

The LINK

A publication of Disability Network Southwest Michigan

Changing Lives.
Changing Communities.

Symbols Matter: Join the Movement

Have you seen the new accessible icon symbol? The new icon is a much needed update to the universal symbol for accessibility, showing action and changing the perception of people with disabilities. Learn more about the new icon at www.accessibleicon.org.

You can be part of this nationwide movement of change! Here's how:

- Update the signs and parking lot symbols in your own parking lot and on your bathroom signage
- Ask businesses and units of government in your community to use this active icon

Some of the organizations leading the way in Southwest Michigan with the adoption of the new Accessible Icon include:

- Disability Network Southwest Michigan
- Kalamazoo Community Foundation
- Area Agency on Aging – Region IV
- Bow in the Clouds Preserve (SWMLC)
- First Congregational Church of Battle Creek
- And more!

Making the change is easy . . .

You can buy stickers to cover the old symbol on your parking signs online at www.accessibleicon.org. Disability Network Southwest Michigan may also be able to loan you our parking lot icon if you want to re-paint your parking lot. If you are looking to purchase a new sign, call Sign Center in Kalamazoo at (269) 381-6869.



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.*

www.dnswm.org



Twenty-five Year Anniversary of the ADA!

2015 marks the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act! Look for more information to come regarding regional and state-wide celebrations with Disability Network throughout the year!

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

Tennis Anyone?

Do you want to learn to play tennis or return to the sport? Join the Kalamazoo Wheelchair Tennis Association!

- Any skill level, any age can join
- Sports chairs and rackets provided or use your own
- Practice at West Hills Athletic Club in Kalamazoo on Tuesday nights
- Players from anywhere in Southwest Michigan are welcome



For more information call 269-359-0611, e-mail kalamazootennis@gmail.com or visit the KWTA website at www.KzooWheelchairTennis.com

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY:

Tools & gadgets that make work, life and school easier


The WatchMinder is a vibrating wristwatch that can be set to remind you to do things all day long. The watch vibrates and displays messages to help with things like remembering to take medication at a specific time, staying on task at work or school, turning in homework, checking-in with a supervisor at work and more. Learn more at www.WatchMinder.com



Funding assistance is available

The Assistive Technology Loan Fund (ATLF) is available to help people pay for tools for independence like the WatchMinder. The ATLF is a low interest loan available to people with disabilities and their family members to help purchase items like wheelchair-accessible vehicles, hearing aids, mobility devices, communication devices, or adapted recreation equipment. The ATLF can also pay for home modifications, including ramps, to make your home more accessible. Call us at (269) 345-1516 for more information.

New Brain Injury Survivors Support Group in Kalamazoo

 Disability Network Southwest Michigan is adding a new Brain Injury Survivors Group starting in March. The new group will meet monthly on the second Thursday of each month from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. This group is open to all adults with a brain injury and meets at Disability Network Southwest Michigan's Kalamazoo office located at 517 E. Crosstown Parkway. The first meeting is March 12, 2015. Contact Miranda for more information at (269) 345-1516 x120.

In addition to this new group, we offer the original weekly Brain Injury Survivors Group and a weekly Women with Disabilities group in Kalamazoo. In Berrien County we offer a monthly women's group called Divine Divas. For more information about these and other disability-related support groups in Southwest Michigan, visit our website at www.dnswm.org or call us at (877) 674-5209.

To change or update your information on our mailing list, contact Dale at abbottd@dnswm.org or (269) 345-1516

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS:

See the Upcoming Events page of our website for additional information or to download flyers for these workshops: www.dnswm.org/upcoming-events

How to Better Understand Your Medicaid & Mental Health Rights

MAR
10

DATE: March 10, 2015, 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

LOCATION: The Arc Community Advocates, 3901 Emerald Drive, Kalamazoo

This workshop is for anyone who wants a better understanding of rights, responsibilities and complaint processes under Community Mental Health Services and Medicaid Services. This workshop is appropriate for individuals receiving services from these systems as well as family members and service providers from community agencies. This workshop is free. SCECH and Social Work CEs will be available for \$15.

This workshop is a collaboration between Disability Network Southwest Michigan, The Arc Community Advocates and Michigan Family Voices.

REGISTER: contact Lisa Cook Gordon at (800) 292-7851 Box 472

Alternatives to Guardianship: Facilitating Life-long Self Determination

APR
1

DATE / TIME: April 1, 2015, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

LOCATION: The Arc Community Advocates, 3901 Emerald Drive, Kalamazoo

This workshop is for families whose child has a developmental disability, as well as service providers working with students and their families. It will cover guardianship from a historical perspective, strangers as guardians and alternatives.

This workshop is a collaboration between Disability Network Southwest Michigan, Michigan Alliance for Families, The Arc Michigan, and The Arc Community Advocates.

REGISTER: by March 25 with Kanika Littleton
(269)364-6317 or kanika@michiganallianceforfamilies.org
or online at www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/rsvp

What Every Family Provider Should Know about Traumatic Brain Injury

APR
14

DATE: April 14, 2015, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Van Buren County ISD Community Transition Center – Middle Conf Rm 811, Hazen Street, Paw Paw

This workshop is for families, child care providers, educators, social service providers and anyone who has a child or young adult in their care and/or coordinates services for children and/or young adults. You will learn causes, symptoms, resources and advocacy efforts for persons with traumatic brain injury. This workshop is free. SCECH and Social Work CEs will be available for \$15.

Disability Network Southwest Michigan is proud to co-sponsor this workshop with the Van Buren ISD and Michigan Family Voices.

REGISTER: contact Lisa Cook Gordon at (800) 292-7851 Box 472

Hearing Access Matters: We are looped!

Accessibility is critical for people with hearing loss, yet hearing access is often overlooked when organizations plan for accessibility.

Disability Network Southwest Michigan is proud to announce that we have installed hearing loops in the conference rooms at our Kalamazoo office. In our St. Joseph office, we have partnered with the Area Agency on Aging Region IV to have a hearing loop installed in the Conference Center of the building we share.

Let us know if you will be accessing the loop system when you visit. If you don't have T-Coil equipped hearing aids, we have induction receivers with headphones for you to use.

If you would like to connect with other people with hearing loss for information, resources, or support, contact these local chapters of the Hearing Loss Association of America:

- **Berrien Chapter:** Darl at St-Joseph@hearingloss-mi.org
- **Kalamazoo Chapter:** Howard at (269) 342-2134 or kalamazoo@hearingloss-mi.org



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



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