



The NJ Council on
Developmental Disabilities
Advocate • Collaborate • Educate njcdd.org

Eye on Advocacy

e-newsletter

October 7, 2025



October is
**National Disability
Employment Month**

NJCDD's Eye on Advocacy weekly e-newsletter is published every Tuesday, focusing on important news and events for the intellectual and/or developmental disabilities community. You are welcome to submit news items and feedback to njcdd@njcdd.org

Subscribe to NJCDD's Publications

October is

National Disability Employment Month

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)

October 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), which recognizes the positive impact people with disabilities have on the American workforce. In 1945, a weeklong national observance was established to recognize the contributions of people with physical disabilities. The NDEAM commemoration began in 1988, when Congress designated it as NDEAM, which then evolved to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including those with mental health disorders and other nonobvious disabilities.

[Learn More](#)

Upcoming Events



Aging & Grief Training Opportunities

"But They Won't Understand:" Dispelling the Myths of Grief, Loss, and I/DD

October 8, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Zoom

[Register Here](#)

Growing Older Together: Aging Siblings and Intellectual Disability

November 5, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Zoom

[Register Here](#)



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Fiscal Intermediary (FI) Transition Update



NEW JERSEY
REGIONAL
FAMILY SUPPORT
PLANNING COUNCIL #6
Monmouth, Ocean

MAP OUR LIFE

RESEARCH STUDY FOR FAMILIES OF
INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL OR
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9 | 6:30PM TO 8:45PM

IN-PERSON EVENT

Children's Center of Monmouth
1115 Green Grove Road Neptune, NJ 07753

Learn about a clinical research study focused on testing a long-term care planning tool for family caregivers of individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD).

[RSVP Here](#)

Download the Flyer [HERE](#)

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Christine Bakter, Deputy Director, New Jersey Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families, **Arshnoor Kaur** and **Nicole Sampaio**, Research Coordinators, Northwell Health



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Fiscal Intermediary (FI) Transition Update

Acumen-NJ
DDD | 2025 Fiscal Intermediary Transition (PPL to Acumen)

**Webinar for Community Vendors and
Individuals/Families who use Vendor Services**
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Webinar for Community Vendors and
Individuals/Families who use Vendor Services**
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM

**Webinar for Community Vendors and
Individuals/Families who use Vendor Services**
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Webinar for Community Vendors and
Individuals/Families who use Vendor Services**
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM

**Webinar for Support Coordinators and
Supports Brokers**
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Webinar for Community Vendors and
Individuals/Families who use Vendor Services**
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM



The Office of Education on Self-Directed Services hosts networking sessions for people and families who are self-directing services or interested in self-direction.

- Wed., Nov. 5 | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
**Bergen County Bergen County
 Special Services School District**
[Register for November 5 Session](#)

[Download Flyer](#)

Download the flyer [HERE](#)

Employment Specialist Supplemental Training Opportunities

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) - A Refresher for Job Coaches

October 17, 2025
2:00 PM - 1:00 PM | Zoom

[Register Here](#)

Good Fences Make Good Neighbors

October 22, 2025
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Zoom

[Register Here](#)

Navigating Challenging Conversations on the Path to Employment

December 3, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Zoom

[Register Here](#)

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY WEBINAR SERIES

Disability Rights New Jersey will be hosting a three-part Lunch and Learn webinar series focusing on assistive technology solutions for individuals living with paralysis, family members and professionals who support them. Beyond the tools, the sessions will offer opportunities to brainstorm implementation ideas to ensure success and promote independence.

Sept 24 - It's in There - Built in Accessibility
Join us as we explore features you might already have access to and didn't know it. Discover how to leverage the resources you currently have at your disposal and the built-in features of your devices to avoid spending money on apps or new hardware that can accomplish what your existing device can.

Oct. 22 - Alternate Access for People with Paralysis
Join us as we explore customizable input methods to hands-free controls, and discover how these advancements enable people to interact with devices, environments, and tools in innovative ways.

Nov. 19 - Smart Home Technology
Join us as we explore how to use smart home technology to access audiobooks, improve personal security, turn on lights, appliances, access music, podcasts and much more.

You can attend one session or all three!

WEDNESDAY
SEPT. 24
OCT. 22
NOV. 19
12:00 NOON

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER



These events are co-sponsored by the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

ATAC ALLIANCE
DISABILITY RIGHTS NEW JERSEY

DISABILITYRIGHTSNJ.ORG

[Download Flyer](#)

Assistive Technology 3-Part Webinar Series

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[Register Here for These Events](#)

SELF-DIRECTION CONFERENCE

SUSTAINABILITY & BEYOND

OCTOBER 23 & 24

20% OFF	Use code SAVE20
NETWORKING EVENT 10/23 6-8PM	CONFERENCE DAY 10/24 8AM-4PM

Come see us at this impactful and inspiring event!

DON'T MISS OUT! REGISTER TODAY!

TCNJ Brower Student Center
Ewing, NJ

THE COLLABORATIVE FOR CITIZEN DIRECTED SUPPORTS

Empowering Self-Direction: A Sustainable Future

You are invited to the Collaborative for Citizen Directed Supports - Self-Direction Conference: Sustainability & Beyond in New Jersey. Don't miss out on this opportunity to join a movement that is focused on building a stronger, more sustainable community that thrives on self-direction!

Location:

The College of New Jersey – Brower Student Center, Ewing, NJ

Conference Date:

Networking & Exhibitor Social:
Thursday, October 23, 2025 | 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Conference
Friday, October 24, 2025 | 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Individuals, families, professionals, and advocates gather for this transformative event to explore the power of self-direction.

[Register Here](#)

New Jersey Legislative Disability Caucus

The NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities
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Seven Years Later: Lessons from New Jersey's First Ombudsman for Individuals with Disabilities

October 28, 2025

12:00pm - 1:00pm (Zoom)



Paul Aronsohn
New Jersey's inaugural Ombudsman for
Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental
Disabilities and Their Families

Join us for an insightful discussion with Paul Aronsohn, New Jersey's inaugural Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families on October 28. As he prepares to conclude his historic tenure at the end of Governor Murphy's administration, Paul will share candid reflections on his seven-year journey advocating for New Jersey's disability community. **Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz, Caucus Co-Chair**, championed the legislation that created this groundbreaking office and will lead the meeting.

[Register Here](#)

Tuesday, October 28, 2025
12:00pm - 1:00pm (Zoom Webinar)

Paul, along with advocates, will discuss the victories that transformed lives, the systemic challenges that persist, and a vision for strengthening advocacy efforts under future leadership. From navigating bureaucratic barriers to ensuring people with disabilities and their families receive essential services, hear firsthand about the real-world impact of having a dedicated state Ombudsman and what lies ahead.

This is a unique opportunity to learn from the experiences of the person who helped define this crucial role and to understand how legislative advocacy can create lasting change for our most vulnerable residents.

Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series

FALL 2025 WEBINARS

Registration is open for the Fall 2025 Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series. All sessions will be held online using The Zoom Webinar platform.

[Visit The Boggs Center Online Registration System](#)

[View Fall 2025 Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series Brochure](#)

Adult Life 101 - A Beginner's Guide to Adult Services

October 31, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Webinar

Direct Support Workforce Solutions: Strategies for Individual and Collective

The Changing Landscape of Post-Secondary Options

November 20, 2025 | 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM | Webinar

Spirituality and Belonging: Pathways Into Community

December 5, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Webinar

Action Toward Workforce Stability

October 31, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Webinar

Remote Support Services and Other Technology Examples from the Smart Home Discovery Place

November 7, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Webinar

Safe, Connected, and In Control: Trauma Responsive Care for People with Dual Diagnosis

November 14, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Webinar

Roadblocks in Family Partnerships: Repairing Communication in Challenging Situations

January 15, 2026 | 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM | Webinar

Understanding Social Security Benefits: Setting Your Graduates Up for Employment Success

February 26, 2026 | 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM | Webinar

Long-Term Planning

March 19, 2026 | 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM | Webinar

In the News

DISABILITY RIGHTS NEW JERSEY

ADVANCING JUSTICE. ADVOCATING INCLUSION.

Disability Rights New Jersey names Bren Pramanik as new Legal Director

TRENTON, NJ – OCTOBER 1, 2025 – [Disability Rights New Jersey](#) announces the appointment of Bren Pramanik (they/he) as the agency's new Legal Director. Prior to joining Disability Rights New Jersey in 2022, Bren worked as an Assistant Deputy Public Defender for New Jersey's Office of the Public Defender. After graduating from Villanova University School of Law, Bren clerked for the Honorable Joseph L. Rea, J.S.C. in the Middlesex County Superior Court's criminal division.

[Download News Release](#)

Resources

Selecting a Service Provider: Making Choices, Becoming Empowered

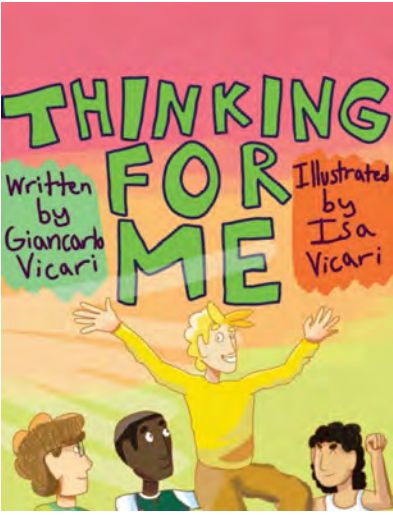
People receiving support through New Jersey's Division of Developmental Disabilities can choose the service provider that best meets their needs. This guide offers people with disabilities and their families ideas that can help them select a provider that will support them to live the lives they want.

[Download guide – English](#)

[Download guide – Spanish](#)

Limited quantities are available in hard copy format through the Publications Order Form.

[Access the Order Form Here](#)



Thinking for Me Comic

[Learn More](#)

Giancarlo Vicari, Youth Ambassador from New Jersey, created a comic called "Thinking for Me" about turning 18 and talking to your parents about alternatives to guardianship. We helped make Giancarlo's comic into a 5-minute audio story narrated by Giancarlo and his friends. This audio story is a great resource to share with anyone interested in learning more about supported decision-making and alternatives to guardianship!

[Download the Comic](#)



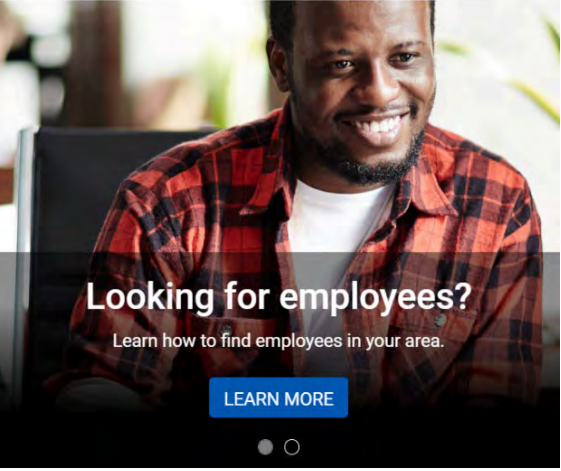
Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and Their Families

Transition Resources New Jersey State Resources

One challenge common to every individual with an intellectual or developmental disability and their families is the transition from childhood to adulthood. Known as the proverbial "cliff" – the point at which there seems to be a sudden drop in services and supports as children age out of the school system and into adult life. Below are resources to help with this transition.

[Learn More](#)

Jobs that Care New Jersey



The Direct Care and Service Workforce is critical to the lives of people with disabilities and those who are aging. The demand for these jobs is growing fast and will continue to increase in years to come. This workforce is essential to providing the supports individuals need to live healthy, active, and engaged lives in the community. From helping with personal, health, and home care to providing support with community activities, workers in these roles make a difference!

If you are interested pursuing a rewarding career, please check out the information on this site to learn more and to find jobs in your area.

[Learn More](#)



Employment First

The Employment First page on the NJCDD website has been updated with information intended for individuals living with disabilities who are interested in working!

Now, along with information about Employment First in New Jersey, the page features plain language information and links related to:

- [Seeking Employment](#)
- [Benefit Resources](#) as they relate to work
- [Transitioning to employment](#) from high school

[Learn More](#)

DISABILITY BENEFITS 101 NEW JERSEY

[HTTPS://NJ.DB101.ORG](https://nj.db101.org)

- + FIND THE RIGHT HEALTH COVERAGE FOR YOU
- + BENEFITS AND WORK ESTIMATOR
- + LEARN ABOUT SSI & SSDI BENEFITS, AND MORE!



BENEFICIOS POR DISCAPACIDAD 101 NUEVA JERSEY

[HTTPS://NJ.DB101.ORG](https://nj.db101.org)

- + ENCUENTRE EL SEGURO MÉDICO A SU MEDIDA
- + ESTIMADOR DE BENEFICIOS Y TRABAJO
- + CONOZCA LOS BENEFICIOS DE SSI Y SSDI, ¡Y MÁS!

The NJCDD is proud to support NJ DB101, a free, user-friendly, all-in-one place, resource guide for employment and benefit questions/information. Find out how working impacts benefits like SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, and more! Resources are in plain language and available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

[Learn More](#)

An Enhanced Family Support Crisis Handbook

4th Edition

Available in English and Spanish



Enhanced Family Crisis Handbook

The purpose of this expanded version of the Toolkit is to empower individuals with disabilities and their family and professional caregivers by providing information to more effectively advocate for persons with complex severe behavioral health conditions (which we formerly referred to as “dual diagnosis”) for treatments, supports, services and the conditions that promote mental wellness.

[Learn More](#)

Manual Mejorado de Crisis Familiares

El propósito de esta versión ampliada del kit de herramientas es facilitarles a las personas que tienen discapacidades y a sus cuidadores familiares y profesionales herramientas que los empoderen, al proveer información que permita abogar de una forma más efectiva por las personas que tienen condiciones graves y complejas de salud conductual (a las que antes se denominaban con “diagnóstico dual”) para conseguir los tratamientos, apoyos, servicios y las condiciones que fomentan el bienestar mental.

[Aprende Más](#)



20 West State Street, Trenton, NJ, 08608 | [Preference Manager](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)
Telephone: 1-800-792-8858 | Email: njcdd@njcdd.org

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