



Advocacy Matters

A digital newsletter produced by
The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project

March 2020

Spring has sprung us into some unfamiliar territory, but we are keeping our stride!

There are a few changes to the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project and how we are reaching out, so please read our update below.

We have been providing [resources regarding COVID-19](#) and will continue to do so through our website, emails, and social media.

The hashtag this month is **#SpringIntoAction**, be sure to tag us if you participate!

Our amazing poster contest winners are featured below for your viewing pleasure.

Council 3 held their annual Bowl-a-thon Fundraiser to great success.

We were active during this budget advocacy season both in-person and online to push for higher DSP wages in the FY2021 New Jersey State Budget.

We are posting instructional videos on our social media accounts including tips on learning American Sign Language, Yoga Poses, Mediation Exercises, Healthy Snacking, and more!

Let's reflect back on the month of March!

NJSAP Update

Things are a little different around here these days!

We'd like to take a moment to thank Michael Pearson, Jr. for his time spent working as Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator for NJSAP and the Advisor for Council 4 and Council 5. He is now the Assistant Director for The Family Institute, focusing on Children's Advocacy. Congratulations, Michael!

Kelly Mulvaney is the NJSAP's new Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator as well as the Advisor for Council 4 and Council 5. You can view her amazing yoga instruction videos in this newsletter. Welcome to the team, Kelly!

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we are not currently holding in-person events or trainings. But that doesn't mean we can't stay connected! We are constantly updating our social media pages, including [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Youtube](#).

We'll be posting advocacy information, COVID-19 updates, healthy lifestyle tips, instructional videos and ways to stay active while social distancing. We are also working out the best way to keep the New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network connected without in-person meetings.

We are still here for you! If you ever need to contact us, please don't hesitate to email NJSAP@ArcNJ.org or call 732-749-8514.

For information regarding your Council area, please contact:

COUNCIL 1 Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex & Warren Counties

Advisor: Ashley Ritchey
732-743-8345 / ARitchey@ArcNJ.org

COUNCIL 2 Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Passaic & Union Counties

Advisor: Erin Smithers
732-246-2525 x 26 / ESmithers@ArcNJ.org

COUNCIL 3 Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean & Somerset Counties

Advisor: Erin Smithers
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COUNCIL 4 Burlington, Camden, Gloucester & Salem Counties

Advisor: Kelly Mulvaney
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COUNCIL 5 Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland Counties

Advisor: Kelly Mulvaney
732-246-2525 x 37 / KMulvaney@ArcNJ.org

COVID-19 Resources



For resources on preventing, coping with, and understanding the coronavirus (COVID-19), please visit [The Arc of New Jersey's website](#).

You can download our recent issues of Positive Pulse for [how to prevent the coronavirus](#) and for [stress relief](#) and [entertainment at home](#).

#SpringIntoAction

The NJSAP Team would like to continue our social media journey by implementing monthly hashtags centered on self-advocacy and topics important to people with I/DD.

April's hashtag will be **#SpringIntoAction**.

Join us in making a post on your social media platform of choice (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram; any or all!). Utilize the theme to create a post that shows what you've been up to this spring! It is important to remember that social distancing limits our contact with other people but doesn't have to stop us from enjoying nature. Show us a photo of that robin you saw bird watching or of the view from a hike you took. Maybe you've taken action to help people in your community stay healthy and receive basic necessities. Or perhaps you're learning some yoga poses from an online tutorial. Don't just sit around, **#SpringIntoAction!**

Don't forget to use the hashtag **#SpringIntoAction** and tag **@NewJerseySAP** (FB and Instagram)/ **@NJSAP** (Twitter) and **@TheArcofNJ**.

SPRING INTO ACTION



Don't have a social media account but still want to be heard?

Feel free to use the template to the left and email it to NJSAP@ArcNJ.org and we'll post for you!

Submitted by: _____

March's hashtag was **#OurTimeToShine**. Thank you to all of the County Chapters of The Arc who participated in our Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Poster Design Contest!

Our winners were:

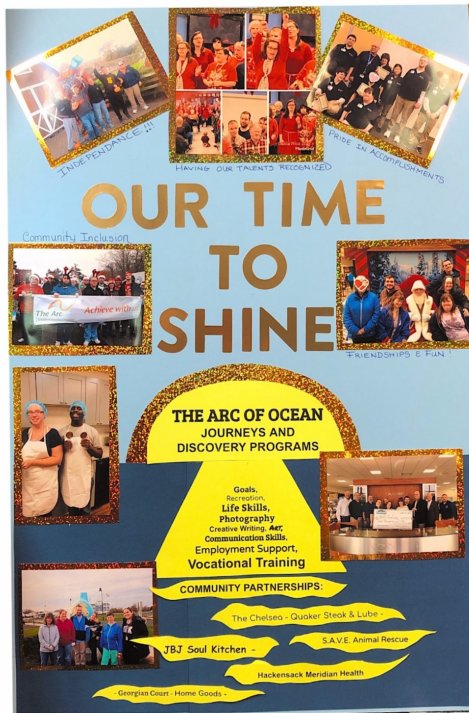
1. **The Arc of Warren**
2. **SCARC**
3. **The Arc of Essex County**







Other wonderful submissions include: The Arc of Union County, The Arc of Cape May, The Arc of Ocean, and The Arc of Atlantic!



Council 3 Bowl-a-thon

Council 3 held their annual Bowl-a-thon this month at AMF Strathmore Lanes in Aberdeen. Looks like a strike to me!



Thank you to everyone who came out to join us and raise money for the Council 3 budget!



Budget Hearings

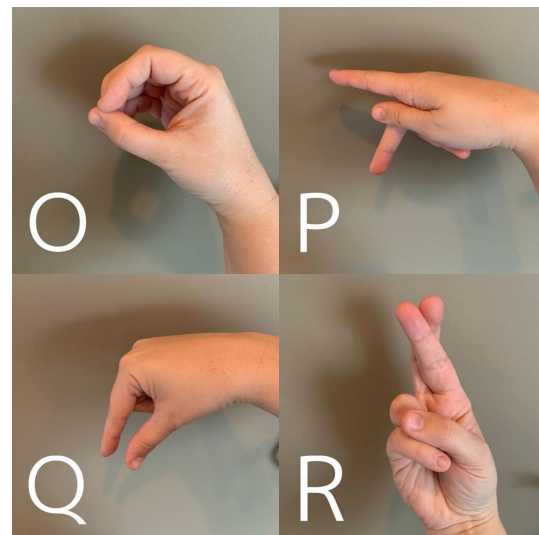
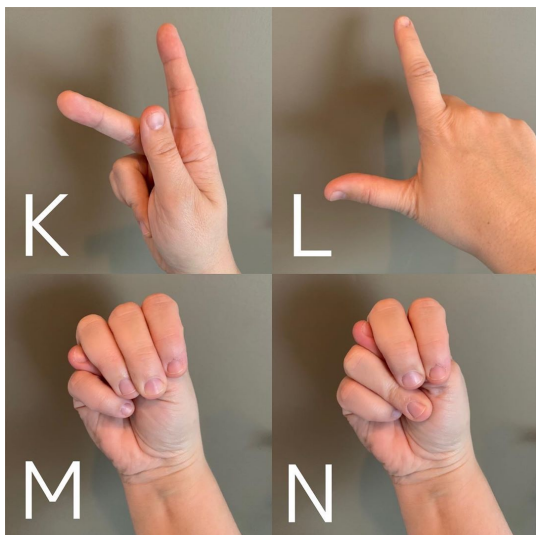
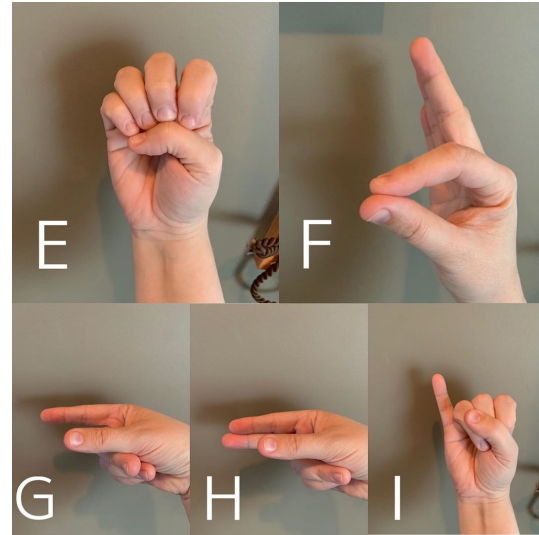
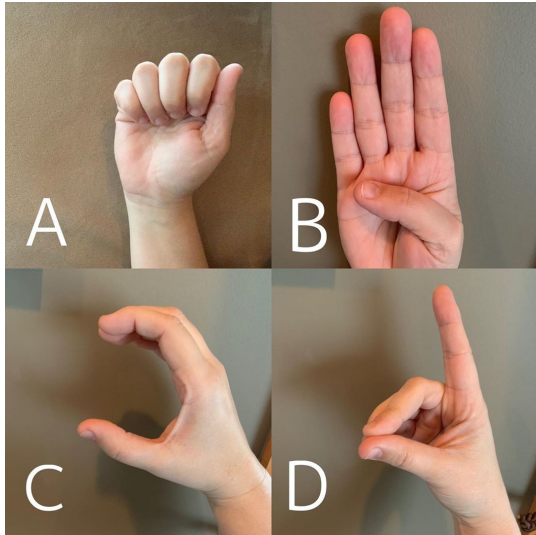
Thank you to Council 2's Renee Pierce for yet again testifying at a Senate Budget Committee hearing. Governor Murphy is proposing \$42 million (\$21 million new state funding/\$21 million federal Medicaid match) in FY2021 for DSP wages. In her testimony, Renee explained to legislators why it's important that the final FY2021 budget include these proposed funds for DSP wages.

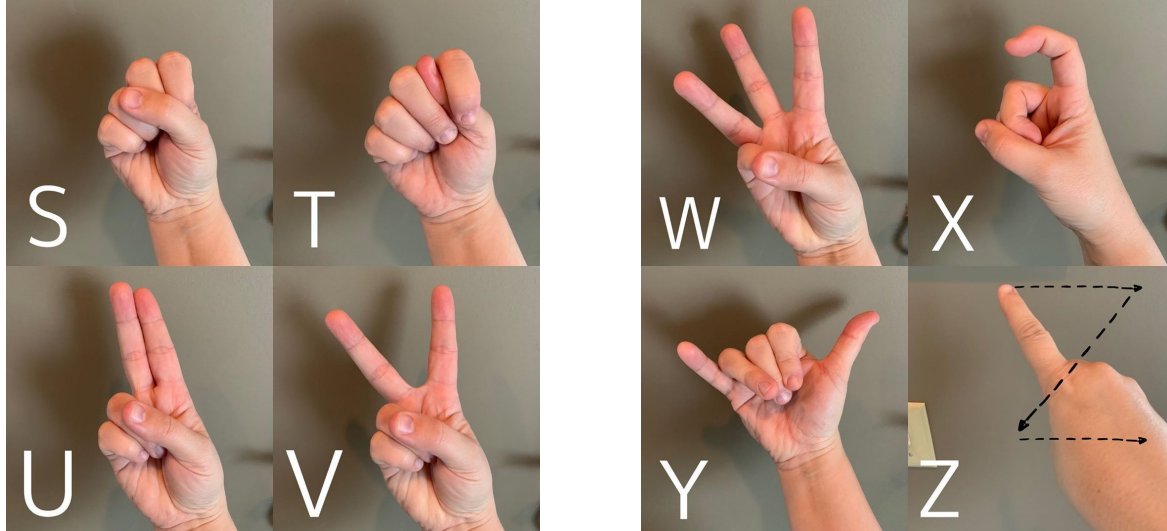
Thank you to Todd Emmons, Evelyn Ramundo and anyone else who also took time to submit their written testimony regarding the FY2021 budget after the other in-person hearings were canceled.



American Sign Language

We may all be feeling physically isolated, but it is important to keep communicating with others. Try learning some American Sign Language as a new way to "speak" to and understand others. Use the guide below to try and sign your name!





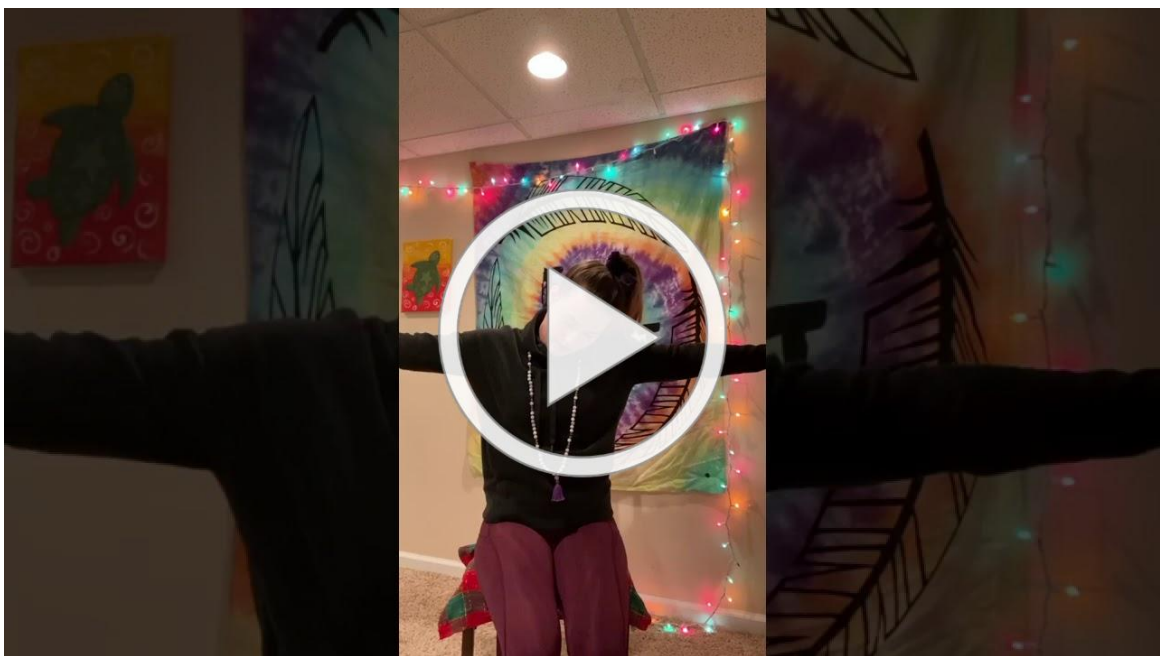
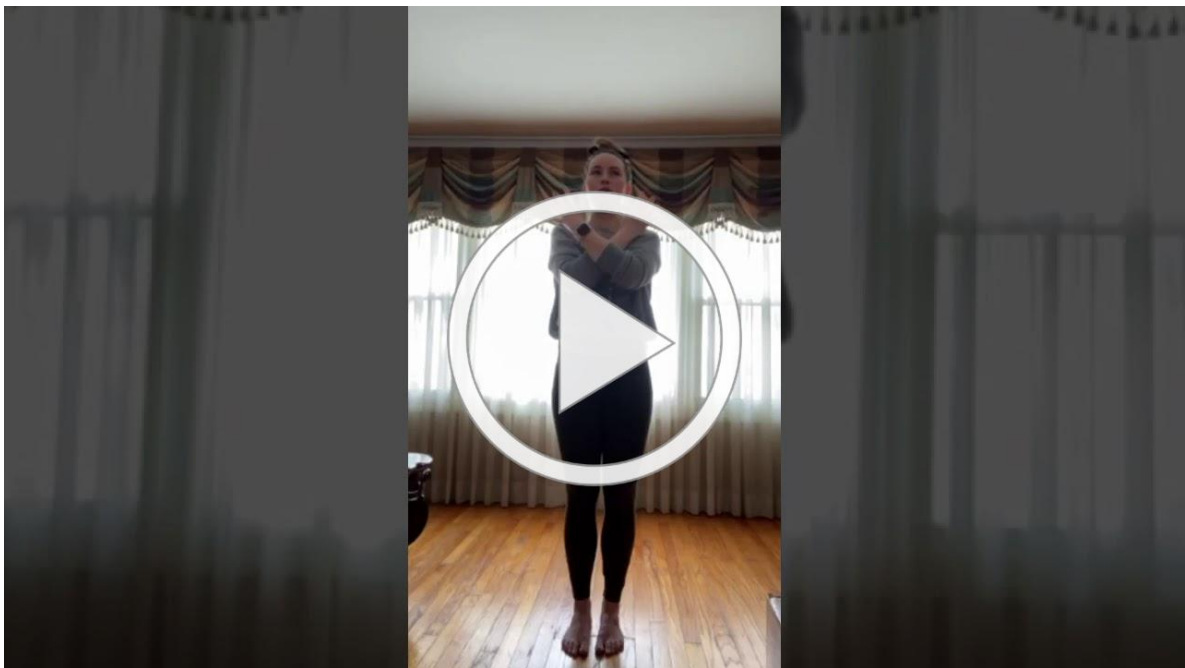
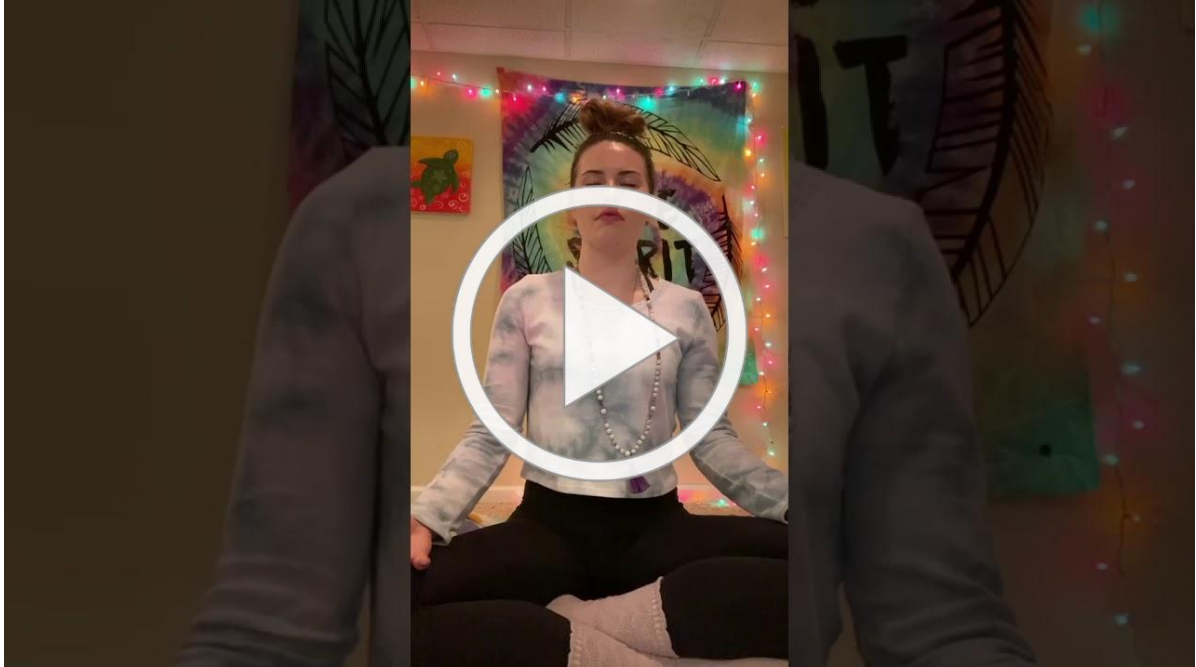
The Healthy Lifestyles Project (HLP) is a program of **The Arc of New Jersey** and receives funding through a grant awarded by **The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey**. The program aims to provide people with I/DD with functional education about the importance of healthy choices related to diet, exercise and stress management.

Let's give a big thank you to The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey for making this possible!

HLP: Meditation and Yoga

Yoga is great way to improve your body physically and mentally. Follow along with the videos below to practice breathing techniques as well as poses inspired by superheroes and species of birds.

You can do this easily and comfortably in your own home. Soon you'll be feeling super and all your worries will fly away!



HLP: Healthy Snacking

When you're stuck at home more often than usual, it can be tempting to overindulge in unhealthy foods and snacks. Try the tips in the video below to stave off hunger in a healthy way!



Nothing beats popcorn for a movie night! Follow these tips to pop your own popcorn without a bag! It can save you money, reduce waste, and minimize the fats and oils you consume.



Register Now for the Spring Luncheon!



Registration is now open for this year's spring luncheon! The date has been postponed and it will now take place:

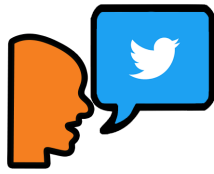
Saturday, June 20th, 2020 at the Imperia in Somerset.

The registration deadline is May 20, 2020, so register today!

Registration is open!

Award Nominations are Open!

Stay connected with us!



[Twitter](#)



[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)



[Youtube](#)

www.njselfadvocacyproject.org



New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project & Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

A program of The Arc of New Jersey since 1983

**Promoting Advocacy and Independence for People
with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**