



DD News and Updates

Newsletter

Volume 28

May 22, 2025

Inside This Issue

- Division Updates
- Community News
- Community Resources
- Community Events
- Reporting Abuse
- Staff Contact List
- Shared Resources



**The Division is closed Monday, May 26th
for the holiday.**

**You can sign-up to get your own copy of this
newsletter for free online.**

Website: www.bhddh.ri.gov

Email: BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov

Phone: 401.462.3421

ESPAÑOL: 401.462.3014

Division Updates

New Resource: CFCM Guidebook

The Division is excited to share a draft of a new resource with you! This resource is called the Conflict Free Case Management (CFCM) Guidebook. In the CFCM Guidebook, you will find information about:



1. **What Conflict Free Case Management (CFCM) is.** Learn about CFCM, why we have it, and who CFCM agencies are. Learn about staff giving CFCM.



2. **How CFCM works.** Learn how CFCM works, like meetings you will have and how you will write your plan. Learn how to find and pay for services.



3. **CFCM resources.** Learn where you can go if you are unhappy with your CFCM services. Learn other CFCM resources.

A copy of the draft CFCM Guidebook is shared with this newsletter. You can also find the draft CFCM Guidebook on the [Division's CFCM Services webpage](#). If you have any comments or suggestions about the draft guidebook, send them to BHDDH.DDComms@bhddh.ri.gov.

Division Updates

Recap of the Your Life, Your Rights Program

The first Your Life, Your Rights webinar series has ended! This program started on April 22nd. Once a week for 5 weeks community members like you joined us for a presentation about our rights. Topics included:

1. **DD Bill of rights:** Rights you have when it comes to your DD Services.
2. **Safety Rights:** Rights to be treated well and feel safe.
3. **Fair Treatment Rights (Anti-discrimination):** Rights to be treated fair.
4. **Healthcare Rights:** Rights to physical and mental health care.
5. **Relationship Rights:** Rights to different relationships.

If you missed any of these trainings, don't worry! We have training materials we will share on our website soon. We will also come back for part 2 of the series in the fall. For now, feel free to visit the [Your Life, Your Rights webpage](#) to learn what your rights are.

This project would not have been as successful without the help from the amazing staff at Advocates in Action! To everyone that helped us build the sign-up page, run the trainings online, and co-present with us, thank you!



Community News

Know Your Rights: Speak Up for Your Community

You can help make your world a better place! One way to do this is by supporting good laws or speaking out against ones you don't agree with. In this Know Your Rights tip, we'll share details on how to get involved at the state level and to make changes to your community.

Who Makes the rules in Rhode Island?

The Rhode Island General Assembly is where important decisions are made. It includes lawmakers, which are people we elect to represent us. These lawmakers work in the House of Representatives and the Senate. They make rules that affect programs, services, and opportunities for the community.

The [Rhode island General Assembly website](#) is a great resource. On it, you will find:

- A list of activities lawmakers are doing.
- News updates by lawmakers.
- Watch live or recorded videos of lawmaker meetings.
- Track bills (which are drafted laws that are not final yet) and laws that lawmakers are working on.

Why does this matter?

Let's say lawmakers are working on a new bill to improve accessibility in public spaces. If you use these spaces, this bill could impact you. You may want to follow the bill for updates, like when lawmakers are going to vote on it to become a law. You could visit the [General Assembly Bills & Laws webpage](#) to track the bill. It will help to know a few details about the bill, like its name and year.

How can this help make a difference?

Tracking or following a bill can help you plan how to respond to it. For example, if lawmakers are going to vote on a bill next month, then you could:

- Call your lawmaker's office to explain why you think the bill is a good or bad idea.
- Visit the State House for an open meeting so you can explain how you feel about the bill.
- Work with local agencies to support or oppose the bill.

Community News

Elevatus: Forming Relationships

In our lives, we will have different relationships. Some will be with family members, friends, people we work with, and romantic partners. Having good relationships is important to keep us healthy and less lonely. Making new friends can be hard, though. Thankfully, there are good online tools to help us. One example of a helpful resource is the [Elevatus Forming Relationships handout](#).

The Forming Relationships handout links to two training materials. One training material is about making friendships, and the second is about making romantic relationships. You can use these tools alone or get someone to help you work through them. This may be a support worker, family member, or other person you trust.

By using these tools, you will get practice:

- Figuring out what is friendly or unfriendly behavior from others.
- How to be kinder to others.
- How to tell if a relationship is romantic or not.
- Much more!



Accessibility Tip

When we make things accessible, we are making sure more people can enjoy what we make. There are many great resources about designing things that are accessible. One organization to visit for tips is the National Center on Accessible Digital Educational Materials & Instruction (NCADEMI). NCADEMI is a tech center from the US Department of Education. NCADEMI's goal is help schools better understand accessibility. Here are two helpful NCADEMI resources to check-out:

1. [Do-It-Yourself Accessibility Basics](#): this is a brief online guide to making learning material accessible.
2. [NCADEMI Webinars](#): this is a library of online trainings about accessibility.



Community Resources

May Mental Health Awareness Month



Mental health is as important as our physical health. The only difference is we often can't tell by looking at a person if their mental health is going well or not. For example, you might easily be able to tell if your friend has a cold because they may cough, sneeze, or have a runny nose. It could be harder for you to tell if your friend was feeling anxious or depressed. This is because mental illnesses happen inside a person's mind and impact things we can't see, like their thoughts and feelings.

Mental Health Awareness Month was created to teach more people about mental health. This not only helps us be there for people in our lives but also be there for ourselves. When we know more about mental health, then we are better able to tell if we or someone we care about is experiencing a mental illness.

Here are two resources you can visit to start learning more about mental health:

1. [Hartford Healthcare Institute of Living](#)

The Hartford Healthcare Institute of Living was one of the first mental health centers in the country. They care for patients, do mental health research, and more. While the services they offer are in Connecticut, their website has many helpful resources. They have a [Health & Wellness Resource page](#) where you can find videos, quizzes, and more about health. They also have a powerful [page about mental health success stories](#).

2. [Mental Health America](#)

Mental Health America is a nonprofit company focused on supporting positive mental health. They have a yearly conference to teach about important mental health topics. They also have an online resource library. This library includes different resource lists, like women's health, disaster tools, and more. They also have a [resource library in Spanish](#).

If you need mental health support now, call or text 988 or chat [988lifeline.org](#). If you are a member of the LGBTQ+ community, you can also visit the [Trevor Project](#).

Community Resources

Self-Care: Solving Conflicts

We all know it's important to be kind, but sometimes we don't agree with others. When this happens, we may find ourselves in a conflict. A **conflict** is an event where two or more people don't agree about something. Often, the people in the conflict feel angry and may start to argue.

Conflicts are not fun to be in, but they are normal and are not always a bad thing. A good conflict helps people learn from each other, even if they have different opinions. Conflicts become bad if they grow into name calling or something much worse.

There are ways we can try to take control over a conflict, so it stops growing and ends. Here are some ways to solve conflicts:

1. Be open and curious about learning how the other person thinks and feels. You don't have to agree with them. Focus on learning what is making them upset about the topic. What do they think the problem is?
2. Share your side of the story. Try using "I" statements to make yourself clear. Try to share your story in a calm way.
3. Work with the other person to solve the problem instead of blaming each other. This is called a compromise. A **compromise** is a solution you and the other person agree to.
4. Know when to quit. If you and the person can't talk to each other in a calm way, it is okay to stop. Agree to disagree and move on. Decide to talk later when you both have a chance to calm down.

The information on this page came from two websites you can visit to learn more:

1. [HelpGuide.org](https://www.helpguide.org)
2. [University of Washington](https://www.washington.edu)



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
"Friendships at Work" by Advancing Employment	Tuesday, May 27, 2025, 2-3pm	Online	Learn more and sign-up on the Advancing Employment website.
"Let's Talk About Money" by Sherlock Center	Wednesday, May 28, 2025, 4:30-6:30pm	Sherlock Center, Rhode Island College	Learn more and sign-up on the Talk About Money event page.
"Advocacy Day" by Community Provider Network of Rhode Island (CPNRI)	Tuesday, June 3, 2025, 2:30pm	Rhode Island State House (82 Smith Street, Providence)	CPNRI Advocacy Day sign-up.
"You Can Work with Benefits!" by Sherlock Center	Tuesday, June 3, 2025, 5:30-7pm	Zoom	You Can Work with Benefits event sign-up.
"Work Pays! An Introduction to Youth SSI Work Incentives" by Sherlock Center	Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 12-1pm	Zoom	Work Pays online sign-up.
"Introduction to Person-Centered Thinking" by Sherlock Center	Mondays and Wednesdays, June 16, 18, 23 and 25 4-5:30pm	Zoom	Person-Centered Thinking event page.
"Scoop, Snack, Chat: A Sweet Social Gathering" by RIPIN	Wednesday, June 26, 2025, 4pm-6:30pm	imPOSSIBLE Dream, Warwick	Sign-up details will be shared soon.
"Family Leadership Project 2.0" by Best Life RI and Starfire	TBD monthly sessions through Sept. from 6-7pm	Online	Visit the Best Life RI website 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.

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



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. Please do not email critical issues.

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

Community Story

The Sterile Sight of the Green Tile Walls by David C. Reiss CEO, The Fogarty Center

The pale green tile walls, the pungent odor of bodily functions and cleaning fluids, and the echoing sound of the steel ward door locking shut, has not been lost on me 47 years later. That was 1978, my first day “in” Ward 47, Riverfield Building, Ladd School. I was an Institutional Attendant.

Amazingly, I went back to work the next day and the day after and..... Little did I realize that I would eventually become the Chief Executive Officer of the Fogarty Center. Now in my 35th year in that capacity, I am retiring in July '25.

It has often been a roller coaster ride, one with a rich colorful history and enough stories to write a trilogy. It has been the perfect job for me. As Mr. Spock from Star Trek would say, “This was my first best destiny”. I am truly blessed.

I’ve witnessed many changes in philosophies, administrations, funding, you name it. In my opinion I can’t say they have all been effective or desirable, but change is always a catalyst for reflection and improvement. It takes time.

Over the years, our Fogarty team has created an impressive agency. In scope and size, we have expanded systematically to meet the evolving needs of those we support. If I have done anything well in my 35 years as CEO, it was to have a good eye for talent and hire the best people I can. Total team effort!

We are a family here, one I do not like thinking of leaving, but it’s time. Come July, Fogarty’s current Chief Operating Officer (COO) Heather Alge will become the new CEO. The agency will be turned over to an excellent administrator. I am thankful for that. My place in history will be looked upon as just one steppingstone towards the greater good.

One of my prouder accomplishments was my role in developing the Self-Directed Program. My old colleague Nancy and I started this program with about 8 people back in 1993-94. Today we have approximately 2000 self-directed employers with well over 3000 employees, spread between two state departments. Self-direction has taken on a life of its own. Heather recently called me the Godfather of Self-Direction. I like that. “I have an offer you can’t refuse”.

Community Story

The Sterile Sight of the Green Tile Walls Part 2

While I have had an important role in the development of the agency and to an extent the development of State services, it is a testament to everyone I have been associated with over the years. You have all been my mentors. I want to thank my family, Fogarty's board of directors, our administrative staff, our DSP's, State of RI employees, and my contemporaries from other agencies.

Most importantly, I am grateful to have had the wonderful opportunity to meet, learn and grow from so many families and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Truly the source of all my passion and commitment. Unmistakenly the best part of my day. Always kept me balanced. Stay person focused and you will always choose the right path. Happiness and good health you all.

David C. Reiss





Division of Developmental Disabilities Staff Contacts

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

Administrative Team

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Kevin Savage	Director	462-0581	Kevin.Savage@bhddh.ri.gov
Anne LeClerc	Associate Director, Prog Performance	462-0192	Anne.LeClerc@bhddh.ri.gov
Brenda DuHamel	Associate Director, Admin Services	462-3010	Brenda.DuHamel@bhddh.ri.gov
Christine Botts	Deputy Administrator	462-2766	Christine.Botts@bhddh.ri.gov
Cindy Fusco	Interdepartmental Project Manager	462-6689	Cynthia.Fusco@bhddh.ri.gov
Heather Mincey	Assistant Director	462-1218	Heather.Mincey@bhddh.ri.gov
Natalie Munoz	Chief Implementation Aide	462-3016	Natalie.Munoz@bhddh.ri.gov
Susan Hayward	Administrator, Transition	462-2519	Susan.Hayward@bhddh.ri.gov
Tracy Levesque	Associate Director, Clinical and RICLAS	462-0209	Tracy.Levesque@bhddh.ri.gov

Social Caseworker Units

Unit 1

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Marguerite Belisle	Casework Supervisor II	462-0714	Marguerite.Belisle@bhddh.ri.gov
Amie Adams	Social Caseworker II	462-2480	Amie.Adams@bhddh.ri.gov
GinaMarie Debartolo	Social Caseworker II	462-3402	GinaMarie.Debartolo@bhddh.ri.gov
Suzanne Porter	Social Caseworker II	462-1972	Suzanne.Porter@bhddh.ri.gov
Kaitlin Sarkees	Social Caseworker II	462-4075	Kaitlin.Sarkees@bhddh.ri.gov
Heather Soares	Social Caseworker II	462-6097	Heather.Soares@bhddh.ri.gov

Unit 2

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Mary Beth Stevens	Casework Supervisor II	462-2438	Marybeth.Stevens@bhddh.ri.gov
Timothy Cronin	Social Caseworker II	462-1721	Timothy.Cronin@bhddh.ri.gov
Jennifer Gouveia	Social Caseworker II	462-0098	Jennifer.Gouveia@bhddh.ri.gov
Erin Simonelli	Social Caseworker II	462-2502	Erin.Simonelli@bhddh.ri.gov
Lena Sousa	Social Caseworker II	462-1834	Lena.Sousa@bhddh.ri.gov
Joseph Tevyaw	Social Caseworker II	462-2474	Joseph.Tevyaw@bhddh.ri.gov

Unit 3

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Stacey Perry	Casework Supervisor II	462-2418	Stacey.Perry@bhddh.ri.gov
Mary Cameron	Social Caseworker II	462-1307	Mary.Cameron@bhddh.ri.gov
Judy Coit	Social Caseworker II	462-1327	judith.coit@bhddh.ri.gov
JoAnn DiMuccio	Social Caseworker II	462-2523	JoAnn.DiMuccio@bhddh.ri.gov
Katrina Ferry	Social Caseworker II	462-2529	katrina.ferry@bhddh.ri.gov
Megan Gilbert	Social Caseworker II	462-2524	Megan.Gilbert@bhddh.ri.gov
Dayna Hansen	Social Caseworker II	462-2505	Dayna.Hansen@bhddh.ri.gov
Heidy Henriquez	Social Caseworker II	462-3022	heidy.henriquez@bhddh.ri.gov
Crystal Morel	Social Caseworker II	462-1329	Crystal.Morel@bhddh.ri.gov

Eligibility Unit

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Karen Lowell	Caseworker Supervisor II/Elig Sup	462-2209	Karen.Lowell@bhddh.ri.gov
Louise White	Public Health Nurse Consultant	462-0089	Louise.White@bhddh.ri.gov
Jill Murphy	Social Caseworker II	462-2409	Jill.Murphy@bhddh.ri.gov
Kim Wright	Information Aide	462-2584	Kimberly.Wright@bhddh.ri.gov

SIS Unit

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Donna Standish	Caseworker Supervisor II/SIS Sup	462-2628	Donna.Standish@bhddh.ri.gov
Meaghan Jencks	Caseworker Supervisor II/SIS Sup	462-2113	Meaghan.Jencks@bhddh.ri.gov
Stephanie Andreozzi	Implementation Aide	462-1859	Stephanie.Andreozzi@bhddh.ri.gov
Wendy Cormier	Social Caseworker II	462-1302	Wendy.Cormier@bhddh.ri.gov
Jamie Fitzgibbons	Social Caseworker II	462-2510	Jamie.Fitzgibbons@bhddh.ri.gov
Timothy Phok	Social Caseworker II	462-4290	timothy.phok@bhddh.ri.gov
Jessica Rodriguez	Social Caseworker II	462-3233	Jessica.Rodriguez@bhddh.ri.gov

Transition Unit

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Susan Hayward	Administrator, YIT	462-2519	Susan.Hayward@bhddh.ri.gov
Carolee Leach	Prof. Services Coordinator	462-1723	Carolee.Leach@bhddh.ri.gov
Laurie Rossi	Implementation Aide	462-2563	Laurie.Rossi@bhddh.ri.gov

Case Management Units

Unit 1

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Souphalak Muriel	Casework Supervisor II	462-2512	Souphalak.Muriel@bhddh.ri.gov
Alex Blue	Social Caseworker II	864-5403	Alex.Blue@bhddh.ri.gov
Cayla Cozzo	Social Caseworker II	864-1944	Cayla.Cozzo@bhddh.ri.gov
Liana Fontaine	Social Caseworker II	864-7622	Liana.Fontaine@bhddh.ri.gov
Nathaniel Mazza	Social Caseworker II	864-6934	Nathaniel.Mazza@bhddh.ri.gov
Mellissa Parham	Social Caseworker II	864-1103	Mellissa.Parham@bhddh.ri.gov
Melanie Reyes	Social Caseworker II	864-4872	Melanie.Reyes@bhddh.ri.gov
Karen Schmid	Social Caseworker II	864-2590	Karen.Schmid@bhddh.ri.gov
Jennea Young	Social Caseworker II	864-1506	Jennea.Young@bhddh.ri.gov

Unit 2

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Yolande Ramos	Casework Supervisor II	462-1059	Yolande.Ramos@bhddh.ri.gov
Erin Hagopian	Social Caseworker II	864-2854	Erin.Hagopian@bhddh.ri.gov
Cassandra Killingham	Social Caseworker II	864-3728	Cassandra.Killingham@bhddh.ri.gov
Erica MacDougall	Social Caseworker II	479-0584	Erica.Macdougall@bhddh.ri.gov
Beth-Ann Myers	Social Caseworker II	864-0198	Bethann.Myers@bhddh.ri.gov
Glenn Vario	Social Caseworker II	529-0720	Glenn.Vario@bhddh.ri.gov
Christine Warren	Social Caseworker II	864-0666	Christine.Warren@bhddh.ri.gov

Community Services

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Heather Mincey	Assistant Director	462-1218	Heather.Mincey@bhddh.ri.gov
Elvys Ruiz	Administrator III, Employment	462-3857	Elvys.Ruiz@bhddh.ri.gov
Gerard (Jay) MacKay	Associate Administrator, Employment	462-5279	Gerard.Mackay@bhddh.ri.gov
Jackie Camilloni	Coordinator, Self Direction	462-6608	Jackie.Camilloni@bhddh.ri.gov
Steven Seay	Coordinator, Integrated Comm Services	462-6609	Steven.Seay@bhddh.ri.gov

Residential

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Tracy Levesque	Associate Director, Clinical and RICLAS	462-0209	Tracy.Levesque@bhddh.ri.gov
Melissa Greenlief	Administrator, Community Services	462-2459	Melissa.Greenlief@bhddh.ri.gov

Communications and Training

Name	Job Title	Phone	Email
Anne LeClerc	Associate Director, Prog Performance	462-0192	Anne.LeClerc@bhddh.ri.gov
Johanna Mercado	Coordinator, Communications	462-6646	Johanna.Mercado@bhddh.ri.gov
Amethys Nieves	Associate Admin, Communications	462-6629	Amethys.Nieves@bhddh.ri.gov
Kelly Petersen	Chief of Training, Staff Development and CQI	462-6592	Kelly.Petersen@bhddh.ri.gov
Christine Allenson	Programming Services Officer	462-0126	christine.allenson@bhddh.ri.gov
Peter Joly	Principal Community Development and Training Specialist	462-6638	Peter.Joly@bhddh.ri.gov
Robin Gannon	Clinical Training Specialist	462-6691	Robin.Gannon@bhddh.ri.gov