

# Stepping Stones NH

A guidebook for people with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who support them

## Unchartered Tutoring

page 14

A specialty publication of



NEW HAMPSHIRE COUNCIL ON  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

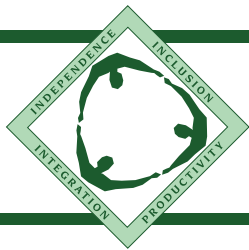
Published by

**BUSINESSNH**  
MAGAZINE



## Our Mission:

The NH Council on Developmental Disabilities is dedicated to dignity, full rights of citizenship, cultural diversity, equal opportunities and full participation for all New Hampshire citizens with developmental disabilities.



NEW HAMPSHIRE COUNCIL ON  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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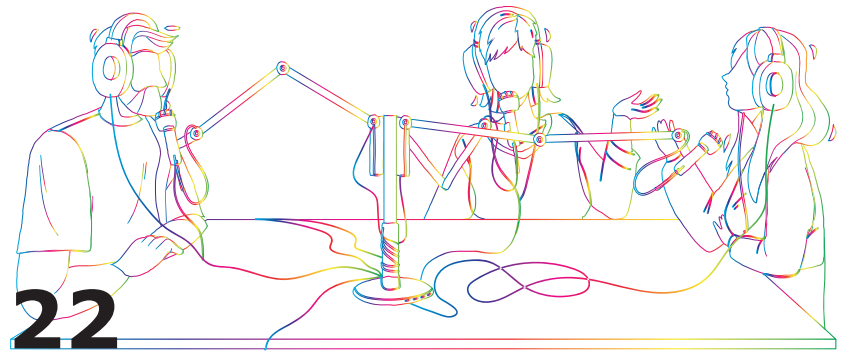
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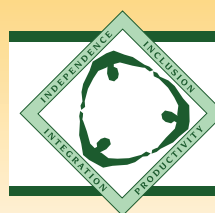


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The NH Council on Developmental Disabilities is dedicated to dignity, full rights of citizenship, cultural diversity, equal opportunities, and full participation for all NH citizens with developmental disabilities. The Council initiates activities and projects for and with people with disabilities that create

positive, long-term change to participate in all aspects of community life and supports community initiatives that promote full citizenship and inclusion.



**NEW HAMPSHIRE COUNCIL ON  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

## Dear Stepping Stones NH Readers:

I'm happy to introduce you to our 2022-2023 issue of Stepping Stones NH magazine. The NHCDD is committed to providing this important resource for individuals, families, providers, and other important stakeholders.

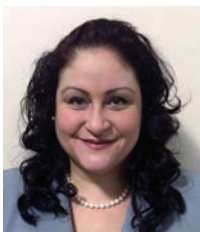
As a community, we continue to come together to navigate our surroundings in new ways. We are excited that many events are happening in person. We are even more excited about all the efforts being made to make these community gatherings and activities more accessible for people with disabilities.

We have been contributing funds through our new Accessibility and Emerging Needs grants for organizations to be more inclusive in how they share information and plan activities to better integrate people with disabilities. We have also been available to provide technical assistance to groups and organizations who want to eliminate barriers for people with disabilities in NH to participate in advocacy and community enrichment.

We continue to support initiatives that align with the NHCDD five-year plan goals, contributing to advocacy and community inclusion in meaningful ways. Articles in this issue cover topics like driver's education, art and science, and health care providers with disabilities. There are also interesting contributions related to the accessibility needs from individuals across the disability spectrum in NH.

We hope that you take the time to review the valuable stories and helpful information in this issue. Also, check out the Nature Conservancy's Cedar Creek Trail for All in Manchester, NH to see what a truly inclusive community project can look like.

If you have any ideas for articles or projects, please let us know at [info@nhcdd.us](mailto:info@nhcdd.us). We would love to hear from you about important topics for the disability community.



**Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre**  
Executive Director  
NH Council on Developmental Disabilities

Check out our Facebook page, which features information, events, conferences and workshops relevant to the developmental disabilities community in NH: [facebook.com/NHCDD](https://www.facebook.com/NHCDD). You can also access our online resource guide at [nhddresources.wordpress.com](https://nhddresources.wordpress.com).



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Stepping Stones NH is published by  
Granite Media Group  
80 Canal St, Ste 203  
Manchester, NH 03101  
603-626-6354

Please forward any inquiries or correspondence to 80 Canal St, Manchester, NH 03101. For editorial information, please call 603-626-6354. For information on how your company can advertise in Stepping Stones NH, call 603-626-6354.

**[BusinessNHmagazine.com](https://www.BusinessNHmagazine.com)**

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# Access For All

## Explore Nature Along the All Persons Trail in Manchester

By Li Platz



Aislinn Graves of Wheels in the Wilderness explores the All Persons Trail with her husband David.

Rooted In Light Media

Minutes from downtown Manchester lies something out of a fairy tale: Manchester Cedar Swamp Preserve, a 640-acre property managed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in New Hampshire with rare Atlantic white cedar swamps, towering hemlock groves and, if you visit in mid-summer, a flush of giant rhododendron blooms. Yet the magic of places like Manchester Cedar Swamp Preserve has long been inaccessible for those with disabilities. After a positive community response to a universally accessible trail at its Ossipee Pine Barrens Preserve, TNC considered building a trail in our most populated city that helps everyone experience nature.

TNC participated in virtual community-led conversations to learn about common barriers people with disabilities and other community groups face in accessing the outdoors. After three years of listening, planning and construction, the All Persons Trail opened at Manches-

ter Cedar Swamp in April 2022. The out-and-back trail is 6 feet wide with gentle, rolling terrain. It features an informational kiosk, resting benches, interpretive signs designed for wheeled device access, and an audio tour in both English and Spanish. At the accessible parking area, visitors can use an ADA-compliant



A mother and child review the trail map.

portable toilet. TNC also partnered with the Manchester Transit Authority to add a new bus stop, providing much-needed transportation to the preserve. “It’s a place where any person with any level of ability can go to enjoy the beauty of natural New Hampshire and to learn about one another; a place where everyone can coexist with a shared interest,” said Max Morelli, director of program services for Opportunity Networks. It truly is a place for all.

Learn more about the All Persons Trail and visiting the preserve at [nature.org/manchester](https://nature.org/manchester).

*Li Platz is Marketing and Communications Intern with The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire and a student at Williams College who’s passionate about writing, outdoor recreation and expanding access to nature. If Li isn’t at work or in the library, she’s likely on a trail somewhere between Durham, New Hampshire, and Lander, Wyoming.*



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Chuck Zlotnick/Marvel Studios

Vincent D'Onofrio as Wilson Fisk/Kingpin and Alaqua Cox as Maya Lopez in Marvel Studios' HAWKEYE.

# Super Representation

By Blake Tyler

Everyday in New Hampshire, about 12% of the population is living their day to day lives with a developmental disability. The disabled community does not want to be treated special or have hollow dispensations hurled their way, they simply want the same respect and opportunities as everyone else in society. Often, the disabled community goes largely ignored and under-represented in many different mediums. So it's always nice to see representation on a large scale that reaches mass audiences, and one of the largest stages you will find these stories presented are the world of superheroes.

One of these heroes is someone who actually represents two worlds; the deaf community and also women of color! Her name is Echo, and she is rising up the ranks of the public consciousness lately thanks to her masterful portrayal by Alaqua Cox in the show Hawkeye and will soon have her own show on Disney+. Echo is raised to be a master hand to hand combat specialist and thanks to her being deaf is a master of reading lips and can mimic any moves after seeing them performed once!

Adding to the authenticity of the character as portrayed in the show is the casting choice. Alaqua Cox was





born deaf and raised on the Menominee Indian Reservation in Keshena, Wisconsin. She is a member of the Menominee and Mohican Nation and attended the Wisconsin School for the Deaf, where she played on the girls basketball team from 2014-2015 as well as the volleyball team.

This sort of representation, while not a cure all or silver bullet for the hurdles the disabled community faces, is a welcome launching pad. The hope is that by starting with one portrayal and one character, thousands of people can finally see themselves and feel seen on screen and inspire many more Aliaqua Cox's to keep shattering ceilings in the future.

To close in the words of the immortal Stan Lee, "That person who helps others simply because it should or must be done, and because it is the right thing to do, is indeed without a doubt, a real superhero."

*Blake Tyler is a Social Media Assistant with the New Hampshire Council on Developmental Disabilities, a lifelong Granite Stater, and passionate fan of all things comics related.*

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# There's a Better Future In Sight

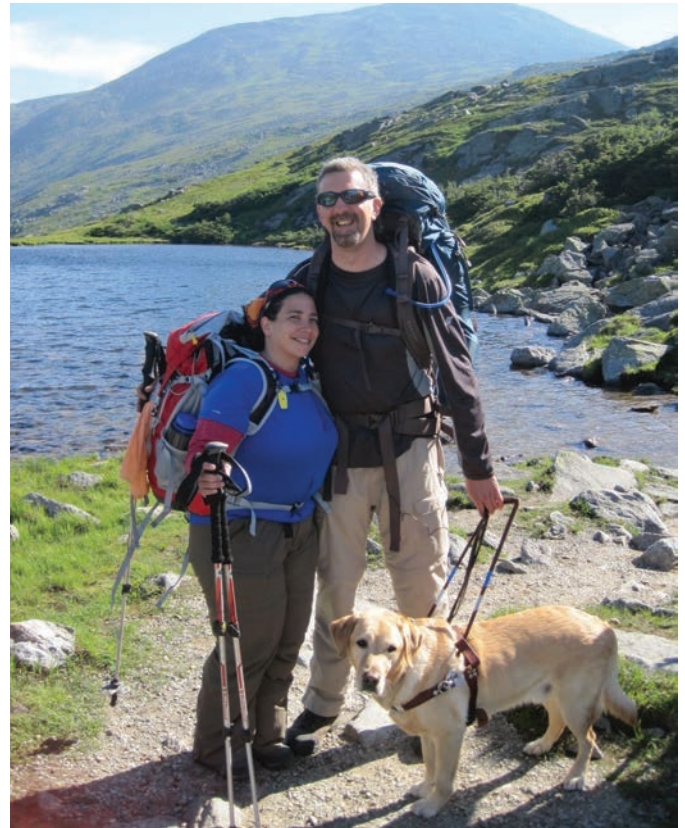
By Randy Pierce

I'm delighted to introduce you to the incredible mission of Future In Sight along with some very personal and powerful perspectives on our inclusive approach to celebrating ability awareness.

Future In Sight is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to transforming the lives of those who are blind or visually impaired. A byproduct of this work is that we also help transform the lives of the family members and friends whom our clients rely on in their day-to-day lives. In order to do this, Future In Sight provides a range of services in education, rehabilitation and social services to infants and toddlers, children (3-22), adults and seniors throughout NH. These services are part of a holistic continuum of care that includes counseling, group therapy, occupational therapy, low vision therapy, vision rehabilitation therapy, orientation and mobility training, education services and technology training. We also partner with medical and eye professionals, healthcare facilities, social service organizations and state agencies, including the Department of Education and Department of Rehabilitation Services. Services are personalized to meet our clients' needs — in the home, at work, at school and in the community. Whether it is no vision or low vision, Future In Sight has techniques to promote confidence, competence and dignity for everyone.

Future In Sight understands the developmentally disabled community experiences an elevated risk to many health challenges. Our team of Occupational Therapists who practice in low vision are particularly proficient in assessing complex situations and challenges to create an individualized plan to meet the needs of the client. Each of our clients is a collaborative partner in determining the goals established to define success. Our professional staff utilizes a team approach to ensure the full range of our services are deployed to best reach those goals.

I well understand all of these realities because they are a part of my personal journey. Thirty-three years ago, I



Randy Pierce, left, hiking with his wife Tracy and his guide dog.

experienced an unexpected —and very sudden—loss of sight. I felt the frustration of helplessness and hopelessness as I thought everything fun or meaningful in my life was no longer possible. Fortunately, I was referred to Future In Sight and they helped me begin to understand that the possibilities were nearly limitless. A practiced and experienced counselor understood the reality of my challenges with sight loss, my own approach to that loss and the various community challenges. Education, demonstration and the arrival of low vision therapy helped me to quickly learn and grow. We adapted my home in subtle ways to enhance my safety as well as the access to all my home appliances. I was cooking, cleaning, managing my mail in slightly adjusted ways. Soon I was learning to travel inside and outside the home and returned to my job with confidence.

I was thrilled to learn there are tools to magnify text, enhance the contrast, improve the lighting and reduce the glare. There is technology to provide speech from talking books to talking computers and smart phones. There is a peer support group to collaborate and commiserate with those who understood and had quality suggestions. There are volunteers that provide transportation and help me with the important tasks, which I might still find challenging.

All of this transformed my life, allowing me to live and thrive. Future In Sight even helped to connect me to my first guide dog and my independent travel became even easier as well as more rewarding; after all, nobody ever asks to pet my cane.

Over a few years my legal blindness progressed to total blindness and each time I lost sight, there was a supportive and knowledgeable person to help guide me through the training necessary. Along with my return to work came a host of activities important to me. I trained for and received a 2nd degree black belt in Shaolin Kempo karate. I learned to climb mountains here in NH and all over the world. I started running races and won a pair of National Marathon Championships. I founded a company and developed an international speaking career. I even wrote a book to share the many epic adventures and lessons of my life, "See You at the Summit. All of this allowed me to support charitable organizations who had helped me, repaying the kindness I'd received.

Last year, Future In Sight invited me to become their president and chief executive officer. It's a dream job,



which enables me to give all of my effort to ensure the skills that we teach are there for everyone who faces vision challenges. I know personally how valuable the services of our organization are for success – however any of us may measure it. I believe Future In Sight's choice to hire me in this role demonstrates their inclusive approach and also the quality of service they have been committed to offering the NH community for over 100 years. Because of my personal experience with the organization, I am confident to say to anyone who encounters sight loss, low vision or blindness, "there is a better future in sight thanks to Future In Sight"!

*Randy Pierce is the President & CEO of Future In Sight. He is also a captivating motivational speaker who draws upon his life experiences to inspire, entertain, and teach. Randy has climbed to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro, won two national marathon championships, and earned his 2nd degree black belt in Karate – all while being 100% blind. He co-authored a book of his experiences, See You at the Summit, with his wife Tracy.*



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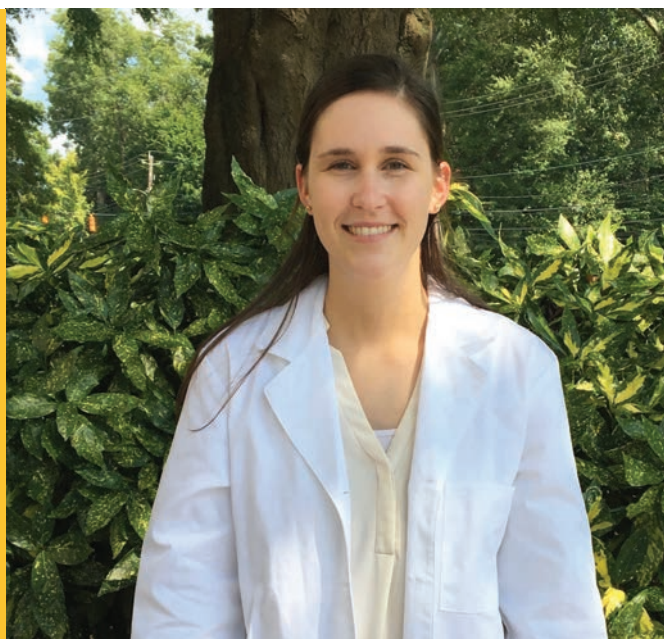
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# A Passion for Nursing

By Allison Love



Author Allison Love in her nursing uniform, above, and with her dog, below.

When I was growing up, I was fascinated by science and medicine and thought for sure I was going to be a doctor. I always did very well in my schoolwork and had a strong desire and curiosity for new information. However, as I got older, I began to realize that the things about me that made me different from my peers would also make it harder for me to be independent enough to have this career that I wanted.

My family and I did not know I had autism until I was in my 20s, but there were plenty of other diagnoses I was given up to that point to try to explain my differences. Now, as an adult and a women's health nurse practitioner, I attribute a great deal of my success to the love and dedication of my parents. I had the great privilege of benefiting from a stay-at-home mom throughout my childhood and despite her not knowing that I was autistic, she gave me every resource and therapy that she could learn about.

I went to public school all the way through 12th grade, and my mom

was at my school constantly to make sure that I was getting the education I deserved. She would remind my teachers that even though I didn't talk that I could both understand and communicate; and she helped come up with communication systems for me to interact with my teachers.



As I moved into middle and high school, my parents both encouraged me to dive deeply into the things I

was passionate about and build a community through these activities. I was a talented musician and music helped me in every way imaginable, including teaching me how to make and keep friends through common interests.

As we began to think about my future after graduation, my parents and therapists helped me learn skills that would allow me to go to college and live on my own; such as shopping in a store, making phone calls, and asking for help when I needed it. I was so scared to go to college, but I wanted badly to work in medicine and with the support of my family and my own drive to reach my goals, I made that leap. By this time, I knew I wanted to be a nurse practitioner instead of a doctor because in my chosen field of gynecology, I learned that doctors are surgeons, and I wanted no part of that. I planned to get a bachelor's degree in biology first, then move on to nursing school getting both a bachelor's and a Master's in Nursing.

When I started nursing school, I realized how truly difficult it was for me to interact with patients and I was

unsure if I could make it as a nurse. I excelled in academics as always, but in nursing school that is a very small part of the picture. As I spent more time around my peers, experienced nurses, and instructors I began to realize how good I was at learning and mimicking social interactions from observing others. I could go into a patient room and take a blood pressure once I knew what a nurse says and does when they perform that task.

Slowly, I began to accumulate scripts in my mind for different situations. I realize now that this is a common trait amongst women and girls with autism, and I feel very proud of it because it has allowed me to succeed in nursing. Now that I, as a nurse, am comfortable and confident with my scripts I have more room in my brain to connect with my patients individually and to adapt to different types of people and different situations.

Looking back on my life until this point, I believe that I have found success by learning about myself and my brain and figuring out how to use my skills to my advantage, even if it means doing things differently than others. Furthermore, I think I have my parents to thank for teaching me the way I needed to be taught and advocating for me until they could teach me to advocate for myself.

Thanks Mom and Dad.



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# Unchartered Tutoring

By Amber Nicole Cannan



Amber Nicole Cannan, left, with group of students in the Unchartered Tutoring science gardens.

**I**t's no secret that overcrowded classrooms have become commonplace. How, then, can we expect teachers to recognize, reach, and educate children who are withdrawn, or those whose fundamental needs are not being met? If this continues, the students we love will keep going unnoticed, unassisted, and unincluded.

Anxiety is a major learning obstacle that seems to be based in Maslow's Hierarchy and identity. Daily, I can't be sure my students have food at home, clean clothes, steady shelter,

or if their heating bill has been paid. Students without these basic human needs are not going to learn. Additionally, if a student's very identity is compromised, or control over their own bodies is removed, it will impair learning and their education could be in jeopardy.

The hardest part of my job is seeing students who lack life's necessities. Evaluating students' needs becomes impossible in overfilled classrooms. Teachers who can accomplish this in a classroom of over twenty students should be evaluated

for superpowers and paid double.

I founded Unchartered Tutoring with these challenges in mind. I believe we can accomplish learning objectives through smaller class sizes, cross topic lessons, and teachers who provide a human connection.

Small class sizes are vital for accommodating students with varying challenges. As an after-school educator, I can control my class sizes where daytime teachers cannot. Additionally, I can teach a class of fifteen alone, but with an assistant, we can form an emotional connection with our stu-

dents. Because I limit our class sizes, we can form the emotional connection required for students to disclose when their basic needs are not being met. We've identified and assisted students with learning challenges, abuse at home, and those who need to feel a little extra love and connection. The smiles and light in a student's eyes when they feel heard and helped is what makes my job the best job in the world. This is a testament to the teachers I have hired.

One element that inspires student success is our approach. To teach children in the vulnerable population, we've created a curriculum that educates, engages, and avoids triggering sensory issues.

Before Covid, we provided gloves and masks for students with sensory issues. COVID-19 has made it more commonplace to have these items on hand. Granted, masks don't block all smells, but they do seem to help, if only psychosomatically. Some of our lessons inherently stink, particularly in our Gross Science series where we create simulated fecal matter and a



A student in an after-school program learning about wood's lamps and phosphorescence.

variety of other ewwy gooey things. We keep citrus-scented oils on hand to try to mask some of those smells. In other lessons where we use smells, students have the choice to decline them if they so wish. Yes, it is that simple.

We have enough tools and aids on hand that students can make a slime without going into sensory overload. The relief I've seen on students' faces when I tell them they can make slime and play with it without ever touching it is confidence boosting to both of us!

Learning disabilities and poverty are not the only learning barriers in a classroom. Students from disadvantaged groups need adults they can relate to. My teachers have done a lot of reading and listening regarding what it means to be BIPOC, LGBTQ+, disabled, neurodivergent or a part of other disadvantaged demographics in this country, and how that affects Maslow's Hierarchy for their students. Many of my teachers come from these spaces because I seek them out!

I've stopped evaluating potential new hires by grades or test scores. Those criteria favor the socioeconomically advantaged, white male. Many people, especially those with intellectual or learning disabilities, lacked resources and aren't well-rep-



A student looks at *Estigmene acrea frass* through a microscope.



Elise helps a student with a scientific illustration.

resented by conventional standards.

However, low test scores can have some bearing on what they can do for Unchartered Tutoring—it makes them stronger teachers and gives them the ability to connect with students who struggle in similar ways! It is an advantage!

When interviewing, I seek that moment when candidates are describing a project and they lean forward in their seats. I watch for that moment when their eyes twinkle as they recall an impact they had where they knew they changed their environment for the better. If those moments align with my needs, I hire them. If it doesn't they don't, I evaluate whether the skill is trainable or an innate personality trait.

Being the boss for over seven years, I've realized that all the skills I need from workers are trainable. Their values are not. I'm not evaluating them by the resources they had growing up, but for how they will work and how much they love what we are doing.

Hiring neurodivergent people and those with intellectual or physical disabilities does take a little extra

commitment from me to give more thorough training and patience with errors. Sometimes I must stop what I'm doing to reassure an anxious employee that they are doing a wonderful job and that I am extremely happy with their performance. Other times, I guide them on technology multiple times to ensure they have the autonomy to make their own schedules. All teachers are given hand trucks

to transport lesson boxes because wheels are smarter, and accommodations shouldn't be reserved for those with a doctor's note.

The biggest challenge I've encountered was resolved by building a robust system of checklists--a method of checking out lessons to ensure supplies are ready ahead of time and that several eyes on the schedule ensure that no mistakes were made.

With such processes in place, my small business operates as smoothly as a big business. When someone moves on, another can take command and run it with very few questions.

Our method works because the human connection between us makes robust learning possible.

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---

*Amber Nicole Cannan (She/Her, They/Them) is our founder and primary muse/instructor. She is a biomedical artist, science and art teacher and general community member.*



A student carefully measures the ratios for her exothermic reaction.





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# Behind the Wheel

Overcoming Challenges to Obtaining a Driver's License

By Matthew J. Mowry

**L**ike any teenager, Abigail Ripley was excited about gaining freedom when she signed up in November 2021 to take lessons at a driver education school.

Then, she learned there was an issue. Ripley has a 504 plan, a program developed by schools to assist students with disabilities. According to a state website, a 504 plan is a set of accommodations, or changes in the classroom environment, to help a child follow the regular curriculum. It is less formal and involved than an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and does not change the instruction itself. For example, a student who uses a wheelchair but doesn't need academic supports would have a 504 plan. See Accommodations below for other examples. A student may qualify for a 504 plan but not an IEP.

Ripley and her parents originally arranged the 504 to avoid potential issues that might come up as Ripley does not have functional fingers on one hand. But that has never kept her from accomplishing anything she has pursued, including playing high school lacrosse.

Ripley says without meeting her and based solely on the fact that she had a 504, the private driving school mandated an evaluation by an adaptive driving expert

just over the border in Vermont, the closest place certified to provide such evaluations.

The driving school then told Ripley she couldn't take driver's education until after the evaluation. By the way, that evaluation cost \$750 on top of the fee for drivers ed.

"My mom emailed the head of DMV and the governor's office on disability," Ripley says. The governor's office referred her to the NH Council on Development Disabilities, which provided a grant covering the cost of the evaluation. Meanwhile, Ripley had to postpone driving classes due to how far out evaluations were booked.

The three-hour evaluation included physical and cognitive tests as well as a driving test with the evaluator. Ripley says the evaluator remarked on how much mobility and strength she had in her arm and commented that Ripley was the best first-time driver they had seen. The evaluator did say Ripley needed a steering wheel knob, a recommendation that was forwarded to the driving school.

While the driving school added a knob for Ripley in the driver's education car, Ripley says, "It made it even harder to learn. I felt it was not necessary. ... I had driven 20 hours with my mom and never used this device.

My pediatrician, who has the same limb difference as me, does not use this device and there is nothing on her license that indicates she needs it.”

After completing her driver training, Ripley’s mom called the DMV to see if the knob was required for the exam and was told it was up to her. She not only aced her written test but also received a perfect score on the driving portion. “It made me feel like I couldn’t do it on my own,” Ripley says of having to use the knob for driver’s education.

Ripley says she is lucky she has parents who are such strong advocates and were able to find a grant to cover the cost of the evaluation. While Ripley says she is grateful the evaluation allowed her to take the training, she says the evaluation was unnecessary. She adds that she took up an evaluation slot and grant money that someone with a more severe disability could have used.

### Helping People Get on the Road Safely

Such evaluations are required when people may need adaptive equipment to assist them in driving, says Amanda Scamman, a certified driver rehabilitation specialist at Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital, one of only two facilities that offer such services in NH.

Certified driver rehabilitation specialists evaluate people’s physical and cognitive abilities to see if they can meet the demands for driving. They also recommend adaptive equipment when an individual needs it to drive safely.

According to Staci Frazier, an occupational therapist and certified driver rehabilitation specialist with DriveAbility, a state-accredited driver school at Exeter Hospital, traditional driving schools do not have the training to evaluate whether a person needs adaptive equipment.

A specialist can evaluate a person’s vision, perception, cognition, and reaction time to determine if there are issues that could affect the ability to drive, says Frazier, who earned certifications as a driving instructor as well as a driver rehabilitation specialist.

Once an evaluation is completed and it is determined if the person can drive with or without adaptive equipment, the person then enrolls in driver’s ed, including at DriveAbility. “If a young adult needs adaptive equipment, a traditional driving school [may] not be able to meet their needs as they will not have the equipment in their

cars,” Frazier says. “We recommend equipment and train them with equipment.”

That is why those with learning and physical disabilities or those who have been in an accident or experienced a medical event, are often referred to certified driver rehabilitation specialists by providers of driver training. “We want to make sure the person learning to drive is appropriate to drive,” Frazier says. Scamman adds she also receives referrals through the state’s NH Vocational Rehabilitation program to assist those who must drive to work.

Scamman says she asks clients about their ability to manage other life skills as that can help to assess their ability to drive and she provides a variety of tests that evaluate such things as attention, visual scanning, and perception. The evaluation includes having the client

in a car demonstrating basic driving knowledge, such as an understanding of the pedals, and the ability to execute turns and using turning signals. Evaluations start in a parking lot and may proceed to a neighborhood or rural road, Scamman says.

Frazier says even if the person has an apparent disability, a thorough evaluation is done to assess whether there are other needs. “We can’t make assumptions,” she says. And it is not just people with physical disabilities who are referred for evaluations. People with ADHD, anxiety, have autism, or require special services may also be referred for an evaluation, Frazier says.

“Even if it is appropriate for them to drive, there are times those young adults need specialized interventions and teaching techniques that they won’t get through traditional driver’s education.”

Due to time constraints as well as the need to have a controlled environment for evaluations, clients are required to come to the evaluation site, says Scamman, who sees clients from across the state.

“In general people with disabilities are so appreciative of my services,” Scamman says, adding she occasionally has a disgruntled parent who is not happy their child requires an evaluation. On the other hand, “Families of our aging population are appreciative as they are not sure if mom and dad should be driving and I can counsel them,” she says.

Scamman says her clients range in age from 16 to 80 and 90% reach their driving goals.



Abigail Ripley receiving her driver’s license.

### Limited Access

One issue is the limited availability of certified driver rehabilitation specialists in NH. There are only a handful of specialists, and all are in southern NH. Scamman says, “There are not enough to serve the whole state.”

But when a medical referral or a driving school requires an evaluation for someone from northern NH, they have to travel hours to get an evaluation or go out of state. “It is a challenge,” Frazier says.

And, if someone requires adaptive equipment to learn to drive, many schools are unable to accommodate those unique needs.

In addition, evaluations are not cheap. Scamman says an evaluation at Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital costs \$500 and examines the ability to drive and other skills such as vision, memory, physical capabilities, endurance and driving knowledge.

An evaluator then develops a plan for the person, whether that is taking a driver’s education course, adding adaptive equipment to the vehicle, additional training with a certified teacher, or whether no further actions is needed.

If someone requires extra training with a driver rehabilitation specialist, that can cost upwards of \$140 per hour over and above the driver’s course required by the state.

Scamman says she knows of a few instructors in NH who are working toward becoming certified driver rehabilitation specialists, and that should help with the demand for such services. Scamman, an occupational therapy assistant, says it took her three years to become certified driver rehabilitation specialist and two more years to become certified as a driving instructor. Those requirements are why there are so few certified driver rehabilitation specialists in the state. “In some states you can become a driving instructor in a week, but, in New Hampshire, it takes two years,” she says.

Scamman says she is consistently booked a month out and conducts about six evaluations per week. She adds that the pandemic caused demand to spike.

### Financial Resources

Frazier says between evaluations, purchasing specialized equipment or vehicles and the actual cost of driver’s education, it can be expensive for someone with a disability to get a driver’s license. An evaluation alone costs



between \$500 and \$1,000, Frazier says, adding adaptive equipment can cost hundreds to thousands of dollars.

And then there is the cost of travel. “We frequently have clients that come from the Lakes Region,” Frazier says.

There are organizations that provide financial assistance to people with disabilities to help cover the cost of a driving evaluation. New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation may provide resources for those who need to have the evaluation to work, Scamman says. The NH Council on Developmental Disabilities also offers limited grants. Specifically, the Council developed an Employment and

Post-Secondary Education Grant to provide up to \$1,000 to help those with disabilities pay for expenses related to employment or educational opportunities, including paying for driver’s education, clothing for job interviews, starter trade tools, assistance with completing resumes, cover letters and job applications, career or college exploration consultation and transportation costs, says Vanessa Blais, director of policy and planning for the NH Council on Developmental Disabilities. She notes the

Council has only received two grant requests so far to cover driver’s education evaluations.

Other organizations Scamman recommends contacting are Granite State Independent Living, Easterseals NH, and Gateways Community Services. Scamman says clients have also sought financial assistance through churches, Lions Clubs, and GoFundMe campaigns. If a student has a 504 plan, some school districts may pay for the service. If someone was injured on the job, workers comp insurance may pay for the evaluation, Scamman says.

But cost remains an obstacle, especially if someone doesn’t know how to access these resources. “This is a

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“ People must have cars to access schooling and employment. ”

-Vanessa Blais,  
NH Council on  
Developmental Disabilities

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huge barrier for families that have to pay extra for these evaluations. The state needs to make it more accessible,” Blais says. “There needs to be way more places in the state to provide this service. We live in a state with abysmal public transportation. People must have cars to access schooling and employment. We need to be better at making sure people don’t have barriers to this.”

Frazier says there is a great need for these services. “If we weren’t here, the community of people with disabilities that we have been serving for 23 years would be stuck and not have a way to gain that independence that they want and need,” she says.

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# In the **S**potlight

## Story Corps with the Disability Visibility Project

By Vanessa Blais

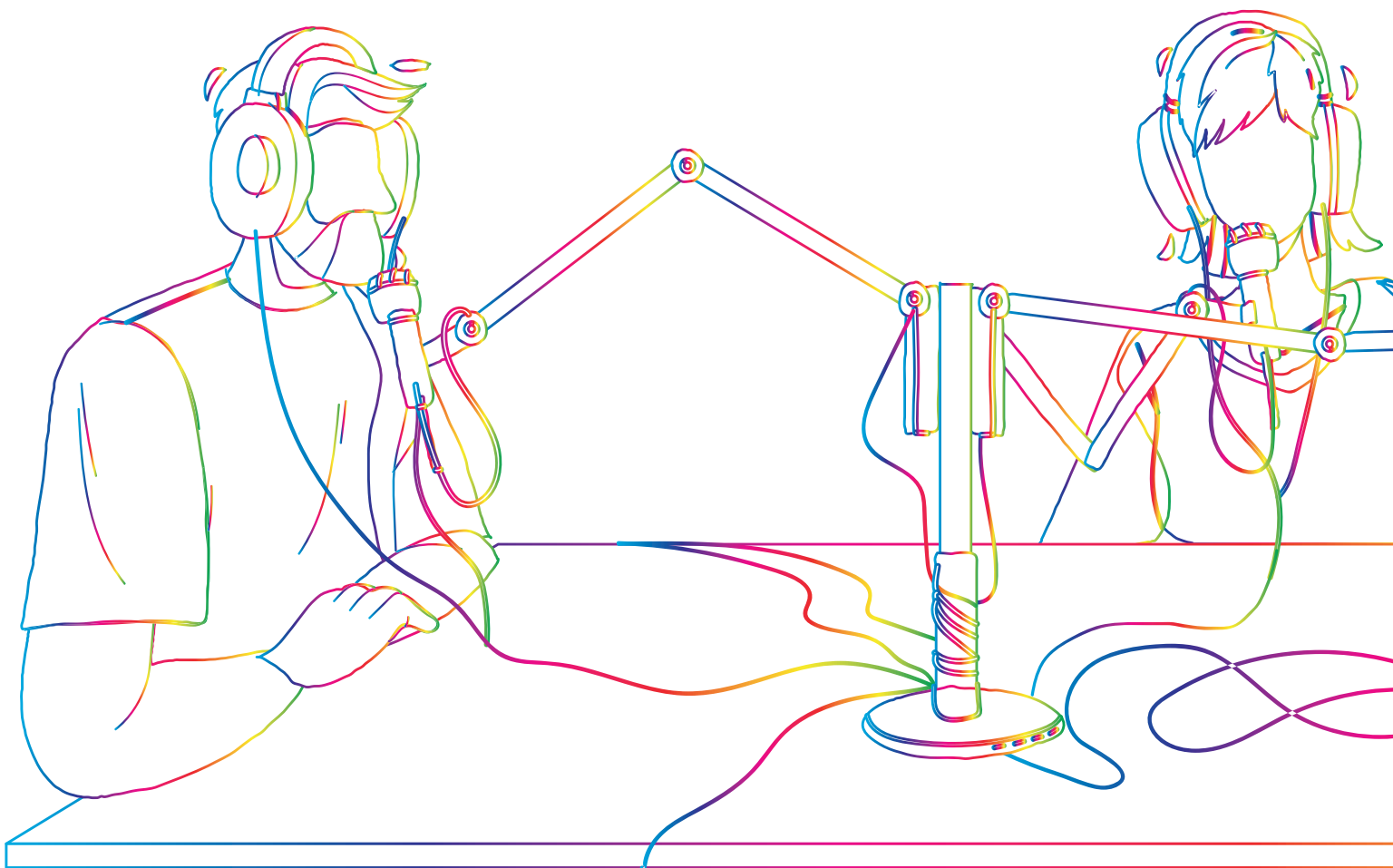


Dave Isay dreamed of creating a place where we could listen to each other's story. In 2003, he opened the first StoryCorps booth in New York's Grand Central Terminal.

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Project**



## How do I record a story?

You can record remotely with a friend from 2 separate locations using **StoryCorps Connect** ([disabilityvisibilityproject.com/how-to-participate/storycorps-connect](https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/how-to-participate/storycorps-connect))

You can record a story anytime, anywhere from your smartphone using the **StoryCorps App** ([disabilityvisibilityproject.com/how-to-participate/oral-histories-with-the-storycorps-app](https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/how-to-participate/oral-histories-with-the-storycorps-app))

If you use a sign language interpreter or facilitator when you recorded your story with the StoryCorps app, the DVP has funds to reimburse for those services.

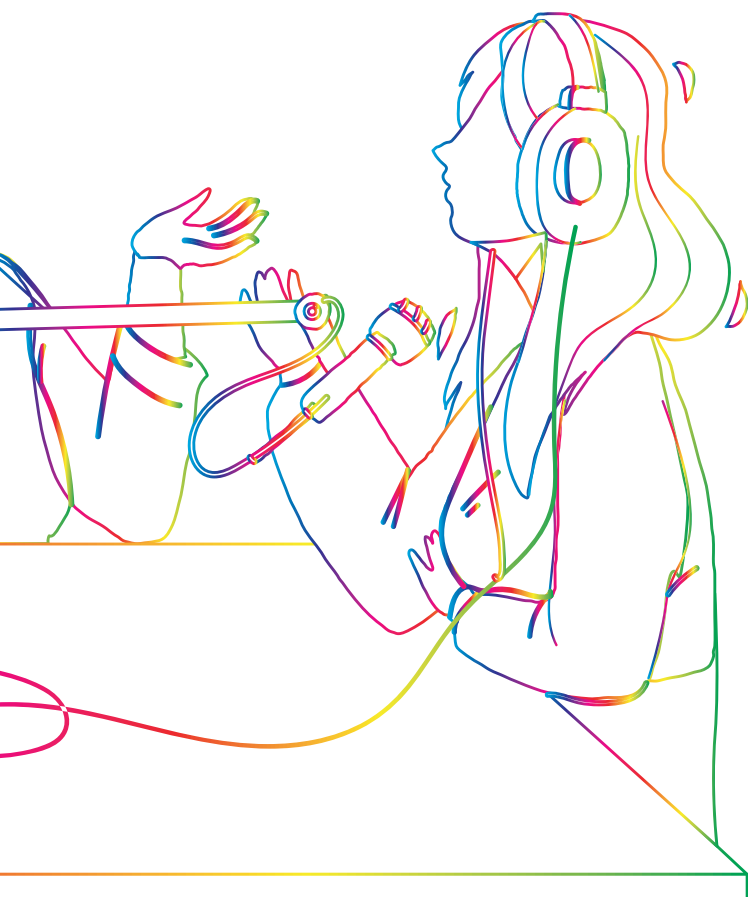
**Details here:** <http://wp.me/P4H7t1-MKK>

## How do I share the story?

1. Add the keywords  
"Disability Visibility Project"
2. Add your story to the StoryCorps community page for the DVP  
([archive.storycorps.org/communities/disability-visibility-project-2](https://archive.storycorps.org/communities/disability-visibility-project-2))

For more about how to add your story to a StoryCorps community: ([support.storycorps.me/hc/en-us/sections/115002804847-Communities](https://support.storycorps.me/hc/en-us/sections/115002804847-Communities))

Watch this video on how to use the StoryCorps app in 5 easy steps.  
(<https://youtu.be/CW8UDYCV50o>)



## Want to learn more?

- StoryCorps – Stories from people of all backgrounds and beliefs ([storycorps.org](https://storycorps.org))
- Hear Alice Wong talk about the Disability Invisibility Project and StoryCorps ([youtube.com/watch?v=8bgBOX42WyE](https://youtube.com/watch?v=8bgBOX42WyE))
- Hear Dave talk about StoryCorps ([youtube.com/watch?v=QKHk\\_UiQboA](https://youtube.com/watch?v=QKHk_UiQboA))
- Note on Accessibility – Disability Visibility Project ([disabilityvisibilityproject.com/how-to-participate/note-on-accessibility](https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/how-to-participate/note-on-accessibility))
- How to participate in the Disability Visibility Project story collection ([disabilityvisibilityproject.com/how-to-participate](https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/how-to-participate))

# Collaborate to Communicate

By Jules Good



**P**icture this: Two people sit on a park bench having a conversation about the weather. What comes to mind when you think about their conversation? You might imagine them speaking to communicate their thoughts and listening to understand what the other person is saying. This is how most of us have learned about communication, as a constant volley of talking and listening. Therefore, it makes sense that much of our world is connected through phone calls and spoken interactions. But what about those of us who are unable to express or receive communication through talking or hearing? The world is not designed with our communication needs in mind. But with thoughtful creativity and a shift in how we think about communication, we can work together to create spaces where everyone's communication needs are met and honored.

Communication has two main building blocks: language and modalities. A Language is a system of communicating that has shared vocabu-

lary and structure among the people who use it. Some examples of languages are English, Spanish, and Swahili. A modality is the means through which we use that language. Writing, speaking, listening, reading, and drawing are examples of modalities. The most common modalities are talking and listening. People with different kinds of disabilities may need to use different modalities to express or receive communication. For example, Cole Sorensen, a nonspeaking Autistic person, uses an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device to express his thoughts. Instead of talking, Cole uses a digital device with a programmed board of icons and phrases; when he taps on an icon or phrase, his device will say it out loud.

Many people think that the way Cole communicates is inferior to "normal" spoken English. But Cole says, "People don't lose options for communication because they are nonspeaking. They lose options for communication because they are not given the communication support they

need. Being nonspeaking is not an inherently bad thing, it just requires different support". In other words, Cole using an AAC is not a problem, but the fact that we live in a world where the use of AACs is stigmatized makes it so that most people have no understanding of how to properly communicate with an AAC user. Everyone deserves accurate communication access regardless of the language(s) or modalities they use.

So how exactly do we facilitate accessible communication settings? First, we have to remember that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution; everyone's needs and preferences are different! We should aim to create solutions that are easily adaptable and changeable, rather than aiming to create a fixed solution. Without flexibility, there will always be unmet needs. When designing for communication access, we need to think not only about the space that people are communicating within, but also about best practices for conversing with a wide variety of people. Here are some key things to consider in both of these realms:



## Environment/Space

Reduce background noise (music, loud fans, etc.). Background noise can make it difficult for people to hear or process sound, and it can interfere with assistive technology.

Make sure your space is well-lit. This helps people who use lip reading, facial expressions, and signing be able to see information more clearly.

Use pictures and icons to convey information alongside written words. To the right is an example of a menu with both pictures and words so that people who struggle with English can still receive accurate information.

you. Do your best to embrace pauses in conversation. We should cherish “awkward silence” as an opportunity for better communication!

or peoples’ communication choices rather than trying to make them communicate in a way that seems more “normal” to us.

Persevere. Sometimes, communication doesn’t work on the first try— technology can fail or there can be misunderstandings. Be willing to repeat yourself or ask others to do so. Remember that everyone deserves equitable access to information, and that sometimes we have to try things a few different ways in order for that to happen.

By understanding the different ways people communicate and being willing to adjust our spaces, attitudes, and practices to fit them, we can create a world where everyone is able to learn, share, and connect in a way that is accessible and respectful for each person. Let’s work together to build that world!

## Accessible Communication Best Practices

Be patient! Sometimes, people might take a little longer to process what you’ve said and respond back to

Respect peoples’ choices. Some people use different modalities at different times. We always need to hon-



## People First of NH

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# Resource Guide

The NH Council on Developmental Disabilities has compiled this listing to help people with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families find the information, services, and support they need.

A complete version of the resource guide is available at [NHDDresources.wordpress.com](http://NHDDresources.wordpress.com) or by calling 603-271-7038.

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### I. Information and Referral Services, Guidebooks and Online Resources

### II. Information and Resources on Specific Disabilities or Topics

- Advocacy and Self-Advocacy
- Assistive Technology
- Autism
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Adults with Physical Disabilities
- Legal Assistance
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- Research and Training
- Transition
- Transportation



## Information and Referral Services, Guidebooks and Online Resources

### NH Family Voices

[www.nhfv.org](http://www.nhfv.org)  
(603) 271-4525  
(800) 852-3345 ext. 4525  
(in NH only)

A “Family to Family Health and Education Center” assisting families of children and young adults with chronic health, physical, developmental, and mental health challenges. Provides one-to-one phone assistance, educational materials, online resources, a lending library, and quarterly newsletter.

### Maneuvering Through the Maze

[nhfv.org/how-we-can-help/resources](http://nhfv.org/how-we-can-help/resources)

A comprehensive resource guide of state health and human services agencies, educational resources, private associations, and organizations that serve people in NH with physical, developmental, mental health and chronic illnesses and their families, from birth to adulthood. Produced by NH Family Voices.

### Parent Information Center on Special Education (PIC)

[picnh.org](http://picnh.org)

54 Old Suncook Road,  
Concord  
(603) 224-7005, (800) 947-7005  
Telephone/email support to families with questions about early supports and services, special education, and other disability-related concerns, interactive workshops for parents, volunteer advocate training and informational materials (online and printed).

### Disability Rights Center – NH (DRC)

[www.drcnh.org](http://www.drcnh.org)  
(603) 228-0432  
(800) 834-1721 (v/tty)

Information, referral, advice, and legal representation and advocacy to individuals with disabilities on a wide range of disability-related issues. Online resources and materials available on many disability-related topics. Federally funded Protection and Advocacy Center.

### ServiceLink Aging & Disability Resource Centers

[www.servicelink.nh.gov](http://www.servicelink.nh.gov)  
(866) 634-9412

#### Resource Directory:

[www.referweb.net/nhsl/](http://www.referweb.net/nhsl/)

From local offices throughout the state, helps individuals access long-term services, supports and resources, access family caregiver information, explore options and understand and access Medicare and Medicaid. After-hours appointments are available as needed. Callers are connected to the ServiceLink office in their area. Funded by the State of NH and federal government.

### Brain Injury Association of NH

[www.bianh.org](http://www.bianh.org)  
List of resources compiled by the Brain Injury Association of NH.

### Governor’s Commission on Disability

[www.nh.gov/disability](http://www.nh.gov/disability)  
54 Regional Drive, Suite 5, ]  
Concord, NH 03301  
(800) 852-3405, (603) 271-2773

Provides information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and accessibility issues, including accessible parking spaces,

housing, voting and transportation. Online list of state and federal government benefit programs for people with disabilities.

### NH Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

[www.silcnh.org/](http://www.silcnh.org/)  
54 Regional Drive, Suite 5,  
Concord, NH 03301  
(603) 271-2773

[Jennifer.i.beaulieu@gcd.nh.gov](mailto:Jennifer.i.beaulieu@gcd.nh.gov) or [info@silcnh.org](mailto:info@silcnh.org)

Provides a monthly resource newsletter, archives of past issues and online “tip sheets” on benefits, housing, and health care, based on an independent living philosophy. A federally funded, independent, cross-disability council.

### NH Family Ties (Formerly Parent to Parent of NH)

[www.communitybridgesnh.org/services/nh-family-ties](http://www.communitybridgesnh.org/services/nh-family-ties)  
(800) 499-4153 ext. 241

Provides parent matches between experienced parents, who have “been there,” with new or referred parents of children with special needs just beginning to meet the challenges of a disability or chronic health condition. Available through the area agency network as part of their family support services. NH Family Ties provides information and referral to community resources, services, support groups, state support programs, and others.

### 2-1-1 NH

[www.211nh.org](http://www.211nh.org)

Information and referral for general human services including help with food, emergency housing, employment, health care and counseling is available by dialing 211 in NH or (866)

# Resource Guide

444-4211 from out of state. Operated by United Ways of NH.

## **NHCarePath**

**[www.nhcarepath.org](http://www.nhcarepath.org)  
(866) 634-9412**

Designed as NH's "front door" to quickly connect individuals of all ages, abilities, and income levels to a full range of community services and supports, including housing, transportation, financial assistance, Medicaid, veterans' services, mental health, drug, and alcohol services. Operated by the NH Department of Health and Human Services.

## **Office of Disability Employment Policy – Federal Agency**

**[www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/topics](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/topics)**

## **NH Easy Gateway to Services/Division of Family Assistance**

**[www.dhhs.nh.gov/apply-assistance](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/apply-assistance)  
129 Pleasant St., Concord  
(800) 852-3345 ext. 9700,  
(603) 271-9700**

Information and Resources on Specific Disabilities or Topics.

## **Information and Resources on Specific Disabilities or Topics**

## **Advocacy and Self-Advocacy**

**ABLE NH**  
**(603) 271-7042**  
**[www.ablenh.org](http://www.ablenh.org)**

ABLE (Advocates Building Lasting Equality) advocates for the human and civil rights of children and adults with

disabilities and promotes full participation by improving systems of supports, connecting families, inspiring communities, and influencing public policy.

## **NH Council on Developmental Disabilities**

**2 ½ Beacon Street,  
Suite 10, Concord  
(603) 271-3236**

**[www.nhcdd.nh.gov](http://www.nhcdd.nh.gov)**

Federally funded agency that supports public policies and initiatives to remove barriers and promote opportunities in all areas of life. Its mission includes "dignity, full rights of citizenship, cultural diversity, equal opportunities, and full participation for all NH citizens with developmental disabilities." Members are appointed by the Governor and represent people with developmental disabilities, parents, guardians, and agencies that serve people with disabilities.

## **NH Leadership Series**

**(603) 228-2084  
(800) 238-2048  
[iod.unh.edu/projects/nh-leadership](http://iod.unh.edu/projects/nh-leadership)**

Intensive 7-session leadership training provides parents and people with disabilities with information and strategies to effectively impact local and state organizations regarding issues related to individuals with disabilities and their families.

## **People First of NH**

**[www.peoplefirstofnh.org](http://www.peoplefirstofnh.org)  
2 ½ Beacon Street,  
Suite 10, Concord**

## **(603) 271-3236**

Statewide self-advocacy organization and umbrella for 17 self-advocacy groups for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. Provides resources, training, and support. Call for the contact information of the chapter in your area or how to start one.

## **Autism**

## **NH Virtual Autism Center Maintained by NH Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders**

**[bit.ly/39aZ4G8](http://bit.ly/39aZ4G8)**

**2 ½ Beacon Street,  
Suite 10, Concord  
[info@nhcouncilonasd.org](mailto:info@nhcouncilonasd.org)**

Provides a single point of entry to a comprehensive body of information about NH services for those who experience autism spectrum disorders. Also offers best practices guidelines.

## **Department of Applied Psychology Antioch University New England**

**[www.antiochne.edu](http://www.antiochne.edu)  
40 Avon Street, Keene  
(800) 552-8380  
[admissions@antiochne.edu](mailto:admissions@antiochne.edu)**

Offers practice-oriented, values-based graduate study. Master's degrees in education, environmental studies, management, and psychology; doctoral degrees in environmental studies and psychology. Offering an Autism Spectrum Disorders Certificate program for teachers, counselors, speech-language pathologists, psychologists, advocates, occupational therapists, and others.

## **Asperger's Association of New England**

[www.aane.org](http://www.aane.org)

**(617) 393-3824, (866) 597-AANE**

The Asperger's Association of New England (AANE)'s mission is to foster awareness, respect, acceptance, and support for individuals with AS and related conditions and their families.

## **Blind and Visually Impaired Future in Sight**

[www.futureinsight.org](http://www.futureinsight.org)

**25 Walker St., Concord**

**(603) 224-4039, (800) 464-3075**

A nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming the lives of those who are blind or visually impaired and their families. Provides a range of services in education, rehabilitation, and social services for infants and toddlers, children (3-21), adults and seniors.

## **NH Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

**21 South Fruit Street, Suite 20, Concord**

[www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/deputy-commissioner/%20bureau-of-vocational-rehabilitation/services-for-the-blind-and-visually-impaired](http://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/deputy-commissioner/%20bureau-of-vocational-rehabilitation/services-for-the-blind-and-visually-impaired)

**(603) 271-3537, (603) 271-3471 (v/tty), (800) 581-6881**

Provides those services necessary to help people with visual loss to enter, re-enter, or maintain employment. Most services are provided without charge to the referred individual. Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Program is supported by state and federal tax dollars.

## **Brain Injury**

**Brain Injury Association of NH**

[www.bianh.org](http://www.bianh.org)

[www.biausa.org](http://www.biausa.org) (Brain Injury Association of America)

[www.bianh.org/resourcedir.html](http://www.bianh.org/resourcedir.html) (Online resource directory)

**52 Pleasant St., Concord**

**(800) 773-8400**

**(603) 225-8400 (NH only**

**Information & Resources)**

**(800) 444-6443 (National toll-free Brain Injury Resource Line)**

Helps people with brain injury-related disabilities live in their own homes and communities.

## **Bullying**

**NH Department of Education Bullying and Cyber Bulling Resources**

[bit.ly/3kYhIJE](http://bit.ly/3kYhIJE)

[www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)

A federal website that provides information from various government agencies about what bullying is, what cyberbullying is, who is at risk, and how to prevent and respond to bullying.

## **Children with Disabilities or Significant Medical Needs Your Child's Pediatrician**

Provides the gateway to proper assessment, diagnosis, and initial treatment, services, and supports.

## **Your Child's Local School District**

If you have a child with a disability who is eligible for special education services, your child may receive services from ages 3-21. Contact your school district before your child turns three — the age at which the school district becomes responsible for your child's education.

## **NH Medicaid for Children**

**129 Pleasant Street, Concord**

**(877) 464-2447**

Provides comprehensive health and dental insurance to NH children ages 0-19 for families without access to insurance or for whom it is unaffordable (formerly NH

Healthy Kids). Also, Home Care for Children with Severe Disabilities (HCCSD), commonly known as the "Katie Beckett" option, is available for severely disabled children up to age 19, whose medical disability is so severe that they qualify for institutional care but are being cared for at home. Only the income and resources of the disabled child are counted towards eligibility for this program.

## **In-Home Support (IHS) Waiver for Children with Severe Disabilities**

**NH DHHS Bureau of Developmental Services  
105 Pleasant St., Concord  
(800) 852-3345, ext. 5034**

Helps children with the most significant medical and behavioral challenges requiring long-term supports and services, who live at home with their families, are Medicaid eligible, and meet the ICF/MR level of care and other qualifications of the program. The goal of the IHS waiver is to provide services, which are necessary to allow the individual to remain at home with his/her care-giving family. Services are provided through the Developmental Disabilities Area Agencies.

## **Family Centered Early Supports and Services (FCESS) NH Bureau of**

**Developmental Services  
105 Pleasant Street, Concord  
(603) 271-5034  
(800) 852-3345, ext. 5034**

A program designed for children birth through age two who have a diagnosed, established condition with a high probability of delay, are experiencing developmental delays, or are at risk for substantial developmental delays if supports and services are not provided.

# Resource Guide

FCESS is delivered in the family's home by designated non-profit and specialized service agencies located throughout the state.

**Special Medical Services  
NH Department of Health  
and Human Services  
129 Pleasant St., Concord  
(800) 852-3345 ext 4488  
(603) 271-4488**

The NH Title V Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs. Administers health programs and services for children ages birth to 21 years, who have, or are at risk for a chronic medical condition, disability, or special health care need. Works together with families and their health care providers, community agencies and schools to obtain access to needed health care and related services. Provides care coordination services; support for child development and neuro-motor clinics; nutritional and feeding/swallowing consultation; psychological and physical therapy services.

**NH Partners  
in Health  
129 Pleasant St.,  
Concord  
(800) 656-3333  
(800) 735-2964 (TDD)**

Helps families of children with a chronic health condition that significantly impacts daily life. Partners in Health's role is to advocate, access resources, navigate systems and build capacity to manage the chronic health condition of their child. Locations throughout the state. No income requirements.

**Deaf and Hard  
of Hearing  
Northeast Deaf  
and Hard of Hearing  
Services Inc.**

**www.ndhhs.org  
56 Old Suncook Rd.,  
Suite 6, Concord  
(603) 224-1850  
(603) 224-0691 (TTY)  
Video Phone (VP):  
968-5889**

NH's "one-stop" resource for services specific to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and for information about hearing loss.

**Dental Services  
Donated Dental Services  
- Dental Lifeline Network  
dentallifeline.org/new-  
hampshire/  
(800) 292-1531**

A statewide program that provides comprehensive treatment by volunteer dentists to elderly, disabled and medically challenged individuals.

**Easter Seals Oral Health  
Center, Manchester  
www.easterseals.com/nh/  
our-programs/oral-  
health-center  
(603) 621-3482**

Staff evaluates, monitors, and responds to patients with a wide range of disabilities and special medical needs. Medicaid accepted.

**Developmental  
Disabilities and  
Acquired Brain  
Disorders  
NH DHHS Bureau of  
Developmental Services  
bit.ly/3L1kF16  
105 Pleasant St., Concord**

**(800) 852-3345 ext. 5034  
For area agencies and  
communities served: www.  
dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/bds/  
agencies.htm**

The NH developmental services system offers individuals with developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders a wide range of supports and services within their own communities through 10 designated non-profit area agencies that serve specific geographic regions. Supports include: Service coordination; Day and vocational services; Personal care services; Community support services; Early Supports and Services and Early Intervention; Assistive technology services; Specialty services and family supports (including respite services and environmental modifications); In-Home Support (IHS) Waiver for Children with Severe Disabilities

**Employment  
Work Incentive  
Resource Center  
bit.ly/3kZa1xf**

Developed by the Institute on Disability as part of a larger effort in collaboration with Granite State Independent Living and the NH Granite State Employment Project to expand employment for individuals with disabilities through greater awareness and use of work incentives.

**NH Vocational  
Rehabilitation Locations  
www.education.nh.gov/  
partners/vocational-  
rehabilitation**

#### Regional Offices:

Berlin (603) 752-2271  
Concord (603) 271-2327  
Keene (603) 357-0266  
Manchester (603) 669-8733  
Nashua (603) 889-6844  
Portsmouth (603) 436-8884

**Vocational Rehabilitation**  
**NH Department of Education**  
**Bureau of Vocational**  
**Rehabilitation**  
[www.education.nh.gov/vr](http://www.education.nh.gov/vr)  
**21 South Fruit St., Suite #20,**  
**Concord**  
**(800) 299-1647**

Helps people with disabilities find employment.

#### **NHWorks**

[nhworks.org/\(603\) 271-7275](http://nhworks.org/(603)271-7275)  
Information center for job seekers and employers. Lists current job openings, NH economic and labor market information, education and training programs, employment laws, small business resources, and locations. Work Centers provide technical assistance to prepare resumes and cover letters, job search workshops, employment counseling, aptitude and skills testing, and career exploration tools. Sponsored by the NH Workforce Opportunity Council.

**GED/Adult Education**  
**NH Bureau of Adult Education**  
**- GED & Adult Education**  
**Information**  
[www.nhadulted.org](http://www.nhadulted.org)  
**21 South Fruit St.,**  
**Suite 20, Concord**  
**(603) 271-6698**

Supports educational services to adults who have not received a high school diploma or GED certificate or who do not read, write, or speak English. Grants to school districts and not-for-profit organizations make it possible for local adult education programs to serve adult

learners whose skills range from very basic to high school level.

**Partnership in Employment:**  
**Supporting Adults**  
**with Intellectual and**  
**Developmental Disabilities**  
**in their Communities**  
[www.aucd.org/docs/  
resources/pie\\_adults\\_Nov2014\\_  
families.pdf](http://www.aucd.org/docs/resources/pie_adults_Nov2014_families.pdf)

A project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston, and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services. Overview of day and employment services for people with developmental disabilities and guidance for those assisting supporting them.

#### **Government Benefits/ Agencies**

**Apply Online for**  
**Benefits with NH EASY**  
[nheasy.nh.gov](http://nheasy.nh.gov)

NH's Electronic Application System (NH EASY) offers NH residents a fast and easy way to apply online for cash, medical, childcare, Medicare savings program and food stamp benefits.

**NH Department of Health**  
**and Human Services**  
[www.dhhs.nh.gov](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov)  
**129 Pleasant St., Concord**  
**(800) 852-3345**

Provides services for individuals, children, families, and seniors, and administers programs and services for mental health, developmental disabilities, substance abuse and public health. The DHHS website contains a description of programs and services administered by the department and how to apply.

**DHHS District Offices**  
[www.dhhs.nh.gov/about-dhhs/  
locations-facilities](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/about-dhhs/locations-facilities)

Local offices to apply for Medicaid, financial assistance, food stamps and other benefits.

**Social Security**  
[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)  
**70 Commercial St.,**  
**Suite 100, Concord**  
**(800) 772-1213**  
**(800) 325-0778 (TTY)**  
**(603) 228-5206 (FAX)**

Applicants for SSDI and SSI can file for benefits online at SSA.gov website, by phone or by visiting a local Social Security Office.

**Special Education**  
**NH Department of Education**  
**Bureau of Special Education**  
[www.education.nh.gov/  
specialeducation](http://www.education.nh.gov/specialeducation)  
**101 Pleasant St., Concord**  
**(603) 271-6693**

Online reports, data, and regulations relative to special education.

**NH Circuit Court —**  
**Probate Division**  
[www.courts.state.nh.us/  
probate/index.htm](http://www.courts.state.nh.us/probate/index.htm)  
**1 Granite Place,**  
**Suite N400, Concord**  
**(855) 212-1234**  
[probateservice@  
courts.state.nh.us](mailto:probateservice@courts.state.nh.us)

The Circuit Court Probate Division has jurisdiction over all matters related to wills, trusts and estates, guardianships and involuntary commitment proceedings, adoptions, name changes and partition of real estate. Probate judges preside over these cases from courthouses located in each of the 10 counties in NH.

**Housing**  
**NH Housing Finance Authority**  
[www.nhhfa.org](http://www.nhhfa.org)  
**32 Constitution Dr., Bedford**  
**(800) 640-7239**

# Resource Guide

**(603) 472-8623**

**(603) 472-2089 (TDD)**

A self-supporting public benefit corporation. The Authority administers a broad range of programs designed to assist low- and moderate-income people and families to obtain decent, safe, and affordable housing. Home ownership programs, multi-family housing programs and rental assistance programs.

**Local Public Housing Authorities**  
[www.hud.gov/states/new\\_hampshire](http://www.hud.gov/states/new_hampshire)

Provides housing for low-income people and families in local communities.

**Brain Injury Association of NH Housing Assistance Guide**  
[img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/73501c8c-d97a-4233-9179-2f30b7c98191/downloads/72005-BIA-web.pdf?ver=1610460953527](http://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/73501c8c-d97a-4233-9179-2f30b7c98191/downloads/72005-BIA-web.pdf?ver=1610460953527)

Lists housing assistance resources compiled by the Brain Injury Association.

**Granite State Independent Living (GSIL) Home Access Modification**  
[www.gsil.org/services/home-access-modification](http://www.gsil.org/services/home-access-modification)

Trained staff assess accessibility needs and provide referrals to licensed vendors throughout NH. May also assist in establishing a plan and identifying funding sources for accessibility projects.

**USDA Rural Development in Vermont/NH**  
[www.rd.usda.gov/nh](http://www.rd.usda.gov/nh)  
**(802) 828-6080**

Works to improve the quality of life in rural areas. Provides technical assistance to communities, and funding and resources for home purchase, apartment rental and repairs.

**NH Community Loan Fund**  
[www.communityloanfund.org](http://www.communityloanfund.org)  
**7 Wall St., Concord**  
**(603) 224-6699**

Collaborates with a wide range of donors and lenders, and with business, nonprofit and government partners. Provides financing and support to people with low and moderate incomes for affordable housing.

**US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) NH Programs and Services**  
[portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/states/new\\_hampshire](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/states/new_hampshire)  
**(603) 666-7510**

Assistance with home ownership, subsidized apartments, public housing, foreclosure assistance, homeless resources, and discrimination. Counseling and other services available.

**State of NH Foreclosure Prevention Initiative for Immediate Assistance dial 211 (in NH)**  
[www.homehelpnh.org](http://www.homehelpnh.org)  
Website with important tips on alternatives to foreclosure

as well as other valuable resources, including a list of qualified housing counselors.

**Independent Living — Adults with Physical Disabilities**

**Granite State Independent Living**  
[www.gsil.org](http://www.gsil.org)  
**21 Chenell Dr., Concord**  
**(800) 826-3700**  
**(603) 228-9680**

NH's only Independent Living Center. Provides information, specialized services, and peer support for people with disabilities following the principles of personal choice and direction. Provides home care services, personal care, community-based disability supports and employment services/benefit counseling.

**Legal Assistance Guide to NH Legal Services Programs**  
[www.courts.state.nh.us/selfhelp/documents/legal\\_services\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.courts.state.nh.us/selfhelp/documents/legal_services_brochure.pdf)  
Produced by the NH Judicial Branch

**Disability Rights Center-NH (DRC-NH)**  
[www.drcnh.org](http://www.drcnh.org)

Provides information, referral, advice, legal representation, and advocacy to individuals with disabilities on a wide range of disability-related problems including special education, accessibility, employment discrimination, home and community-based services and Medicaid.

**NH Legal Aid**  
[www.nhlegalaid.org/](http://www.nhlegalaid.org/)  
**(800) 639-5290**



A cooperative effort of the legal services agencies serving NH's low-income population to provide legal information, referrals, and pro se assistance. Online application for legal assistance. Links and contact information to several non-profit agencies that provide services across NH, and online self-help guides.

**NH Judicial Branch  
Self-Help Center**  
[www.courts.state.nh.us/selfhelp/index.htm](http://www.courts.state.nh.us/selfhelp/index.htm)

Basic, practical information about the NH court system, how it works, and what the procedures are for bringing a case to court.

**NH Bar Association  
Pro Bono Referral Program**  
[www.nhbar.org/legal-services-programs](http://www.nhbar.org/legal-services-programs)

**(800) 639-5290; (603) 224-3333**  
Connects low-income individuals with volunteer attorneys who provide free legal services in family law, bankruptcy, consumer, housing, and senior citizen matters.

**NH Legal Assistance**  
**(800) 562-3174**  
[www.nhla.org](http://www.nhla.org)

Provides free legal advice and representation to low-income people and older adults in civil matters involving basic needs, including food, shelter, income, medical care, and public benefits. Local Offices:

Berlin	(800) 698-8969
Claremont	(800) 562-3994
Concord	(800) 921-1115
Manchester	(800) 562-3174
Portsmouth	(800) 334-3135

**Foreclosure Relief Project**  
**(877) 399-9995**

**Senior Citizens Law Project**  
**(888) 353-9944, (603) 624-6000**

**The "Law Line" —  
NH Bar Association**  
**(800) 868-1212**

Talk to a lawyer free of charge on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, from 6 - 8 p.m.

**University of NH School of  
Law Civil Practice Clinic**  
**(603) 225-3350**

Assists low-income clients with a variety of issues from consumer protection, collection, and foreclosure defense (including Chapter 13 bankruptcy), predatory lending and auto fraud. Will take cases from Merrimack, Belknap, Sullivan, and Hillsborough counties.

**Mental Health and  
Suicide Prevention**  
**Phone 2-1-1**

**SAMHSA Behavioral  
Health Treatment Services  
Locator and Treatment  
Referral Helpline**  
[findtreatment.samhsa.gov/](http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/)  
**(800) 662-HELP (4357)**  
**(800) 487-4889 (TDD)**

Use the Locator to find alcohol and drug abuse treatment or mental health treatment facilities and programs around the country or call the SAMHSA Treatment Referral Helpline. Free, confidential information in English and Spanish for individuals and family members facing substance abuse and mental health issues. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

**NAMI NH**  
[www.naminh.org](http://www.naminh.org)  
**85 North State St., Concord**  
**(800) 242-6264, (603) 225-5359**

A statewide network of affiliate chapter support groups, staff and volunteers that provide information,

education and support to all families and communities affected by mental illness.

**Community Mental  
Health Centers**  
**NH DHHS Bureau of  
Behavioral Health**  
[www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/health-care](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/health-care)  
**(800) 852-3345, ext. 5000,**  
**(603) 271-5000**  
**TDD Access: Relay NH**  
**1-800-735-2964**

Regional agencies provide publicly funded mental health services to individuals and families who meet certain criteria for services. Services include 24-hour emergency services, assessment and evaluation, individual and group therapy, case management, rehabilitation, psychiatric services and specialized programs for older adults, children, and families as well as short-term counseling and support.

**Mental Health Peer Support**  
**NH DHHS Bureau of  
Behavioral Health**  
[www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/health-care/mental-health/peer-support-agencies](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/health-care/mental-health/peer-support-agencies)  
**(800) 852-3345 ext.5000,**  
**(603) 271-5000**

Local Peer Support Agencies provide services to adults with mental illness who self-identify as a recipient, former recipient, or at significant risk of becoming a recipient of publicly funded mental health services. Provided by and for people with a mental illness. Includes face-to-face and telephone peer support, outreach, monthly educational events, activities that promote self-advocacy, wellness training, after-hours warm line, and crisis respite.

**Disaster Distress Helpline**  
[disasterdistress.samhsa.gov](http://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov)

**(800) 985-5990**

**(800) 846-8517 (TTY)**

Website and helpline for those affected by a disaster and in need of immediate assistance, information, support, and counseling. Callers are connected to the nearest crisis center.

**Center for Disease Control  
Emergency Preparedness  
Resources**

**[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/  
disabilityandhealth/  
emergencypreparedness.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/emergencypreparedness.html)**

**National Suicide Prevention  
and Crisis Lifeline**

**Call/Text 988  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org) (800) 273-TALK (8255)**

**NH Suicide Prevention  
and General Resources**

**[theconnectprogram.org/](http://theconnectprogram.org/)  
(603) 225-5359, (800) 242-6264  
(NOT crisis response numbers)**

**Research and Training  
UNH Institute on Disability  
iod.unh.edu**

**(603) 228-2084 (TTY)  
(800) 238-2048 (TTY)**  
Provides a university-based focus for the improvement of knowledge, policies, and practices related to the lives of people living with disabilities and their families. Offers seminars and workshops, webinars, interdisciplinary evaluation and consultation, leadership training, and customized, on-site support in schools.

**Transition  
NH Parent Information  
Center's Life after  
High School Toolkit**

**[picnh.org/wp-content/  
uploads/2018/06/Transition-  
Toolkit-2018v2.pdf](http://picnh.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Transition-Toolkit-2018v2.pdf)**  
Strategies, tools, and resources for

families of youth with disabilities to assist in creating successful transition plans.

**Next Steps NH: Options for  
Life after High School  
[nextsteps-nh.org/](http://nextsteps-nh.org/)**

Transition and career development resources for special educators, students, parents, and others interested in increasing transition and career development opportunities for youth with and without disabilities.

**National Secondary Transition  
Technical Assistance Center's  
Age-Appropriate transition  
assessments toolkit**

**[www.nsttac.org/content/  
age-appropriate-transition-  
assessment-toolkit-3rd-edition/](http://www.nsttac.org/content/age-appropriate-transition-assessment-toolkit-3rd-edition/)**  
Designed to help with the selection of assessments for students regarding transition planning.

**Disability.gov's Guide to  
Student Transition Planning  
[www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/  
files/odep/pdf/2013odep  
healthyreport.pdf](http://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/odep/pdf/2013odephealthyreport.pdf)**

Link to Healthy Transitions: A pathway to employment for youth with chronic health conditions and other disabilities.

**Transportation  
NHCarePath Transportation  
[www.nhcarepath.org/  
transportation](http://www.nhcarepath.org/transportation)**

**NH Department of  
Transportation — Public  
Transportation Information  
[www.nh.gov/dot/org/  
aerorailtransit/railandtransit/  
transit.htm](http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/aerorailtransit/railandtransit/transit.htm)  
(603) 271-3734**

Information about public transportation in NH, including links to regional transit providers

**National Aging and Disability  
Transportation Center  
(NADTC)**

**[www.nadtc.org](http://www.nadtc.org).  
Resources and Publications:  
[www.nadtc.org/resources-  
publications](http://www.nadtc.org/resources-publications)**

**Toll Free: 866/983-3222**

**Email: [contact@nadtc.org](mailto:contact@nadtc.org).**

A program of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, administered by Easterseals and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) with guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living.

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# CSNI

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORK, INC.

*The Association for NH's Ten Area Agencies*



*It is the mission of CSNI to promote, support and advance the local area agencies in their efforts to maintain and evolve the comprehensive community-based system of long term supports and services for individuals with disabilities and acquired brain disorders.*

**Collaboration • Empowerment • Inclusion**

**Northern Human Services**  
[www.northernhs.org](http://www.northernhs.org)

**Pathways of the River Valley**  
[www.pathwaysnh.org](http://www.pathwaysnh.org)

**Lakes Region Community Services**  
[www.lrcs.org](http://www.lrcs.org)

**Community Bridges**  
[www.communitybridgesnh.org](http://www.communitybridgesnh.org)

**Monadnock Developmental Services**  
[www.mds-nh.org](http://www.mds-nh.org)

**Gateways Community Services**  
[www.gatewayscs.org](http://www.gatewayscs.org)

**The Moore Center**  
[www.moorecenter.org](http://www.moorecenter.org)

**One Sky Community Services**  
[www.oneskyservices.org](http://www.oneskyservices.org)

**Community Partners**  
[www.communitypartnersnh.org](http://www.communitypartnersnh.org)

**Community Crossroads**  
[www.communitycrossroadsnh.org](http://www.communitycrossroadsnh.org)

**Community Support Network, Inc.**

**10 Ferry Street, Suite #309 Concord, NH 03301**  
**603-229-1982**  
**[www.csni.org](http://www.csni.org)**

# Centered in Care

Easterseals NH offers affordable and accessible family-centered care, support, and services for people of all ages with disabilities and special needs. Whatever your dreams for yourself or your loved one, we can help you realize them.

## Live, Learn, Work, and Play at Every Age and Stage

Transportation is available to many onsite services and programs.

- Autism Services
- Child Development & Family Resource Centers
- Social and Emotional Development Support
- Early Intervention Services
- Pediatric Outpatient Services
- Camping & Recreation Programs
- Youth Transitional Services
- Residential & Educational Services



## A Community of Families and Caregivers

We offer respite, resources, and community for caregivers and families to support you caring for a loved one with a disability or special need.

## Experienced Professionals

Our program teams include teachers, home care providers, direct support specialists, nurses, volunteers, doctors, and counselors who have all found their purpose at Easterseals NH. We put those we care for and their families at the center of all we do.



**Exceptional care leads to extraordinary outcomes at Easterseals NH. Visit [easterseals.com/nh/our-programs](https://www.easterseals.com/nh/our-programs) today to see how we can be there for your family.**

