

Equal Justice Journal

February 2025



"Advocating for equal justice for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities"

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, a time to highlight the importance of recognizing the abilities and potential of individuals with developmental disabilities. Established by President Reagan in 1987, this observance promotes the understanding that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can contribute meaningfully to society when given the right opportunities. By focusing on raising awareness and celebrating the diversity of individuals with developmental disabilities, the month serves to reduce stigma, challenge stereotypes, and encourage inclusivity. It is meant to remind society of the importance of supporting equal rights, access to education, and employment for people with disabilities, ensuring they have the same opportunities to thrive.

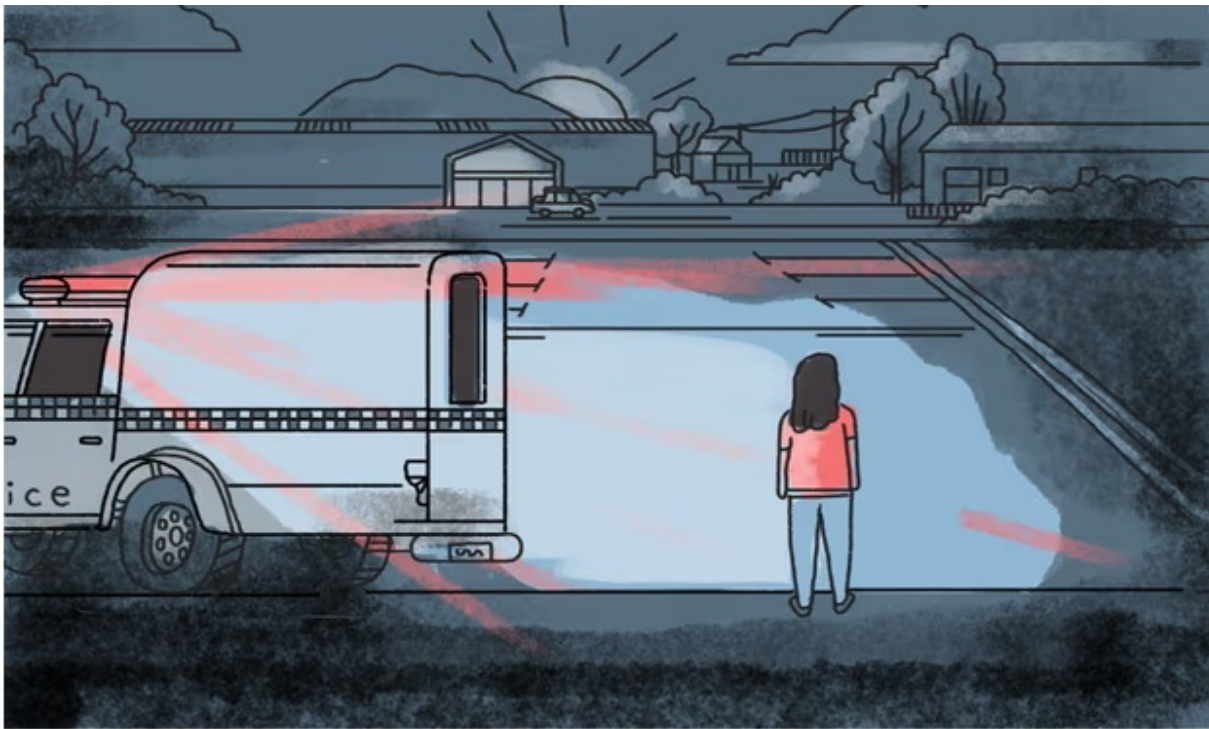
Spotlight: International Boost Self-Esteem Month

February Awareness Month: Boosting Self-Esteem for Better Mental Health
Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself and can fluctuate throughout life, especially during stressful times or mental health struggles, such as depression. A healthy self-esteem is crucial not only for liking yourself but also for improving mental health and managing depression.

To boost your self-esteem, try these helpful tips:

- Stop Negative Self-Talk: Challenge and change critical thoughts about yourself.
- Accept Your "Flaws": Separate changeable flaws from unchangeable ones, and choose acceptance to regain control.
- Celebrate Your Strengths: Recognize and reflect on your positive qualities daily.
- Practice Self-Care: Focus on your physical and emotional well-being to nurture yourself.

These practices are steps toward a healthier self-esteem, which can help manage mental health struggles and increase resilience in tough times. For more on clinical depression and mental health, click [here](#).



The article highlights the troubling correlation between Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and youth incarceration in Australia. Many children with FASD, whose conditions are often undiagnosed, struggle in the justice system due to cognitive and behavioral challenges. These children are more likely to be arrested and incarcerated. The article stresses the need for better awareness, screening, and specialized interventions for young people with FASD to address their unique needs and prevent further criminalization.

For more details, visit the full article [here](#).

Illustration: James Gulliver Hancock/The Guardian

Equal Justice Talks Webinar Series



From Classroom to Cell: Understanding and Addressing the School-to-Prison Pipeline for Individuals with IDD

Upcoming Webinar:

"Building Bridges between the Disability & Criminal Justice Community: Updates from The Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability"

Join us for a webinar exploring the intersection of disability and criminal justice. Led by The Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability, this session will cover key developments, strategies, and initiatives aimed at improving systems for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in the criminal justice system.

Attendees will gain insights into current trends, best practices, and policies shaping disability advocacy and justice reform. This is a unique opportunity for professionals, advocates, and others interested in creating more inclusive systems. Register today to help drive meaningful change!

Register [here](#).



Past Webinar: "Interdisciplinary Treatment Approaches for Youth with IDD and Co-occurring Mental Health Conditions"

On February 27th, this webinar offered valuable insights and practical guidance on the critical topic of interdisciplinary treatment approaches for youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and co-occurring mental health conditions. It equipped professionals from various disciplines with effective strategies to address the unique needs of this population.

Visit our [Webinar Archive](#)

Upcoming Resource Events

Special Needs Resource Fair & Family Fun Day

Union College Cranford Campus is hosting a Special Needs Resource Fair & Family Fun Festival on March 22 at 1033 Springfield Ave. Meet over 60 providers offering services in schools, camps, therapies, advocacy, and more. Enjoy games, face painting, activities, door prizes, and character appearances. The event is FREE, but registration is required.

Register [here](#).



2025 Hudson County Disability

Resource Fair

Craig Guy, Hudson County Executive
invites you to

2025 Hudson County
Disability Resource Fair

County Prep High school is hosting a day filled with valuable information, resources and support for individuals with disabilities on March 22nd from 10:00am to 2:00pm. For registration and/or transportation assistance, please contact the Office of Inclusion & Accessibility at 201-324-6225.

Register [here](#).

525 Montgomery Street Jersey City, NJ 07302

Looking for Acting Classes in NJ?

Looking for the perfect drama school to jumpstart your acting career? NextGen Acting Studio in East Brunswick, NJ, stands out with its comprehensive acting programs for both kids and adults. From foundational scene study and character development to audition techniques, we cover it all. Led by skilled instructors who offer personalized attention, our studio fosters talent and encourages student collaboration in a welcoming environment. Whether you're pursuing acting as a hobby or career, NextGen provides the industry exposure and top-tier training you need to succeed. Enroll today and take the first step towards turning your acting dreams into reality!

[Enroll Today!](#)



CIT - NJ

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE



Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is a specialized police response program that trains officers to effectively manage encounters with individuals experiencing mental health crises. The goal is to de-escalate situations, connect individuals with mental health services, and reduce unnecessary arrests or use of force.

A training will be conducted on March 20th in Burlington County.

If you are law enforcement staff or court personnel interested in coordinating a presentation in your county, please contact rholt@arcnj.org.

Stay Connected

The Arc of New Jersey Criminal Justice Advocacy Program

732-246-2525

cjap@arcnj.org

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