

Newsletter

July 2019

CAPITAL DISTRICT
Center for
Independence, Inc.



The Capital District Center for Independence, Inc.

The Capital District Center for Independence, Inc. (CDCI) is a non-residential, community based, Independent Living Center (ILC) which offers a wide variety of services to consumers with any and all disabilities, and their families.

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Meet the Staff

Laurel Lei Kelley *Executive Director*

Dawn Werner *Deputy Director*

Meg Bisailon *Healthy Living Specialist*

John Dutcher *Peer Advocate*

Shannon DeMayo *OMH Specialist*

Paul Hackett *Peer Advocate/Housing*

George Kleinmeier *SDMC Coordinator*

Tim Maxwell *Computer Network Technician*

Mary Miller *Office Manager*

Stacey Porter *MFP Transitions Specialist*

Kaia Raine *Peer Advocate*

Terra Snow *Benefits Coordinator*

Katie Sprouse *Schenectady Program Manager*

Jordan Steele *Receptionist*

It's Time for Us to Get Connected

The Capital District Center for Independence, Inc. has been in existence since 1979. That is 40 years of providing services to people with disabilities. In this ever-changing environment, it is up to us to grow and adapt. This includes reaching out to our community and becoming more connected. We have created this newsletter as a reflection of what we are seeing in the office as well as what we see affecting our everyday lives. We would love for you to check out our website and social media. Send us your questions. Let us be of assistance!

- Staff of the Center for Independence

The Philosophy of

Independent Living



According to the National Council of Independent Living (www.ncil.org), independent living is a program, a movement and a culture. The philosophy emphasizes people with disabilities are the best experts on their own lives and needs. Therefore, they have the right for equal opportunity to explore opportunities of how they want to live, work and be involved with their community. Traditionally, "professionals" such as a doctor or a case worker will tell the person with a disability how to live their life, not taking into consideration people's experiences and beliefs. This led to the underestimation of people's abilities and therefore infringement of basic human and civil rights. Through the tireless efforts of disability advocates, individuals with disabilities, their friends and families and organizations which celebrate people's abilities; many of these limiting beliefs are starting to fall by the wayside.

Rather than seeing the person with the disability as the "problem", the independent living model sees the environment as the element needing to adapt to support people of all abilities. So how can we support this philosophy so everyone has the ability to be the leaders of their own life? There truly is so much. Focus on the person's ability, rather than their limitations. Let them make mistakes and experience the consequences. Sounds strange, but this allows people to learn life lessons in their own unique way. Respect the person's privacy if they want to meet with their doctor, advocate, lawyer, etc. alone. At the end of the day, people need an opportunity to demonstrate their own competency. Without the opportunity, how will they ever prove to themselves they can live their most independent life!

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www.cdciweb.com

Health Food Corner

Overnight Oatmeal

Ingredients

- ½ cup of steel cut oats
- 1 cup of water (or milk)
- 1 tbsp peanut butter (or almond butter)
- 1 tbsp of honey or maple syrup
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 banana
- 1 tbsp walnuts

Directions

1. The prior evening, pour the oats into a container with a lid and add water (or milk for a creamier texture). Leave refrigerated overnight.
2. When ready to eat, take oats out of fridge. Add peanut butter, honey, cinnamon, vanilla extract, salt and mix all together.
3. Slice banana and put on top with walnuts. Enjoy!

Nutrition Per Serving

- Calories – 387
- Fat – 14.6g
- Calories – 58.5g
- Protein 10.2g

Self-Advocacy Tips: #1

Ask Questions!

It seems obvious, but so many people assume they know the answer and stop themselves before they even start. Don't fall into that trap! If are curious to know more or want something explained more fully, just ask!

CDCI's Upcoming Workshops

Tuesday, July 9th, 11a-12:30p

Rock Your Benefits with John Dutcher
Medicaid Buy-In Program for
Working People with Disabilities

Tuesday, August 13th, 11a-12:30p

Rock Your Benefits with John Dutcher
SSDI and SSI Work Incentives

Beware of Social Security Scams

Many of us are already aware, but it definitely needs to be repeated. There are many Social Security scams going around. People are receiving phone calls from someone claiming to be Social Security or another agency. What is especially scary about these calls is the scammers are displaying 1-800-772-1213 (Social Security's national customer service number) on the caller ID. In some calls, the person pretending to be Social Security will not know your information and will ask for things like your Social Security number (SSN) or other sensitive information. Other calls will tell the person they need additional information to increase their benefit payment or if they do not share their information, their benefits will be terminated. Sometimes, they will threaten to deactivate your SSN or delete it as well. Note, these tactics, as well as others, are switched up during a call to confuse and upset the person.

It's not just your sensitive information at risk! Sometimes, Social Security does call beneficiaries for customer service purposes. It is rare, but it does happen. A person might have business with Social Security and the claims representative needs to verify their information. Unfortunately, people have become so aware of the scams, they are hanging up on the real Social Security agency and stopping all communication. Just know, Social Security will never threaten you or promise an increase in benefits if you give them your information.

If you are to receive a call which you suspect is a scam...

1. **DO NOT GIVE OUT SENSITIVE INFORMATION!** Especially if the person on the other line is threatening you if you do not provide the information.
2. Ask the person for their name, tell them you will call the Social Security number back and hang up.
3. If Social Security states they were not trying to reach you, the call was a scam and you should report it.

Please report:

Office of the Inspector General
1-800-269-0271
oig.sa.gov/report

For more information, please check out the video "SSA Phone Scam Alert" <https://bit.ly/2VKJ8SG>.

Should My Child Participate in the IEP Meetings?

In 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) states that a child should attend their Individualized Education program (IEP) meeting, if appropriate. Basically, the choice comes down to the family. However, it should be noted meeting attendance encourages self-advocacy in the child, especially if they started attending at a young age. Other positives include: giving the child an opportunity to understand the impact of their disability; learning ways to ask for help and how; exploring their own strengths; practice conflict-resolution; practice setting goals; practice working as a team, etc. This is a chance for the student to communicate their own needs and for the support team to work together to find strategies to support success!

Disability Disclosure at a New Job

Disability Disclosure is a very personal issue, in which there are many varying opinions. For those of us who are new to the workforce or maybe we have had negative experiences in the past, it can be a very stressful decision whether or not we should disclose our disability to our new employer. As it is such a personal decision, we will not tell what you should do. However, we've compiled a small list of questions people encounter when considering disclosure.

- I am filling out a job application and it asked if I could complete the tasks required of the job with or without accommodation.
 - If you are able to complete all the tasks asked of the job, then put yes. If you need some assistance (ie: not standing on your feet for 8 hours straight), you are still able to answer yes because the assistance might fall under an accommodation.
- At the end of the job application, it asked for me to participate in a voluntary survey which asked if considered myself as a person with a disability.
 - This is your choice. The purposes of this question is to track statistics and will have no impact on your employment. Sometimes companies who contract with the federal government need to report how many people with disabilities they hire. Sometimes this question has to do with a tax credit for your employer.
- If I disclose my disability, who needs to know about it?
 - Human Resources will have something in your file. Your direct supervisor and their supervisor may know if your disability impacts your job directly.
- One of my coworkers has been gossiping stating I have a disability, but I do not.
 - The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) protects people with disabilities as well as people with perceived disabilities. This is a violation and you need to go to a supervisor or HR.
- I disclosed to my supervisor I have a disability and now the whole office knows.
 - Did you disclose in a confidential manner? If so, you need to go to their supervisor or HR. If it was a conversation in a common area where someone else overheard, then it is not a violation of confidentiality.
- I am worried if I disclose, I will not get the job or a promotion.
 - This is a common fear. There is no right answer, unfortunately. Trust your instincts. Does this employer feel comfortable to you? Do they treat all members of staff with respect? Do your supervisors seem professional? Maybe talk to coworkers you trust and ask them if they have ever had any issues when it comes to confidentiality.

Make sure you go into a situation educated about your rights and responsibilities. The more informed you are, the better supportive your decision will be!



CDCI's Support Groups

All support groups meet once a week per month.

Monday

12p – 2p

Self-Advocacy Group

Practice and learn about self-advocacy skills, laws and other topics revolving around speaking up for yourself.

Monday

2p – 4p

Citizens for Public Transportation

Meet with like-minded people who are passionate about consistently clean, safe and accessible bus stops.

Thursday

2p – 4p

Circle's Edge Loneliness Group

Sometimes, we just need some hang out with people we hope to one-day call friends.

If you are interested in joining one of these support groups or work with a peer advocate to create your own, please call CDCI at (518) 459-6422.

Thanks!

I was wondering...

Question: I receive \$771 for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) each month. I receive this money each month in a direct deposit. There is another amount of \$87 that gets deposited too. What is this amount? Am I being paid wrong?

Answer: No! You are being paid correctly. In New York State, there is a program called NYS Supplement program (SSP). SSP provides state-funded financial assistance to aged, blind and disabled individuals. There are other ways to qualify, but you receive SSP because you receive SSI. In NYS, you get both benefits, they just are deposited separately because they come from two different sources.

Welcome to CDCI

By John Dutcher

I would like to tell you a little bit about us. CDCI is a unique place filled with unique people. When you walk through the door, the first person you will most likely see is our office manager, Mary Miller. She has been with the agency for years and really acts as the nerve center for the entire office. We call her the gate keeper, so you better be nice to her. If Mary isn't at the front desk, then you'll meet Jordan Steele. Jordan is new to the agency, but has really become part of the team.

Once you've filled out a little bit of paperwork for us, you'll meet with your advocate. Each advocate has years of life and professional experience which they bring to the table to support you! Many people know Paul Andrew Hackett, who has been with CDCI for many years. He is our housing guru and has expertise with most housing topics (and if you know Paul, tons of other topics too!). Another advocate who knows about tons of topics is Kaia Raine. She was in our Schenectady office, but since CDCI centralized to one location, it has been great having her with us in person. If you need help with benefits, our Benefits Specialist Terra Snow is a great asset to you. She recently finished her Certified Work Incentive Coordinator (CWIC) certificate, so she really is on the up and up. If you encounter two women with dark curly hair and glasses, you aren't seeing double. They are Meg Bisailon and Katie Sprouse. Meg is our Healthy Living Coordinator and she leads programs such as Diabetes Self-Management and 14 Weeks to a Healthier You! Katie Sprouse is the Schenectady Program Manager and does a lot of our outreach and employment. Both these ladies take on consumers so they might be the ones to help you out!

Luckily, CDCI is able to house a few programs which allow us to help people in the community directly. Stacey Porter and Shannon DeMayo work to get people out of nursing homes who do not need to be there and transition them into the community. Stacey is a strong and persistent advocate who has a passion for her program. Shannon is a very sweet, yet tenacious person who works tirelessly to get people into their own apartments. George Kleinmeier is another strong advocate. He has been coordinating a special program for years which assists people in group homes without families decide if they need non-emergency medical treatment or when it is time to pull someone off of life support. All three assist with very important and sensitive work and we are so lucky to have such wonderful people on the team.

There are three more people you may encounter in our office. Tim Maxwell is our IT person who also runs the self-advocacy and citizen for public transportation support groups. Tim knows his facts and is more than happy to sit down and share them with you at any time. Laurel Kelley and Dawn Werner are our Executive Director and Deputy Director respectively. They are the strong and fearless leaders of this organization and are always happy to lend a hand. They both have so much knowledge, advocates will reach out to them to work together as a team to help you resolve your issue.

Last, but not least: I, John Dutcher, am also an advocate and CWIC, so I know benefits and other topics to support you! I stumbled upon CDCI 18 years ago and live by the motto, "If you do a job you love, you'll never work a day in your life".

We all look forward to meeting with you and will be happy to assist you lead a more independent life!

What is the Difference Between a Pet, a Service Animal, and a Support Animal?

By Terra Snow

These terms may seem interchangeable but they are not: *Service Dog*, *Service Animal*, *Companion Animal*, *Assistance Animal*, *Emotional Support Animal* (ESA), *Comfort Animal*, *Therapy Animal*, and *Facility Animal*.

To understand the differences, it is best to look at the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** and the **Fair Housing Act (FHA)**.

"Service Animals are defined only as dogs and miniature horses that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities."

"Examples of work/tasks performed by Service Animals include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a veteran or other person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties."

For more information: <https://www.propertyware.com/blog/service-vs-emotional-support-animals/#serviceanimaldifference>

Have you heard of... Equipment Loan Fund?

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services' Equipment Loan Fund for the Disabled can help you purchase equipment that will improve the quality of your daily life.

The Equipment Loan Fund allows you to borrow up to \$4,000, with an interest rate of 4%, and can be used to purchase wheelchairs, wheelchair van lifts, ramps, and adaptive equipment.

Call (518) 474-0197 for more info!

Or visit:

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/equiploanfund.asp>