

Today's Quote: *"Life is 10% of what happens to me and 90% of how I react to it."* John Maxwell, American Author, speaker, pastor.

Rosa's Law

New law to end use of "mental retardation" phrase in all Federal legislation; Similar New Jersey law in effect for State statutes

The outdated terms "mentally retarded" and "mental retardation" will no longer be used in state or federal legislation as the result of two pieces of legislation recently signed into law. Instead, terms considered to be more respectful to individuals with developmental disabilities will be used in all future legislation.

On August 16, Governor Chris Christie signed a law eliminating references to "mental retardation," "mentally retarded" and "feeble-minded" in all future state statutes and legislation. The law states that these terms should be replaced by the terms "intellectual disability" or "developmental disability."

The federal legislation, known as "Rosa's Law" was signed into law by President Obama on October 5th. It dictates that all future federal legislation will use the term "individuals with intellectual disabilities" rather than "mentally retarded."

Rosa's family became upset when she began school and was designated as "mentally retarded" on her educational plan. The family convinced the school to drop this designation and then began working to have the law changed in Maryland. This led to U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski of Maryland introducing the federal bill that will change the language in all federal

statutes. A copy of Senator Mikulski's original press release regarding the bill can be found at this website:
<http://mikulski.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=319975>.

The NJ Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) has already removed many references to "mental retardation" from its website and publications and the term "intellectual disabilities" is now being used. DDD is continuing to identify, remove or place new language, rather than use "mental retardation," in all its literature. DDD will address the term use in statutes and legislation as revised/as required by new laws.

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

We are in the process of updating our information and expanding our reporting data. This feature will be moving to our website, so stay tuned for further details.

New Training - Exciting Opportunities For Direct Support Professionals

Direct support professionals (DSPs) who provide direct care to individuals receiving services through DDD will now be able to participate in advanced Internet-based educational training through the College of Direct Supports. The online training program is part of a larger effort to provide more support and recognition, and reduce turnover, for the DSPs.

The effort, known as the New Jersey Partnership for Direct Support Professional Workforce Development (NJ Partnership), was formally launched on September 14th with a celebratory event at DDD's Hamilton office. NJ Partnership will be funded for at least two years by DDD.



Assistant Commissioner Kenneth W. Ritchey welcomed the audience.

In announcing the launch, Department of Human Services Commissioner Jennifer Velez gave credit to the stakeholders and DDD staff whose work, as a coalition, for the past four years made the partnership possible. "Today, we honor the service of direct support professionals," said Commissioner Velez. "In concert, we also recognize the work of the New Jersey Direct Support



A panel of DSPs told the audience about their experience with the College of Direct Supports.

Professional Workforce Development Coalition, the professional and personal stakeholders in the disabilities community who are dedicating their time to improving the human services workforce."

The coalition was formed in 2006 with the goal of reducing turnover among direct support professionals, whose job is to assist individuals with daily tasks including: meal preparation; assistance in taking medications; bathing; dressing; and getting to work and activities. Through a pilot program funded by the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities, the coalition demonstrated a 33 percent reduction in professional turnover.

DSPs employed by agencies that receive funding through DDD's home and community-based services Medicaid waiver will have access to the College of Direct Support, free of charge. DSPs will have opportunities to take courses about autism, brain injury, communicating with individuals who are non-verbal, depression, community inclusion, employment and

at least 20 other topics. The program will rollout across the state from south to north, beginning in November with agencies in the southern counties and ending next summer in northern counties. Eventually, it will be offered to families who self-direct their own services, and DDD staff in the state's seven developmental centers. The Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities will conduct training on how to administer the College of Direct Supports.

During the September launch, Commissioner Velez also presented a proclamation from Governor Chris Christie, designating the week of September 12 - 18 as "Direct Support Professional Recognition Week." The Governor's proclamation noted that more than 30,000 people in New Jersey serve as direct support professionals. Most are employees of private agencies under contract with DDD; while almost 3,400 are employed by and work in one of the state's seven developmental centers.



DHS Commissioner Jennifer Velez talked about the importance of DSPs in the human services workforce.

DHS Creates Office of Autism in Response to Autism Task Force Recommendations

New Office located at DDD

The Department of Human Services Commissioner Jennifer Velez has established an Office of Autism in response to recommendations contained in a report issued last year by the Adults with Autism Task Force. The Office is located within DDD, and Commissioner Velez has appointed Deborah Cohen, PH.D., to serve as Director and Jonathan Sabin, MSW, to serve as Associate Director.

The Office of Autism was created partly in response to 44 recommendations presented in the report prepared by the Adults with Autism Task Force, which was submitted to the Governor and Legislature last October. The first recommendation focused on the need for a centralized place within State government to help build a lifespan service system for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). More information on the office and report can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/boards/AAT-Frpt.pdf>.

Many families have expressed to DDD their difficulty in obtaining services for a family member with ASD. As the incidence of ASD continues to grow both in New Jersey and across the country, Autism NJ recently documented similar concerns in a report of its own (<http://www.autismnj.org/Doc/Blueprint.pdf>). One of the primary responsibilities of this new office is to address these concerns.

The new office also will become involved in an Interdepartmental ASD Work Group, which is being formed to improve and enhance the communication, collaboration and coordination among all state agencies that are providing services to individuals with ASD. In addition, the department anticipates that the office will assist in applying for federal grants that relate to ASD.

To reach the Office of Autism, send an e-mail to Deborah Cohen, Director, at deborah.cohen@dhs.state.nj.us or Jonathan Sabine at jonathan.sabin@dhs.state.nj.us.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Autism New Jersey (ANJ)

ANJ Workshops - Healthcare Resources: Access and Funding for Autism.
[Click here for details](#)

New Jersey Association of Community Providers (NJACP)

2010 Conference November 18 & 19, 2010 Conference Brochure

Parent Link

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 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.

Second Annual Cape May County Community Disabilities Awareness Day

Event scheduled for Saturday, November 13th
in the Avalon Community Center from 10 AM to 2 PM.

New Kids Corner will be introduced this year to accommodate the many families expected to attend.

Cape May Court House - Cape May County will again celebrate Disabilities Awareness Day in November in Avalon, an event designed as a day of information, food, music and fun not only for people with disabilities but for all who are interested in the agencies and organizations that serve the citizens of Cape May County.

Admission is free. Refreshments will be provided. An Honor Guard from the Coast Guard Training Center in Cape May will open the event. The Cape May County String Band will entertain with its special brand of music, so look for some dancing in the aisles. Although Disabilities Awareness Day is being held on a Saturday, Fare Free Transportation will be available to county residents who call to reserve a ride by Friday, November 5th.

This community event has been planned by representatives from the CMC Office of Disability Services, the CMC Department on Aging, the CMC Human Services Advisory Council, the ARC of Cape May and several community disabilities advocates. For more information, contact Paulann Pierson at the CMC Office of Disability Services: 609-465-4117, Ext. 28.

For more details please see the Cape May County Office of Disability Services at <http://cmcods.org/>
or

CONTACT:

Paulann T. Pierson

Cape May County Office of Disability Services: 609 - 465 - 4117 Ext. 28; paulann@capeworkshop.com

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.

Morris County Family Meeting

Date: Future meetings are scheduled for
Nov. 10, 2010; Jan. 12, 2011;
March 9, 2011 and May 11, 2011.

Time: 6:30 - 8:45 PM

Location: Morris County Library,
30 East Hanover Ave.,
Whippany, NJ 07981

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