



**Join Us for a Virtual Information Session  
on the Technology Fund**

**Wednesday, April 6, 2022**

**4:30 PM – 5:30 PM**

This Spring, people receiving services through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) will be able to purchase technology through a limited-time initiative funded by the State through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Technology funding will be in addition to each person's current authorized funding.

Join us on Zoom on Wednesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> to hear about what types of technology can be bought and how to request the funding.

Registration is not required. To join the information session, open Zoom then enter the meeting ID and passcode shown below.

**[Click here to go to Zoom](#)**

**Meeting ID: 816 5768 5015**

**Passcode: 441462**

**Reminder about Self-Directed Hiring  
During and After COVID-19**

Under the Public Health Emergency (PHE), people who self-direct can hire any qualified adult, including family members, parents, and legal guardians. The authorization for this will continue until six months after the PHE is lifted.

All hired staff, including family members, must have the same requirements for background checks and training.

BHDDH continues to work in collaboration with the RI Medicaid office and the Federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) to make this permanent.

States will be given 60 days' notice prior to the termination of the public health emergency declaration for COVID-19. As of March 31, 2022, the federal PHE declaration remains in effect.

## **Seeking Opportunities for All**

*By Richard Charest and Kevin Savage; Posted in The Westerly Sun on March 24, 2022*

The most contentious topic in the home shared by the Jenkins siblings might be who does the cooking. Two of the brothers, Alton and George, say those duties are shared. Their sister, Beverly, tells a different story. "I do the grocery shopping," she says. "I do the cooking."

Culinary contributions aside, the Jenkins siblings agree on most things. They enjoy living in Newport. They enjoy taking vacations together. Perhaps most of all, they enjoy the satisfaction that comes from working.

This might seem trivial, except that the five siblings and one daughter who share the home handed down by the Jenkins' parents have intellectual and developmental disabilities. This means their employment status and their independent lifestyles exemplify what is possible when people have the right opportunities.

Three of the siblings, and Beverly's daughter, Mary, work five days a week at the Newport Naval Base. They provide cleaning and custodial services through an employment program at the James L. Maher Center, a nonprofit agency based in Middletown. The work is part-time, but in addition to the pay, it affords Beverly, George, Mark and Mary with a sense of purpose and belonging.

"This means everything to them," says a Maher Center supervisor, Mark Theodore, holding a naval base I.D. badge like the ones the Jenkins have. "They don't just work there. They want to be there."

As we work to strengthen Rhode Island's services and supports for more than 4,000 individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, one of our primary goals at the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals is to help people pursue their interests and use their skills and talents to live as independently as possible. This fulfills a universal human desire to contribute, and it is important to reflect on this as we observe Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, held each March to raise awareness about the need for inclusion and opportunity.

Rhode Island is making progress in this area, through efforts ranging from employment counseling that is tailored to individual interests, to greater financial investments in the services provided by nonprofits such as the Maher Center. But we know there is work to do.

Nationwide, people with disabilities are more than three times more likely to be unemployed, according to the U.S Department of Labor. That's far too high. There are many people with intellectual or developmental disabilities who want to work, and they should have options that allow them to work. When they do, it's good for everyone, including employers.

At the naval base, says Theodore, the Jenkins are on a first-name basis with many staff. He also says working with the Jenkins is "one of the best things that's happened" to him, because of their enthusiasm and their work ethic. "They have fun, and at the end of the day, the work is done," he said.

Not that work is everything. As each of the Jenkins knows, it's also important to get out and socialize. They are active in the Newport community, going to dances and parades and other events, and some of them also enjoy going out to eat and going to the beach.

Alton, who is 70, has retired from his work at the base, as has another sibling, Carl, who is 68. But with more time on his hands, Alton enjoys going for walks, and he's also found that he enjoys helping his neighbors "when they need it." It might be carrying groceries or bringing a barrel to the street.

As with his work at the base, his efforts demonstrate that people who find satisfaction in their work only need to have the opportunity.

*Richard Charest is director of the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals.  
Kevin Savage is Director of BHDDH's Division of Developmental Disabilities.*

## **Notes from Self-Directed Supports Network Meeting**

The Self-Directed Supports Network held a meeting on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Below are some highlights from the meeting notes.

This meeting focused on a dialogue with Sherlock Center staff Mary Madden and Andrew McQuaide regarding sustaining the Direct Support Professional workforce. Andrew shared some information about the US vs. State of RI Consent Decree and the Action Plan that was entered into in October of 2021. (NOTE that Jillian Lenson of the US Department of Justice attended the meeting and listened in. If anyone wants to reach out to her, she can be reached at [jillian.lenson2@usdoj.gov](mailto:jillian.lenson2@usdoj.gov).)

Good information on Consent Decree updates can be found [here](#).

The Consent Decree Action Plan recognizes that more funding and focus needs to be directed at recruitment and retention of the staff that directly support folks with IDD. The Action Plan includes:

- Development of a Statewide Workforce Initiative to look at ways to ensure that skilled and competent staff are available to individuals with IDD. How to provide training and ways to advance in this important career. We want to ensure that the voices of those who self-direct are heard. The Action Plan also addresses the need to adequately reimburse DSPs for the valuable work they do.
- “Transformation Funds” available to provider agencies and others who agree to become a RI Medicaid provider. Some are looking at ways to make their services and supports more available to those self-directing.
- Specific fund of \$2 Million to support Self-Direction with Advisement Services and Staffing Pools. More information will be available in coming months.
- “Technology Fund” of \$2 Million will soon be available for anyone who self-directs. More information will be available at a virtual informational meeting on April 6. A reminder that “technology” does not have to only be computers or apps. Consider things like a smart home appliance that could make life easier and more independent for some folks.

If interested in reading the complete Action Plan, it is available [here \[static1.squarespace.com\]](https://static1.squarespace.com).

Mary and Andrew then led the group in a dialogue around what are the needs for training and ensuring competency of direct support staff for those self-directing. Some points shared by the group include:

- Staff need to be able to be reimbursed for their time spent on training once hired. Currently staff can only be paid if the person supported is present.
- Much of the training new staff need is very individualized to the person and best provided by the family or those who already know the person well.
- Both staff need to be paid when new staff are shadowing veteran staff to learn routines, communication style, other aspects of supporting the person well. We have had clarification from Heather Mincey at BHDDH that this IS allowed as long as the person supported is present. Employers will need to let the fiscal intermediary know that this is the reason that two staff people were working at the same time.

- Although much training needs to be individualized there would be value in having access to generalized introduction to things such as community bridge-building, person-centered and person-driven outlook to support inclusive lives for folks, etc.
- Some mentioned that so much of the importance of quality support depends on the relationship and sometimes the common cultural background (even language) shared by the person supported and staff. We wouldn't want any mandatory training to get in the way of that.
- Family members who are paid caregivers would need to meet the same requirements as other DSPs. It is important for those family members who are providing support to learn more about how to help bridge to the community, provide better employment supports, etc.
- A question arose as to how people who self-direct can access person-centered planning. There is not currently an obvious avenue to access people with these skills, although it would be a permissible cost from the individual budget.
- Quality conflict-free case management that would work with a circle of support around a person, to include family and direct support staff – to help identify the person's interests, goals, support needs and related community resources – could be a strong source of ongoing training and support for self-directed direct support staff.

## **Self-Directed Supports Network**

*A network of individual and family members using self-directed supports in RI*

Are you an individual or family member currently using self-directed supports through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (i.e. Options, Works for Me, My Choice, or proPartnerships)?

Are you considering self-directed supports?

Would you like a chance to meet with other people or their families using self-directed supports?

Join us to share ideas about...

- Designing a plan to support what you need
- Recruiting and keeping good staff
- Connecting to opportunities in your community & more....
- Coping with COVID

For more information, or to join our mailing list, contact:

Claire Rosenbaum, Sherlock Center

Phone: 401-456-4732

Email: [crosenbaum@ric.edu](mailto:crosenbaum@ric.edu)

Click [HERE \[surveygizmo.com\]](https://surveygizmo.com) to join the SDS User Group LISTSERV to receive and exchange information by email.

For more information please go to: [sdsri.net \[sdsri.net\]](https://sdsri.net)

## **The Affordable Connectivity Program Can Help SSI Recipients Get Internet Access**

*By Alejandro Roark, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau Chief, Federal Communications Commission  
From [Social Security Matters Guest Bloggers](#)*

Internet access is now necessary for work, school, healthcare, and more. However, for many households, it remains unaffordable. The Federal Communications Commission wants everyone to access reasonably priced internet services. We recently launched a new program to reduce the cost of getting online.

The [Affordable Connectivity Program](#) (ACP) provides a discount of up to:

- \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households.
- \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands.

Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 toward purchasing a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers. To qualify for this one-time discount, households must contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

Any household with an individual who receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is eligible to receive discounted internet service through the ACP. Social Security doesn't count ACP assistance as income or a resource for SSI purposes. Receipt of this assistance will not affect your SSI payment. You may also be eligible, if your household participates in other assistance programs, such as:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Medicaid.
- Federal Public Housing Assistance.
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).
- Lifeline.

If you don't receive SSI or participate in another qualifying assistance program, you may also be eligible if your household income is at or below 200% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#).

There are additional ways to qualify. Go to our [Affordable Connectivity Program](#) page to learn more and apply. If you have questions, you'll find [a consumer FAQ](#) that can help, along with [a list of participating internet service providers](#) sorted by state.

Cost shouldn't be a barrier to getting online. Being connected can help you find job opportunities and access telehealth services, saving you time and transportation costs. And with affordable internet services, students no longer need to rely on public Wi-Fi hotspots to do their homework or for distance learning.

As of February 2022, more than 10 million households have already enrolled in the ACP program. That's an exciting threshold, but we know many more eligible households that are not yet enrolled. Please help us spread the word about ACP with your families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers.

The ACP helps close the digital divide.

[Watch a video overview of ACP here](#) | [en español](#) | [American Sign Language](#)

## Next Meeting of the Cross Disability Coalition

Monday, April 4, 2022

12:45 PM - 2:00 PM

Virtually via Zoom

RSVP to [rsvp@riddc.org](mailto:rsvp@riddc.org) or call (401) 737-1238

Topic: Able Act Account – What It Means To You  
Presented by Kevin Nerney – Executive Director, RIDDCC



# You're Invited!



### WHEN:

Monday, April 4, 2022

12:45 pm – 2:00pm

### WHERE:

Via Zoom

### *The ABLE Act/Accounts*

Presented By: Kevin Nerney, Executive Director, RIDDCC and Keith Wilcox, Advocates Connecting



**Please RSVP to 737-1238 or email [rsvp@riddc.org](mailto:rsvp@riddc.org)**

Let us know if you need any special accommodations.

an initiative of the RI Developmental Disabilities Council

401.737.1238 • [crossdisability@riddc.org](mailto:crossdisability@riddc.org) • 400 Bald Hill Road, Suite 515, Warwick, RI 02886 •

[www.riddc.org/cross\\_disability](http://www.riddc.org/cross_disability)

The Rhode Island Cross Disability Coalition is an initiative of the RI Developmental Disabilities Council. The Coalition is for individuals with all disabilities to connect and talk about what is important in our lives and what we can do together to improve quality for all people! It is also an opportunity to become familiar with different services available from agencies in Rhode Island and learn what these agencies can do to support and meet the needs of individuals. Visit the Coalition website at <https://www.ricrossdisability.org/>.



## **Advocate Voice: A Blog By Max Barrows and Hasan Ko**

### **The DSP Workforce Crisis and Remote Supports**

*From the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS)  
Community Services Reporter newsletter, March 2022*

On February 10, 2022, Max Barrows and Hasan Ko met with more than 60 self-advocates from at least 25 states. They discussed what works and what does not work when getting remote support from staff. All agreed we must be given a choice about meeting with our direct support professionals in person or virtually. And make sure that a person understands when you give us choices. Unfortunately, often during the pandemic, providers did not give us a choice.

People with developmental disabilities were pushed to keep working with our direct care workers on zoom all day and all night. We need to get up and move around. When you are working from home, you have to sit on zoom a lot. Many people cannot sit that long. We taught ourselves during the pandemic how to be independent. It's nice not to have our staff right by our sides all the time.

For the first time some of us were given a device and regular access to the internet. People have discovered that we can do stuff, like using a computer without staff. Using headphones blocks out distractions and can allow us to communicate more effectively with our assistants. It works really well for people who feel more comfortable with talking. We get to be our own person by doing our work, living our lives in our own way inside our homes. During a break, you can take it with the feeling of more privacy to "release energy" knowing you are in your own house.

When we are having a hard time, we have our family right there to support us to get through it in ways we may not rely on our staff to do. It provided lots of flexibility for workers and it helped staff save on their gas.

We were often lonely, and it was a way to be involved with staff and see their faces. It helped us prioritize and work on the essential things we need to learn. It's good to be independent.

Of course, it all falls apart when the technology is not working, and your staff are not there to help you figure it out. And some people with disabilities and staff did not have access to phones, tablets or reliable internet. It works better when you transition to working remotely with staff you already know and who are familiar with how to support you. It is hard to meet new staff over the computer and to teach them how to support us. Some new staff had no experience and the only training they received was by watching a video. They may look at us, our disabilities, and only see stereotypes and have no idea how to work for people with disabilities.

Communicating our true feelings can be more difficult while working remotely with staff. Staff can give emotional guidance easier when in person. Over Zoom, it can be difficult for staff to read our emotions. Some staff have their cameras off too long and we wonder what's going on. Some staff get easily distracted when we are sharing our screens and they spend a lot of time looking at their phones.

It's absolutely necessary to get out in the community with staff and that is not happening when working remotely. Sometimes it is essential that staff are with us in person so they can show us what to do and we can practice more easily. Staff being in person when learning something new is a lot more relaxing. And finally, for many people with disabilities it's more difficult to communicate via Zoom. Going forward getting support remotely is an important option as long as we get to decide. We must have a choice about being with our direct support professionals in person or virtually.

**2020 National Core Indicators® In-Person Survey**  
**COVID Supplement Infographic**

**During the COVID pandemic in 2020**



**83%**  
talked to a  
case  
manager or  
service  
coordinator  
enough



**85%**  
reported all  
staff always  
used  
personal  
protective  
equipment  
(PPE)



**37%**  
reported  
being more  
worried,  
scared,  
anxious, or  
sad than  
before



**23%**  
reported  
wanting  
more help  
to feel less  
worried,  
scared,  
anxious or  
sad

**Technology**



**88%** have a computer, tablet, or smartphone they can  
use in the home



**83%** report internet always works and connection is  
good at home



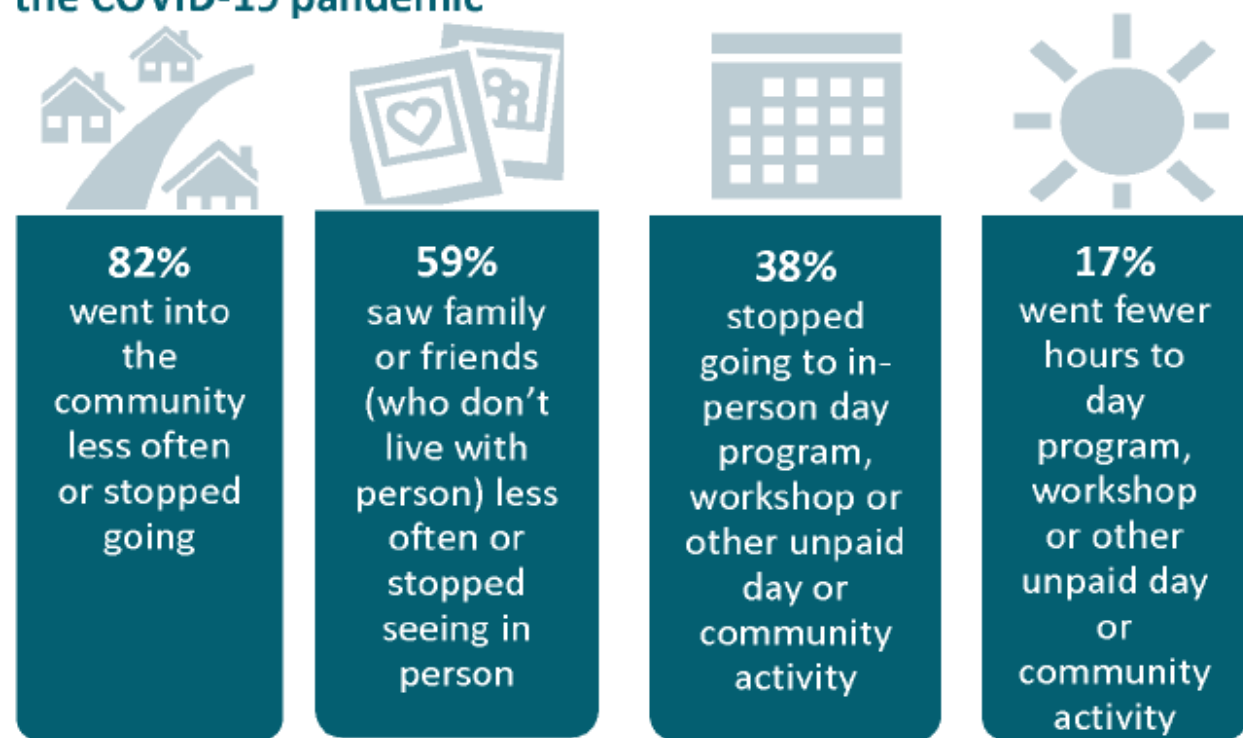
**57%** have ever talked to a case manager/service  
coordinator using videoconference or telehealth.



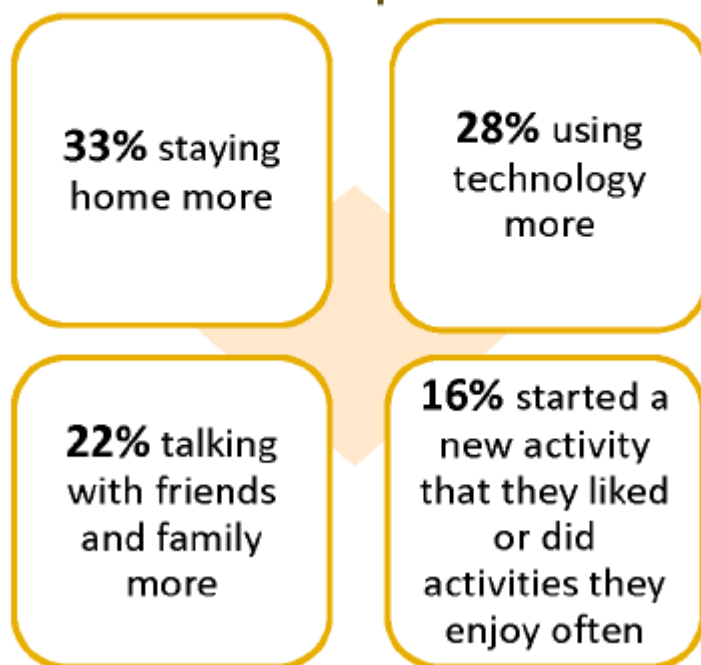
**51%** have ever talked to a health professional using  
videoconference or telehealth



## The most common changes to routine or daily schedule during the COVID-19 pandemic



## Respondents reported liking the following changes to their lives and daily routines that they experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic



## **New Website Launched for Youth Alternatives to Guardianship**

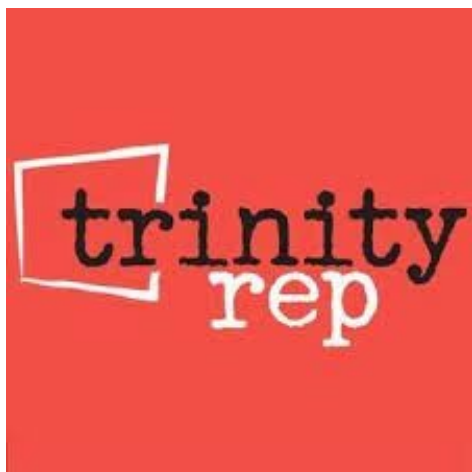
The [Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice](#) (CYVYC) has launched a new website. CYVYC is a national youth resource center on alternatives to guardianship. It promotes the use of alternatives to guardianship nationally through research, self-advocacy, outreach, coalition building, and education.

The new website features:

- [a U.S. map with information about alternatives to guardianship in different states](#);
- photos and bios of [Youth Ambassadors](#) and a [Youth Ambassador Training Curriculum](#);
- resources for many different audiences including ones written in [plain language](#);
- [stories from other young people who chose supported decision-making](#) ; and
- information on [state teams](#) that are part of a national Community of Practice.



## **Pick Your Price for Trinity Rep Shows**



To make the theater accessible for all, the first preview for every Trinity Rep mainstage show is a Pay What You Wish performance. This means you determine how much you pay for your ticket. Pay What You Wish performance tickets go on sale in the afternoon before the show. Trinity Rep hopes this will make it easier for guests to buy tickets to these special performances.

Purchase these tickets in-person at the ticket office or on the phone at (401) 351-4242. Trinity Rep accepts cash and credit cards. Limit of one ticket per person.

Online sales for Pay What You Wish are not available at this time.

## **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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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

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Meaghan	Jencks	Social Caseworker II	462-2113	<a href="mailto:Meaghan.Jencks@bhddh.ri.gov">Meaghan.Jencks@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Souphalak	Muriel	Social Caseworker II	462-2512	<a href="mailto:Souphalak.Muriel@bhddh.ri.gov">Souphalak.Muriel@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Yolande	Ramos	Social Caseworker II	462-1059	<a href="mailto:Yolande.Ramos@bhddh.ri.gov">Yolande.Ramos@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Judy	Smith	Social Caseworker II	462-1327	<a href="mailto:Judith.Smith@bhddh.ri.gov">Judith.Smith@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Vacancy		Social Caseworker II	462-2563	
<b>Eligibility Unit</b>				
Karen	Lowell	Eligibility Supervisor	462-2209	<a href="mailto:Karen.Lowell@bhddh.ri.gov">Karen.Lowell@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Marisa	Abbruzzi	Social Caseworker II (RICLAS)	462-6099	<a href="mailto:Marisa.Abbuzzi@bhddh.ri.gov">Marisa.Abbuzzi@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Christine	Harding	Eligibility Caseworker	462-3233	<a href="mailto:Christine.Harding@bhddh.ri.gov">Christine.Harding@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Lori	Lombardi, RN	PASRR	462-0089	<a href="mailto:Lori.Lombardiburns@bhddh.ri.gov">Lori.Lombardiburns@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Kim	Wright	Information Aide	462-2584	<a href="mailto:Kimberly.Wright@bhddh.ri.gov">Kimberly.Wright@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
<b>SIS Unit</b>				
Donna	Standish	SIS Supervisor	462-2628	<a href="mailto:Donna.Standish@bhddh.ri.gov">Donna.Standish@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Wendy	Cormier	SIS Caseworker	462-1302	<a href="mailto:Wendy.Cormier@bhddh.ri.gov">Wendy.Cormier@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Kristen	Miga	SIS Caseworker	462-0449	<a href="mailto:Kristen.Miga@bhddh.ri.gov">Kristen.Miga@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Vacancy		SIS Caseworker	462-2510	
<b>Transition Unit</b>				
Susan	Hayward	Administrator, YIT	462-2519	<a href="mailto:Susan.Hayward@bhddh.ri.gov">Susan.Hayward@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Carolee	Leach	Prof. Services Coordinator	462-1723	<a href="mailto:Carolee.Leach@bhddh.ri.gov">Carolee.Leach@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
<b>Support Staff</b>				
Stephanie	Andreozzi	Implementation Aide	462-1859	<a href="mailto:Stephanie.Andreozzi@bhddh.ri.gov">Stephanie.Andreozzi@bhddh.ri.gov</a>
Lori	Vandall	Clerk Typist	462-6086	<a href="mailto:Lori.Vandall@bhddh.ri.gov">Lori.Vandall@bhddh.ri.gov</a>

# TECHNOLOGY FUND GUIDANCE

▶ ASL TRANSLATION: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceiyBWubaDE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceiyBWubaDE)

## What is the Technology Fund and how you can use it

In early 2022, people receiving services through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) will be able to purchase technology using a one-time Technology Fund. This fund will be in addition to each person's current funding.

**"Technology" includes hardware and software.**

**Hardware** is a computer or other electronic device, like:

- ✓ A tablet or cell phone
- ✓ A "smart home" appliance with automatic features
- ✓ An electronic watch

**Software** tells a computer what to do, like:

- ✓ An app that reminds a person to stay on task at work
- ✓ An alarm to remind a person to take their medication
- ✓ A screen reader that turns words into sound

## ❖ How technology can work for you

Technology can support a person's desire for more independence at home, in the community, and at work, and reduce reliance on others. Technology can help a person with communicating, pursuing a passion, remembering, getting from one place to another, and many other things.

## Technology Meets Different Needs



*"My iPad, AirPods, and Work Autonomy App are important to me at work because they help to keep me organized, on time, and increase my independence."*

— Diane



*"I'm really excited to use my community map through Google My Maps to visit all of the record stores in RI to see which one I like the best!"*

— Gloria



# TECHNOLOGY FUND GUIDANCE

▶ ASL TRANSLATION: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceiyBWubaDE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceiyBWubaDE)

## ❖ How to get started

Think about what technology will be used and how it will help the person. Talk about how technology will meet a person's needs during the person-centered planning process. The person may also choose to update their Individual Support Plan (ISP) to include a new goal or expand upon an already existing goal.



**Virtual Informational Meeting**

**April 6, 2022 @ 4:30 – 5:30pm**

**Meeting ID: 816 5768 5015 | Passcode: 441462**



See a recording: [www.bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/initiatives](https://www.bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/initiatives)

## ❖ How to make a purchase

**A request form will be made available in April 2022.**

This form will ask the following:

- ✓ Name of the technology selected
- ✓ Cost of the technology selected
- ✓ Identify barrier(s) and the functional solution offered by the technology selected
- ✓ Identify its connection to an ISP goal

## ❖ Questions

For all questions, please contact the person's DDD Social Caseworker.

If the DDD Social Caseworker is not known, call the DDD main phone line at (401) 462-3421.

## Technology Meets Different Needs



*"My iPad has helped me to do different types of art and I can communicate with my friends, family and even my doctor through video."*

— Alton



*"I enjoy using my iPad to film puppet shows. I also use technology to collaborate with writers and storytellers to create the content for my puppeteering."*

— Jillian





**Join ATAP to Celebrate National Assistive Technology Awareness day!**

**April 6, 3:00 – 6:00 PM**

Join the Assistive Technology Access Partnership (ATAP) as we celebrate National Assistive Technology Awareness Day!

ATAP will be hosting an Open House at the **Warwick Public Library** on April 6th from 3-6 pm. Join us to visit ATAP partners and state agencies that support and promote the AT movement. Gather resources and grab some refreshments.

**The first 100 people to register will receive an AT Swag Bag filled with AT gadgets!**

**[Register to attend here.](#)**

### **What is ATAP?**



The Rhode Island Assistive Technology Access Partnership (ATAP) is designed as a statewide partnership of organizations, each

with a targeted assistive technology focus, working together to improve access to and acquisition of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.

ATAP's main initiatives include:

- Device Demonstration Device Loan
- Device Re-Use
- Training, Public Awareness, Collaboration, Information & Referral

**ATAP Partners include [Adaptive Telephone Equipment Loan Program \(ATEL\)](#), [East Bay Educational Collaborative \(EBEC\)](#), [Ocean State Center for Independent Living \(OSCIL\)](#), and [TechACCESS of RI](#)**

TechACCESS of RI for ATAP | 161 Comstock Parkway, Cranston, RI 02921 401-463-0202

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Please Join Us

April 9<sup>th</sup>

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

To Reserve your spot call 401-515-4007

Or email [Narragansett@FredAstaire.com](mailto:Narragansett@FredAstaire.com)



*Tori Lynn Andreozzi*  
FOUNDATION



# LUNCH AND LEARN: Working While Disabled—Work Incentives Sessions

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

**SSI Overview:**  
April 27, 2022, 12-1 pm

**SSDI Overview:**  
May 18, 2022, 12-1 pm

-----  
**Work Pays! An Introduction to Youth  
Work Incentives**  
April 6, 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](mailto:esollecito@ric.edu).

**Session questions:** Contact Vicki Ferrara at [vferrara@ric.edu](mailto:vferrara@ric.edu).





# 2022 Access for All Abilities Mini Grant Opportunity!

**Submission Deadline - Friday, April 8, 2022**

Online Application - <https://bit.ly/aaaminigrant22>

## **Purpose:**

The Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College is soliciting applications from local businesses and organizations for the 2022 Access for All Abilities Mini Grant cycle. The Sherlock Center will award grants with the purpose of increasing access for people with disabilities to social, leisure, recreational, and cultural activities. Non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, and city and town government agencies in Rhode Island, or primarily serving Rhode Island communities, are encouraged to apply.

*Three (3) grants will be awarded. Businesses and organizations may apply for up to \$5,000. The Sherlock Center reserves the right to award additional grants as funds permit.*

## **Eligibility:**

All businesses and organizations that engage the public in social, leisure, recreational, and/or cultural activities in Rhode Island, or primarily serving Rhode Island communities, are eligible to apply. Eligible entities include non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, schools, and city or town government agencies. Applicants must demonstrate in their proposals sufficient resources to complete the proposed project within one year of receipt of the grant award.

Entities whose primary missions or client base is disability focused are not eligible for a grant award, however, are encouraged to support eligible businesses and organizations to develop a proposal that meets the established criteria.

**New for 2022, the Sherlock Center will prioritize applications submitted by eligible businesses or organizations (as defined above) that demonstrate a high degree of engagement with minority communities or diverse populations (e.g., veterans, refugees, L.G.B.T.Q.I.A+).**

## **Review Criteria:**

A panel of representatives from the Sherlock Center, including individuals with disabilities, will evaluate applications according to the following criteria:

- Degree to which the applicant provides social, leisure, recreational, and/or cultural activities to the public.
- Degree to which proposal will result in increased participation or access of people with disabilities in leisure, recreational and/or cultural activities provided by the business / organization.
- Degree to which the applicant engages with diverse populations or communities.
- Degree to which proposal meets a demonstrated or unmet need.
- Degree to which the proposed project demonstrates sustainability or long-term impact.
- The proposal demonstrates an effective plan for outreach to people with disabilities to engage with the activities available at the business or organization and to evaluate the impact of the project.
- The proposal demonstrates sufficient resources to implement the proposed project within one year of receipt of the grant award.

*Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities - A University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities*

Phone: (401) 456-8072 • TTY Via RI Relay: 711 or 800-745-5555 • Fax: (401) 456-8150 • [www.sherlockcenter.org](http://www.sherlockcenter.org)

## Funding Examples:

The Sherlock Center encourages applicants to think creatively! Examples of the type of projects that may be funded include, but are not limited to the following:

- Purchase or development of specialized equipment or product to enable or enhance accessibility.
- Technical assistance or specific skills training.
- Scholarships or reduced fees.
- Modifications to an existing space or materials.
- Funding of an initial but measurable stage of a larger project (e.g., architectural plan), etc.

*Applicants may propose combining funds from other sources to support a larger project that meets the required one-year timeframe for completion.*

## Grants will not fund:

- A new or current service or program that is designed to primarily or only engage people with disabilities (e.g., karate for kids with autism, dance classes for adults with disabilities, hiking for the visually impaired)
- A service or product that will only benefit a single individual (e.g., equipment needing to be custom fit for a particular person, funding a one-on-one assistant) or only people with disabilities served by one specific program or organization.
- A service or program focused on employment or the development of employment-related skills (e.g., training programs, volunteer activities).
- A service or program focused on education or academic training.

## Application Process:

Applicants are encouraged to apply using the Online Application. Applicants may also submit a proposal in-person or by email, mail, or fax. All applications and materials are available at [www.sherlockcenter.org](http://www.sherlockcenter.org). Click “Access for All Abilities Mini Grant” from the main menu.

**Online Application - <https://bit.ly/aaaminigrant22>**

## Timelines:

- Grant applicants must submit a complete application online, postmarked, faxed or in-person, by 4/8/22.
- The Sherlock Center will notify recipients by 4/28/22.
- The Sherlock Center will request that each grant recipient submit an invoice for the funds awarded and will subsequently issue a check within 4-6 weeks.
- Grantees must complete the proposed project within one year of the grant award.
- Grantees are required to submit a report documenting the project outcomes within 30 days of completion.

*For more information or to request an application in an alternate format, contact Crystal Cerullo at 401-456-8915 or [ccerullo@ric.edu](mailto:ccerullo@ric.edu). Information and forms are also available on the Sherlock Center website at [www.sherlockcenter.org](http://www.sherlockcenter.org).*

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The mission of the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities is to promote membership for all in school, work and community. The Sherlock Center, Rhode Island's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), receives funding for this initiative administered by the Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (OIDD).

*The Sherlock Center is located at Rhode Island College. Rhode Island College departments are not eligible to apply.*

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# Exploring Alternatives to Guardianship: A Brief for Youth with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities and Their Supporters

Alexandra Bonardi, Valerie Bradley, and Jaimie Timmons



## Introduction

Do you want to know how many people with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (IDD) have guardians? We talked with people with IDD about making important life decisions. We talked with people who have guardians. We also talked with people who don't have guardians.

Here is what we learned from the National Core Indicators (NCI). The National Core Indicators is a survey. Thousands of people with IDD are invited to answer questions in the National Core Indicators survey each year.

This brief will tell you what we learned about guardianship for people with IDD. It will show you some differences between people with IDD who have guardians and people with IDD who do not have guardians.

This brief will also describe *alternatives to guardianship*, including supported decision-making. At the end, the brief lists resources such as the [Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice](#). It also offers questions that you can ask your parents and teachers so you can learn more about alternatives to guardianship. Let's start with defining some terms!

## What is guardianship?

Guardianship is a legal term. Guardianship is when a court decides that a person cannot make their own decisions. The court then gives someone else (a guardian) the power to make decisions for the person. Guardianship is often used in the United States to try and protect people with disabilities. But guardianship also takes away the person's legal rights and ability to make decisions.

Many adults with disabilities have guardians that they do not need, and this can be bad for them. Sometimes, people with IDD have guardians, even though they can make their own decisions and choices.

## What are alternatives to guardianship?

Many people with IDD do not need guardians. The term "alternatives to guardianship" means choosing something different instead of guardianship. Alternatives to guardianship are tools other than guardianship that people can use to get the support they need to make tough decisions about their lives.

## What does the National Core Indicators survey tell us about guardianship?

The National Core Indicators (NCI) survey tells us that about half (53%) of adults with IDD have a guardian. That means they might not be able to make important decisions about their own lives.

People with IDD who have guardians are less likely to make important life decisions than people who do not have guardians. This includes making decisions about:

- where to live
- who to live with
- how they spend their time
- what they buy

[For more information about these differences in decision-making between people with IDD who have guardians and people who don't, check out our infographic here.](#)

## How can having a guardian make people with IDD feel?

Research shows that people with IDD who have guardians may feel:

- helpless or hopeless
- not good enough
- tired or sick
- sad or depressed
- dependent on others

From: National Council on Disability. (2018). [Beyond guardianship: Toward alternatives that promote greater self-determination](#), Washington, D.C.



## What are some alternatives to guardianship?

Some alternatives to guardianship include *health proxies* and *powers of attorney*. Another alternative to guardianship is supported decision-making. *Supported decision making* is a way for people with IDD to make decisions about their own lives, with help from good friends and family members who create a circle of support.

Research shows that people with IDD who have used supported decision-making say they:

- are more independent
- feel good about making decisions
- are able to make important decisions
- feel good about their lives

From: "[I learned that I have a voice in my future](#)" Summary, Findings, and Recommendations of The Virginia Supported Decision-Making Pilot Project by Martinis, J. & Beadnell, L. (2021)

## Do you want to learn more about alternatives to guardianship?

Youth with IDD and their families should learn about alternatives to guardianship when they are making the transition to being an adult. This is the time *before you turn 18*.

Here are some questions you can ask your parents and teachers about alternatives to guardianship:

- *Do you know about alternatives to guardianship?*
- *Do other people in my school know about alternatives to guardianship?*
- *Can you tell me about alternatives to guardianship?*
- *Can you tell my parents about alternatives to guardianship?*
- *Can you tell me more about supported decision-making?*
- *Can you tell my parents about supported decision-making?*
- *Do you know what the [National Guardianship Association](#) says about alternatives to guardianship?*
- *Do you know what the American Bar Association says about alternatives to guardianship?*
- *What are the laws in my state about supported decision-making?*
- *What are the laws in my state about alternatives to guardianship?*

- *What does the Protection and Advocacy organization do?*
- *Does the Protection and Advocacy organization work with people who don't want guardians?*
- *Are there other groups that work with people who don't want guardians?*
- *Are there self-advocates and advocates I can talk to about alternatives to guardianship?*
- *Do judges in courts understand alternatives to guardianship?*
- *Do judges in courts have to mention alternatives to guardianship?*

## Are you a youth or a supporter looking for more resources?

The **Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice** is a resource center for youth with disabilities. We help you learn how you can have control over your decisions after you become a legal adult. One of the ways you can do this is by using alternatives to guardianship.

[This publication offers a clickable list of accessible resources](#) designed for youth with IDD and their supporters.

## For more information on alternatives, including Supported Decision-Making:

- Georgia Advocacy Office. [Advocate John McCarty talks about supported decision making, how he used it to terminate guardianship, and includes perspectives from his parent.](#) (2020).
- Georgia Advocacy Office. [Shining a Light on the Inner Workings of Supported Decision-Making.](#)
- American Bar Association. (2016). [Practical tools for lawyers: Steps in supporting decision-making.](#) Chicago, IL.
- Center for Public Representation. [Supported Decision-Making Gives People with Disabilities a Voice.](#)
- Disability and Health Information Center (n.d.). [Missouri Guardianship: Understanding Your Options & Alternatives.](#)
- Georgia Advocacy Office. [Supported Decision-Making Resources.](#) The Georgia Advocacy Office
- [National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making.](#)



The [National Core Indicators](#) (NCI) project talks with people with IDD around the country about the services and supports they receive. Almost all state intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) agencies in the US collect this information and they use this to make the services they provide better. One of the questions they ask people with IDD is whether they have a guardian.



## About

The Center is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston (ICI)

*in partnership with:*

Center for Public Representation (CPR)  
Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)  
Human Services Research Institute (HSRI)

*in consultation with experts from:*

Harvard Law School Project on Disability  
Georgia Advocacy Office

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## Suggested Citation

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## For more information

Allison Cohen Hall, PhD | [allison.hall@umb.edu](mailto:allison.hall@umb.edu)

[www.youth-voice.org](http://www.youth-voice.org)



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nonprofit network of  
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# A Panel Discussion Webinar: Pioneer Families' Creation of Inclusive Living and Working for Adults with Disabilities

*Moderated by Ann Turnbull*

*Please visit our  
HCPBS Website:  
[www.hcpbs.org](http://www.hcpbs.org)  
Make a donation!*

Many adult agencies are scrambling to keep congregate facilities open and have not had the bandwidth to embrace truly inclusive living, working, recreating, socializing, etc. Our focus will be on dreaming big about inclusive possibilities and bringing dreams to fruition through trusting partnerships of like-minded family, friends, agency professionals, and community citizens.

In this webinar, Ann Turnbull will moderate the discussions of pioneer families who will share their stories of inclusive supports to inspire others to see what could be possible in their own communities. This is essential information for both family members and professionals who support people with disabilities.



## **About Ann:**

Ann Turnbull has been a professor, researcher, and advocate for individuals with disabilities and their families for almost five decades at the University of North Carolina and University of Kansas. She has authored 37 books and over 300 articles and chapters. Ann and her husband, Rud, were selected by the National Historic Preservation Trust on Developmental Disabilities as two of 36 individuals who "changed the course of history for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the 20th Century." Ann is quick to say that her "best professor" was her son, Jay (1967-2009), who experienced multiple disabilities and had what she describes as an "enviable life" through inclusive community supports. Jay lived in his own home with housemates who provided support and worked as a Clerical Aide at the University of Kansas for almost 20 years.

**April 25, 2022 7:30- 9:00 PM EST**  
**[REGISTER HERE](#)**

*See next page for a list of the panelists*



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## Pioneer Families: Meet our Panelists!

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Make a donation!*



Reilly Pelkey is the VP and Director of Client Operations for Virtus Health, LLC and has dedicated her career to making a difference in the lives of individuals with autism and related disabilities and their families. Reilly has worked to impact and educate families through community involvement by building relationships and bridging the gap. She sat on the board of the Center for Independent Living Options for 10 years. She was also the Director of the community Top Soccer League for Martin County for 8 years. She has been on the FAU CARD Parent Advisory Board for 15 years and is a Board Member and Treasurer for HCPBS for 4 years.



Dotty Foley taught special education in the public school system for 15 years before working as private behavioral education specialist. She's been a business owner and currently works as an advisor for an international functional medicine program. Dotty serves as the Chair of the Community Capacity Building Committee for the North Carolina Olmstead Plan Stakeholder Advisory Group, a member of the Strategic Housing Planning Workgroup, IDD Stakeholder Workgroup and Supported Living Level 2/3 Action Group. Dotty and her husband Jim have four children. Their oldest son, Dylan, has a diagnosis of autism and is a pioneer of supported living in N.C



Martha Banning is the mom of four children. Her second oldest child, Ryan, is 45 and has Down syndrome. Ryan has lived in his own home and has owned a vending business for over 20 years. This has been made possible by accessing a collage of support systems including federal/state financial assistance. Martha is retired from the University of Kansas after working in the disability field for over thirty years as a teacher, administrator, and researcher.



Carmen co-founded the Children's with Disabilities Information Coalition 33 years ago, El Paso's federally funded Community Parent Resource Center. Since 2017, she has served as Board President. Carmen and her empowered family were pioneers in bringing in 1985 one of the country's first inclusion court cases on behalf of her son, Daniel. The Federal Court of Appeals stipulated that Daniel was entitled to academic and extra-curricular inclusion. Now at age 40, Daniel has a 16-year work record in the grocery business, having started his work career when he was 17. Daniel enjoys living independently since he turned 26. His mother, Carmen, is his main home healthcare provider since retiring as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.