

The LINK

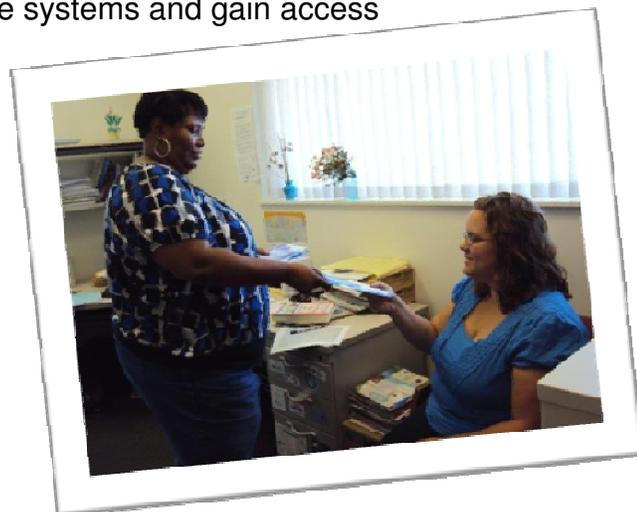
*Changing Lives.
Changing Communities.*

A Publication of Disability Network Southwest Michigan

Introducing Our Disability Guide Program

Disability Network Southwest Michigan is now offering a program that can help people with disabilities navigate state systems and gain access to needed community resources.

The Disability Guide pilot program was introduced to Centers for Independent Living throughout Michigan by our state legislature. Disability Guides were hired to assist individuals receiving or attempting to receive state benefits as they work toward greater self-sufficiency.



Many people encounter barriers related to housing, healthcare, and employment that can interfere with their financial stability. Disability Guides can empower people with disabilities to address these barriers and take the steps necessary to make positive changes in their lives.



If you or someone you know would benefit from the services of a Disability Guide, please contact us:

- ▶ Berrien County Debra Mead (269) 982-7738
- ▶ Kalamazoo County: Lisa Williams (269) 345-1516 x108
- ▶ Van Buren County: Tim Allgor (269) 345-1516 x102



If you live in one of the other 5 counties of our service area, please call our Information & Referral Team for assistance. For Cass County, call (269) 985-0111. For Barry, Branch, Calhoun, or St. Joseph County call (269) 345-1516.



Two Office Locations

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

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

This issue is available in alternative format upon request.

Disability Network is the first stop for people with disabilities and their families in Southwest Michigan.

► Upcoming Events ◀

To ensure accessibility for all participants, please do not wear scented products (like perfume or cologne) to these events. Thank you!

January 23: Brown Bag Lunch & Learn

Topic: Ed Roberts, Founder of the Independent Living Movement

Time: 12:00 noon – 12:30 pm

@ Disability Network's Berrien County Office

2900 Lakeview Avenue, St. Joseph, MI 49085

RSVPs, questions and accommodation requests:

Joanne (269) 982-7761 or johnsonj@dnswm.org



January 29: Small Changes, Big Differences: Assistive Devices to Help You Increase Your Independence

Time: 10:00 am—11:00 am

@ Lion's Club/Paw Paw Senior Center, 227 CR665 , Paw Paw, MI

Contact Joanne Johnson for questions or accommodation requests at

(269) 982-7761 or johnsonj@dnswm.org.

Come see, touch and learn about low cost gadgets that can help you or a loved one do everyday tasks. This presentation is fun, informal, and interactive. Bring a friend!

February 1: 107.7 WRKR Texas Hold 'Em Poker Tournament

Proceeds benefitting Disability Network Southwest Michigan

Time: Check in: 9:00 am Play begins: 10:00 am \$100 Buy In

@Wayside West, 3406 Stadium Drive, Kalamazoo

Register in person or by mail: Disability Network Southwest Michigan,

517 E. Crosstown Parkway, Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Questions? Contact Kristen at (269) 345-1516 x119 or pottsk@dnswm.org



DANCING WHEELS @ DOGWOOD FINE ARTS FESTIVAL

Dancing Wheels was founded by Mary Verdi-Fletcher, the first professional wheelchair dancer in the United States. Born with spina bifida, Mary wanted to offer others with disabilities full and equal access into the world of dance.

May 10, 2014 @ 7:30 p.m.

Dale A. Lyons Building Theatre

Southwestern Michigan College

58900 Cherry Grove Road

Dowagiac, MI 49047

Tickets: \$20 adults, \$15 students

Proudly co-sponsored by Imperial Furniture
and Borgess Lee Memorial Hospital

<http://dogwoodfinearts.org/index.html>



JOIN US FOR A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION TO SHAPE MICHIGAN'S FUTURE

Disability Network Southwest Michigan invites you to a Community Conversation for YOUR say on what Michigan's future should look like. We are partnering with the Center for Michigan to host two Community Conversations – guided discussions that let you share your opinions about the things that matter most to you.

The Center for Michigan holds Community Conversations around the state to gather and amplify the voices of Michigan citizens.



The Center creates a final report that is shared with policy makers. The goal of the Community Conversation project is to ensure that policy discussions taking place in Lansing reflect the views of Michigan people. Please join us!

February 5, 2014

2:00 – 3:30 pm

Kinexus (Formerly MI Works!)
Anchor rooms A & B
499 W. Main St., Benton Harbor

RSVP by Monday, Jan 27th to

Joanne at (269) 982-7761

johnsonj@dnswm.org

February 26, 2014

1:00 – 2:30 pm

Disability Network Southwest MI
517 E. Crosstown Parkway
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

RSVP by February 19th to

Michele at (269) 345-1516

mcgowenm@dnswm.org

WORKSHOP: EVERYTHING MY CHILD NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT SEXUALITY BUT I WAS AFRAID TO TELL

Date: March 19, 2014

Time: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm Cost: \$10 (includes lunch)

Disability Network Southwest Michigan will provide a limited number of scholarships – please ask when registering.

Social Work CE and SCECH are available for an additional \$15.

Location: KRESA, 1819 E. Milham Road, Kalamazoo

To register visit <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TX5MRH6> or call (800) 292-7851 x472



Youth with disabilities need to know about their bodies and sexuality as much as youth without disabilities. This workshop is based on sixteen areas of sexuality, which should be part of every individual's learning on this topic. It will be factual, but fun, with many real life stories that illustrate the perils of having too little or the incorrect information in this area.

Examples will be given that help you get ideas and make a plan to meet the needs of children and their families. There will be no off limit topics, since this presentation will be geared toward teaching teens through adulthood. So come ready with your questions and be prepared for open, frank, and fun discussion.

Sponsored by Disability Network Southwest Michigan, the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council, Michigan Family Voices, and Parent to Parent of Southwest Michigan.

The New Fragrance Free Policy at Disability Network Southwest Michigan is about Accessibility

You may have seen the words below on the email signatures of our staff or on flyers and other documents. We will soon have signs posted in our offices that read the same:

For the safety and well-being of our employees and visitors, Disability Network Southwest Michigan is a fragrance-free office. Please do not wear colognes and perfumes when visiting. Thank you!

We want our programs and services to be accessible to everyone – that includes access to alternative formats like large print or Braille materials, sign language interpreters, meetings in locations that are physically accessible, and a fragrance free environment.

Fragrances like perfumes, scented candles and body lotions can trigger migraines, seizures or asthma. We have staff that need a fragrance-free environment as a reasonable accommodation and we know that others need it as well to be safe and fully included in our programs and services.

Please ask if you have any questions about our accessibility policies and practices.



BARRY ♦ BERRIEN ♦ BRANCH ♦ CALHOUN ♦ CASS ♦ KALAMAZOO ♦ ST. JOSEPH ♦ VAN BUREN



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