



# Advocacy Matters

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

## March 2022

Let's look back at the advocacy activities that took place this month!

In need of virtual programming? Inquire about our virtual [trainings](#), [webinars](#), and [events](#)!

Take a look at our [New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network](#) Council activities for this month and the current NJSSAN Priorities.

[Register for our NJSSAN Spring Awards Luncheon on Saturday, April 9, 2022.](#)  
You can also buy a [commemorative mug and support our fundraiser!](#)

Our hashtag this month was [#DDAwarenessMonth2022](#).

March is [Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month!](#) Take a look at the many ways we celebrated this year.

Check out an opportunity to share your experiences with self-advocacy work and your perspective on barriers that hinder inclusive and equitable services for those with disabilities by emailing Esther Bennett ([e.r.bennett@rutgers.edu](mailto:e.r.bennett@rutgers.edu).)

We host one brand new webinar each month and present replays of past content [Register for our weekly webinars each Tuesday and watch the recorded versions of our past webinars here.](#)

We continue to host our interactive Zoom series [Healthy Lifestyles Project: Live!](#) You can check out our past events below and [register for upcoming sessions here.](#)

Brain Games is held each Thursday at 1 PM! [Watch archived videos here](#) and [join in LIVE every week on Zoom.](#)

We continue to post all across our social media pages! You can find new videos every [Monday](#), [Wednesday](#) and [Friday](#) about Health, Fitness and Nutrition!

**We have a lot to say, so make sure to click  
"View entire message" if it appears at the bottom of this  
newsletter.**

## Virtual Programming

# every day of the week!

**MY WEEK WITH NEW JERSEY SELF-ADVOCACY PROJECT**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
•Check social media feed for Veronica's new nutrition video f t y i Vero Pure Green	•Watch the new Stay Healthy at Home webinar at 2pm Stay Healthy at Home	•Interactive Zoom event for HLP:Live at 11am Healthy Lifestyles Project LIVE •Check social media feed for IHT's new workout video f t y i	•Play this week's Brain Game on Zoom at 1pm Brain Game	•Check social media feed for Erin's new recipe! f t y i •HLP:Live! It's Fitness Friday with IHT on Zoom at 1pm HLP:Live! It's Fitness Friday

**TO DO LIST:**

- Sign up for NJSAP's email list
- Request a virtual group training
- Make a social media post using this month's hashtag

**THE NEW JERSEY SELF-ADVOCACY PROJECT**

**REMINDERS + NOTES:**

- Mark my calendar with all upcoming activities
- Reminder: Each NJSSAN Council meets every month
- Remember: Self-Advocacy means to **SPEAK UP!**

**YouTube**  
Find out more at [www.njsselfadvocacyproject.org](http://www.njsselfadvocacyproject.org)  
Facebook: [@NewJerseySAP](#) / Instagram: [@NewJerseySAP](#) / Twitter: [@NJSAP](#)

Click the image above to download the planner, complete with live links to all of our programming! Email [NJSAP@ArcNJ.org](mailto:NJSAP@ArcNJ.org) if you have any questions.

- Struggling with technology? [Maybe one of our tech tutorials can help.](#) You can also [contact us](#) to set up a virtual training.
- Looking for a training for your group? Check out our Training Portal for topics [We hosted 201 trainings this year for 5,606 self-advocates!](#)

## NJSAP & NJSSAN Update



We are holding monthly NJSSAN Council meetings *virtually*!  
[For information regarding your Council area, please click here.](#)

Calendars for 2022 are up! [Visit your council page](#) to download them.

The New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (NJSSAN) is made up of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) throughout the state. The NJSSAN is used as a means of supporting positive change on both a personal and social level. It consists of 5 Councils based on geographic location within the state.

[You can read the current NJSSAN Priorities here.](#)

## NJ Statewide Self-Advocacy Network Position Statements

The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project (NJSSAP) is a program of The Arc of New Jersey established in 1983 to challenge individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to become involved in events, legislative policies, and issues that affect their lives or lives of others with disabilities.

We work together with these individuals to form The New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (NJSSAN), which is used as a means of supporting positive change on both a personal and social level. The NJSSAN consists of five Councils based on geographic location within the state.

1. [Home & Community-Based Services \(HCBS\)](#)
2. [Housing for People with IDD](#)
3. [Transportation](#)
4. [Supported Decision Making and Alternatives to Guardianship](#)
5. [Raising Awareness of IDD Issues](#)

NJSAP@ArcNJ.org -- NJSSAN POSITION STATEMENTS  
www.njselfadvocacyproject.org -- 732-749-8514

## COVID-19 Resources



For more information on the vaccine, [please visit The Arc of New Jersey's website.](#)

For resources on preventing, coping with, and understanding the coronavirus (COVID-19), please visit [click here.](#)

Look below for updates from Governor Murphy about changes in guidelines for NJ. [Find out more here.](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed everyone's lives. If you live in New Jersey and are struggling with a change in mood, poor concentration, increased alcohol/drug use, or difficulty sleeping, there is help. Call Covid-19 Connect Entity for guidance.

**(833) 223 - 0011**

## Register Now



Saturday, April 9, 2022



[www.njsselfadvocacyproject.org](http://www.njsselfadvocacyproject.org)

## Fundraiser Mug



**Registration is FREE.** If you would like to make a donation, [you can do so here](#).

Each year, the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project and the New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network work together to host the annual Spring Into Action Awards Luncheon.

The event is an opportunity for Self-Advocates and Allies to network, learn about current advocacy issues, and celebrate the accomplishments of Self-Advocates over the past year.

## # Monthly Hashtags

Our hashtag this month was **#DDAwarenessMonth2022!** We are celebrating this year by aligning with [a current Action Alert from The Arc US, "Share Your Story: Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters"](#).

People with disabilities rely on home and community-based services (HCBS) funded through Medicaid to live independently in their communities. People with disabilities rely on HCBS and direct support professionals for help with things like employment supports, getting around the community, dressing, and bathing, taking medication, and much more! But due to a decades-long lack of investments in the system, Medicaid doesn't have the funding to support everyone. This means people are stuck on waiting lists, direct care workers are underpaid due to stagnant wages, and too often unpaid family caregivers are filling in the gaps in service.

[Check out the gallery](#) below to see examples from amazing self-advocates across the state.

 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "My staff helps me to take care of my home. They help when I need assistance and support. They are like family to me. They provide transportation and we work and laugh together."          Phyllis P., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>	 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          Home and Community-Based Care matters because it allows me to live among people with and without disabilities, make friends, work, and learn, get out in the community, nobody has a better life.</p> <p>- John B., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>	 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          My staff provides food for us. They teach us how to be more independent around the apartment."</p> <p>Joe B., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>	 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "My staff helps me to work. They take me to work and they do everything with me!"</p> <p>Patricia B., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>
<b>DD Awareness RP</b>	<b>DD Awareness JuS</b>	<b>DD Awareness JS</b>	<b>DD Awareness PM</b>
 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "My staff helps me to taking care to the bathroom and taking care of me. They help me all the time. They are very nice and kind. I really like them a lot. They take me to the center when I need to go."</p> <p>Robert Slack, Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>	 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "I am able to get to work and home again because of help from my staff."</p> <p>Patricia Z., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>	 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "I have staff that I like very much. She cooks for the staff and teaching me how to work on my own. I want to be a staff and I want to learn how to be independent in the kitchen. My staff is teaching me how to do that. She shows us how shopping and I think she is a wonderful person. She is very helpful."</p> <p>Mark B., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>	 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "My staff helps me to work but also teaches me how to work and food shop for myself. My staff is very nice and helps me make appointments for my medical and dental."</p> <p>Melanie T., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>
<b>DD Awareness RS</b>	<b>DD Awareness PZ</b>	<b>DD Awareness MB</b>	<b>DD Awareness MT</b>
 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "My staff helps me to take care of my home. They help when I need assistance and support. They are like family to me. They provide transportation and we work and laugh together."</p> <p>Phyllis P., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>	 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "I believe that staff is kind and generous. They know how to communicate without words or difficult. They are there for me when I need support and help. They also offer great advice and help me work through my problems. They know how to help when we have the right way without triggering more problems."</p> <p>Shelley H., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>	 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "My staff teaches me how to do things I don't know how to do like putting the sheets on my bed and taking the sheets. They help me to do these things by myself. They are there when I need them for help and support."</p> <p>John L., Council 2 Member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>	 <p><b>Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month March 2022</b></p> <p><b>Share Your Story</b>  <b>Why Home and Community-Based Care Matters</b>          "Staff helps me with my medication and exercises. They help me with everything. I believe if I can't do things on my own."</p> <p>Patricia Hadden, Council 2 member</p> <p>#DDAwareness2022 #DDA022</p> <p>#DDAP #WonderingCAP #ThankU #ThankU</p>
<b>DD Awareness MM</b>	<b>DD Awareness JH</b>	<b>DD Awareness JL</b>	<b>DD Awareness MK</b>

# #DDAwareness2022

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month! We have been posting resources, photos, videos, and mini-trainings, so be sure to check out our [social media pages](#)!

Members of The Arc of New Jersey and the Statewide Self Advocacy Network leaders met with folks from Governor Phil Murphy's Office to discuss priority issues, and how the Governor can continue to make disability issues, inclusion, and equity a priority.



# Meeting with the Governor's Office Tuesday, March 15, 2022



## **Thank you to the Governor's Office Staff at the meeting:**

Kaylee McGuire - Senior Policy Advisor  
Christine Sadovy - Cabinet Secretary  
Deborah Cornavaca - Deputy Chief of Staff of Outreach  
Kiah Lattimer - Aide  
Jack Teters - Policy Coordinator  
Awilda Pomales-Diaz serves as a Senior Legislative Aide

NJ Department of Human Services Acting Commissioner Sarah Adelman joined The Arc of New Jersey and NJSSAN members virtually to read Governor Phil Murphy's proclamation declaring March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in New Jersey! Assemblyman Daniel Benson also joined to celebrate DDAM, present the Joint Legislative Resolution and listen to advocates.

Commissioner Adelman and Assemblyman Benson engaged self-advocates in discussion and heard from them about their priorities on a range of topics including: home and community-based services, housing for people with IDD, transportation, supported decision making and alternatives to guardianship, and raising awareness of IDD issues amongst the general public, law enforcement officers, and other professionals.

Thank you, Commissioner Adelman and Assemblyman Benson, and a big hand to the incredible advocates in attendance: Julia, Pam, Kevin, and Evelyn.

# Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month



3/22/22 Meeting with  
DHS Acting Commissioner Sarah Adelman

NJSSAN members:  
Julia S., Pam K.,  
Kevin W., Evelyn R.



New Jersey Statewide  
Self-Advocacy Network





# Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month



3/22/22 Meeting with Assemblyman Benson

NJSSAN members:  
Julia S., Pam K.,  
Kevin W., Evelyn R.



Part of self-advocacy is knowing how to contact your legislators in order to share your views on legislative policies and issues that affect your life or the lives of others with disabilities. Use the videos below to find out how to do this online.



Looking for more ways advocacy resources and ways to spread awareness and celebrate Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month? Check out our website below!





# #DDAwarenessMonth

**DD Awareness Month** exists to spread awareness about intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), educate others about the importance of inclusion, and to share the stories, strengths and successes of these individuals.

**Intellectual disability** is a below-average cognitive ability with 3 characteristics: I.Q. is between 70-75 or below, significant limitations in the ability to adapt and carry on everyday life activities such as self-care, socializing, communicating, etc., and the onset occurs before age 18.

**Developmental disability** is a broader term that includes ASD (autism spectrum disorders), epilepsy, cerebral palsy, developmental delay, fetal alcohol syndrome and other disorders that occur during the developmental period (birth to age 18). The major differences are in the age of onset, the severity of limitations, and the fact that a person with a developmental disability may or may not have a low I.Q.



March is DD Awareness Month!  
Celebrate with us.

[www.DisabilityAwarenessNJ.org](http://www.DisabilityAwarenessNJ.org)



In celebration of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, we encourage everyone to use social media to educate others and spark discussion about people with developmental disabilities! Below, you can find questions that highlight ways to stay ...

[Read more  
www.arcnj.org](http://www.arcnj.org)

## Budget Hearings

Evelyn Ramundo, President of the New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network, shares her testimony and recommendations for the FY23 New Jersey State budget, including funding to support a DSP wage increase.



Would you like to share your recommendations for the FY23 New Jersey State budget? The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee will be meeting virtually on April 21, 2022. [Registration is open now!](#) Use the video guide below to help get you started.



## Focus Group

Would you like to share your experiences with self-advocacy work, and your perspective on the barriers to receiving services for those with disabilities? Rutgers University has partnered with the NJ Division of Disability Services to hold two focus groups in order to collect this



information. Participation is entirely voluntary.

**This one-time focus group that will last approximately 90 minutes. The discussion will be held online via Zoom and will include up to 7 other members of the the NJSSAN. You will be compensated \$40 for your time.**

If interested, please email Esther Bennett [e.r.bennett@rutgers.edu](mailto:e.r.bennett@rutgers.edu). Please indicate which focus group time would be better for you:

**Tuesday 4/12 at 11am or Thursday 4/14 at 10am or 7pm**

Also, if you will need accommodations of any kind, please let them know!

We hope you will be interested in this opportunity to discuss your valuable experience, insight, and recommendations to enhance services in New Jersey!

## Share your experiences with self-advocacy work and get \$40!

Rutgers University has partnered with the NJ Division of Disability Services to hold two 90 minute virtual focus groups on Tuesday 4/12 at 11 am or Thursday 4/14 at 10am or 7pm



If interested, please email  
Esther Bennett at [e.r.bennett@rutgers.edu](mailto:e.r.bennett@rutgers.edu).

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.



improving health, improving lives



The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey



The Arc of New Jersey

Let's give a big **THANK YOU** to The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey for making this possible!

We are now on our 8th grant cycle for the Healthy Lifestyles Project and we are greatly looking forward to continuing to help people with IDD live healthier lives!

## HLP: Stay Healthy at Home Weekly Webinars



The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project team is excited to continue our *Stay Healthy at Home* webinar series! They take place every **Tuesday** at **2 PM**.

Beginning in September 2021, we will present one new webinar each month followed by replays of previously recorded sessions. Click [here](#) for details.

**\*NEW\***







If you've attended one of our we're very thankful. Please spread the word and register for one of our upcoming sessions!

[Register now for upcoming webinars!](#)

## Healthy Lifestyles Project: LIVE!



The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project team continues to host bi-weekly sessions of Healthy Lifestyles Project: LIVE! These are live, interactive events on Zoom to promote healthy living for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They take place every Wednesday at 11 AM and Friday at 1 PM.

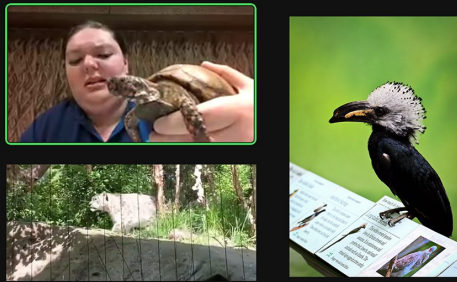


[www.healthylifestylesproject.org](http://www.healthylifestylesproject.org)



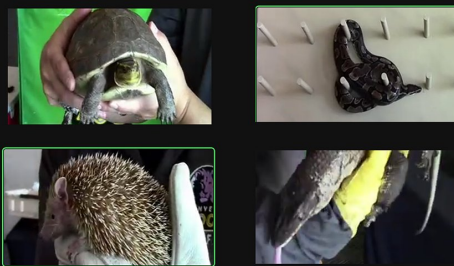
[www.healthylifestylesproject.org](http://www.healthylifestylesproject.org)

## HLP:Live! Where the Wild Things Are: Bronx Zoo



[www.healthylifestylesproject.org](http://www.healthylifestylesproject.org)

## HLP:Live! Where the Wild Things Are: Denver Zoo



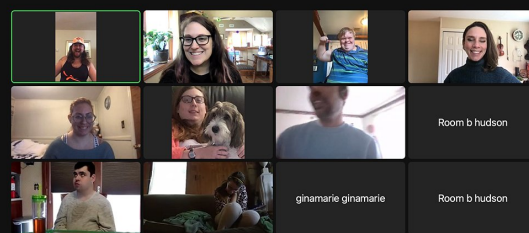
[www.healthylifestylesproject.org](http://www.healthylifestylesproject.org)

## HLP:Live! Road to Relaxation: A Guided Meditation



[www.healthylifestylesproject.org](http://www.healthylifestylesproject.org)

## HLP:Live! The Right Fit: Find Your Exercise with Adaptive Fitness



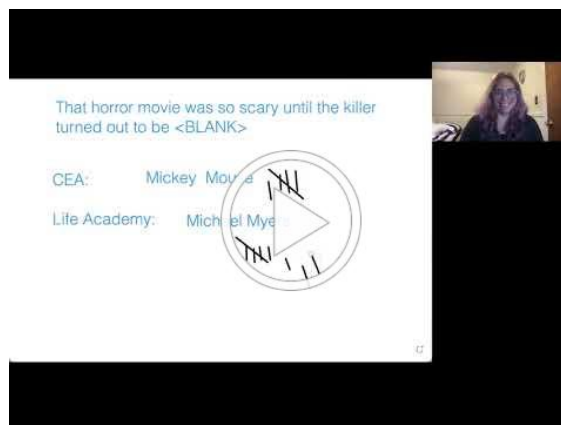
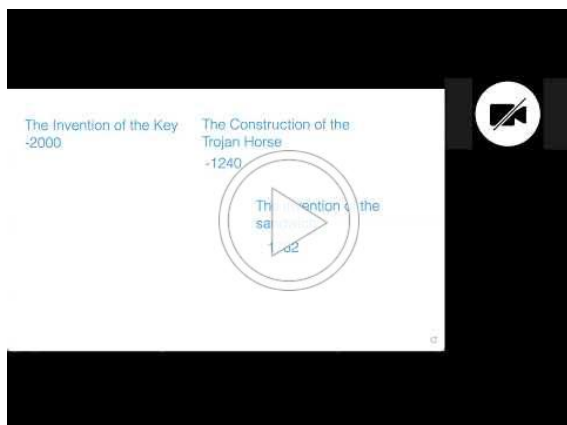
[www.healthylifestylesproject.org](http://www.healthylifestylesproject.org)

[Register now for next month's events!](#)

# HLP: Brain Games

Get your thinking caps on! The NJSAP team presents games to play on Zoom!

Watch our previous videos below of Timeline and Quiplash to get an idea of all the fun that goes on! Be sure to join us at 1 PM every Thursday! [Click here to learn more.](#)



We can also schedule Brain Games with your group! Email [NJSAP@Arcnj.org](mailto:NJSAP@Arcnj.org) if you are



interested.

# HLP: Video Guides

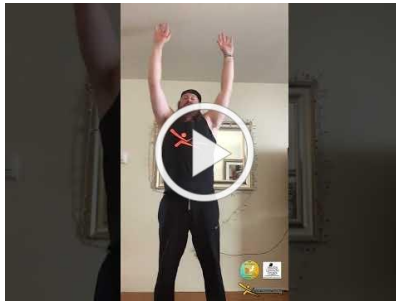
Our Healthy Lifestyles Project: LIVE! events are held twice a week, but if you can't make it to a live session, try watching our health and fitness videos on social media! On Mondays, we post videos from Veronica ([Vero Pure Green](#)) and on Fridays we post videos from Matt ([In-Home Personal Training](#)).

You can follow along easily and comfortably in your own home. We add videos on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Youtube](#) every Monday and Wednesday for you to practice along!

Eating properly is also a big part of keeping your body healthy! Try the tips in our social media videos with Erin to stave off hunger in a healthy way! [There are recipes for snacks, dips, appetizers, meals and more!](#)



[Mondays with Veronica:  
Playlist](#)



[Wednesdays with Matt  
and Kristen: Playlist](#)



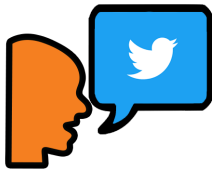
[Fridays with Erin:  
Playlist](#)

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\*You are encouraged to share this information with others who may also be interested. However, if you are forwarding this email, please delete the "unsubscribe" link at the bottom of this page. If you do not remove the "unsubscribe" option and a person who receives your forwarded email clicks "unsubscribe," it would result in *your name* being removed from our distribution list.

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[www.njselfadvocacyproject.org](http://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**