



The DD Community Update

February 2010

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The Michigan
Developmental Disabilities
Council

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Peer Mentor Pilot Training

The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council's Peer Mentor Pilot Training was held at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing on January 20-22, 2010. The purpose of the training was to teach people with developmental disabilities to become peer mentors and assist others to live the life they want.

The pilot was a success, with nineteen participants attending the two and a half day training where they learned what peer mentoring is, why it's important, and the primary skills needed to be an effective peer mentor.

Following the introductory class Peer Mentoring 101, ten breakout sessions were offered and participants chose the topics that interested them. On the last day of the training, Janet Olszewski, Director of the Department of Community Health (DCH), spoke to the group and commended the council in its efforts during January's Mentoring Month. She talked about the importance of peer mentoring and how it can have a positive impact on someone's life. At the end of the training, each participant received a Certificate of Completion.



Janet Olszewski speaks to the participants on the importance of Peer Mentoring.



Participants gathered in several workshops on employment, housing, transportation, living well, health coverage, recreation and community participation, systems change, and others.

Seclusion and Restraint—What to Do

While state and federal seclusion and restraint legislation has been introduced, many states do not have official regulations in place for these harmful practices. It is important for parents and students themselves to be on the watch for incidents of seclusion and restraint. Here are some things you can do if you suspect that it is being used in your school:

- **Don't condone it.** The purpose of the IEP (Individualized Education Plan) is to establish appropriate programming and positive behavior supports to avoid severe behavioral problems. If a child's IEP currently includes provisions for restraint or seclusion, now is the time to request that they are taken out, and replaced with positive behavioral support techniques.
- **Watch for the signs.** Keep an eye out for disciplinary measures gone wrong. If a child is nervous about school, refuses to go or is acting out in any way, there could be something going on.
- **Look for assistance.** If you do suspect something, know your rights. The protection and advocacy system offers information on restraint and seclusion rules. Contact Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service at www.mpas.org or 1-800-288-5923.
- **Use the IEP process.** Incorporate positive behavior support techniques into the IEP. Talk to your child's teacher or other school staff about your concerns. Request records for your child and demand that school staff document any use of restraint or seclusion. (www.disabilityscoop.com)

This is a continuation of the council's coverage on seclusion and restraint. For more information on this topic, please see the December 2009 and January 2010 issues of the DD Community Update at the Council's website, www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil.

Autism Exhibit at Absolute Gallery

February 1 through March 31 Absolute Gallery in Old Town, Lansing is featuring "Autism—Communication through Art." This exhibit features the art work of students with autism throughout the Mid-Michigan area.

The Absolute Gallery is located at 307 East Grand River, Lansing, MI 48909. For more information, you can also visit www.absolutegallery.net, or call 517.482.8845

Dental Advocacy Training

The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council's grant project, *Smiles Across Michigan* at Community Living Services, held three dental advocacy trainings in Marquette, Grand Rapids, and Detroit in December 2009 and January 2010.

The purpose of the trainings was to teach participants techniques to advocate for the reinstatement of Medicaid Adult Dental benefits. Participants practiced telling their legislators personal stories about Medicaid dental and how oral health is essential for overall well-being. Included in the training was a workshop to help participants write letters to their state representatives. Everyone had a chance to write a letter to both their senator and representative, and to share their letter with the group.

A role-playing skit also taught participants the value of expressing concerns to their legislators about oral health and the Medicaid Adult Dental benefit. 20-40 people attended each training.



Jody tells her personal oral health story with Andrea Goodwin, project coordinator.



Lori tells her personal oral health story.



Role-playing skit on how to speak to your legislator.



The letter writing workshop gave participants an opportunity to get assistance in finding their state Representative and Senator, and writing a letter to them on why oral health is important in their lives. (All pictures displayed were taken at the Grand Rapids, MI training)

Remembering Civil Rights Advocate Judi Chamberlin

Judi Chamberlin was an accomplished Civil Rights Leader and Patients' Rights Advocate. She passed on January 16, 2010. Judi co-founded the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and was a longtime Board of Directors member.

Judi, with the help of her partner and daughter, kept a blog of her "Life as a Hospice Patient" over the past few years. You can view the blog at <http://judi-lifeasahospicepatient.blogspot.com/>. After reading Judi's article "Confessions of a Non Compliant Patient," a Michigan Disability Rights Coalition staff member suggested adding the "non-compliant" to their feisty-wear clothing line. You can read the article at <http://www.power2u.org/articles/recovery/confessions.html>.

There is a virtual memorial where visitors can view Judi's articles, writings, sign the guestbook and view the photo album. The virtual memorial is located at <http://judi-chamberlin.virtual-memorials.com/>. Please take a moment to remember Judi's life and hard work as an advocate.

Empowerment Workshops

On March 21st the Power of Hope and Grace Bible Church Special Needs Ministry will be hosting a free Empowerment Workshop from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Topics and presenters will be:

Wayne State University, Developmental Disabilities Institute— "Person-Centered Planning: Valuing the Contributions of Direct Support Professionals," and **Michigan Alliance for Families**—Individual Education Plan (IEP) Basics.

Pre-registration is required. To register, please call (313) 895-7464 Ext. 124 by March 18, 2010. Sign language interpreters are available.

The Power of Hope and Grace Bible Church is located at:

6495 West Warren Ave

Detroit, MI 48210

Obama Budget: Funding for Special Education, Autism

Funding for special education, autism research, and other programs aimed at Americans with disabilities is part of the \$3.8 trillion budget proposed on February 1, 2010 by President Barack Obama. The President's proposed spending on programs serving people with developmental disabilities includes:

- Autism research: \$222 million to study the genetic and environmental factors leading to autism and examine how autism affects the brain. This money will also fund clinical trials of drugs and behavioral therapies for the condition.
- Special Education: \$250 million boost for special education, bringing federal grants to the states up to \$11.7555 billion.
- Vocational Rehabilitation: \$60 million to help people with disabilities and other adults needing basic skills.
- Community Living: \$103 million for a caregiver initiative designed to assist caregivers of people with disabilities and aging individuals.
- Medicaid: \$25.5 billion to extend a temporary increase in federal matching funds to the states for another six months.
- Housing: Just \$90 million is proposed in housing assistance for people with disabilities, down from the \$300 million expected this year.

Congress will consider the president's budget proposal and likely modify it before it goes into effect in October 2010.

www.disabilityscoop.com

Did You Know?

The House Education and Labor Committee has passed H.R. 4247, the Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act by a 34-10 bipartisan vote. The bill will now go to the full House of Representatives for consideration. Two Michigan congressman voted for the bill, Congressman Dale Kildee and Congressman Vernon J. Ehlers.

Transit Partnership Conference

If you are interested in transportation issues, the Transit Partnership Conference is a great place to find a lot of useful information. The conference is April 1-2, 2010, in Mount Pleasant, Michigan, and will be at a different location for each day.

On Thursday, April 1 the conference will be at the Comfort Inn and Suites located at 2424 South Mission Street, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. On Friday, April 2 the conference will be held at the Soaring Eagle Resort, 6800 Soaring Eagle Boulevard, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 from 8:30 a.m.—2:15 p.m.

Thursday sessions include:

- Federal Transportation Update
- Opportunity for Impact: 2010 elections
- Demand Response Service: Expectations vs. Reality
- What's Happening with the ADA?
- Basics of Community Organizing
- The lunch panel discussion will be on The Current State of Transit in Michigan

On Thursday there is also a banquet at the Soaring Eagle Resort for participants with entertainment by ArtsJAM Percussion Ensemble from VSA Arts of Michigan.

Friday's sessions will involve participants and action teams committing to what they will do in the next year to get results on key issues, such as increasing customer satisfaction, taking action on ADA issues, and increased funding for transit.

Please register by March 1, 2010. The fee is \$10 which includes the Thursday banquet. To register, send your registration information to Glenn Ashley, Project Coordinator, United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan, 4970 Northwind Drive, Suite 102, East Lansing, MI 48823. You can also fax it to 517-203-1203 or email to ashley@ucpmichigan.org.

In the registration information please include your name, organization, address, phone, email, and any accommodations or dietary needs. For more registration information, visit the Allies for Transportation blog at:

<http://transportationallies.blogspot.com/2010/02/transit-conference-registration-and.html>

2010 Census—The Whole Story

Here are some frequently mentioned concerns and facts about the 2010 Census that will help clear some confusion that you may have.

Concern: You are concerned about sharing your information with anyone. Fact: Census information is protected by law, and everyone who works for the census must swear that they will never disclose any personal information. Penalties for any employee who might share that information are severe: up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. By law, the Census Bureau can't share your information with anyone—including other federal agencies and law enforcement. Your information is safe.

Concern: You don't want someone coming to your door asking questions. Fact: A census questionnaire will be mailed to you. You can then fill it out and mail it back. A census worker will only come to your door if you do not mail your form in on time. Mailing the form rather than having a Census worker come to your home saves money, as well.

Concern: The 2010 Census will ask a bunch of intrusive questions. Fact: The 2010 Census is the shortest and simplest in U.S. History. It asks just 10 basic questions including: Name, sex, age and birth date, Hispanic origin, race, household relationship, and if you own or rent your home. The 2010 Census does NOT ask about bank account information, salary or income, citizenship, or immigration status. The Census never asks for your social security number.

Concern: There may be criminals working for the Census. Fact: All census workers undergo a FBI name background check, and a fingerprinting requirement has been added for the 2010 Census. These two security measures screened out 16 percent of hundreds of thousands of applicants for census operations in 2009.

Census forms will be mailed out in March 2010. It is important that you fill out the form and mail it back promptly. April 1st is National Census Day. Use this day as a point of reference for sending your completed forms back. If you do not fill out and return a form, Census takers will visit your household between April and July 2010. For more information, visit www.census.gov or www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil and click on **2010 Census** in the **Resources** section.

Upcoming Events

February 24

Healthy Relationships Training for Men

DeVos Center, GVSU, 401 West Fulton, Suite 134E, Grand Rapids, MI.

9:30 am—1:30 pm

Contact Angela Martin at 313-577-9470 or Angela.M.Martin@wayne.edu to register.

Presented by the Developmental Disabilities Institute in partnership with the Arc Kent County. No fee, lunch will be provided.

March 18

3rd Annual Disability & Health Symposium

8:30 a.m., Kellogg Center, East Lansing. Contact Amber Matthews at (517) 335-7992 to register.

April 1-2

Transit Partner Conference Mount Pleasant, MI.

See page 6 for more information.

March 2010 Council Meeting Schedule

Public Policy Committee: March 9, 10 a.m.—12 p.m.

Diversity Committee: March 8, 1 pm—3 pm

Education Workgroup: March 16, 3:30 pm—5 pm

RICC Teleconference: March 25, 1 pm—3 pm

Health Issues Work Group: March 16, 1 pm—3 pm

Family Support Work Group: March 17, 10 am—12 pm

Housing Work Group: March 11, 1 pm—3 pm

Transportation Work Group: March 11, 10 am—12 pm

Program Committee: March 9, 9 a.m.—10:30 a.m.

For Council Work group and Committee meeting minutes please visit the Council's webpage at www.michigan.gov/ddcouncil. If you have ideas, topics, or suggestions for the DD Community Update please call Laura Robertson at 517-3334-7288 or email roberstonl@michigan.gov.

