



GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS UPDATE

New Legislative Session Begins in Trenton

January brought us a New Year and also a new Governor, Lt. Governor and Legislative Session with a host of new representatives in Trenton. Phil Murphy and Sheila Oliver were sworn in as Governor and Lt. Governor and the Legislature began its 218th Session. Senate President Sweeney will continue to lead the Senate while the Assembly welcomed a new Speaker: Assemblyman Craig Coughlin. We are excited to work with the new Administration and Legislative Leaders on issues of importance to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Before leaving office, former Governor Christie signed three, high-priority pieces of legislation that impact people with I/DD. This included bills that will exempt community providers from paying certain motor vehicle fees, will limit the use of restraint techniques on students with disabilities, and will expand the background check process for staff who work with individuals with I/DD. To continue reading, [click here](#).

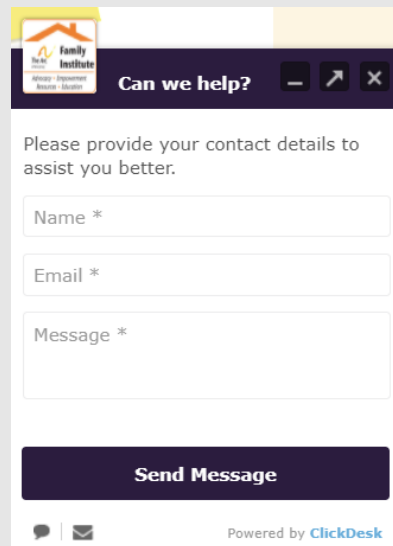


Self-Advocacy Trainings Now Available on YouTube



This month the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project began uploading select trainings to view on their Youtube page for when you can't make it to an event or want to review the information for a second time. You can also share the trainings with others who you think might benefit! Make sure to visit and subscribe to the NJSAP YouTube Page by clicking [here](#). Current videos focus on stress management and online dating safety.

Come Chat with The Arc of NJ Family Institute!



The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute is always looking for new ways to connect with and support families. With that in mind, we've introduced a new feature to our [web site](#) that will allow families to chat directly with the Institute's Director Lisa Ford. If you

are in need of assistance, come chat with us throughout February at the following times:
Monday & Tuesday from 11 am to 1 pm or
Wednesday from 2 to 3 pm. The chat box is located on the right-hand side of the homepage. Not able to chat? Send an email to fap@arcnj.org.

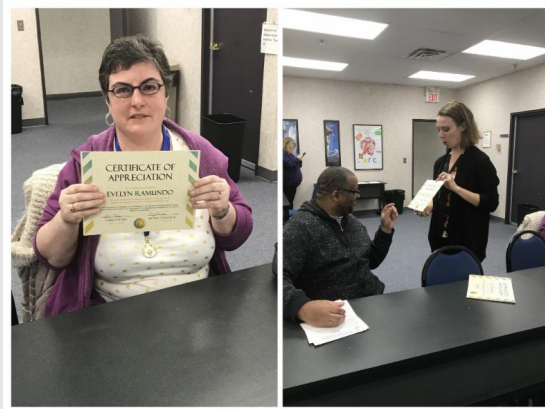
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Register Now for Spring Self-Advocacy Luncheon



Registration is now open for the 13th Annual Spring Into Action Self-Advocacy Luncheon. The event will take place on Saturday, April 7 from 10 am to 2 pm at the Imperia in Somerset. You can register online by visiting [this site](#), or you can mail in your registration form to the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project at 985 Livingston Avenue, North Brunswick, NJ 08902. The Luncheon will include the presentation of awards as well as dancing and plenty of opportunity for socializing. We hope to see you there!


Questions? Contact Frankie Bayak at fbayak@arcnj.org or call (732) 749-8514.



Self-Advocates Recognized for their Commitment and Service

Certificates of appreciation were presented on January 29th to Advisory Board representatives from the regional Councils of the New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network. The officers were elected to their positions at the Annual NJSSAN Awards Luncheon in April 2015 and the certificates served to thank the representatives for their dedication and leadership throughout their term. Interested in getting more involved with Self-Advocacy? Email Ashley at Aritchey@arcnj.org.

Learn More About Non-DACs with New Fact Sheet

 **Mainstreaming Medical Care Program**
Advocating for quality health care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

What is a "Non-DAC?"

How does "Non-DAC" status allow some students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), who are **not** eligible for Medicaid, to receive DDD services?

This fact sheet was written for parents, educators, and other professionals who interact with students with IDD.

1. What is the usual process for an individual with IDD to receive DDD services at age 21?
In order to receive supports and services from the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) at age 21, students with IDD are required to have Medicaid and be functionally eligible for DDD services. However, there is an exception to the Medicaid requirement, which is applicable to a small number of individuals with IDD (see the next paragraph). The recommended process for obtaining Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and the Medicaid that accompanies it -- has been explained in the 504 Fact Sheet from CDD. That fact sheet explains the importance of youth with IDD applying for SSI as soon as possible after their 18th birthday. This process is replicable for the majority of youth with IDD.
2. What is the exception to DDD's Medicaid requirement?
A relatively small number of school-age youth with IDD are able to obtain SSI or Medicaid at age 18 because a parent has retired, become disabled, or died before the student was able to apply for SSI. Upon the death, disability or retirement of a parent, the social caregiver with IDD usually starts to receive a monthly Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefit. The amount of this benefit is determined by the parent's earnings and the number of years worked. Often, the amount of the SSDI benefit is too high for the student to obtain SSI or Medicaid.
3. What happens if individuals with IDD are receiving child support income due to the divorce of their parents?
Child support money that is given to the child when parents are divorced is viewed by the Social Security Administration and by NJ Medicaid as the child's income. If the monthly child support payment is above the threshold for Medicaid eligibility (listed in #4 below), then the child will not be eligible for Medicaid. However, there is a 3% exclusion applied to the child support income. For example, if the child receives a

Please be sure to check out this important new fact sheet, authored by our Mainstreaming Medical Care Program, that explains how "Non-DAC" status allows some students with I/DD, who are **not** eligible for Medicaid, to receive Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) services. Download the document by [clicking here](#). The fact sheet was written for parents, educators and other professionals who interact with students with I/DD. If you or someone you know has questions about "Non-DAC" status, contact our Mainstreaming Medical Care Director Beverly Roberts at Broberts@arcnj.org. You can also download our Medicaid Eligibility Problem Form by clicking [here](#).

The Arc of New Jersey Looks to the Future with Strategic Planning

Individuals with I/DD, family members, volunteers and representatives from the Local County Chapters came together last week to discuss the most pressing issues impacting those represented by The Arc of New Jersey. This was an important dialogue that covered a wide range of state and federal issues. Based on input from those in

attendance at the Strategic Planning session, our organization will draft and develop an advocacy plan that will steer our work for the next three years. We look forward to taking on the challenges ahead! Pictured left to right, Second Vice President Karen Murphy, Facilitator Kathy Mullery, President Joanne Bergin and First Vice President Kevin Sturges.



Check Out These Upcoming Webinars

Webinar: An Overview of the Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund

[Tuesday, February 6 at 12 pm](#)

The Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund is a financial assistance program for New Jersey families whose children have an illness or condition. For those eligible, it reimburses families and guardians for expenses incurred not otherwise covered by health insurance or State or Federal programs.



Webinar: Equal Justice Talks: Investigating and Prosecuting Financial Crimes Against People with I/DD

[Thursday, February 22 at 1 pm](#)

Individuals with developmental disabilities can be vulnerable to financial exploitation and fraud. The Gloucester County Prosecutor's Office Financial Crimes Unit has expertise in investigating these crimes. Assistant Prosecutor Caban and her team will provide a one hour webinar describing the criminal offenses, what to look for and how to prevent you or your family member from falling victim to economic crime.

Webinar Wednesdays: Critical Resources for Special Needs Families: Creating a Blueprint for Your Loved One's Future

[Wednesday, February 28 at 6 pm](#)

Long-term planning is essential for individuals with disabilities and their families - regardless of age or level of disability. This practical webinar will help families of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities identify key areas where planning is needed and steps they can take to be prepared for the future. Topics discussed will include: accessing government services, guardianship, special needs trusts, employment, medical care, housing & in-home supports and care coordination. Speakers: Liz Shea, Of Counsel, Porzio Bromberg & Newman (former Assistant Commissioner, NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities) and Deirdre Wheatley-Liss, Principal, Porzio Bromberg & Newman

Need help or more information? Want to become active in our advocacy network?

- **Visit our website** to access lots of great information that can help you navigate service systems, find resources and keep you informed as to the important issues facing children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.
- **Join our advocacy network** to add your voice to the thousands who are working hard to promote and protect the quality of life of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

[Visit our website](#)

[Join an Advocacy Network](#)

The Arc of New Jersey | 732.246.2525 | info@arcnj.org | www.arcnj.org

STAY CONNECTED

