



Advocacy Matters

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

May 2025

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 pages and the current NJSSAN Priorities.

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.](#)

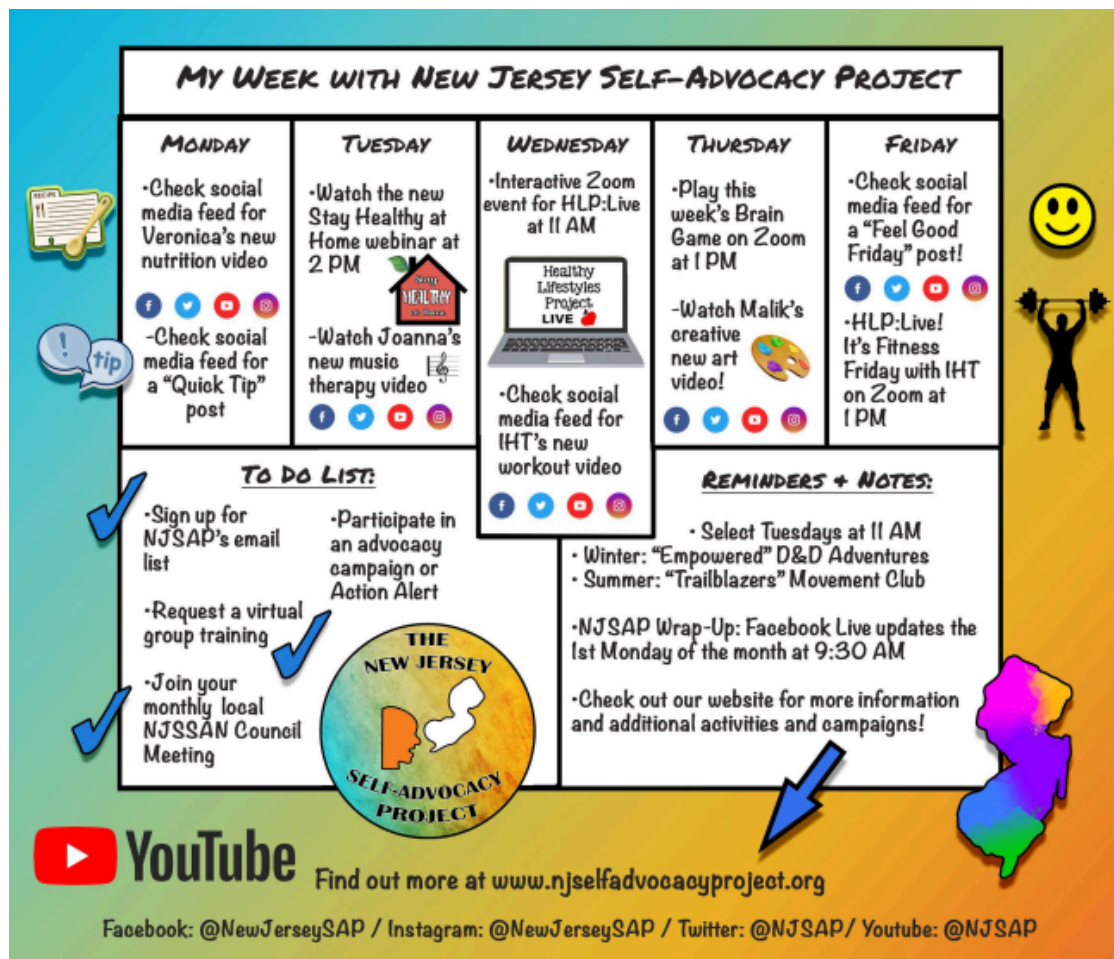
We continue to host our interactive Zoom series, [Healthy Lifestyles Project: Live!](#) You can check out our past events below and [register for upcoming sessions here.](#)

Our weekly Brain Games session 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. [If you have been forwarded this message, you can subscribe here.](#)**

Virtual Programming every day of the week!



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

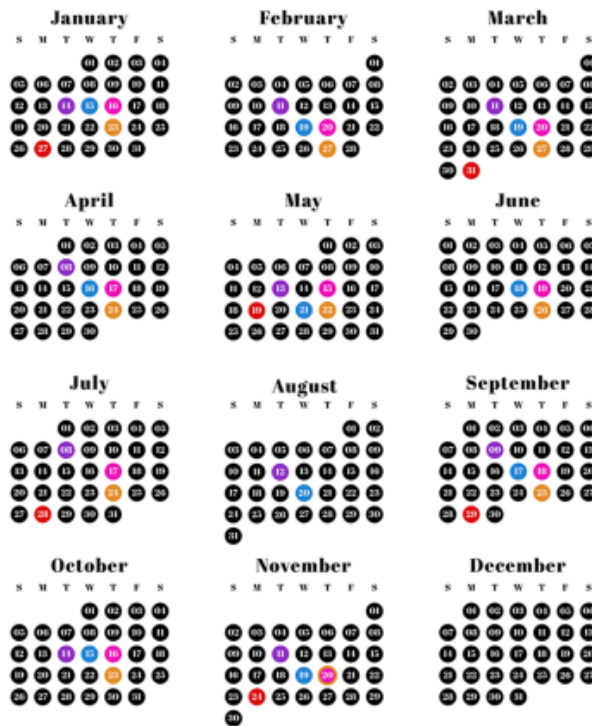
- Struggling with technology? [Maybe one of our tech tutorials can help.](#) You can also [contact us](#) to set up a virtual training.
- Looking for a training for your group? Check out our Training Portal for topics! [We hosted 201 trainings this year for 5,606 self-advocates!](#)

NJSAP & NJSSAN Update



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

[Visit your council page](#) to download calendars for 2025.



2025

**NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE
SELF-ADVOCACY NETWORK**

<p style="text-align: center;">COUNCIL 1</p> <p>3rd Thursday of each month*, 5:30-6:45pm Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex & Warren Advisor: Frankie Bayak Fbayak@ArcNJ.org / 732-749-8514</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">COUNCIL 2</p> <p>4th Thursday of each month*, 4-5:30pm Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Passaic, and Union Advisor: Erin Smithers ESmithers@ArcNJ.org / 732-246-2525, ext. 26</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">COUNCIL 3</p> <p>2nd Tuesday of each month*, 5:30-7pm Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean & Somerset Advisor: Blanca Najera BNajera@ArcNJ.org</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">COUNCILS 4 & 5</p> <p>3rd Wednesday of each month*, 3-4pm Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Salem Atlantic, Cape May, & Cumberland Counties Contact Erin or Frankie as seen above</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">NJSSAN ADVISORY BOARD</p> <p>Last Monday, every other month*, 3-4pm Only Open to Advisory Board Members</p>

*Check the calendar image for exact dates

For more information, contact: Frankie Bayak
NJSAP@ArcNJ.org / 732-749-8514
www.njselfadvocacyproject.org

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

NJSSAN POSITION STATEMENTS
www.njselfadvocacyproject.org / 732-749-8514

Trailblazers

NEW

Join us for our movement club from June to September, every Tuesday at 11:00 AM. Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity to stay active, informed, and socialize. Each week, you will get your choice of activity of a Virtual Fitness Session where you will stretch, strengthen, and practice self-care with a certified trainer from IHT, or an In-Person Hike to explore nature with the NJSAP team at Watchung Reservation in Union County. You can also join our Music League: All Summer, where you'll submit songs based on fun weekly themes and vote on your favorites!

NEW this year: You'll have your choice of activity!

Virtual Fitness Session with Carlos on Zoom
OR
In-person hike with the NJSAP Team
AND
Music League: All Summer

[Register Here: Virtual Fitness Session](#)

[RSVP Here: In-person hike](#)

[Join: Music League: All Summer](#)

TRAILBLAZERS

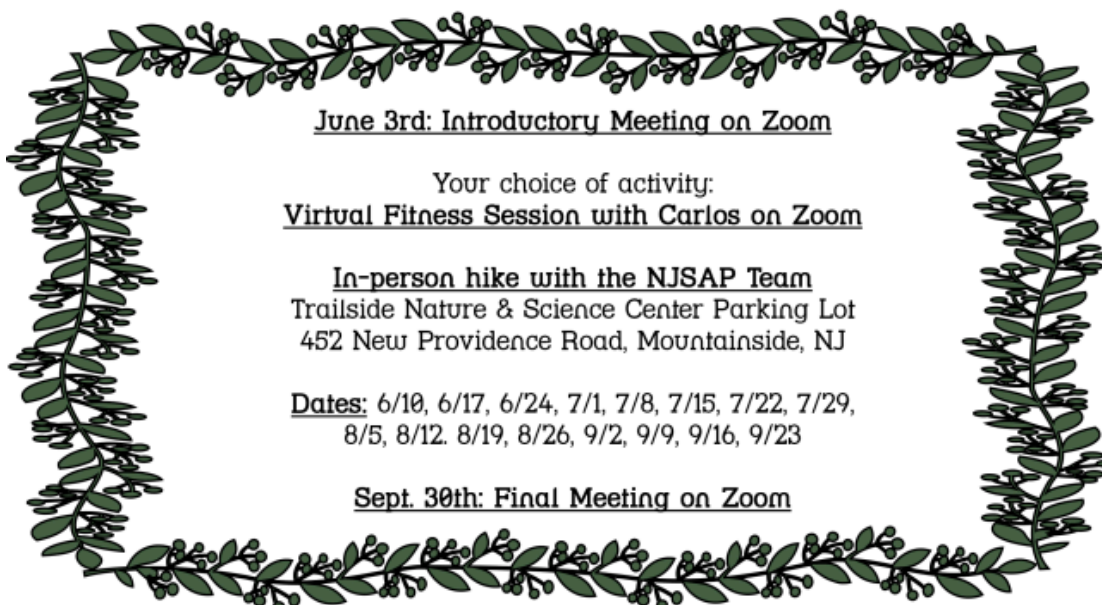


EACH TUESDAY IN JUNE - SEPT.
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM



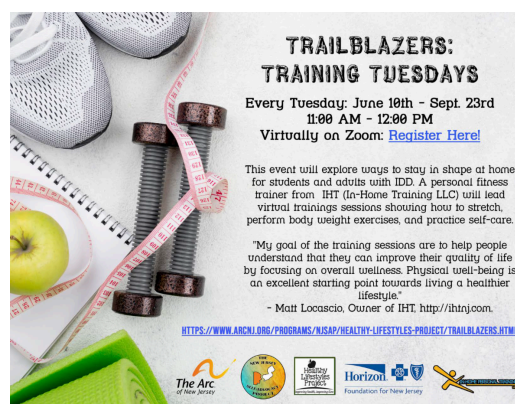
Join our movement club, created for people with IDD to lead the way towards healthier habits. Members will make personal goals, socialize, and learn all about hiking, nature, and fitness.

[Register on our website to join!](#)



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.

[HTTPS://WWW.ARCNJ.ORG/PROGRAMS/NJSAP/HEALTHY-LIFESTYLES-PROJECT/TRAILBLAZERS.HTML](https://www.arcnj.org/programs/njsap/healthy-lifestyles-project/trailblazers.html)



Join the Trailblazers



Come jam with us! Submit a song that fits the weekly theme and vote on your favorites in the "Trailblazers" Music League! A Spotify account is required (no subscription necessary). You can use the [Music League app](#) or the [website](#) to play.

Songs will be played during our weekly ["Trailblazers" Hikes each Tuesday](#). We'll also be hosting a virtual dance party with the top songs from each week on September 30th at 11 AM.

Winners will receive a prize!



Sign up to our
League here.



<https://www.arcnj.org/programs/njsap/music-league.html>

Trainings

If you are interested in hosting a training for your group, take a look at our available trainings list and send us a request through the form below.

[Training Topics and Request Form](#)

Take a look at the delicious recipe that we made with SCARC. The recipe can be found below if you'd like to give it a try! This month SCARC made Fried Rice!



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

A program of The Arc of New Jersey since 1983

Fried Rice

Prep Time 15 Minutes Cook Time 10 Minutes Total Time 25 Minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 Cups Rice (I use frozen)
- 2 Cups Water (If Not Using Frozen Rice)
- 3 Tbsp Sesame Oil
- 10 oz Frozen Peas and Carrots
- 6-8 oz Diced Chicken
- 1 Tbsp Butter
- 4 Eggs (Or Egg Substitute)
- 2 Tbsp Soy Sauce
- 1 Tbsp Sesame Seeds
- 2 Handfuls of Basil
- Salt and Pepper
- 1 Small Onion, Chopped

Cooking Instructions:

- Add Rice and water to a pot and cook to directions. If using frozen rice simply heat in microwave.
- Add sesame oil to a separate large pot.
- Add Onion to the hot oil and sauté for 2 minutes.
- Add the chicken and butter to the onion and cook until browned.
- Add in the peas and carrots and cook for 2 minutes.
- Push the ingredients to the side and add in the eggs to the empty side.
- Stir the eggs constantly so the eggs get beaten while they cook.
- Fold everything together.
- Add in the rice, soy sauce, and sesame seeds.
- Add salt and pepper to taste.
- Garnish with green onion and sesame seeds for garnish (optional).
- I also like to top mine with a drizzle of sriracha.
- Enjoy!

Recipe link:

<https://instantpot.com/blogs/recipes/better-than-takeout-chicken-fried-rice>



Supporting the rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities
985 Livingston Avenue, North Brunswick, NJ 08902
Phone: 732-743-8345 Fax: (732) 749-8514
Email: NJSA@arcnj.org
www.njselfadvocacyproject.org



improving health, improving lives



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 programming possible!

We are now on our 11th grant cycle for the Healthy Lifestyles Project and we are greatly looking forward to continuing to help people with IDD live healthier lives!

Positive Pulse

Positive Pulse is a monthly blog on our website with advice and resources on living a healthier life. You can find this month's post in by clicking the title below.

Positive Pulse: Migraines and Headaches

Migraines and headaches affect over 1 billion people worldwide and are one of the leading causes of physical disability. This month, take a moment to learn your triggers, slow down, and listen to your body. A calm environment, good sleep, and stress management can make a big difference.



Migraines & Headaches

Stay Healthy at Home Webinars

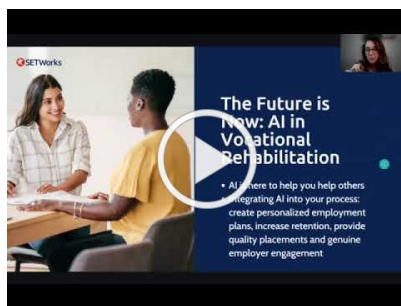


The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project team is excited to continue our *Stay Healthy at Home* webinar series! They take place every **Tuesday at 2 PM**.

We will present one new webinar each month followed by replays of previously recorded sessions. Click [here](#) for details.

NEW

[Harnessing AI for Customized Employment](#)

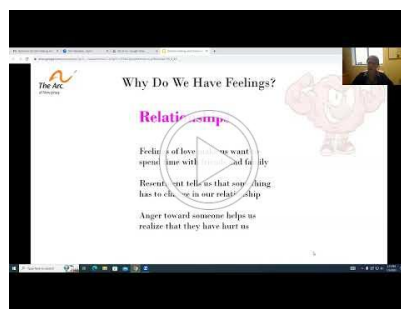


[Emotional Intelligence](#)

[Quality Of Care for Direct Support Professionals](#)



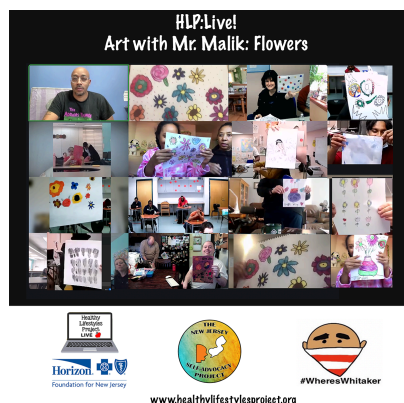
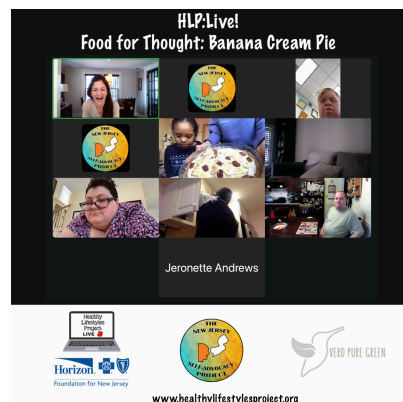
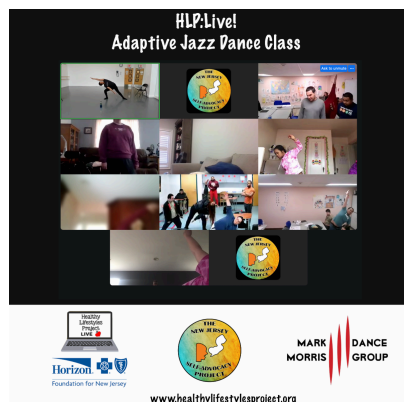
[Decision Making with Jennifer Harrison](#)



If you've attended one of our *Stay Healthy at Home* webinar sessions, 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.

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

HLP: Brain Games

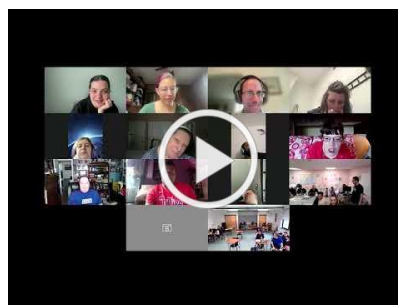
Get your thinking caps on! The NJSAP team presents games to play on Zoom!

Watch our previous videos below of Snippets and Pictionary 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.](#)

[Finish the lyrics](#)



[Pictionary](#)



We can also schedule Brain Games with your group! Email 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 videos on social media!

- On Mondays, we post health and nutrition videos from Veronica Ramirez ([Vero Pure Green](#))
- On Tuesdays, we post music therapy videos by Joanna Tan.
- On Wednesdays we post fitness videos from Matt Locascio ([In-Home Personal Training](#))
- On Thursdays, we post art-making videos by [Malik Whitaker](#).
- On Fridays, we post recipe videos/tips from Erin Smithers ([NJSAP](#)).

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

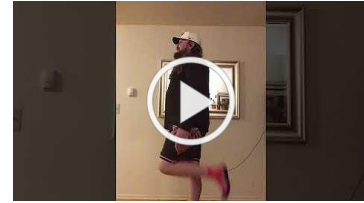
[Mondays with Veronica: Playlist](#)



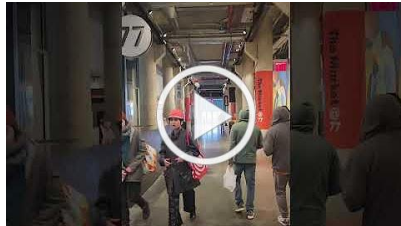
[Tuesdays with Joanna: Playlist](#)



[Wednesdays with Matt: Playlist](#)



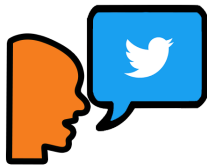
[Thursdays with Malik: Playlist](#)



[Fridays with Erin: Playlist](#)



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www.njsselfadvocacyproject.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

New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project | 985 Livingston Avenue | North Brunswick, NJ 08902 US

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