



**National Developmental Disability Professionals Day is July 15th**

*Day honors professionals' contributions in lives of people with developmental disabilities*



Developmental disability professionals ensure that people are living full, meaningful lives. Their work is all about helping others, but on July 15, the day will be devoted to recognizing them.

“These professionals are like so many other workers in the field of human services in that their work, while appreciated, often goes without formal recognition,” said Connie Melvin, director of The National Association of Qualified Intellectual Disability Professionals (NAQ). “It is important to remember that these are incredibly valuable professionals.”

Developmental disability professionals have stepped up to face the multitude of challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, and to find creative solutions to help the people they support stay engaged and connected, Melvin added. “Now, more than ever, it is important to recognize everything these folks do,” she said. “If you think about what people are sacrificing to keep people safe during the pandemic, it’s coming at a price to themselves and their families.” This is an opportunity to formally recognize the work they are doing each day.

“Developmental disability professionals provide services to some of the most vulnerable people in our country,” Melvin said. “They do so because they recognize that all people are an inherently valuable and important part of the fabric of our communities. Developmental disability professionals are resilient in times of challenge, uncompromising in the provision of outstanding supports and tenacious advocates for positive change. They have played a critical part in advancing the rights of people with developmental disabilities and deserve recognition for their tireless efforts to this end.”

The National Association of Qualified Intellectual Disability Professionals (NAQ) was formed in 1996 to meet the needs of DD Professionals. NAQ provides an avenue for connecting with other professionals, sharing evidence-based best practices, and serving as a resource for learning and continued education. For more information about Developmental Disability Professionals Day and NAQ, visit [www.gddp.org](http://www.gddp.org).

**BHDDH Moving Back to Simpson and Barry Halls**

Starting this week, BHDDH staff will be moving out of the Hazard Building and back to the Simpson Hall offices. Others will move back to Barry Hall in the coming weeks. Phone numbers and other contact information have not changed.

## REV-UP: National Disability Voter Registration Week July 13-17

Join the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), along with many other advocates and organizations, to show the power of the Disability Vote this week. Learn how you can get ready to vote in the 2020 elections at [www.aapd.com/ndvrw](http://www.aapd.com/ndvrw).

#REVUP #NDVRW #DisabilityVote [American Association of People with Disabilities](http://www.aapd.com)

You can register to vote in RI online at this link:

<https://vote.sos.ri.gov/Home/RegistertoVote?ActiveFlag=1>



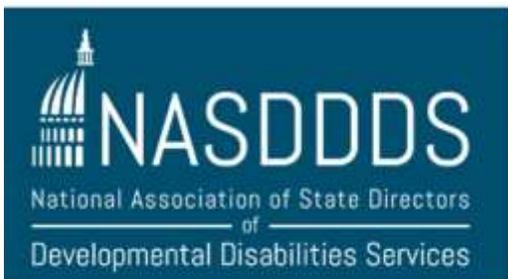
**NATIONAL DISABILITY  
VOTER REGISTRATION WEEK  
JULY 13-17, 2020**

[www.aapd.com/ndvrw](http://www.aapd.com/ndvrw)

**A REV UP CAMPAIGN INITIATIVE**



## NASDDDS Celebrates 30 Years of the Americans with Disabilities Act



NASDDDS celebrates the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act all month on social media highlighting the road the advocacy community traveled to enact this groundbreaking federal legislation. Our month-long celebration culminates in the release of a podcast on July 26 focusing on the past, present, and future of the ADA.

The podcast, entitled, *Three Big Questions*, will pose the same three questions to people with I/DD across our nation to analyze how far we have progressed since the passing of the ADA and what challenges may be ahead for this community. We will also touch on the intersection of disability and race along with other social justice concerns pushing our services to evolve. Do not miss it! #NASDDDScelebrates #ADA30 **Follow NASDDDS on Facebook [@NasdddsUS](https://www.facebook.com/NasdddsUS)**

## Advocates Urge Congress to Act on HCBS Funding for People with I/DD

A number of individuals and groups “fighting for the inclusion and equitable treatment of people with I/DD and their families and the trained professionals who support them” sent a letter to House and Senate leadership to express “concern over the federal government’s response to protect people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.” The letter points out that “individuals with I/DD are at heightened risk during this global pandemic,” and argues that it is “a matter of human rights” to make sure they are protected.

Many people with I/DD, the letter observes, “live in group homes and rely daily on caregivers who provide support to them around-the-clock, all-year-round,” which “means social distancing and quarantine measures may not be just inconvenient for people with I/DD but restrict their ability to carry out daily self-care functions.” Federal funding will help ensure their continuity of care, the letter continues, urging Congress to “support provider protections and the dedicated 10 percent FMAP increase for HCBS providers and the increase in the global FMAP included in the HEROES Act,” since “both are essential to provide stability to the Medicaid program for people with I/DD and are urgently needed as none of the funding that has flowed from the prior relief packages have supported these systems.”

Read the letter at:

[https://www.ancor.org/sites/default/files/joint\\_letter\\_to\\_congressional\\_leaders\\_-\\_protect\\_people\\_with\\_intellectual\\_and\\_developmental\\_disabilities\\_6.18.20.pdf](https://www.ancor.org/sites/default/files/joint_letter_to_congressional_leaders_-_protect_people_with_intellectual_and_developmental_disabilities_6.18.20.pdf) [ancor.org].

## Silver Linings

### **Simple Breathing Can Turn The Tables On Stress**

“Just breathe” is basic advice that’s easy to ignore. But when dealing with increased stress—as we are during these strange pandemic weeks—simple, controlled breathing is one of the best tools available for getting a grip on our emotions and the effects of stress on our bodies. And it happens to be the one tool we don’t have to go anywhere to find — it’s accessible with just a bit of advice and a little time.

**Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth with a simple, controlled breathing exercise like [box breathing](#), [bubble breathing](#) or the [4-7-8 method](#).** You can find these and other exercises described many places online and in a variety of relaxation [apps](#). The specific exercise isn’t important – what matters is finding a straightforward way of facilitating controlled breathing.

According to the Mayo Clinic, intentional deep breathing can actually calm and regulate the autonomic nervous system (ANS). This system regulates involuntary body functions such as temperature. It can lower blood pressure and provide an almost immediate sense of calm.

The well-researched benefits of controlled breathing include **regulating heart rate and blood pressure, tapping into the brain's emotional control regions, and potentially even sharpening your memory.** On the more speculative end of the research, it's also possible that controlled breathing may boost the immune system and improve energy metabolism.

The bottom line: simple, controlled breathing is one of the most efficient, straightforward stress-management tools available to us, and we don't have to go anywhere or buy anything to get it. Just breathe.



### Nature makes us happy



A new study from BBC Earth and the University of California, Berkeley has revealed that watching nature documentaries can make you happier, so BBC Earth is on a mission to bring real happiness to as many people as possible by improving their connection to the natural world.

If you can't get outside, check out these sources of nature videos:

BBC Earth <https://www.bbcearth.com/>

GoPro Walking Tours [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=gopro+walking+tour](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=gopro+walking+tour)

Nature Relaxation Films <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4lp9Emg1ci8eo2eDkK-Tag>

### Love on the Spectrum

**Netflix series premiering on July 22 follows young adults on the autism spectrum through their dating lives**

<https://screenrant.com/everything-to-know-netflix-love-on-the-spectrum/>

Excerpted from article by Saylee Padwal

*"It doesn't matter whether you're on the spectrum or not, everyone has a basic human right and a basic human need of connection and love,"* says Jodi Rodgers, the relationship specialist from Netflix's soon to launch, ***Love on the Spectrum***, a 4-part docuseries that follows individuals who are on the autism spectrum and showcases their dating experiences. Arriving on July 22, the show that first debuted on ABC Australia in November 2019 is all about love and the fact that it doesn't discriminate.

With an objective to combat the misconception that autistic people can't have meaningful relationships, the show features a bunch of 20-somethings that are new to dating, and also those who are navigating long term relationships. The Aussie dating series has already won major accolades for shedding light on what love is like when you're not neurotypical and has also been reviewed for a second season. The most unique aspect of *Love on the Spectrum* is how the show beautifully explores each cast member's unique experience of autism, thereby giving the audience a much broader understanding of the subject of neurodiversity. What all of them have in common though, is the fact

that they're all looking for love. By making the audience realize that most people on the spectrum also have the same desires for intimacy and belonging as the rest of the world, the show also speaks about how social interaction and communication is what makes finding love a difficult experience for the individuals. As well as following individuals seeking love, the makers have also included couples in the series because they felt it was important to tell positive stories that can serve as inspiration for people out there who are struggling to find someone special.

The participants receive advice on social skills and dating tips from the show's experts Jodi Rodgers, and Dr Elizabeth Laugeson. Dr Laugeson is a licensed clinical psychologist and an Associate Clinical Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior. She is also the Founder and Director of the UCLA PEERS® Clinic, which is an outpatient hospital-based program providing parent-assisted social skills training for preschoolers, adolescents and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other social impairments. Meanwhile, relationship coach and specialist Jodi Rodgers started her career as a special education teacher and spent twelve years with ASPECT (Autism Spectrum Australia). Since then, she has worked in Australia and internationally for over 20 years helping people equip themselves with life tools that will move them out of the rut and towards finding life and work relationships that are true to who they are.

The casting process too, has been extensive with the team speaking to hundreds of people who were interested in being a part of the show, which confirmed the real need for assistance. They also worked closely with autism and disability organisations to ensure the production was sensitive to the needs of people on the spectrum.

As the participants on the show invite the cameras into their lives and allow the audience to get up close and personal with their love stories, they also clear out any misconceptions about autism and romance. Their stories are diverse, personal, and the couples are warm, generously open, with a great sense of humor. There are awkward moments, yes, especially ones that would be expected from two people going on a date for the very first time, but the show handles them delicately and makes them endearing.

Like series producer and director, Cian O'Clery adds, *"As a storyteller, I felt we had an opportunity to explore this issue by shining a light on the struggles many people on the spectrum face in seeking out meaningful relationships. I hope this series will start conversations, help bring about understanding and acceptance, and ultimately inspire people with Autism, their families and society at large to find ways to help people on the spectrum find love."* O'Clery, who also created an Australian series titled *Employable Me* that features neurodiverse job seekers had expressed that he got the idea of making *Love on the Spectrum* because he kept encountering the myth that people on the spectrum aren't interested in love. The representation of autism on our screens is fairly limited, he thinks and hopes that ***Love on the Spectrum*** will help broaden the picture.

You can watch the show's [trailer](#) here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=3&v=k8PJq8GccJQ&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=k8PJq8GccJQ&feature=emb_logo)



## Just for Fun

# Skittles Science

Who knew the science to be learned from a pack of Skittles and a little warm water! This **Skittles Experiment** is super simple and the results are fascinating. In fact, this is one science experiment that easily fits into the captivating and magical category. The actual science at play involves what's known as the concentration gradient.

### You will need:

- 1 package of Skittles candy
- 1 large white dinner plate
- Warm water

### Directions:

1. Place your dinner plate on a stable surface.
2. Arrange the Skittles in a circle around the edge of the plate. Arrange the colors randomly or in a pattern.
3. Gently pour the warm water into the center of the plate. Pour just enough water to cover the bottom of the Skittles. Do not add too much water, you don't want the Skittles to float out of position.
4. Wait a few seconds. The colors from the Skittles will start to spread slowly towards the middle of the plate.
5. Continue until the colors meet in the middle.

### Extension Ideas

- One the colors have met in the middle see what happens if you place a sugar cube in the middle of the plate.
- Try the activity with both M&Ms and Gobstoppers to see if they have the same result.
- Try hot water instead of cold water.
- Test other liquids such as vinegar, seltzer, milk, or soda.



## 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

## Stay Informed with Information on COVID-19

### Rhode Island Department of Health COVID-19 Resources

Hotline (401) 222-8022 or 211 after hours;

Email [RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov](mailto:RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov)

Website <https://health.ri.gov/covid/>

### Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Information

Website [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Videos <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/videos.html>

*Includes a link to ASL videos*

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

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

### RI Parent Information Network (RIPIN)

Website <https://ripin.org/covid-19-resources/>

Call Center (401) 270-0101 or email [callcenter@ripin.org](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*

## Sign Up for Our Email List

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



DD Community Newsletter  
SIGN UP FOR THE BHDDH NEWSLETTER

## Contacting the Division

The department is working on a reduced workforce and therefore calls should not be placed directly to your social caseworker. DDD has put 24-hour phone coverage in place with a central business hour phone number and an on-call number for nights and weekends.

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



# REOPENING RI

## The COVID-19 Risks of 10 Common Summer Activities and Ways to Reduce Your Risk

Your personal risk depends on your age and health, the prevalence of the virus in your area and the precautions you take during any of these activities.

### 1 Spending the day at a beach or pool



#### LOWER RISK

**Risk factors:** Distance from others; shared spaces, such as bathrooms and concession areas.

**Reducing risk:** Ensure proper physical distancing; avoid shared spaces; wear a mask in crowded areas; beaches are safer than pools, go in the morning or late afternoon to avoid crowds; bring your own food and drinks; wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

### 2 Going to a vacation house with another family



#### LOWER RISK

**Risk factors:** Activity/risk levels of those traveling together; risk of environmental cleaning BEFORE you stay there.

**Reducing risk:** Set expectations about precautions to take for two weeks before trip and while there; make sure no one is sick; clean major surfaces in the house upon arrival; wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

### 3 Exercising outdoors



#### LOWER RISK

**Risk factors:** Contact level (i.e. running, golf, and tennis are safer than basketball and football); distance from others; shared equipment; size of group.

**Reducing risk:** Wear a mask if you can't keep 6 feet of physical distance; better to avoid touching shared objects like a ball; wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

### 4 A BYOB backyard gathering with one other household



#### LOWER RISK

**Risk factors:** Who's invited? What have their behaviors been?

**Reducing risk:** Avoid sharing food, drinks, utensils; limit alcohol consumption (makes people less careful, increases need to go in house to use bathroom); wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

### 5 Going camping



#### LOWER TO MEDIUM RISK

**Risk factors:** Size of group; physical distancing; common areas; sanitation.

**Reducing risk:** Choose more isolated locations instead of busy camping areas; self-contained RVs are safer than using shared bathroom/shower facilities; limit contact with others; wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

# REOPENING RI

## 6 Staying at a hotel



### LOWER TO MEDIUM RISK

**Risk factors:** Time spent in common areas such as the lobby, gym, restaurant, elevator.  
**Reducing risk:** Bring disinfecting wipes to wipe down common surfaces; remove the bedspread; ask about the cleaning policies of the hotel; use knuckle of little or ring finger to press elevator buttons; take the stairs, if possible, and avoid taking the elevator with other people; wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

## 7 Watching a youth or adult athletic event



### LOWER TO MEDIUM RISK

**Risk factors:** Number of spectators, physical distance between spectators, compliance with face covering requirement, community spread of COVID-19 in area where game is being held (games can be played between teams within Rhode Island as well as outside of Rhode Island, provided that there isn't a stay-at-home order or other travel restrictions in that state), using public restrooms or portable toilets.  
**Reducing risk:** Follow recommendations for no more than 2 spectators per player, wear face coverings, keep physical distance from other spectators and players, bring your own food/drink, wash hands/use hand sanitizer.

## 8 Eating outdoors at a restaurant



### LOWER TO MEDIUM RISK

**Risk Factors:** Physical distancing; other customers' compliance with physical distancing and mask wearing; restaurant's compliance with ReopeningRI guidelines (i.e. spacing of tables, reduced capacity dining, compliance of servers wearing masks, access to hand-washing stations, individually wrapped condiments and utensils.)  
**Reducing Risk:** Minimize the size of your party; only go with members of your household; avoid busy times; keep face covering on when not eating; stay 6 feet apart from other parties; wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

## 9 An outdoor celebration such as a wedding



### MEDIUM TO HIGHER RISK

**Risk factors:** Large crowds, extended face-to-face conversations, drinking, dancing  
**Reducing risk:** Keep gathering small with mostly local guests; limit alcohol consumption; urge older, vulnerable people to consider risks; stay 6 feet apart from other guests, don't closely mingle; wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

## 10 Going shopping at a mall



### RISK VARIES

**Risk factors:** Type of mall, how crowded, how much time you spend there.  
**Reducing risk:** Don't browse or stay in one area for too long; go to an outdoor mall; less busy malls are better; avoid the food court; avoid busy hours; wear a mask; wash hands or use hand sanitizer.

# REOPENING RI

## Wearing a Face Covering in the Summer



It's important to wear a face covering whenever you go out – even when it's hot outside – if you are not able to continuously maintain 6 feet of distance between other people.

### Wearing Your Face Covering

- Use two or more layers of 100% cotton material.
- The lighter the color, the less heat it will attract.
- Keep an extra with you to change out in the heat.
- Using clean hands, fit it over your nose and mouth.
- Once it's on, keep hands off except when removing!
- Use clean hands to remove.
- Wash your face afterwards.
- If you have respiratory issues or other underlying health issues, contact your healthcare provider regarding face coverings and other COVID-19 preventive measures.



### Caring for Your Face Covering

- Wash with soap and hot water after each use.
- Discard if they become worn or won't remain in place comfortably.

If you have to wear a face covering for an extended period of time, take a break and get some fresh air when you can safely do so.

Take measures to reduce heat exhaustion:

[health.ri.gov/beatheat](https://health.ri.gov/beatheat)

[health.ri.gov/stopthespread](https://health.ri.gov/stopthespread)



[reopeningri.com](https://reopeningri.com) | [health.ri.gov/covid](https://health.ri.gov/covid)

An official publication of the State of Rhode Island.



**RHODE  
ISLAND**

# REOPENING RI

## COVID-19 Screening Tool

Recommended tool to screen employees, clients, and/or visitors for symptoms of COVID-19.

### SYMPTOMS

HAVE YOU HAD ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS IN THE PAST THREE DAYS THAT ARE NOT EXPLAINED BY ALLERGIES OR A NON-INFECTIOUS CAUSE?	YES	NO
COUGH		
SHORTNESS OF BREATH OR DIFFICULTY BREATHING		
FEVER OR CHILLS		
MUSCLE OR BODY ACHES		
SORE THROAT		
HEADACHE		
NAUSEA OR VOMITING		
DIARRHEA		
RUNNY NOSE OR STUFFY NOSE		
FATIGUE		
RECENT LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL		

### RISK FACTORS

	YES	NO
Have you been in close contact (less than six feet) with anyone with COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days? <sup>1</sup>		
Have you traveled anywhere outside the 50 United States in the past 14 days?		
Have you traveled to Rhode Island for a non-work-related purpose from a location with a high community spread rate (see list maintained by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) at <a href="http://www.health.ri.gov/covid">www.health.ri.gov/covid</a> )? <sup>2</sup>		
Have you been directed to quarantine or isolate by the Rhode Island Department of Health or a healthcare provider in the past 14 days? If so, when does/did your quarantine or isolation period end?		
<p><b>IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED “YES” TO ANY OF THE QUESTIONS ABOVE, AND YOU CANNOT EXPLAIN THESE SYMPTOMS BY KNOWN ALLERGIES OR NON-INFECTIOUS ILLNESSES, THEN YOU CANNOT ENTER THIS BUILDING FOR THE SAFETY OF OTHERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Employees:</b> Please contact your supervisor and your Human Resources representative.</li> <li>• <b>Visitors:</b> Please call to discuss when you can return to this facility.</li> </ul>		

<sup>1</sup> Does not apply to people who come into contact with people with symptoms of COVID-19 during the course of their daily work while wearing full and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html> for more information.

<sup>2</sup> Public health, public safety, and healthcare workers are exempt. Does not apply to anyone traveling for medical treatment, to attend funeral or memorial services, to obtain necessities like groceries, gas, or medication, to drop off or pick up children from day care, summer camps, or to anyone who must work on their boats. Does not apply to people who have had a negative COVID-19 test from a specimen taken no more than 72 hours prior to arrival in Rhode Island

07/03/2020

