



DAWN AWAKENINGS

Awaken to Independence

September 2010

BILL ESTABLISHES REGISTRY TO PROTECT PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Governor Chris Christie has signed a bill that would create a statewide registry of caregivers for people with developmental disabilities who have harmed someone who they were supposed to protect.

This new law, sponsored by New Jersey Senate President Stephen M. Sweeney, establishes a Central Registry of Offenders against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities to prevent caregivers with a history of abuse from harming other individuals.

“We owe it to our most vulnerable residents to ensure they are given every protection from being unknowingly placed in the care of an abuser,” said Sweeney. “This registry will give New Jersey families of individuals with developmental disabilities peace of mind that they don’t have to worry about whether the person caring for their loved one truly has their best interests at heart.

The registry will include caregivers against whom allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation have been substantiated. Anyone listed in the registry will be prohibited from employment in a facility or program run by the Division of Developmental Disabilities or a licensed affiliate. Employers serving vulnerable populations will have access to the registry to determine whether potential or current employees have a history of abuse. According to data from the Arc of New Jersey, an individual with a developmental disability has a 90 percent chance of being sexually abused at some point during his or her life – yet only three percent of those cases will be reported.

BILL WOULD INCREASE ASSET LIMITS FOR SSI RECIPIENTS

A bipartisan bill sponsored by Massachusetts Congresswoman Niki Tsongas and Wisconsin Congressman Tom Petri would reform the “asset test” in the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, making it easier for people to save money and still benefit from the federal program. SSI is the primary provider of subsistence cash to extremely low – income individuals, seniors and people with disabilities.

The SSI Savers Act of 2010 (H.R. 4937) would remove savings disincentives in SSI in several ways:

- The Bill would raise the “asset limit” for individuals in the program from \$ 2,000 to \$ 5,000; for couples the limit would increase \$ 3,000 to \$ 7,500
- The Bill would change the way in which assets are counted. Currently, SSI counts all resources, including retirement accounts, such as 401 (k)s and IRAs. The bill would exclude retirement savings for those under age 65 who are not living in an institution from being counted toward assets. Education Savings Accounts and Individual Development Accounts.

- For those 65 and older who are living in an institution, the bill would exclude savings in Retirement accounts below \$10,000 for an individual and \$ 15,000 for a couple or household.
- It would change the way in which income is defined, so that 1/3 of the income from a retirement account for those 65 or older would be excluded as well.

Advocates have called for reforms to Social Security to allow people with disabilities to save a modest amount, and earn a modest income while still on the program. For more information go to: http://www.washingtonwatch.com/bill/show/1111_HR_4937/html.

The bill was originally introduced in the US House of Representatives on March 3, 2010 and was referred to the House Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Supports.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK - CARMELA SLIVINSKI

I am thrilled to share some very exciting news with DAWN members, consumers and colleagues. For many years, the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) has identified the areas of Sussex and Warren counties as underserved in the State Plan for Independent Living for New Jersey (SPIL). The SPIL is a document submitted by the SILC to Rehabilitative Services Administration (RSA) at the federal level which details how Independent Living dollars are to be used within the state. The priorities in the document are based on consumer input gathered through various methods, including surveys and public forums. By identifying Sussex and Warren counties as underserved, the SILC laid the foundation for a new Center for Independent Living (CIL) to be created in that area should additional funds be made available to NJ.

Last year, as a result of the "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act", NJ received enough funds to support a new CIL. These funds were available through a competitive bid and DAWN submitted a proposal for the funds. While DAWN has always served the Sussex and Warren county area with a very limited amount of resources, this was an opportunity to finally begin to offer services to those communities in a more comprehensive manner. The proposal was submitted in June of this year and in late September; we were informed that our proposal was successful.

The New CIL is targeted to be based in Hackettstown, NJ and will support 2 new positions, a full-time Independent Living Specialist and a part-time Information and Referral Specialist. We are currently in the process of interviewing for the positions and identifying accessible office space. We plan to be fully operational early in the New Year.

We are currently working to expand our representation on the Board of Directors from those 2 counties. If you reside in Sussex or Warren county and have an interest in hearing more about serving on our Board of Directors, please contact me via telephone at 973-625-1940 or via email at cslivinski@dawncil.org.

If you would like to hear more about our expansion and future plans, please join us at our annual meeting on Wednesday, November 17th from 6:30 -9:00 pm at Christ Episcopal Church in Budd Lake. A light dinner will be served. Transportation is available.

WRITERS WELCOME!

The DAWN Center for Independent Living, welcomes our consumers to submit articles for this newsletter and writings on topics of relevance to people living with disabilities. If you are interested in writing your own article for this newsletter please contact me, Mr. Alan Levine, Newsletter Coordinator, DAWNcil, 30 Broad Street, Suite 5, Denville, NJ 07940 with your writing. You may also contact me at (973) 625-1940 or e-mail at alevine@dawncil.org. Articles can be of any length and must be approved before being printed in DAWN Awakenings.

WEB SITES, ETC.

- www.accessiblesociety.org - Center for an Accessible Society
- www.spinalcord.uab.edu - Spinal Cord Injury Information Network
- www.nod.org - The National Association on Disability
- www.MoPix.Org - For information on Visual Enhancement Movie Services.
- www.state.nj.us/humanservices - New Jersey Department of Human Services
- www.jobbankinfo.org - America's Job Bank
- www.askjan.org - Job Accommodation Network

SOCIAL SECURITY REDBOOK AVAILABLE

The 2010 edition of the Social Security Redbook is now available in both English and Spanish. This book acts as a general reference source about the employment related provisions of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs. While the Red Book is primarily for educators, rehabilitation counselors and counselors who serve people with disabilities, it can also serve as a self – help guide for Social Security Applicants and beneficiaries.

You can download a copy of the Redbook in English at:
<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/2010/introduction.htm>.

A Spanish version of the book is available at: <http://www.segurosocial.gov/espanol/librojo>

HIGHLANDS HEALTH VAN

The Highlands Health Van is an eco-friendly van that travels to Warren and Hunterdon Counties. It has a medical staff on board that provides basic medical assistance for low-income and uninsured residents with limited transportation options. Its goal is to reduce emergency room visits.

The van "docks" at the United Methodist Church, 116 East Washington Ave in Washington, and Trinity House, 212 East Moore Street, Hackettstown. For specific dates and times of service contact Highlands Health Van Service, 17 South Warren Street, Dover, NJ 07801 or call (908) 968 - 0898.

RUTGERS STUDY ON TRANSPORTATION TO WORK FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES NEEDS YOUR HELP

The Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University is conducting a research study for the U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Transit Administration to better understand the transportation barriers and needs of New Jerseyans with disabilities who are seeking employment. They need your help.

If you are a person with a disability searching for a job, Rutgers would like to hear directly from you on this issue and ask that you complete the confidential online survey available at this link:
<http://policy.rutgers.edu/vtc/transurvey.html>.

Anyone completing the survey will be entered in a drawing to win a \$100 American Express gift certificate and if you need help completing the survey or want a hard copy of the survey, you can contact Rutgers project manager Andrea Lubin at 732-932-6812, ext. 593 or via email at: annlubin@rutgers.edu. The deadline for response to the survey is November 1, 2010.

FRANKI'S FUND – To Honor the Memory of Francesca Slivinski

Sponsored by DAWN Center for Independent Living, Inc.

“The mission of the Franki’s Fund is to offer young adults with special needs ages 14 to 25 an opportunity to explore artistic and vocational pursuits that would enrich their lives and expand their horizons.”

SAVE THE DATE

- Sunday, November 7th, 2010
12:30 – 4:30 pm
Zeri’s Inn
Mountain Lakes, NJ
- Show your support by:
Attending the event - Ticket price is \$75/person.
- Donating a gift basket.
- Purchasing space in the ad journal: (\$200 for a whole page, \$100 for a half page, \$50 for a quarter page, \$25 for a business card sized ad.).
- Please forward any donations to 30 Broad Street, Suite 5, Denville, NJ 07834. Make all checks for donations or ad journal purchases payable to DAWNcil.

UPCOMING DAWN EVENTS

A request for an accommodation must be made two weeks prior to an event. Without proper notification the accommodation may not be possible. Upcoming events are as follows:

November 7 - Franki's Fund Fundraiser at Zeri's Inn in Mountain Lakes - 12:30 - 4:30 Cost - \$75.00

November 17 - Annual Membership and Board Elections at Christ Episcopal Church in Budd Lake - No Cost (RSVP by November 5, 2010) Please make transportation requests by November 3, 2010.

December 11 - Holiday Gala at Place to be Announced - 12:00 - 4:00 - Cost - To Be Determined

VSA NEW JERSEY HONORS OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS AND STUDENT ARTISTS

VSA NEW JERSEY (VSA/NJ), A STATEWIDE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO PROMOTING THE CREATIVE POWER OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE 2011 ARTS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS AND ART PAR EXCELLENCE STATEWIDE TOURING EXHIBIT. VSA/NJ IS PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL VSA NETWORK, AN AFFILIATE OF THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS IN WASHINGTON, DC. VSA IS DESIGNATED BY CONGRESS AND THE NATIONAL COORDINATING AGENCY FOR ARTS PROGRAMS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

The annual VSA/NJ Arts Achievement Awards include Student Arts Excellence Awards, presented to students with disabilities who are classified (mainstreamed, inclusion, self – contained classes or activities) 14 - 21 years old, not to exceed the 12th grade level, who show outstanding achievement in and commitment to an art form; and the Education in the Arts Awards, presented to outstanding educators and administrators for establishing high quality programs for classified students. The awards also recognize individuals who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to arts education for classified students. Award recipients become candidates for the distinguished NJ Governor's Awards in Arts Education. Application deadline is January 11, 2011.

In addition, VSA/NJ is accepting applications for the 11th Art Par Excellence statewide touring art exhibit featuring original two dimensional artwork by students through age 21 with disabilities. All schools in the state are invited to submit two works. Selected students will have their work professionally displayed at prestigious locations throughout the state. The artists will be recognized at an opening reception with their families, teachers and school administrators as invited guests. Application deadline for this award is January 31, 2011.

For applications and registration information please contact VSA New Jersey, 703 Jersey Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, by phone at (732) 745 – 3885 or (732) 745 – 3913 (TTY). You may also write for information by e-mail at info@vsanj.org or visit their website at www.vsanj.org.

INTRODUCING NJ PROTECT

NJ Protect is a new health insurance option for uninsured New Jerseyans with pre-existing medical conditions. Coverage through NJ Protect will generally cost less than comparable individual health insurance and offer superior benefits. Because the program is federally subsidized, treatment for pre-existing medical conditions will be covered as of the day a policy goes into effect, and preventive care will be covered at no out-of-pocket cost to the policyholder. The eligibility requirements are established by Federal law. To find out more about NJ Protect go to their website http://www.state.nj.us/dobi/division_insurance/njprotect/index.htm

FEDERAL BILL TO REMOVE “MENTAL RETARDATION” FROM LAWS PASSES THE U.S. SENATE

Before leaving for the summer break, the United States Senate unanimously approved legislation to replace the term “mental retardation” with “intellectual disability” in some areas of federal government.

The Bill, known as “Rosa’s Law” would impact health, education, and labor policy at the federal level. Under the measure, individuals with disabilities would retain the same rights that they currently have, but the terminology would be swapped as laws and documents come up for revision over the next several years. The measure is not expected to incur any cost. The bill must now go before the House of Representatives and gain the support of President Obama to take effect. Governor Christie of New Jersey signed a similar bill covering the State of New Jersey on August 17, 2010.

A CONVOLUTED CADENCE - by Susan Donald

As I make my way through ordinary days with my teenage daughter who has multiple disabilities I make observations of how our circumstances are fitting into the world around us. Often I find that strangers can make or break a day. An unkind word or action can be the defining moment of a bad day. An unexpected kind word or action sometimes turns an ordinary neutral day into a good one. The tone of everyday errands can be set by how strangers act.

We were a small percussion section. The sticking brake on my daughter’s wheelchair clicking away and the thumpy rattle of the shopping cart as we made our way through the store was our convoluted cadence. Occasionally Hillary added her voice to the mix, just to keep it interesting, or maybe to warn the people coming out of the intersecting aisles. One of the challenging parts about shopping alone with her is pushing all 230 pounds of girl and wheelchair with one hand and pulling the shopping cart behind with the other while avoiding running into other shoppers or displays, or knocking things off shelves by cutting corners too close with either piece of equipment. Trying to stop in time when someone stops suddenly in front of me adds challenge and interest. So far, I haven't hit anyone. I think occasionally about putting spikes on the end of the footplates of the chair for those times when people just don't want to give an inch, but up to this point I've controlled myself. At times, I have wished I had an air horn at my disposal for those talking on their cell phones, oblivious to other shoppers trying to navigate the merchandise. This particular day there was no temptation, it was Nice People Day. I love Nice People Day! The cashier helped unload my cart onto the belt without being asked. She was cheerful, efficient, and used a minimum of bags. The day continued its pleasant

theme when I exited the store as, amazingly, when I needed to cross the parking lot with my little caravan the traffic stopped to let us get off the curb and cross to our vehicle. That might sound like no big deal, but I assure you that it doesn't often happen and I sure do appreciate when it does!

It is the simple things that strangers do that can sometimes either make or break my day, and this day they made it. It must have been that our convoluted cadence was a happy one.

“TAKE ONE AND PASS ALONG” – THE ARC FINDS SURVEY

The Arc seeks individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families or caregivers to participate in a national disability needs survey. The Arc FINDS (Family and Individual Needs for Disability Supports) is a free, online survey designed to tap into the knowledge and perspectives of individuals and families within the I/DD community, including self-advocates on different issues across the life span. So far, thousands of people have taken the survey; more participants are being sought as every opinion will count. Results will provide greater understanding about what services are being received, where gaps exist, and what new supports may be needed from the individual and family perspective. To access the online survey, go to: <http://www.thearc.org> and link to the survey from the home page – and pass the word along to others. Take one and pass along!

NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF DISABILITY SERVICES

The NJ Division of Disability Services (DDS) serves as a single point of entry for people with disabilities who need information and/or services within the human services system. Through its toll free hotline - **1-888-285-3036** - the Division also responds to as many as 15,000 requests each year for ***Information and Referral Assistance*** on issues affecting people with any type of disability in the State of New Jersey.

As one of its primary services, DDS publishes [New Jersey Resources](#), the most comprehensive guide available about services across New Jersey for people with disabilities. This directory is updated annually. DDS administers programs that allow people with different types of disabilities to live more independently in the community, and in many cases, avoid the need to move into an institution. These programs include home and community-based service programs, as well as other resource programs:

- AIDS Community Care Alternatives Program (ACCAP) Waiver
- Community Resources for People with Disabilities (CRPD) Waiver
- Disability Health and Wellness Initiative
- Information and Assistance Services
- Medicaid Personal Health Assistance (PCA)
- NJ Housing Resource Center
- NJ WorkAbility Program
- Personal Attendant Services Program (PASP)
- Personal Preference: New Jersey's Cash and Counseling
- Rewarding Work
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Waiver
- Traumatic Brain Injury Fund (TBIF)
- Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board

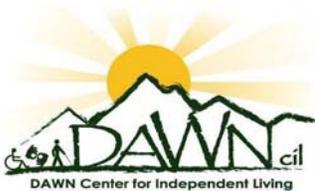
To find out more about the New Jersey Division of Disability Services call toll free at 1-800-285-3036 (Voice) or (609) 292-1210 (TTY). You may also visit their website at <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dds/home/index.html>.

DAWN CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING OFFERS HOME MODIFICATION PROGRAM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SPINAL CORD INJURIES LIVING IN MORRIS, SUSSEX AND WARREN COUNTIES

DAWN Center for Independent Living is pleased to announce the availability of funds made possible through a grant from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation. The grant will provide home modifications to people with spinal cord injuries living in Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties. Priority will be given to persons at risk of institutionalization, if modifications are not made to their home. Medical and financial need must be demonstrated. Types of modifications may include but not limited to ramps, widening of doorways, raising countertops, grab bars, floor level showers and stair glides. Applicants must provide two cost estimates of the work to be done as well as before and after photos. The amount available per recipient will average \$ 2,000 - \$ 4,000 on a first come, first serve basis.

Established in 2002, the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation is a private foundation dedicated to supporting cutting-edge research to find a cure for paralysis due to spinal cord injury (SCI) and innovative rehabilitation programs to improve the quality of life for those living with SCI. Mr. Neilsen himself a quadriplegic for 21 years until his death in 2006, recruited experts in the SCI community to peer review all grant requests for scientific and clinical research, post-doctoral fellowships, and quality of life program grants.

If someone you know is interested in the Home Modification Program or other DAWN services, please contact Mark Moldé at (973) 625 - 1940 or TDD (973) 625 - 1932.



Phone: 973-625-1940
Fax: 973-625-1942
TTY: 973-625-1932
Email: info@dawncil.org

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DAWN MISSION STATEMENT

DAWN Center for Independent Living empowers people with disabilities to strive for equality and to take control of their own lives by:

- Providing the tools that encourage independence and self-advocacy.
- Promoting public awareness of the needs, desires and rights of individuals living with disabilities.
- Offering community activities that create new experiences and opportunities.
- Creating informed communities that advance the Independent Living Philosophy.

DAWN PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| - Information and Referral | - Advocacy |
| - Living Well with a Disability | - Peer Support |
| - Next Chapter Book Club | - Recreation |
| - Aktion Club (Morris County only) | - SAIL |
| - Nursing Facility Transition | - Care Management |
| - Independent Living Skills Training | |
| - School to Adult Life (<i>STEP-UP</i> Program) | |