



DAWN AWAKENINGS

Awaken to Independence

Spring 2006

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Director's Desk
 - IDEA 2004
 - Living/Working after Brain Injury
 - Planning for the Future
 - DDD Funding
 - Catastrophic Illness Fund
 - Babies & Sign Language
 - Aktion vs Reaction
 - Guide to Accessible Arts
 - Tickets to "Comic Relief Night"
 - Medicare Pt D - websites phone #s
 - Event and Meeting Schedules
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ABILITIES EXPO

The Abilities Expo for the New York Metro Area will be held April 21-23 for 2006. Considered the show that provides solutions to life's everyday challenges because it provides consumers with a preview of products that serve the disabled community. These products include: daily living aids, durable medical equipment, wheelchairs, scooters, assisted technology, automobile/conversions, patient lifts/transfer systems, pediatric market, chairs and accessories, incontinent products, orthotics and prosthetics, augmentive communication devices, home modification, local service organizations, and much more. If you get the chance check out the Expo. It is being held at the New Jersey Convention and Expo Center, 97 Sunfield Avenue, Edison, NJ 08837. Click this link to get directions.

If you would like a ticket for free entry call the DAWN office (973) 361-5666.

VEHICLE MODIFICATION PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

If you are looking to have your recently purchased vehicle modified or are ready to purchase a new vehicle with modifications, there are programs that can help. Chrysler, Ford, GM, Toyota/Lexus, Saturn and Volkswagen all have Mobility Programs. These programs provide the opportunity for each eligible, original retail customer to receive a cash reimbursement for the cost of purchasing and installing qualifying adaptive driving and passenger equipment for transporting persons with physical disabilities. For more information contact Lisa at (201) 967-5599 or 1-800-FIGHT-MS (1-800-344-4867).

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Welcome to the new DAWN. "DAWN Center for Independent Living, Inc."

For those of you who are not aware, DAWN has gone through some major changes in the past several months. We have formally changed our name from Disabled Advocates Working for Northwest, Inc to DAWN Center for Independent Living, Inc. With that change has also come a new logo, a new website address, (www.dawncil.org; which is currently being constructed) as well as a new brochure which is currently being produced. What has not changed are the programs and services we currently provide. However, we are adding new programs to our menu as we expand the focus of the organization. DAWN has many new and important programs on the horizon which will enable us to more effectively serve consumers.

We are very excited to announce two new programs which will be underway during the month of March: Warren County Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC): Through this program, Warren County residents with all types of disabilities will be provided with one-stop access to programs and services available to them. The goal of this new initiative is to streamline services and to create a single point of entry for individuals with disabilities to be informed of programs available to them to enable them to make informed decisions. This goal is in line with that of Centers for Independent Living in that Centers strive to ensure the full integration of persons with disabilities into the mainstream of society by providing those individuals with the supports, services, information, and tools necessary to live independently within their community. This program will allow DAWN to hire a full-time staff person to administer the program. This individual will have office space in the county and that site will serve as DAWN's satellite office.

Morris County Self-Advocacy Institute for Leadership (SAIL: This program will assist youth in developing a proactive mindset in predicting, prioritizing, and meeting their own personal needs by means of a ten week interactive course involving goal setting, monitoring, and attainment. Any classified student in Morris County ages 13-21 will be eligible to participate in exciting new program funded by the United Way of Morris County.

We at DAWN look forward to the implementation of these programs and will report on our activities as time goes on.

In addition, I would like to take this time to welcome two new members to DAWN's Board of Directors; Elizabeth Lehmann and Robbie Furman. Elizabeth and Robbie were elected to the board at our most recent board meeting to fill positions that had been vacated. Each of these individuals brings a level of expertise to the board which was not present in the past. We continue to look for additional board members to represent specific populations we serve. For instance, we would like to have representation from the parents' perspective. We provide programs and services to many youth and are in need of a representative from that community to bring their input and expertise to the board. If you are interested in learning more, please contact me for further information.

In my last newsletter, I discussed the move to a new and larger facility. Unfortunately, that location fell through and we continue to look for new space. If anyone is aware of space available, please contact me. We are in need of approximately 2500 square feet and it must be extremely well priced. If anyone knows of space, please forward the information to me. Finally, I would like to report that our first ever "Annual

Meeting" was a huge success. Over 40 individuals were present and enjoyed a Thanksgiving feast while I presented an overview of the agencies past programs and successes and our path for the future. The event will continue each year so our members can be fully informed of the work we do. I hope to double the attendance at our next Annual Meeting, which is slated to take place on Wednesday, November 15th, 2006. "Save the Date."

Once again, many thanks for your ongoing support in our efforts.

IDEA 2004 TELECONFERENCE

The changes to IDEA includes increased accountability for school districts and states, annual federal monitoring, and most immediately relevant, changes to the due process and mediation process currently employed by the state of New Jersey. This information is important to all parents who have a child receiving special education services in the New Jersey. Also, in December, the state of New Jersey submitted its State Performance Plan to the federal government.

For those reasons, Spina Bifida Association of the Tri-State Region (SBATSR) is going to conduct a session on the IDEA 2004. There will be a teleconference on March 28, 2006 at 8:00 p.m. the conference will cover the changes giving specific attention to the changes in mediation and due process. The approved plan should be available for public dissemination before the 03/28/06 teleconference and we can discuss the current performance of NJ, with specific information about local school districts, and the areas of improvement delineated in that plan.

Please feel free to call me (Jennifer Shore, Family Support Coordinator) with any questions beforehand at (908) 247-0709. To sign up, call (908) 782-7475 or e-mail at info@sbatsr.org. Registration ends March 15th.

DDD FUNDING

Families eligible for NJ DDD services should consider contacting their case manager early in the year to ask about the current application procedures/deadlines for accessing: Camp; Inclusive Recreation; Cash Subsidy Voucher Stipend; and Respite funding.

BABIES CAN USE SIGN LANGUAGE

Why teach young children sign language? Studies have shown that there are clear benefits to teaching sign to young children. Babies who sign tend to have a stronger command of verbal language and also begin speaking at an earlier age than babies who do not sign. Also, the interactive program strengthens the parent-child bond, increases the child's interest in books, and boosts I. "Signing is a normal part of language development," said Linda Acredolo, co-author of *Baby Signs: How to Talk With Your Baby Before Your Baby Can Talk*. "It is an absolutely normal way for babies to deal with the frustrations of not being able to say words."

LIVING & WORKING AFTER BRAIN INJURY: TOOLS FOR SUCCESS SEMINAR

The Brain Injury Association of New Jersey, in conjunction with the Henry H. Kessler Foundation and the New Jersey Division of Disability Services, presents three free educational seminars: March 29, 2006; April 6, 2006 and April 27, 2006.

One out of every 1,000 children and adults in New Jersey is hospitalized each year as a result of brain injury. Thousands of others have mild brain injuries not requiring a trip to the hospital. While some people are able to return to home, school, or work without difficulty, many others require the ongoing services provided by state, county and community organizations. This seminar addresses the needs and services available to individuals with brain injury served by health and human service workers throughout New Jersey.

For more information contact: Brain Injury Association of NJ, Inc. (732) 738-1002 (V) or e-mail scaetano@bianj.org.

OPEN HOUSE FOR DISABILITY SERVICES

Disability Services Agencies will be available to answer questions from families, individuals, and students. Admission is free and we will provide refreshments and we will have door prizes. Hours for each are 3-7 PM.

- 04/19/06 at Morris County Police & Fire Academy
- 04/26/06 Sussex County Community College
- 05/10/06 Tentative date for Warren County Technical School

AKTION VERSUS REACTION:

MAKING THINGS HAPPEN INSTEAD OF TAKING WHAT'S OFFERED

DAWNcil's Aktion Club is in full swing as they enter their second exciting year and continue to grow. What is an Aktion Club you might ask? An Aktion Club is a community service and social group for adult citizens (18 and over) who live with a disability. The mission of Aktion Club is to provide these young adults an opportunity to develop initiative and leadership, to serve their community, to be integrated into society, and to demonstrate the dignity and value of these citizens. Aktion Club members strive to return to their communities the benefits, help, and caring they have received, as well as develop friendships and important skills during the process.

An Aktion Club is co-sponsored by a Kiwanis club and a local community based organization. Such has been the partnership with DAWN and the Division 14 Kiwanis clubs of Morris County. Too often, young adults with special needs feel isolated and dependent when they could be making valuable contributions to themselves and to the world around them. Service providers do their best to help young adults with disabilities to reach their potential. However, many of these agencies do not have the funding or staffing to provide the community based social and recreational activities that are so desperately sought after. The

volunteer efforts of local Kiwanis sponsors can address these and many other concerns through Aktion Club.

DAWNcil's Aktion Club was chartered in January 2005 and has now grown to 18 active members. Robbie Furman, the Kiwanis advisor of the group states, "This Aktion Club is unique from all others. It is possibly the first of its kind that encompasses young adults from an entire county unlike those that originate from a particular group home or just one municipality." Since its inception the Aktion Club has been very productive. In March of 2005 the group raised over \$500 for the Battered Women's Shelter of Morris County. In October of 2005 the Aktion club was instrumental in putting together a successful Tricky Tray event for DAWN as they helped collect nearly 200 prizes from local businesses and organizations. Furthermore, in December of 2005 the group sold hand decorated bags at the Ledgewood Mall in order to raise over \$200 towards disaster relief for victims of hurricane Katrina. Robbie Furman further states, "The young adults within this group are highly energetic and very motivated. Aktion Club is truly a place where development has no disability."

Eric S. Fox, Transition Specialist

"COMIC RELIEF NIGHT"

Dawn has available four free tickets to the "Comic Relief Night" 2006 which benefits the Rockaway Township Police Department Community Policing Programs and the Dover-Rockaway Elks. The comedy show will be held on Thursday, March 23, 2006 at the Dover-Rockaway Elks, 4 Princeton Avenue, Dover. If you would like a ticket(s) please call the office (973) 361-5666. (Click this link to get directions.)

CATASTROPHIC ILLNESS FUND

This is a little-known program offered through the state Department of Human Services. Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund Commission (CICRFC) provides support to New Jersey families who are forced to pay out-of-pocket for their child's health expenses that insurance doesn't cover and who struggle to find the funds to pay their bills.

Income doesn't matter. It isn't just for uninsured families. Families who are insured have used the fund because of higher deductibles and the inability to meet their payments. A child's disability does not need to be extremely serious or rare to warrant funding. It is set up to pay expenses associated with a child's illness, such as the installation of ramps for wheelchairs, accessibility improvements in bathrooms, the purchasing of accessible vans with lifts, medical costs for broken bones and even airfare for trips to specialized hospitals.

Many New Jersey families qualify to receive financial assistance. Eligible expenses must total more than 10 percent of a family's total income under \$100,000 and 15 percent of any income over \$100,000. The child must be 21 or younger and the family has to live in New Jersey for three months prior to the date an application is filed.

Click: www.state.nj.us/humanservices/catill/cicrf1.htm or 1-800-335-FUND

Families

GUIDE TO ACCESSIBLE ARTS

The New Jersey Theatre Alliance and the New Jersey Arts Access Task Force have a publication of cultural events throughout the state called The Guide to Accessible Arts. To receive a copy of this guide e-mail your request to: info@njtheatrealliance.org or call (973) 540-0515 extension 10.

UPCOMING DAWN MEETING & RECREATION EVENTS

General Membership

Tues., April 25th Dinner Out at Applebee's in Hackettstown 6:30-9:00

Wed., May 3rd Meeting in Cafeteria at Paragon Village, subject is Computer Fraud and Internet Safety. 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

To sign up or to arrange for special accommodation / transportation please call the office.

Young Adults Recreation

2nd Friday of Month at Montville Rec. Center (unless otherwise noted) 7:00-10:00 p.m.

Fri., April 7th Dance at Roxbury Teen Center

Fri., May 12th Shopping Roxbury Mall start at Food Court Entrance

Deaf Seniors

1st Friday of month at St. Peter's Episcopal Church Mountain Lakes 1:00-4:00 p.m.

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH PROJECT

Christian Outreach Project will once again be offering no-cost home repair/improvement services for the elderly, disabled and low-income homeowners in Sussex, northern Warren, and western Morris counties. The two weeks scheduled for this work are June 25th to July 1st and July 2nd to July 8th. Christian Outreach has twenty-four work crews who will provide a total of 4,400 hours of free, quality service. If you have work you need assistance with or know of someone who does, please contact the DAWN office prior to April 30th . (973) 361-5666.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

This is the 5th annual NJ self-directed supports gathering - there are eleven workshops offered for this conference. Participate in the roundtable lunch discussions, art show, logo contest, and special presentation. Learn from Vickie Cammack and Al Etmanski how to complete the picture of a good life for people with disabilities! Attend fun, informative, interactive workshops! Network with families, professionals and advocates who want to Talk about it!

The conference will be held on Saturday, March 25, 2006 at the Doubletree Hotel and Executive Meeting

Center, 200 Atrium Drive, Somerset, NJ 08873. Click this link to get directions.) A registration form is required for each person who will attend. Visit website: <http://rwjms.umdnj.edu/boggscenter> for a copy of the form, or call The Boggs Center at (732) 235-9327 for information.

MEDICARE PART D - IMPORTANT WEBSITES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

May 15, 2006 is the last day to enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan and pay lower premiums (without paying a penalty). You can contact one of the following for more information.

- Medicare - www.medicare.gov or by phone 1-800-633-4227
- State Health Insurance Assistance Program 1-800-792-8820
- State Health Insurance Department 1-800-446-7467
- Social Security Administration - 1-800-772-1213

Your Guide to Medicare Prescription Drug Plans is available by calling 1-800-Medicare or by visiting the Medicare website.



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

We are on the web!
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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:

- | | |
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| - 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) | |