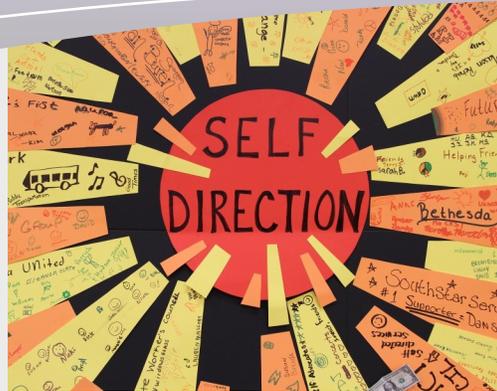


The Alliance News



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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.

Mission

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

The Alliance is proud to be an Initiative of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities

Happy November everyone! The Alliance staff a great time at Speak Up and Speak Out. Here's a bit about what our local groups have been up to:

Speak Out of Rock Island held an awesome political event in September. They invited local politicians to come and speak to their group. I'm told the event was a great success!

Strike For a Better Change has finished up their Anti-bullying campaign and will probably start tackling employment soon.

The Network attended a Halloween dance fundraiser for one of their local group homes.

People First of Illinois Valley is still working on fundraising.

Self-Advocates of Lake County opened a checking account, and hopes to take on a new project soon.

People First of Illinois elected some new officers.

SACNI is growing in numbers, as two more people attended their last meeting. Congrats guys!

CAPS had a successful fundraiser selling bracelets and cookbooks. The group also decided to adopt a family for Christmas. They plan to help a family buy goodies for Christmas dinner and presents for the kids. Way to give back everyone!

That's all for now. Have a great Thanksgiving.

Megan Norlin
Local Group Coordinator



The Alliance News

This and That

Futures Unlimited in Pontiac Observes The International Day of Peace



Pontiac Futures Unlimited was busy tie dying at the end of September. The Fun and Talents class had individuals bring in one item of their choice, a t-shirt, socks, handkerchiefs or etc. to tie dye. Folding, scrunching, twisting and then tying was the next step. Then we had a lot of fun choosing our colors to dye with. After a few days of tie dying, the items were all complete. So many beautiful and colorful creations were made. We are very proud of our results. The SEAL's (social skills, etiquette, advocacy, leadership) class decided to take a picture of everyone wearing their tie dye shirts. We had the picture taken on September 21 to observe The International Day of Peace. Notice, we are in the shape of a Peace Sign.



Wrong Planet is the web community designed for individuals (and parents/professionals of those) with Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, ADHD, PDDs, and other neurological differences. We provide a discussion forum, where members communicate with each other, an article section, with exclusive articles and how-to guides, a blogging feature, and a chat-room for real-time communication with other Aspies.

Log on to www.wrongplanet.net to explore more!

"My disability has opened my eyes to see my true abilities."

~ Robert M. Hensel



The Alliance News

Local Group Spotlight



Spotlight on Sertoma United!

~ Tara Wickey, Community Organizer



In October I had the opportunity to visit with one of my local groups, Sertoma United. The incredible individuals who are part of the advocacy group participate in several of the service programs offered by Sertoma Centre located in Alsip, Illinois. Some of the services they offer range from Autism services, behavioral support, CILA, DT, transition support, skills training, mental health & community services.

Shortly after I arrived, I was greeted by Melissa Sands, Sertoma United's energetic & spirited adviser. She introduced me to the group members who were all so lovely and excited to be part of the group. They told me about all the AMAZING things they have been doing since their group started in 2004. Some highlights are starting a healthy relationships class, resolving a PACE bus issue, writing Christmas cards to hospital & nursing home patients as well as soldiers overseas, collecting donations for a food drive, raising money for projects by doing bake sales and selling tee-shirts, and participating in Alliance events like The Rally. Sertoma United made a "thumbs up" board with their challenge grant money from the Alliance (see above right). They were even featured in the news when three local legislators came to talk to them about funding cuts for individuals with disabilities (see pictures below). Phew! This group of rock star advocates have done so much I can hardly fit it all in my article!

The best part about Sertoma United is that the group helps their agency maintain its "checks and balances". What this means is that their group has a voice as well as political power in their agency whenever any new changes or policies are proposed. All proposed policies are checked by Sertoma United before they are implemented. How cool is that? Advocates also help train new staff on the mission and philosophy of the organization as well as person centered planning. The group also helps with the agency's Quality Assurance Survey.

Melissa Sands gave me a tour of the facility and I got to meet other individuals who work there or receive services. Everyone had a smile on their face and a positive attitude. People were eager to work and I had a wonderful time visiting! I left feeling refreshed and recharged. Keep up the work Sertoma United!





The Alliance News

National News

Advocates Renew Call For Restraint, Seclusion Reform

~ Michelle Diamant, disabilityscoop

More than 200 disability organizations are urging Congress to reignite efforts to regulate the use of restraint and seclusion in schools.

In a letter sent last week to key legislators, a who's who of disability advocacy organizations including the Autism Society, The Arc and the National Disability Rights Network said action is needed in order to ensure student safety.

"It is time for a national policy addressing restraint and seclusion in our schools for all children," reads the letter sent to members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives education committees. "America needs more than the current patchwork of state laws to ensure that every child is afforded protection."

Since 2009, disability advocates have pressed Congress to establish federal regulations to govern the use of restraint and seclusion in schools after a series of government and advocacy group reports found widespread abuse and even deadly instances of the practices.

In response, the House of Representatives passed legislation in 2010 to establish national standards, but the Senate declined to act. As a result, a variety of state and local rules currently exist. (Read all of Disability Scoop's coverage of restraint and seclusion at www.disabilityscoop.com/restraint-seclusion/)

Thus far, the recent correspondence has garnered no reply. However, Jessica Butler of the Autism National Committee, who organized the effort, says she plans to send the letter again after hearing from additional groups who wanted their support included.

"As you know, our 200-plus organizations are concerned because of the lack of national protection for all children," Butler wrote in an email to Disability Scoop. "The (Government Accountability Office) documented 20 stories of deaths in school from restraint and seclusion, and the news stories keep coming. It is important for Congress to act and pass legislation and extend these kinds of protections to all of our nation's school children."

At present, there are proposals in both chambers of Congress that would address restraint and seclusion in schools, but lawmakers have indicated no plans to take up the issue.



The Alliance News

Self-Advocacy News



"The system of supports in Illinois belongs to you! Let us work together to make the voice of self-advocates the most important voice in the system. Speak up and speak out!"

~ Kevin Casey, DHS DDD Director

Speak Up and Speak Out Summit 2012 October 31, 2012



Going Home Illinois is an interactive website was designed with you in mind. Going Home Illinois is the place where you will find facts and the latest news about the Governor's plan to rebalance the disability system and transition people into the community.

You will have the opportunity to get your questions answered and participate in a forum with serious, thoughtful discussions about the transition process.

Individuals and families can express concerns and share useful strategies and ideas about transitioning into the community.

You will also find a video that tells the story of individuals and families who are thriving after moving from an institution to community life. You will be able to keep track of our activities, follow people with disabilities on their journey, view our picture gallery, read about success stories, and so much more!

You are not alone on this journey. Our website was built as a resource for you – a place where you can go to share your story and to get your questions answered factually and timely.

We know that making the transition into the community can be intimidating. We also know that it can be done successfully, which is why our Family Transition Advocates will be there every step of the way. Please visit www.goinghomeillinois.org to experience our collective journey to living life with independence, equality, and opportunity.

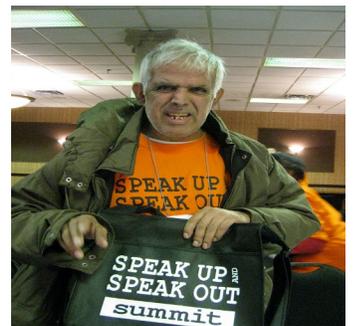


The Alliance News

PHOTOS



Speak Up and Speak Out Summit October 30 - 31, 2012 Springfield, IL



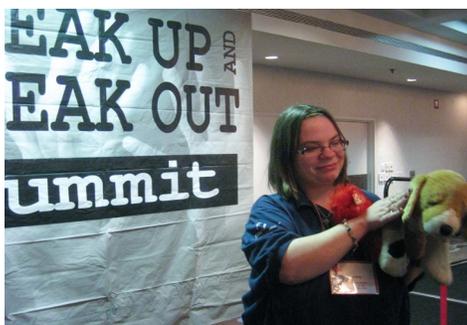


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PHOTOS



Speak Up and Speak Out Summit October 30 - 31, 2012 Springfield, IL





The Alliance News

PHOTOS



Speak Up and Speak Out Summit October 30 - 31, 2012 Springfield, IL



Speak Up and Speak Out Summit Photos in this newsletter were taken by Tara Wickey, The Alliance's Community Organizer

