

Today's Quote: *"Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are."*

John Wooden (UCLA Basketball Coach, 1910 – 2010)

New Jersey's Creating a Central Registry of Caregivers Who Have Harmed Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

Governor Chris Christie signed landmark legislation on April 30 that, for the first time, will allow creation of a registry of caregivers who are known to have abused, neglected or exploited an individual with developmental disabilities in their paid care. The new law takes effect 180 days from the signature date.

Anyone listed in the Central Registry of Offenders against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities will be prohibited from employment by any program or facility that receives state funding to serve individuals with developmental disabilities.

Other states that enacted similar legislation include: Delaware, Louisiana, Ohio, Missouri, New Mexico and Tennessee.

"Abuse at the hands of a caregiver is a reprehensible action," Governor Christie said. "The legislation that I am signing today is an important tool to help safeguard those with developmental disabilities from harmful caregivers taking advantage of their position. Equally important, this new law will prevent these custodians from gaining re-employment or continuing participation in human services funded programs."

With this legislation, the Department of Human Services (DHS) is required to maintain both the central registry, and an emergency hotline that people can call to report or complain about suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of an individual with a developmental disability.

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How many people have recently moved to the community from developmental centers?

Year One:

July 2006 – June 2007 = 86

Year Two:

July 2007 - June 2008 = 121

Year Three:

July 2008 - June 2009 = 112

Year Four:

June 2009 – June 11, 2010 = 56

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services has launched a new website for parents called **Parent Link**, The Early Childhood, Parenting and Professional Resource Center:

<http://www.njparentlink.nj.gov/>. **NJ Parent Link** is the new "central station" for receiving early childhood updates, events and networking opportunities. The focus of the website is to highlight New Jersey state services and resources.



DDD: Celebrating 50 years of Service

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DDD Presents County-Based Forums

DDD invites individuals who are in Real Life Choices, Self-Determination, or at the top of the Priority and Priority-Deferred categories of the Waiting List for Waiver Services (formerly known as Community Services Waiting List [CSWL] or Residential Waiting List) to attend a county-based family forum.

These forums are geared toward the family's need to plan and prepare for the well-being of their adult child/children with developmental disabilities.

Forums are being held in each state county.

For information, contact Janice Delorenzo at 609-689-1794 or janice.delorenzo@dhs.state.nj.us.

Mercer County Family Forum

Date: June 15, 2010

Time: 6:30 - 9:00 PM

Location: Project Freedom at Lawrence,
Community Bldg., 1 Freedom Blvd., Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

Sussex County FAST Meeting

Date: June 16, 2010

Time: 6:30 - 8:30 PM

Location: SCARC, 25 Gail Court, Sparta, NJ 07871

Burlington County FAST meeting

Date: June 17, 2010

Time: 6:30 - 9:00 PM

Location: Burlington County Human Services Facility,
795 Woodlane Road, Westampton, NJ 08060

Gloucester County Family Forum

Date: June 28, 2010 tentatively scheduled

Time: 6:30 - 9:00 PM

Location: Gloucester County College,
1400 Tanyard Road, Sewell, NJ 08080

Hunterdon County Family Forum

Date: June 30, 2010

Time: 6:30 - 9:00 PM

Location: The Arc of Hunterdon,
The Concourse at Beaver Brook, 1465 Route 31, Suite 23, Annandale, NJ 08801



New Jersey's Central Registry

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"We are very gratified that the legislature and the Governor have supported the creation of this registry," said DHS Commissioner Jennifer Velez. "This registry will give New Jersey families of individuals with developmental disabilities peace of mind that they don't have to worry about whether the person caring for their loved one truly has his or her best interests at heart."

DHS also is required to maintain a unit to receive and prioritize these reports, initiate appropriate response through timely and appropriate investigative activities, alert appropriate staff and ensure that findings are reported in a uniform and timely manner.

Assistant Commissioner Kenneth Ritchey, for the DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), said he was very pleased that New Jersey will now have a state-wide registry that agencies can turn to when making hiring decisions.

"The Central Registry will give us one more tool that we can use to protect the health and safety of the people we serve," said Ritchey. "Our provider agencies and the people we serve will all benefit from its existence."

\$60 million in Affordable Care Act grants available to help New Jerseyans manage health and long-term care options

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has announced the availability of \$60 million in Affordable Care Act grants to states and communities to help individuals and their caregivers better understand and navigate their health and long-term care options. The application deadline is Friday, July 30, 2010.

These grants will fund approaches that take into account the unique needs of seniors, Americans with disabilities and their caregivers. Some specific areas of focus include assisting older adults and individuals with disabilities live at home or in settings of their choosing with the right supports and assisting people transition from hospitals or nursing homes back into the community.

The purpose of this new grant program is to create streamlined, coordinated statewide systems of information, counseling, and access that will help people find consumer-friendly answers to help meet their health and long-term care needs. Grants will be awarded in September 2010.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Grants/Funding/index.aspx>

or

www.grants.gov.

or

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2010pres/06/20100603b.html>

"The Family Support Center of New Jersey (www.fscnj.org)" has re-established "The Training Calendar," an online resource for information about training opportunities, lectures, and other activities for caregivers and receiving support and care. Please visit www.thetrainingcalendar.org, for more information.

Per www.fscnj.org, you also will find the new spring 2010 Training Schedule and registration information for Life Line for the Journey, Pathways to Adult Life or Preparation for Life after 21.