



DD News and Updates

# Newsletter

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# Division Updates

## DD Community Forum Recap

The last DD Community Forum was on Tuesday, March 18, 2025. A lot of information was shared during the online event. Key updates included:

Agency	Update
<b>Advocates in Action</b>	<p>You can now sign-up for <a href="#">RI's Self-Advocacy Conference "Try Everything."</a> This is a two-day event from May 8<sup>th</sup> to May 9<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>Day One:</b> Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am- 2:30 pm on Zoom. There will be general sessions, workshops, music, raffles, and lots of fun. This is free. <a href="#">Sign-up for day one online.</a></p> <p><b>Day Two:</b> Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm- 10:00 pm in person at the Marriott Downtown Providence, 1 Orms Street, Providence. This is a Dinner Dance Party. The cost is \$30 per person. <a href="#">Sign-up for day two online.</a></p> <p><b>Call for presenters:</b> open until Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. <a href="#">Submit a presentation proposal online</a> if you want to present on day one.</p>
<b>Sherlock Center RI Statewide Workforce Initiative (RISWI)</b>	<p>RISWI is continuing its work to help make it easier for people to hire, train, and keep Direct Support Professionals (DSPs). They held an Annual Summit recently. 74 people went to the Summit, and they enjoyed it.</p> <p>Visit the <a href="#">Direct Support Workforce website</a> to learn more.</p>
<b>RIPIN Self-Directed Support Program</b>	<p>RIPIN has a busy 2025 schedule with one event per month through June. Visit <a href="#">RIPIN's online calendar</a> to learn more.</p> <p>RIPIN also has a growing <a href="#">webinar library</a> you can review online.</p>
<b>Division</b>	<p>The Division shared updates on Conflict Free Case Management. Part of the update was the difference between Case Managers and Independent Facilitators. Learn more on the next page.</p>

The forum was recorded. To review the recording, along with the event slides, visit the [Advocates in Action website](#). You will also soon find a copy of the forum questions and answers handout.

# Division Updates

## Conflict Free Case Management (CFCM)

Though CFCM has been in the works for more than a year, it is still new. This means we are still learning how to best transition people getting services to CFCM.

Like other new things, CFCM may be overwhelming and confusing due to all the changes that come with it. The Division knows this and is focused on making this process as easy and smooth as possible. As we build this new system, we will keep trying new ways to do things. Some of what we try will work, and others may not. This is all part of the learning process.

It may take about one year for everyone getting services to start with CFCM. During this time, the Division will work closely with everyone as they make this change. If you have questions or concerns at any time, please contact the Division at (401) 462-3421.

## CFCM Providers

There are two types of CFCM providers: Case Managers (CM) and Independent Facilitators (IF). Both CM and IF help you:

- Lead your Person-Centered Plan (PCP) meetings.
- Write your PCP and make changes throughout the year.
- Learn about the resources, services, and supports in your community.
- Explore new opportunities and activities.
- Get the resources, services and supports in your community.
- Make sure you are happy with the services you are getting.

CM and IF also differ from one another. CMs work for agencies that are certified by Medicaid and help people who go to an agency, self-direct, or do a combination of both. IFs are not certified by Medicaid and only help people who self-direct.

So far, 1211 adults getting services have started working with a CM/IF. If you get services but have not started working with a CM/IF yet, don't worry. The Division will contact you when it is time for you to start working with a CM/IF.

# Division Updates

## Your Voice Matters! Join Our Community Services for Adults Workgroup

The Division has been working on four important topics to support the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) community:

- **ISP Guidance** (Individual Support Plan guidance)
- **Goods and Services**
- **Conflict-Free Case Management/Independent Facilitation**
- **Community Services for Older Adults**



A Special Edition Newsletter with detailed summaries of each workgroup will be published on Friday, April 4, 2025.

We're inviting self-advocates in the I/DD community who are 62 or older, as well as their family members, to join our workgroup on **Community Services for Older Adults**. Two meetings have already taken place, and we want to include more voices in a third meeting to finish talking about how older adults can get support at home and do the things they love.

### What's the Meeting About?

The group will work together to create a draft of a document explaining how older adults in the I/DD community can receive support.

### When and where?

**Date:** Tuesday, May 6 **Time:** 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM **Location:** Online via Zoom

### How to Get Involved:

Please contact **Steven Seay** by email at [Steven.Seay@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:Steven.Seay@bhddh.ri.gov) or phone at (401) 462-6609.

Your thoughts and ideas can make a big difference in shaping these services. Thank you for helping us make this happen!

# Division Updates

## Sign-up for the 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.

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



### **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.

# Community News

## Know Your Rights: Immigration



Citizens and non-citizens in the United States have rights and are protected under the Constitution. If you or someone you know is approached by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, know your rights. According to the [American Civil Liberties Union \(ACLU\)](#), your rights include:

1. The right to remain silent. Other than give your name, you do not have to answer any questions. You do not have to say anything other than, “I will use my right to remain silent” and “I want to speak to a lawyer.”
2. The right to not have your person, belongings, or home searched. You can say, “I do not agree to be searched.”
3. Not allow ICE agents into your home without an official warrant signed by a judge. If ICE agents come to your home, you do not have to open the door. You can ask them to share the warrant and any other information under the door.
4. If you have immigration papers, you must show them. If you don’t have them, say you will remain silent and wish to speak to a lawyer.
5. The right to a speak to a lawyer if you are arrested.
6. The right to a phone call if you are arrested.
7. Not sign anything without first talking to your lawyer.

There are other resources to help you learn your immigration rights. Visit any of the following websites to learn more:

- [We Have Rights](#). This website shares 5 short cartoon videos about your rights. It also shares an emergency plan handout.
- [Immigrant Defense Project](#). This website shares flyers, booklets, posters, and other tools about your rights.

Both websites have materials available in other languages, including Spanish, French, Mandarin, Arabic, and more.



# Community News

## 2025 Access for All Abilities Mini Grants



The Sherlock Center has a call for applications open for the 2025 Access for All Abilities Mini Grants. These grants are for local businesses, nonprofits, schools, and city/town agencies. Five grants will be awarded. The grants will be up to \$3,000.

If you would like to apply, you must do so by Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>. To learn more and apply, visit the [Access for All Abilities Mini Grants webpage](#).

## Perspectives RI Resources

Perspectives is a local agency that offers developmental disability services. They offer services to both adults, youth, and families. Perspectives also has great online resources. Some worth exploring include:

- [Noticeably Invisible Podcast](#). The podcase shares real stories from adults with disabilities.
- [American Sign Language \(ASL\) class](#) from beginner to advanced.
- [Paid internships](#) for many professions.



## Elevatus Training: Research Study

Elevatus Training is a company that creates and gives trainings to adults with disabilities. Their trainings focus on sexuality and sexual health.

Elevatus Training is starting a research project to update their sexuality training. They are searching for adults with developmental disabilities aged 18 to 24 to take part in this project. People who join the project will be asked to join a Zoom call and take a survey. People will be given a \$50 gift card for joining.

To learn more, review the [Elevatus Training research study flyer](#).

# Community News

## Podcast Alert: Disability News You Can Use



### Episode 10, part 1 - Interview with Jim Wolpaw and Scott Hopkins on the Ladd film

[Disability News You Can Use](#) March 21, 2025

Join us to hear from Jim Wolpaw, an Oscar-nominated filmmaker, and Scott Hopkins, a member of the film crew. They'll talk about the history of the Ladd School and how they made the film *Best Judgements: Ladd School Lessons*

**The Ladd film will air on PBS on Thursday, May 8th at 8 pm.**

You can learn more about Ladd and upcoming opportunities to see the Ladd film at:

- [Facebook - Best Judgement - Ladd School Lessons](#)
- [Laddfilm.com](#)

#### Other resources:

- [PBS Documentary on the Ladd School](#)
- [The Ladd School](#)

Join Deanne Gagne and Andrew McQuaide as they talk about issues affecting people with disabilities in Rhode Island. They'll also share tips on how you can use what you learn from each episode in your daily life. Disability News You Can Use is sponsored by Advocates in Action Rhode Island, a group that helps people speak up for themselves.

# Community Resources

## March Awareness Month



March is **Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM)**. One way to celebrate is to learn more about the disability experience by those with a disability. Here is a list of films that have people with disabilities as the lead characters sharing their own stories:

1. [Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution](#). This is a documentary about a summer camp in the 1970's for people with disabilities. This story is part of the Disability Rights Movement.
2. [I didn't See You There](#). This is a documentary exploring the daily life of a person with a disability that uses a wheelchair. The story is told from the person's point of view, with the camera pointed away from them.
3. [Patrice](#). This is a documentary about Patrice, a woman with a disability. In the story, Patrice shares the challenges she had to overcome on her journey to marriage.
4. [Change, Not Charity: The Americans with Disabilities Act](#). This is a documentary about the path to equal rights for people with disabilities.

## Accessibility Tip: University of Rhode Island (URI) Cyber-Seniors

URI offers tech-training to older adults in the Cyber-Seniors Program. The program's goals are to:

- Teach older adults how to use technology to stay connected with others and explore things.
- Give young people volunteer experience working to help older adults build their tech skills.
- Build communities with strong relationships between younger and older people.

If you are interested in growing your tech skills, visit the [Cyber-Seniors webpage](#). You can sign-up for trainings, review old trainings, and find other resources. You can learn how to shop online safely, spot scams, and more.



# Community Resources

## Self-Care

As much as we would like to feel happy and hopeful everyday, there are times when we don't. One reason for this is we may face challenges we don't know how to solve yet. These challenges may be from work, our personal relationships, and/or world events.

The first thing to remember is unhappy feelings like sadness are normal. We all feel them at some point in our lives.

The second thing to remember is these unhappy feelings won't last forever.

Here are some tips to help you find hope when you're feeling down:

- Be patient and kind with yourself.
- Remember to eat, drink, and get enough sleep.
- Do small acts everyday to get closer to your goal.
- Connect with people closest to you and ask for help if you need it.
- Celebrate all your achievements, no matter how small (and yes, getting out of bed in the morning is a win!).



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

# Community Events

## Calendar of Events

Explore upcoming events in your community. Unless noted, these events are free and open to the public. You may have to sign-up a few days before the event to go.

Event	Date & Time	Location	Sign-up
“ABLE Accounts: A Pathway to Financial Empowerment for People with Disabilities” by Disability Employment TA Center	Tuesday, April 8, 2025, from 3-4pm	Online	Visit the <a href="#">ABLE Accounts events website to learn more and sign-up</a> .
“Transition Night” by The Sargent Center	Wednesday, April 9th from 6pm-8pm	800 Quaker Lane, Warwick	<a href="#">Sign-up for Transition Night online</a>
“What, Wait! You Want Me to Talk About Sexuality?” by Elevatus Training	Wednesday, April 15, 2025, and 2 other dates from 3-4pm	Online	<a href="#">Elevatus Training free online workshop sign-up webpage</a>
“Self-Directed Toolkit” by RIPIN	Saturday, April 26, 2025, at 10 am	Zoom and in-person	Learn more on the <a href="#">RIPIN Self-Directed Toolkit event page</a> .
“23rd Annual Imagine Walk & Family Fun Day!” by the Autism Project	Sunday, April 27, 2025, at 10am	Goddard Memorial State Park	<a href="#">Autism Project Annual Imagine Walk sign-up webpage</a>
“Mental Health Support for Consumers with I/DD” by RIPIN	Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 6pm	Zoom	Learn more on the <a href="#">RIPIN Mental Health Support for Consumers with I/DD webpage</a> .
“Annual Breakfast” by RIPIN	Thursday, May 22, 2025, from 8-10am	Crowne Plaza, Warwick	<a href="#">Annual Breakfast online sign-up webpage</a>
“Family Leadership Project 2.0” by Best Life RI and Starfire	TBD monthly sessions through Sept. from 6-7pm	Online	Visit the <a href="#">Best Life RI website</a> to sign-up

# 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.

# A Shared Living Story

## From Darkness to Love



Theresa's life was not going well. She thought that living with her fiancé would be the ultimate dream, but that is not what it turned out to be. Theresa lived in fear and terror of her fiancé who took advantage of her emotionally and financially. She needed out of the situation of which she had no control. When her fiancé became ill, she could no longer remain in his home. While living with her fiancé, she had become estranged from her family, so she could not reach out to them for help. It was a real emergency, and she contacted her state Social Caseworker who connected her with Living Innovations. So began her new life.

Gwen welcomed Theresa into her home, and she quickly became part of the family. She has reconnected with her family and sees them at least once a month. They are very happy to see her and note the big change in Theresa since she joined shared Living. Theresa is supported by going to all of her medical appointments and her health is greatly improved. While at her new day service she has made friends and taken on responsibilities as a volunteer (with a badge!). Most importantly, Theresa now feels good about herself. She is happy and states that she is "living her best life"! She is part of a family that she chose and most importantly has a life full of love.

This story was shared by Living Innovations. For more information about shared living, and more stories of success please visit the [Living Innovations website](https://www.livinginnovations.org).



## 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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## Communications and Training

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