



Focusability

Northern Regional Center for Independent Living

May 2010

Proposed Special Education Law Governs Restraints and Seclusion

The question of how special education law governs safety at schools is a hot-button issue for many parents. Whether or not their child is receiving a proper education as well as being properly cared for is of utmost importance. Concerns and reports in the recent past regarding restraints and seclusion, particularly among special education students, has raised eyebrows and prompted the proposal of a new bill.

The Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act (H.R. 4247) was introduced to Congress in December of 2009 and as of late February, has been placed on the Union Calendar of the House for an upcoming vote. As stated by the government summary, the bill would “direct the Secretary of Education to establish a minimum set of standards,” regarding restraint and seclusion, including:

- providing state-approved training to school personnel
- prohibiting certain restraints
- providing timely means to notify parents if restraint or seclusion occurs

This bill would be the first special education law of its kind to ensure that children across the country are being educated in a safe, healthy, appropriate way at all times. Specifically for children with disabilities, the special education law would define provisions that cannot be put on an IEP, an omittance which could otherwise be a loophole for some forms of unmonitored seclusion or use of restraint.

The bill has become top priority for many special education law advocacy groups and among education advocates, because in more than half of the states across the country, students are only provided with limited or seemingly no protection from restraint and seclusion. This bill would require states to adopt a federal law and hold individual schools to a national standard of care for all students.

You can keep track of the [special education bill](#). Read more about the provisions and contact your representative.



You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, the encountering may be the very experience which creates the vitality and the power to endure. ~ Maya Angelo

Inside this issue:

Restraints & Seclusion 1

Nursing Home Transition Diversion 2

Love can... 3

Can Drive fundraiser 4

ADA Celebration

Hello and Good-bye to staff 5

Mental Health Awareness 6

Calendar of Events 7



NURSING HOME TRANSITION AND DIVERSION

The Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid Waiver for Nursing Home Transition and Diversion (NHTD) allows New Yorkers with disabilities and seniors to receive appropriate homecare services permitting them to live in the most appropriate, least restrictive setting, which is usually their homes rather than an institution.

The NHTD program is targeted at individuals either already in nursing homes and wanting to return to their community or those being considered for nursing home placement but who would prefer to avoid institutional care and remain in their own homes.

The state developed the HCBS Medicaid Waiver with the idea that individuals with disabilities and/or seniors have the same rights as anyone to be in control of their lives, encounter and manage risks and learn from their experiences.

An HCBS Medicaid Waiver presents an opportunity for comprehensive services to be available in the community rather than in an institution, allows the assembly of a package of carefully tailored services to meet the needs of a targeted group in a community-based setting, maintains the waiver participant's health and welfare through an individualized service plan, and ensures the overall cost of serving waiver participants in the community is less than the cost of serving a similar group in an institution. Sometimes something as simple and inexpensive as widening a doorway or making a bathroom accessible can be the difference between individuals being able to stay in their homes or requiring institutional placement.

To be eligible for the NHTD Medicaid Waiver individuals must be: capable of living in the community with assistance from available informal supports, non-Medicaid supports and/or Medicaid State Plan services; eligible for nursing home level of care; authorized to receive Medicaid Community Based Long Term Care; at least 18 years of age or older; considered part of an aggregate group that can be cared for at less cost in the community than a similar group in a nursing home; and not participating in another HCBS waiver.

NHTD Service Coordination - This service provides assistance with the development and implementation of a person-centered individualized service plan that will lead to the waiver participant's independence, integration into the community, continued health and welfare. In addition to homecare and medical care, additional services provided through this program include wellness counseling, nutritional counseling, home and community support services and community integration counseling.

Time to Renew Your NRCIL Membership!!

It's time again to renew your membership with NRCIL. With cuts in many of our state programming, this year promises to be a tough year in disability rights and we need you to be here with us!

Membership Levels:

Contributing \$5.00, *Family* \$25.00, *Patron* \$50.00, *Sustaining* \$100.00, *Business* \$250.00, *Silver* \$500.00, *Gold* \$1,000. All levels of membership entitle the member to one vote at the Annual Meeting and other benefits. Please call Brenda Campany; Executive Director at 785-8703 for more information.

Love Can by Megha Bajaj

Chicken Soup for the Soul: The Cancer Book

I believe love can help in curing cancer!

I am not a doctor and I do not know of studies that can prove this. But I know it is true. I have experienced it in my own life.

When our family discovered that my mother had cancer, we were silent. Usually, our house is filled with noise -- old melodies played by Dad, soap operas Mom watched on TV (with her running comments), my sister, Nidhi, chattering on the phone, and continuous humming and giggling from me. On that day, there was silence.

Always the dreamer, I found refuge on the terrace. Gazing at the skies, I wondered aloud to God if we would ever be okay again. When I came downstairs, I saw Dad sitting with Mom, stroking her hair with such tenderness in his eyes I could feel every trace of anxiety leave her beautiful face. My sister was holding Mom's hand. We all looked at each other and knew that this was not Mom's fight alone. Her health would not just be the responsibility of the doctors; it would be ours, too.

Fear gave way to determination. Anxiety yielded to hope as we turned our attention to conquering cancer, every cell of it, with love.

One of the reasons cancer is so scary is because the treatment itself is painful. Chemotherapy makes one feel sick in every sense of the word. Since Mom's cancer was at an advanced stage, her medicines would be very strong and the doctors warned us that her health would deteriorate quite a bit. Hmm! Is that so? We looked at each other and shrugged our shoulders, almost in unison, as if to say, "Let's see."

We didn't allow any negativity to touch Mom. An injection? We countered it with a "love you" and by holding hands. Negative comments? We responded with a hug and an expression that said, "This person knows nothing." Tears on our cheeks? We followed them with much laughter. Trouble sleeping? We were up, through the night, chatting, playing cards, and listening to Dad's collection of beautiful old melodies. Loss of hair from chemotherapy? We had an answer for that too! We called Mom the "Bald and the Beautiful!" and she would giggle like it was the world's funniest joke.

The result? Mom's red cell count, which should have fallen tremendously, stayed almost normal, through all six rounds of chemo. While most other people take about a week to recover from side effects she took only a day. The doctors were awestruck! One actually said, "Mrs. Bajaj, everything is absolutely fine; please leave so we can check someone who is actually ill!"

Before Mom became sick, she had always placed us before her, our health before hers. Not anymore. She began to invest time in herself. Mornings began with yoga and healthy food and her days ended with meditation. She started developing a love for her body, which I had never seen before, applying nice smelling cream on her arms and looking for pretty clothes to wear.

Continued on next page

Can Drive Fundraiser for Families Together in the North Country

Families Together in the North Country is a chapter of Families Together in New York; we are working to establish a unified voice for children and youth with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. Our mission is to ensure that every family has access to needed information, support, and services. To raise funds we are having a can-drive. The funds are used for family activities, education, and trainings. To participate, take your cans to Griff's Redemption at 153 Coleman Avenue, Watertown. Only this location is accepting bottles and cans for this drive.

When dropping off your cans, just say that you are making a donation to Families Together. To find out more information about this cause call NRCIL at 785-8703. Thank you in advance for your support.



SAVE THE DATE!!!



COME CELEBRATE WITH US!!

20th ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

When: Saturday July 24th 2010

Time: 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

**Where: Watertown Fairgrounds Arena
Watertown, NY**

FREE!!

Every year since the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), we have had a celebration to commemorate this Civil Rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability. Our celebration is a time when people with disabilities, along with their friends, family and the community come together to celebrate this milestone. This year is especially significant as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the ADA! In addition to hosting this celebration, we are also taking this opportunity to support our local food pantry at the Urban Mission. NRCIL is collaborating with other area service providers to make this year's celebration bigger than ever!

Bands!! Food!! Games!! Silent Auction!! Door Prizes!!

Continued from page 3

Love Can

One day, out of the blue, she said. "I love dancing; teach me a dance."

Something very beautiful was happening inside my mother. Would this beautiful change have the power to defeat cancer? Her tests came back all clear. In fact, her reports showed that her health improved from what it had been before she had cancer.

Today, three years later, my mother's hair is softer than ever. She dresses prettily and goes to a group called Helping Hands to offer hope to other cancer patients. Just seeing her radiating with love, I am told, inspires patients.

Mom tells them, "Love yourself. Love those around you. And love life. Believe that you deserve to live and watch how cancer slinks away."

I believe her wholeheartedly. Love works.

WELCOME NEW STAFF!!

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Hello! My name is Angelica (Angel) Durham and I have been hired by NRCIL as an Independent Living Advocate. As an Advocate, I use my personal experience to provide peer counseling, advocacy, benefits advise, and information and referral so that consumers can obtain personal goals as well as services in the community. I enjoy helping consumers with the roller coaster of life and recognize that everyone has hard times as well as good times. I strive to help people understand that the only person that can help you is yourself and I'm only here to point you in the right direction. At home and in my free time, I enjoy spending time with my husband and six month old daughter, Becca.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Hello, my name is Becky McDermott and I am the newest member of the Family Support team. I currently reside in Alexandria Bay with my St. Bernard, husband, son and nephew. My nephew has multiple diagnoses which have impacted his social and academic needs. With this said, I feel I can use my experience as a parent and a guardian to help other families. I am very active in my community and participate in the majority of the local events. Currently, I am training to run a marathon by the end of the year. I am truly appreciative of how welcoming the staff at NRCIL and volunteers are. I have found everyone to be very kind and full of great knowledge and expertise.

AIDS IN PRISON

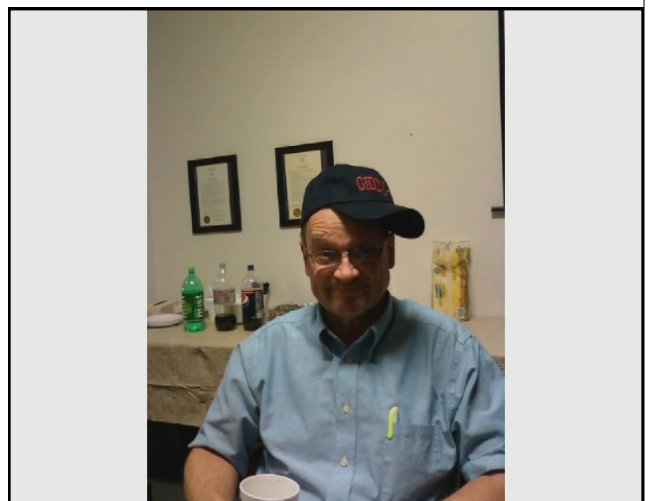
My name is Kathleen Hirschey. I am enjoying my new job here at NRCIL. I am the mother of a nine year old, and the wife of a service member. I truly enjoy working in the human service field. My background is in counseling and public justice. I enjoy spending time with my family, and am truly looking forward to all the activities available during the spring and summer months.

My name is Amanda Bradbury. I was recently hired as the new Transitional Planner on the AIDS in Prison team at NRCIL. I live in Pamelaia with my 2 dogs. In my free time I like to sing, shop, and enjoy the outdoors.

FAREWELL TO OLD STAFF!!

(yes, "old")

NRCIL bids a very fond farewell and happy retirement to John Waterhouse. John has been the Director of our Special Education Parent Center and Parent Training and Information Center grants. His vast experience, compassion, and quirky sense of humor will be missed by our entire organization. "GIDDY-UP, John!"



May is Mental Health Awareness Month



Wear a Green Ribbon for Mental Health Awareness!

We urge you to attend a mental health awareness event in your community and wear a green ribbon.

Why Green?

In the 1800's, the color green was used to brand people who were labeled "insane". The children's mental health community decided to continue using the color green, but to denote a new, refreshing meaning. Green signifies new life, new growth, and new beginnings. We wear green ribbons to raise public awareness, better the lives of children and adults with serious emotional challenges and show support for them and their families.

<p align="center"><i>Lewis County 4th Annual Walk for Mental Health</i></p> <p><i>When:</i> Thursday, May 13th 2010 <i>Time:</i> 9:30 am to 1:30 pm <i>Where:</i> Lowville Fire Hall</p> <p>To pre-register for this event or for more information call NRCIL at 376-8696. Walk-Ins are Welcome!!</p> <p align="center">Doorprize!! DPAO Summer Concert Series Tickets to Alan Jackson Concert!!</p> <p align="center">Choose your distance: 1.5 Mile Walk 3.0 Mile Walk 5.0 Mile Walk</p> <p align="center">Within the Village of Lowville</p> <p align="center"><u>Your Sponsors:</u></p> <p align="center">NRCIL, Lewis County Community Mental Health Center, The ARC, Disabled Person Action Organization (DPAO), Lowville Fire Department & Ladies Auxilliary, Lewis County Public Health, Lewis County Opportunities</p>	<p align="center"><i>6th Annual Mental Health Awareness Walk in Jefferson County</i></p> <p><i>When:</i> Wednesday, May 19th 2010 <i>Time:</i> 10:00 am to 2:00 pm <i>Where:</i> Dulles State Office Building</p> <p>10:00: Guest Speakers at the Dulles State Office Bldg. 10:30: Walk to Public Square 10:40: Balloon Release 10:50: Mental Health Awareness Walk to Thompson Park (round trip transportation provided along walk route) 12:00: Lunch at Thompson Park Pavilion prepared by Chef Manning</p> <p align="center"><i>Entertainment by "One Night Stand"</i></p> <p align="center">Doorprize!! DPAO Summer Concert Series Tickets to Alan Jackson Concert!!</p> <p><i>With support from Jefferson County Mental Health Services and...</i></p> <p>NRCIL, Samaritan Medical Center, Mental Health Association, The Children's Clinic, Children's Home of Jefferson County, Transitional Living Services of NNY, & Credo Community Center</p>
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Show your support for Mental Health by wearing green to these events!



PEERS TOGETHER**A Mental Health Self-Help Group**

Every Wednesday @ NRCIL
2:30-3:30

- Confidential
- Foster Friendships
- Develop Coping Skills
- Share Experiences
- Information & Resources
- Vent & Discuss Issues
- Self-Advocacy Skills

**PLEASE JOIN US!!**

- 05/22/10, 06/19/10, 07/17/10
12:00 to 3:00

Families Together “Picnic in the Park” @ Thompson Park Area R-3-A next to the playground.

- 05/25/10 **Speaker Night**
“Perspectives of Disability”
@ NRCIL in Watertown
6:00pm-8:00pm
- 06/22/10 **Speaker Night**
“Ask the Advocate”
@ NRCIL in Watertown
6:00pm to 8:00pm

Call 785-8703 to request accommodations or arrange child care.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS**Autism Spectrum Disorders Group**

2nd & 4th Monday of every month @ NRCIL 12:00-2:00

Parents of Children w/ Disabilities

1st & 3rd Thursday of every month @ NRCIL 5:00-6:30

YALE (Youth Advocacy)

1st & 3rd Thursday of every month @ NRCIL 5:00-6:30

Exceptional Parents/Exceptional Children

2nd Tuesday of every month 11:30 –1:00 @ ACS Bldg. Ft. Drum

Love & Logic Parenting

Individual & Group -Call for details

Families Together Chapter Meetings

1st Thursday of every month @ NRCIL (Call for details)

Encopresis Support Group

2nd & 4th Thursday of every month @ NRCIL 12:00 (Bring your lunch)

Family Support takes its direction for activities and training from you...if you have ideas and/or would like to get involved, please let us know what's on your mind. Also, this list is subject to change. Please call for updates, additions, deletions, reservations, etc. @ 785-8703.

Northern Regional Center for Independent Living

...a disability rights and resource center that promotes community efforts to end discrimination...

Watertown

210 Court St. Suite 107
Watertown, NY 13601
(315) 785-8703
(315) 785-8612 fax
(315) 785-8704 TTY

Lowville

7632 N. State Street
Lowville, NY 13367
(315) 376-8696
(V/TTY)
(315) 376-3404 fax

**Northern Regional
Center for Independent Living**

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Join NRCIL today and support our work in the commu-

Membership levels:

- Contributing Member \$5
- Family Member \$25
- Sustaining Member \$100
- Business Member \$250
- Silver Member \$500
- Gold Member \$1000

Members attending the Annual Meeting in April, vote to elect the new Board of Directors.

Membership also includes FREE Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) consultations.

If you would like to become a NRCIL member please fill out this form and circle the membership level you are interested in and return it to NRCIL.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____