR: OPTIMISTIC OCTOBER 2020



MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

**"Choose to be optimistic.
It feels better" - Dalai Lama**



- 1 Write down your most important goals for this month
- 2 Look for reasons to be hopeful even in difficult times
- 3 Take the first step towards a goal that really matters to you
- 4 Be a realistic optimist. See life as it is, but focus on what's good
- 5 Start your day with the most important thing on your list
- 6 Do something constructive to improve a difficult situation
- 7 Remember that things can change for the better
- 8 Make progress on a project or task you have been avoiding
- 9 Avoid blaming yourself or others. Just find the best way forward
- 10 Take time to reflect on what you have achieved this week
- 11 Focus on a positive change that you want to see in society
- 12 Look for the good intentions in people around you today
- 13 Put down your To-Do list and let yourself be spontaneous
- 14 Do something to overcome an obstacle you are facing
- 15 Look out for positive news and reasons to be cheerful today
- 16 Thank yourself for achieving the things you often take for granted
- 17 Share your most important goals with people you trust
- 18 Make a list of things that you are looking forward to
- 19 Set hopeful but realistic goals for the week ahead
- 20 Find the joy in completing a task you've put off for some time
- 21 Let go of the expectations of others and focus on what matters
- 22 Share an inspiring idea with a loved one or colleague
- 23 Write down 3 specific things that have gone well recently
- 24 Recognise that you have a choice about what to prioritise
- 25 Plan a fun or exciting activity to look forward to
- 26 Start the week by writing down your top priorities & plans
- 27 Be kind to yourself today. Remember, progress takes time
- 28 Ask yourself, will this still matter a year from now?
- 29 Find a new perspective on a problem you face
- 30 Set a goal that links to your sense of purpose in life
- 31 Think of 3 things that give you hope for the future

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



www.actionforhappiness.org

Keep Calm · Stay Wise · Be Kind

Learn more about this month's theme at www.actionforhappiness.org/optimistic-october



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

BHDDH Information on COVID-19's Impact on DD Services and the DD Community

Website bhddh.ri.gov/COVID

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

Sign Up for Our Email List

If you aren't receiving email updates and newsletters from the Division, you can sign up on our website. From the main BHDDH page at bhddh.ri.gov, select **What's New**, then go to bottom and click on **DD Community Newsletter**. The link to sign up for the BHDDH Newsletter is directly below the title, as shown in the picture at right.

DD Community Newsletter

[SIGN UP FOR THE BHDDH NEWSLETTER](#)

Contacting the Division

DDD has put extended hour phone coverage in place with a central business hour phone number and an on-call number for nights and weekends.

If you have a vital need, please call the numbers on the next page. If you have any general questions or concerns, please email them if you can, in order to try to leave the phone lines free for those who need to call. We will do our best to address your questions directly or through future newsletters.

AM **M T W Th F** PM
401-462-3421

8:30 AM → → → → → ← ← ← ← ← 4:00 PM

WEEKDAYS DURING BUSINESS HOURS FOR:

- **VITAL, NON-MEDICAL SUPPORT NEEDS**
- **QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR DD SERVICES**

During business hours
 (Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00),
 for questions or support
(401) 462-3421
 Para español, llame
(401) 462-3014

PM **M T W Th F** PM
401-265-7461

4:00 PM → → → → → ← ← ← ← ← 10:00 PM

AFTER HOURS ON WEEKDAYS FOR:

- **VITAL, NON-MEDICAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

For emerging or imminent care
 related questions,
 Mon - Fri 4pm-10pm and
 weekends 8:30am-10pm
(401) 265-7461

AM **SAT SUN** PM
401-265-7461

8:30 AM → → → → → ← ← ← ← ← 10:00 PM

ON WEEKENDS FOR:

- **VITAL, NON-MEDICAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

E-MAIL THE DIVISION

BHDDH.AskDD
@BHDDH.RI.GOV

HELP US KEEP THE PHONE LINES OPEN FOR
 THOSE WHO ARE CALLING WITH A VITAL NEED!

WHEN POSSIBLE, PLEASE SEND AN E-MAIL FOR:

- **NON-CRITICAL CONCERNS** about Your Services and Supports
- **GENERAL QUESTIONS** about Your Services or the RI DD System

Send general questions to the
 AskDD email address. Please
 do not email critical issues.
BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov

911

FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES
CALL 911
 RIGHT AWAY. DON'T WAIT!

For medical or
 healthcare related
 emergencies, call
 your Primary Care
 Physician or 911

CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR

CALL FOR:

- ROUTINE Healthcare Questions
- NON-EMERGENCY Medical Care

FOLLOW YOUR DOCTOR'S ADVICE
DON'T go to their office
unless they tell you to!

Virtual Open House

Learn more about the New Person-Centered Supported Employment Program (PCSEP) Projects

Four projects will use a customized employment approach to help individuals who have never been employed before find a job.

Tuesday, October 6 at 6:00 PM

Register here: [PCSEPP 3 Webinar Registration](#)

The Ingredients For Your
Successful Employment
Looking Upwards, L.I.F.E. Inc., and West Bay RI



Seven Hills and Trudeau Center

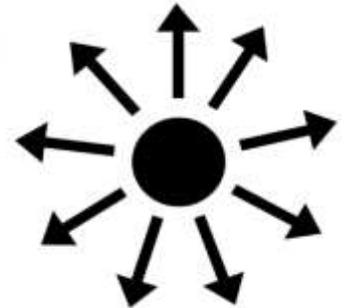
Employment Matters
You Can Make It Work

WORK TOWARDS YOUR DREAMS

Perspectives, AccessPoint RI,
and Trudeau Center

Customized
Employment
Options

BE THE CEO OF YOUR FUTURE



Work Inc. and Kaleidoscope

What is Customized Employment?

“Customized employment” is a different approach to looking for a job. It focuses on identifying a person’s strengths and creating a profile that is used to target businesses where the job seeker’s unique characteristics and skills will be seen as assets. The question is not if the person can work, but where will the individual’s unique characteristics be valued?

Community of Practice in Autism in RI October Meeting

MY JOURNEY TO EMPLOYMENT

**October is Disability Employment Awareness Month.
2020 marked the 30th anniversary of the
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).**

PRESENTER: Michael D. Macedo, LCSW
Psychotherapist and Autism Self-Advocate

Michael Macedo will guide us through his journey growing up with Asperger's Syndrome and his transition to adulthood. He will share lessons learned and how his experiences shaped the person he is and the work he does as a clinician.

Consider attending if you are an individual with disabilities, family member, professional, college student, or employer of neuro-diverse individuals.

REGISTRATION

**OCTOBER 21, 2020
4:00-6:00 PM
ZOOM WEBINAR**

Advance registration is required
using the link below:

<http://bit.ly/38DRVJN>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Professional Development:

Continuing Education Credits (2.0 credit hours) from NASW-RI and RIMHCA will be available pending approval.

To be eligible for CEUs you MUST:

- JOIN USING YOUR UNIQUE ZOOM LINK PROVIDED UPON REGISTERING
- SIGN INTO WEBINAR USING BOTH FIRST & LAST NAMES
- PARTICIPATE THE DURATION OF THE WEBINAR

Dialing in by telephone will not be accepted as proof of attendance.

Questions & Requests:

If you need a reasonable accommodation (e.g., ASL/CART, subtitles, large print materials, or information in a language other than English), Please indicate your request on the registration form as soon as possible.

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

For questions about the Community of Practice or this meeting, contact Paul LaCava at placava@ric.edu or 401-456-4735.



Registration information is also available on the Sherlock Center website at www.sherlockcenter.org.

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)



People who use AAC to communicate love to chat just as much as you do!

There are many ways of communicating. AAC users may use multiple means, with different people, in different contexts, and at different times.



People who use AAC need access to many different types of AAC -- from sign language and pen and paper all the way up to speech generating devices.

AAC can encourage speech development, not hinder it.



Talk directly to the person who is using AAC, not to an accompanying family member or assistant.

Most people who use AAC have typical hearing. Speak in a normal tone of voice, without exaggerating.



A patient attitude is an effective tool in communicating with people who use AAC.

Ask individuals about their preferences. For example, some people who use AAC don't like it when people read over their shoulders or finish their sentences before they completely type them out.



People who use AAC need access to an appropriate AAC system that is not restricted to selection based on their assumed abilities.

It may look as if people who use AAC are not communicating, but people can control whole AAC systems with any body part, including their eyes!



AAC competence can take a long time to build.

People who use AAC have various levels of independence. Don't assume they need an assistant.

