

The Alliance News



This Issue

Alliance Action Plan	page 1
Local Issues	page 2
Around Illinois	page 3
Fun Page	page 4



Self-Direction In Illinois

By Terah Green

Vision

Our vision is for self-advocates to work together to get the support we need to live the life we want in the community.

In October 2010, we had a meeting with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). We talked with Lilia Teninty about why we wanted self-directed support, as well as some of the barriers to getting self-direction. She asked us to explain what self-direction means to us, so we wrote a position paper on self-direction. This paper is posted on our website. In November 2010, we had the Speak Up, Speak Out Summit. We spoke about self-directed supports and did a “Deal or No Deal” game. We presented the paper to DDD at the end of January, and Lilia committed to moving forward! Please see page three for a summary of the paper.

Mission

Our mission is to speak up for ourselves and each other while working together to make changes in our communities and in Illinois.



Top: Alliance board members hold “Deal or No Deal” signs.

Bottom: Speakers for presentation, and recognizing leadership team members



An Initiative of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities



The Alliance News

LOCAL ISSUES

Call to Action: Accessibility Assessment

By Megan Norlin

Hello fellow advocates! I'm Megan Norlin, the Local Group Coordinator of the Alliance, and I'm thrilled to welcome you to the first ever of *Call to Action*. In this article, I will present you with a project for your group to complete together. Hopefully, these projects will help you advocate and help change your community! Let's get started!



Independence is important to us, and part of independence is accessibility. In order for us to be independent, we need equal access in and around public places. Unfortunately, that doesn't always happen.

Let's change that! I have created an accessibility assessment so your group can investigate the accessibility of a public place. Your job is to go around your town, and see how your local buildings measure up. Choose any place you like. Inspect one building or 10 buildings. It's all up to you. The packet also includes information on how to report your findings for others to read on www.jjslist.com so that others can learn what you've discovered. We hope it will bring more attention to accessible businesses and help others become accessible.

Interested? Request a project packet at hottwheelz702@yahoo.com. Not part of a local self-advocacy group? E-mail me, and I'll be happy to help you get started!

I hope I've inspired you to get inspecting! Thanks for reading and I'll see you next time with another new and exciting project.

Speak Out of Arc of Rock Island County

By Jennifer P, Alicia D, and Courtney B



Speak Out has been around for 11 years. We have 50 members, and most of the members work at Arc Industries. We meet every other Friday afternoon on payday Fridays! Some of the things we have done over the years are:

- Freedom Quest—we went on the whole ride, and we planned and hosted a rally in Moline to start off the Quest!
- 10th Anniversary Event—we had speakers, games, and food to celebrate our 10th anniversary. The mayor of Rock Island even came!
- Meet the Candidates—we have held several forums where candidates came and answered our questions.

Right now we are working on two issues. We wrote a letter to MetroLink, the transportation company, to build a new shelter. We are also working on getting streets and sidewalks cleared of snow and ice. We are learning about ordinances in other cities, and are planning to go to the city council meeting to talk to them. We like Speak Out because we can help people, make changes, and speak up for ourselves.

Speak Out officers pictured to the right





The Alliance News

AROUND ILLINOIS

Self-Direction In Illinois, continued from page 1



This paper starts with our principles. We want to do what everyone else can do and we deserve to be heard. The second section is about the current system. Illinois is almost last in the country in supporting people to live in small houses in the community, and has more people in institutions than most other states. This is not what self-advocates want!

Self-directed supports means we get to choose how we want to live our lives and who can be a part of it. It means that we are in charge of our lives, we make the decisions, and we control how everything works. There are four parts to self-direction.

1. The first one is individual budgets. This means that each person would get a certain amount of money to cover the costs of their needs.
2. The second one is personal advocate. This means having someone to makes sure the person is getting the support they need from the people they want.
3. The third one is choice of services. This is about having a choice about where you live, transportation, who you hire, and what you do during the day.
4. The forth one is a business agent. This is someone who oversees how you spend the money and pays all the taxes.

Self-direction is a good thing so let's make it known!

Meet the new Alliance Board of Directors!

This is the Alliance's new Board of Directors. They each represent a self-advocacy group. Nine of the 15 groups decided to have a board member. Pictured here, from left to right, are:

- Front Row: John G (People First of the Illinois Valley), Stephanie C (Ray of Hope Self-Advocates)
- Back Row: Beth D (The Network), Tia N (People First of Illinois), Courtney B (Speak Out), Brian D (Self-Advocates of Lake County), Donald (Changes to Independence Altogether)

Not pictured: Lynda H (CAPS), Eric F (Strike for a Better Change)





The Alliance News

FUN PAGE

Quiz time!

Can you answer these questions? All of the answers can be found in this newsletter!

1. What does DDD stand for?
2. What is Megan Norlin's article about?
3. What are two parts of self-direction?
4. What are the names of the new board members?

- Answers:
- 1) Division of Developmental Disabilities
 - 2) Accessibility Assessment
 - 3) Individual budgets, personal advocate, choice of services, business agent
 - 4) John G, Stephanie C, Beth D, Tia N, Courtney B, Brian D, Donald W, Lynda H, and Eric F.

At the Speak Up, Speak Out Summit in November, many people spoke up about what is important to them about self-direction. Below are a few pictures from the open mic session. Thanks for speaking up, everyone!



The Alliance has started planning a rally for:

June 15th in Bloomington, Illinois

Stay tuned for more details!