



# Newsletter

**Volume 24**

February 28, 2025

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# Division Updates

## DD Community Forum



The next DD Community Forum is Tuesday, March 18, 2025, from 3:00pm to 4:30pm. This a free event and is open to anyone interested in joining.

At the event, the Division will share news and updates. It is also a great event for the Division to learn from you and others in the community.

Please [sign-up for the forum online](#) if you would like to go.

## Your Life, Your Rights

The Division is hosting a free, weekly online training about your rights. The program will last for five weeks on Tuesday from 10:30am to 12pm. Program dates are:

- Tuesday, April 22, 2025
- Tuesday, April 29, 2025
- Tuesday, May 6, 2025
- Tuesday, May 13, 2025
- Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Learn how training topics and how to sign-up by visiting the flyer at the end of this newsletter.



# Community News: Local

## Advocates in Action Conference



The Advocates in Action RI's 2025 Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference is coming soon. This year's theme is "Try Everything," and it's happening Thursday-Friday, May 8-9, 2025! If you've never been to the Self-Advocacy Conference, this is the year to TRY IT!

Day one of the event is free and will be online. Day two of the event is a Dinner Dance that costs \$30. Visit the [Advocates in Action website](#) to learn more and to sign-up.

## Accessibility Tip: Protect Yourself from Scams

A **scam** is when a person or people try to trick you into giving them something. The person or people that do this are **scammers**. Often scammers want you to give them money. They may also try to get you to give them access to your private information.

The [Social Security Administration \(SSA\)](#) recently came out with a resource to help you stay safe from scams. Here are some ways to tell if you are getting a SSA scam call or message:

- The person tells you your social security number has been cancelled. SSA will never do this.
- The person shares their ID badge with you. SSA would never do this.
- The person pressures and rushes you to do something. SSA would never do this.
- The person tells you that you must pay for something right away or you will be arrested. SSA would never do this.
- The person shares an email or other message that has spelling errors
- The person tries to get you to open a website that does not end with SSA.gov. SSA would never do this.

These tips are from the [SSA Slam the Scam video](#).

To report a scam, visit [ssa.gov/scam](#).



# Community News: Local and National

## Sherlock Center Grant



The Sherlock Center at Rhode Island College has a grant opportunity. Sherlock Center is accepting applications for the 2025 Access for All Abilities Mini Grants. The Sherlock Center will award five grants of up to \$3,000. Local businesses and organizations can apply.

The purpose of the grant is to improve access to community spaces for people with disabilities. Learn more and apply on the [Sherlock Center website](#).

## Elder Abuse Training by ADvancing States IQ

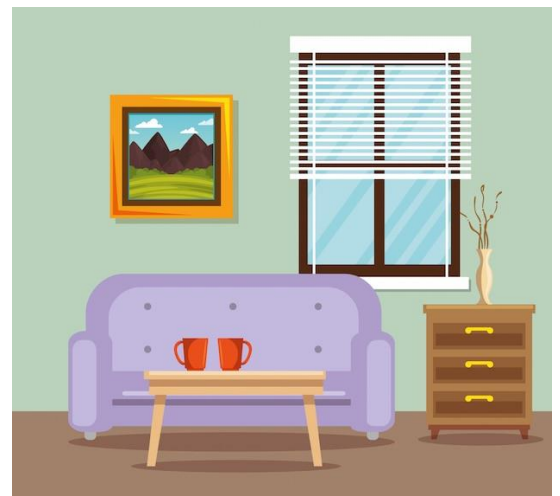
ADvancing States IQ is an online learning center. Of their many online trainings, they offer a class on elder abuse. The training explains what elder abuse is, and shares ways to respond to it. The class was made for providers, so they are better able to help the people they work with.

To learn more and to sign-up, visit the [Preventing Abuse and Exploitation class website](#).

## Living Innovations: SLA Story

Living Innovations has a new story about Shared Living Arrangements (SLA). These stories are being shared to give people an idea about SLA and how it can work for them.

This story is about an SLA provider, Marsha. Find the full story at the end of this newsletter.



# Community Events

## Calendar of Events

Event	Date	Time	Location	Sign-up
“Shared Living Arrangements in Rhode Island Series” by Living Innovations	Tuesday, March 4, 2025	12-1 pm	Online	Visit the <a href="#">Shared Living Arrangements event webpage</a> to sign up
The Arc RI free Zoom session about services offered	Wednesday, March 5, 2025	6pm	Online using Zoom	<a href="#">The Arch RI Zoom session sign-up webpage</a>
"Supporting Meaningful Employment Training“ by Sherlock Center	Thursday, March 6 -Thursday, May 15, 2025	Various times	Online	Visit the <a href="#">Sherlock training event webpage</a> to sign-up
“What, Wait! You Want Me to Talk About Sexuality?” by Elevatus Training	Wednesday, March 12, 2025 4 other dates	3-4pm	Online	<a href="#">Elevatus Training free online workshop sign-up webpage</a>
“PLAN Special Needs Trust” by the Arc Rhode Island	Tuesday, March 18, 2025	5pm	Online	Visit the <a href="#">PLAN webinar sign-up page</a>
“Work Pays! An Introduction to Youth SSI Work Incentives” by Sherlock Center	Wednesday, March 19, 2025	12pm	Online using Zoom	<a href="#">Work Pays online sign-up webpage</a>
“Family Leadership Project 2.0” by Best Life RI and Starfire	Monday, March. 24, 2025, with monthly sessions to Sept.	6-7pm	Online	Visit the <a href="#">Best Life RI website</a> to sign-up
“23rd Annual Imagine Walk & Family Fun Day!” by the Autism Project	Sunday, April 27, 2025	10am	Goddard Memorial State Park	<a href="#">Autism Project Annual Imagine Walk sign-up webpage</a>
“Annual Breakfast” by RIPIN	Thursday, May 22, 2025	8-10am	Crowne Plaza, Warwick	<a href="#">Annual Breakfast online sign-up webpage</a>

# Community Resources

## Honor Black History Month



Black History Month is a time of great learning and celebration. Many of the rights and opportunities we have today can be traced back to Black activists. What's more is, the work to protect all our rights is still being done today.

History is made everyday. The World Institute on Disability has a great article about some of the Black activists making history now. This article is called, "[12 Black Disabled Activists and Advocates You Need to be Following.](#)" Check-out the full story to learn how these leaders are:

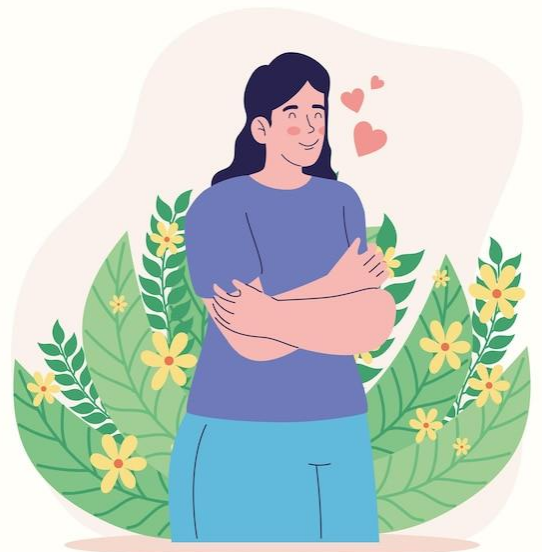
- Protecting people in jail with a hearing disability.
- Teaching the community about anti-ableism.
- Helping people with disabilities lead their own lives.
- So much more!

## Self-Care

Spring is less than a month away! As the weather gets warmer you can treat yourself to a dose of nature. Here are some self-care activities you can try on the next warm day:

- Sit by the ocean.
- Go to your favorite park.
- Stroll through a flower garden.
- Visit animals at local farms or zoos.

For a list of accessible parks in the state, visit [RI State Parks](#).



# Report Suspected Abuse

## QA Hotline 401-462-2629

### Mandated Reporting

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

To report abuse and serious incidents call the BHDDH Quality Assurance (QA) Unit **hotline at (401) 462-2629**. The hotline is open 24-hour hotline, seven days per week, 365 days per year. Staff respond to reported incidents of abuse, neglect, mistreatment, and financial exploitation.

### BH Link is Here for You

BH Link's mission is to ensure all Rhode Islanders experiencing mental health and substance use crises receive the appropriate services they need as quickly as possible in an environment that supports their recovery. Visit the BH Link website at [www.bhlink.org](http://www.bhlink.org).

**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 a risk of immediate danger.

If you or someone you know needs support now, call or text **988** or chat [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org)



### For More about the Division

Want to find out more about the Division? Visit the [Division's webpage](#). You will find information on services, resources, and more.

To contact Division staff, review the Contact List attached to this newsletter. You can also find a full list of staff on the [Division's Contact Us webpage](#).

You are always welcome to send general questions to [BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov). Please do not email critical issues.

The Division is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM.

**Website:** [www.bhddh.ri.gov](http://www.bhddh.ri.gov)

**Email:** [BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov)

**Phone:** 401.462.3421

**ESPAÑOL:** 401.462.3014



# Your Life, Your Rights Program

Join the Division's free, weekly online trainings about your rights. Program dates are:

- Tuesday, April 22, 2025
- Tuesday, April 29, 2025
- Tuesday, May 6, 2025
- Tuesday, May 13, 2025
- Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Trainings are from 10:30am to 12pm.

Sign-up for any or all the trainings you are interested in.



**DD Bill of Rights:**  
The rights under your DD Services.



**Safety Rights:**  
Rights to be treated well and feel safe.



**Antidiscrimination:**  
Laws on fair treatment



**Healthcare Rights:**  
Rights to physical and mental health care.



**Relationship Rights:**  
Rights to different relationships.

Use the [program sign-up link](#) or scan the QR code to sign-up



# A Shared Living Story

## Focus on SLA Provider: From One Generation to Another



Marsha's journey as a caregiver began with her mother Gladys, who in the early 1970's welcomed Shirley from a Massachusetts state institution. Shirley quickly became part of Gladys family and Marsha grew up learning the benefit of caring for others. Many years later, as Gladys began to age, she worried "Who will care for Shirley?" Marsha, who was then married with a family of her own, spoke up right away "I will mom". Shirley had an easy transition to Marsha's home and became one of the first private Shared Living Arrangements (SLA) in Rhode Island, but the caregiving did not end there. A few years later with a new home addition, Gladys also moved into her daughter Marsha's home and was once again living with Shirley. Sunday evenings found the two of them watching their favorite show Lawrence Welk, and every evening saying their prayers together. Both Shirley and Gladys enjoyed being together and, when the time came, both received superlative hospice care Marsha's home.

It is said, 'Apples don't fall far from the tree'. Not only is Marsha following in her mother's footsteps, so is Marsha's daughter who also became an SLA home provider. This is a family of caregivers, and they are not the only ones. Living Innovations reports at least eight (8) wonderful SLA home providers who have family members who are also SLA providers. The culture of doing for others goes from one generation to the next.



## Division of Developmental Disabilities Staff Contacts

<b>Main Phone:</b> (401) 462-3421	<b>Website:</b> <a href="https://bhddh.ri.gov/">https://bhddh.ri.gov/</a>
<b>Fax Phone:</b> (401) 462-2775	<b>Behavioral Health Link (BH Link):</b> (401) 414-5465
<b>Spanish Phone:</b> (401) 462-3014	<b>Report Abuse:</b> (401) 462-2629
<b>TDD:</b> (401) 462-3226	

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