

The LINK



A publication of Disability Network Southwest Michigan

Your Vote Matters!

People with disabilities are important in every election. The people that get elected will make decisions that affect our day-to-day lives. Voting is a basic civil right, but sometimes we are told that we cannot vote or should not vote because of our disabilities. This is not true.

Know your rights. You have the right to vote:

- if you have a guardian
- if you live in a group home
- if you live in a nursing home
- if you need help to mark your ballot
- no matter what kind of disability you have

October 11, 2016 is the last day to register to vote for the November 8th election.



To find out if you are registered to vote, or to see a copy of what your ballot will look like, go to www.michigan.gov/vote.

Have questions or want to learn more? Contact Michele McGowen at (269) 345-1516 x116 or mcgowenm@dnswm.org.

October is Disability Employment Awareness Month

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The purpose of which is to educate people about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities.

Held annually, National Disability Employment Awareness Month is led by the U.S. Department of

Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, but its true spirit lies in the many observances held at the grassroots level across the nation every year. Organizations of all sizes and in all industries are encouraged to participate in National Disability Employment Awareness Month to help foster a more inclusive workforce, one where every person is recognized for his or her abilities—every day of every month.



Disability Network offers Disability Employment Workshops

In recognition of National Disability Employment Month, Disability Network Southwest Michigan is offering a series of workshops throughout the region titled "Know Your Rights: Disability & Employment." The workshops are aimed at educating people with disabilities about their rights regarding when to (and not to) disclose their disability to an employer or potential employer. See the workshop article inside this newsletter for more details.

Disability Network Southwest Michigan

Serving 8 counties in
Southwest Michigan:

BARRY
BERRIEN
BRANCH
CALHOUN
CASS
KALAMAZOO
ST. JOSEPH
VAN BUREN

Office Locations:

517 E. Crosstown Pkwy
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
(269) 345-1516

2900 Lakeview Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 985-0111

For the accessibility and well-being of our employees and visitors, Disability Network Southwest Michigan is a fragrance-free office. Please do not wear perfume, cologne or other scented products when visiting.

Mission Statement:

We educate and connect people with disabilities to resources while advocating social change.

Vision Statement:

Our vision is a community that values disability as human diversity, free of attitudinal barriers, where all people benefit with full access and inclusion.

www.dnswm.org

Disability & Employment Workshops

How, When and Why to Talk About It

As a person with a disability you may be wondering what you should or should not say to your employer, or a prospective employer, about your disability or medical condition. Disability Network is offering a FREE workshop that will inform you of your rights in regards to disclosing your disability at work. You will also learn how to ask your employer for an accommodation and get employment resources to help navigate your workplace.

This workshop is being offered in five locations throughout our region. Choose the date and location that work best for you.

Date/Time	Location	
Wed., Oct. 5 10 AM – 12 PM	Kalamazoo	Disability Network Southwest Michigan 517 E. Crosstown Parkway, Kalamazoo
Mon., Oct. 10 10 AM – 12 PM	Paw Paw	Michigan WORKS! 32849 Red Arrow Highway, Paw Paw
Tues., Oct. 11 10 AM – 12 PM	St. Joseph	Disability Network Southwest Michigan 2900 Lakeview Avenue, St. Joseph
Fri., Oct. 28 10 AM – 12 PM	Battle Creek	Michigan WORKS! 200 W. Van Buren Avenue, Battle Creek
Mon., Oct. 31 1 PM – 3 PM	Dowagiac	Michigan WORKS! 601-D N. Front Street, Dowagiac

Visit our website, www.dnswm.org, for more information. These workshops are free and open to the public. Please register in advance by contacting Miranda Grunwell at (269) 345-1516 x120 or grunwellm@dnswm.org. Let us know if you need an accommodation to participate.

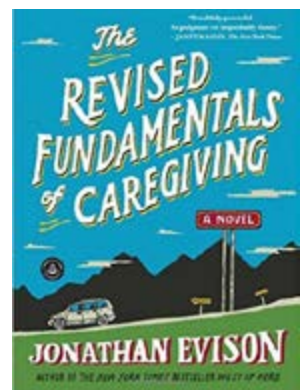
This is a fragrance-free environment. Please do not wear perfume, cologne or other scented products to this event.

Lunchtime Book Club with a Movie!

At December's Lunchtime Book Club meeting we will enjoy a light lunch, discuss the book and then watch the movie. Didn't read the book? Come join us for lunch and the movie!

The Revised Fundamentals of Caregiving is bursting with energy and filled with moments of absolute beauty. The story ponders life's terrible surprises as well as what it takes to truly care for another human being.

The Lunchtime Book Club will meet on Wednesday, December 7, 12 noon - 2:30 PM in both our Kalamazoo and St. Joseph offices. Please RSVP to Michele McGowen at (269) 345-1516 x116 or mcgowenm@dnswm.org. Learn more about the Lunchtime Book Club on our website at www.dnswm.org/connect/book-club.

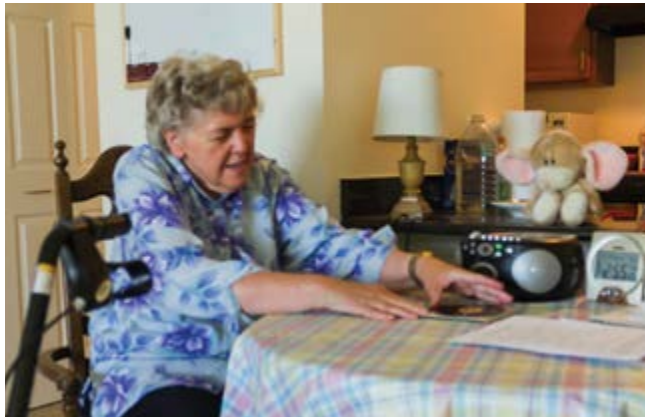


Nursing Facility Transition Program

The goal of Disability Network's Nursing Facility Transition (NFT) program is to provide individuals, regardless of their disability or age, the opportunity to choose community-based living as a viable alternative to nursing facility residency.

Some of the support services that may be available through the NFT Program are:

- Exploring in-home care options and connecting with personal care chore provider services.
- Providing information on housing options and assisting with applications.
- Assisting with one-time moving expenses, such as a security or utility deposit, housekeeping supplies and furniture.
- Connecting with community resources, such as transportation and home delivered meals.
- Improving safety in the home by purchasing a personal emergency response system, bath bench or other assistive devices not covered by insurance.
- Increasing home accessibility by building a ramp or installing grab bars.



Disability Network Southwest Michigan assists with Nursing Facility Transition throughout our eight-county service area. Contact Lisa Hansen in our Kalamazoo office for more information about the NFT program: (269) 345-1516 x111 or email her at hansenl@dnswm.org.

You can help support our NFT program!

Many of the people we help transition back into the community need household items to help furnish their new living space. Please see the back panel of this newsletter for a list of items you can donate in support of this program.

Nursing Facility Transition is just one example of how Disability Network is bridging the gap for people with disabilities in Southwest

Michigan. Person-centered planning is incorporated into transition services so that people with disabilities are educated about options and make choices about their life based on their own individual needs and desires. This is at the heart of each of our core services: Information & Referral, Independent Living, Transition, Peer Support, and Community Education & Advocacy.



Bridging the Gap

Our Publications:

The LINK is our quarterly newsletter, available in printed format or emailed in electronic format.

Disability Digest is a monthly e-newsletter focused on Disability Rights issues and upcoming Disability Network happenings. Available in electronic format only.

Business & Disability Bulletin is a bi-annual e-newsletter directed at businesses and organizations wanting to stay informed about regulations and best practices regarding disability employment. Available in electronic format only.

You can sign up online for any of our publications at www.dnswm.org, or contact Dale at abbottd@dnswm.org or (269) 345-1516 x123.

Current and past issues of our publications are available on our website at www.dnswm.org.

This newsletter is available in alternative format upon request.



Find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/dnswm)



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Disability Network Southwest Michigan

517 E Crosstown Parkway
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

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You can help support our NFT program!

Our Nursing Facility Transition (NFT) program works to help people in nursing facilities move back into the community. Some of these people are in need of basic household items.

You can help support our NFT program by donating new or gently used household items such as:

- Pots and pans
- Dishes and eating utensils
- Small kitchen appliances
- Cooking utensils and other kitchen items (can openers, dish trays, hot pads, measuring cups and spoons, etc.)
- Home telephones
- Vacuum cleaners
- Small furniture (end tables, lamps, coffee tables, night stands, etc.)
- Clocks

If you are able to donate items to help people who are transitioning to community-based living please contact Lisa Hansen at (269) 345-1516 x111 or hansenl@dnswm.org. The value of your donation is tax deductible.

