



# all Abilities Celebration Connection

FALL 2014

## A Remarkable Day

**B**on August 4 during this past summer, I attended a Sibling Support Conference and Panel in Fairfax, Virginia. Additionally, a Sibshops Facilitator Training/workshop was held, which I was not able to attend. The keynote speaker was Don Meyer, director of The Sibling Support Project. Meyer is the nation's leading trainer and educator on sibling support in the country. As stated on their website, "we want to increase the peer support and information opportunities for brothers and sisters of people with special needs and to increase parents' and providers' understanding of sibling issues."

We have written about Sibshops and the Sibling Support Project in the pages of CSC, several times over the past years, and I have thought many times about how helpful it would have been for my childhood self to have had someone with whom I could share my feelings, the good ones, and sometimes, even the not-so-good ones.

But I'm adult now. I went to the conference in my role as a writer and the editor of CSC. I thought I could objectively report on the conference and gather a few interesting anecdotes. But I was completely surprised by my reaction. Nearly everyone I spoke to had a story similar to mine. I had grown up being accustomed to feeling alone but suddenly, I wasn't alone. As I wrote on the Sibnet facebook page (more about that in a minute!) "... I have never in all my life been with a

*room with so many (identified) adult siblings of people with disabilities - it was like looking in a mirror to my long ago childhood self and the adult I have become—unbelievably emotional and cathartic! Afterwards, I wanted to go up to Don Meyer and thank him in person but I wouldn't have been able to keep from crying!"*

The last half of the seminar that day included a panel of adults, ranging in ages from early 20s to 50s and 60s. Prompted by questions from Don Meyer, the panel shared their personal stories. They spoke from the heart, voicing not only pride and love, but also frustration and sometimes even resentment.

The very next day, I joined Sibnet, a closed facebook page that can be found at [www.facebook.com/groups/SibNet](http://www.facebook.com/groups/SibNet), and posted the comment above. Since that day, I have read and responded to the many comments posted by this "family of friends." And the weight of isolation that I didn't even know I had been feeling, has been considerable lightened.

To learn more about Don Meyer and the Sibling Support Project, visit [www.siblingsupport.org](http://www.siblingsupport.org)

Happy Holidays and see you in January!  
**Laura Nelson**, Editor



### IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from Editor .....	1
Voting .....	2
Publication Info.....	4
CSC Informational page.....	5
Teal Pumpkin Project .....	6

Possibility Dogs (book review).....	7
Virginia.gov media.....	9
Inclusive Schools Week.....	10
Case for Inclusion .....	11
Educational Modifications .....	14
Links I love.....	15



# ACCESSIBILITY: Exercising Your Right to Vote

## Editor's note:

*This cycle will feature Senate and House of Representative elections to the U.S. Congress, and state legislative elections, mayoral races, and a variety of citizen initiatives and bond issues. My sincere thanks to the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities ([www.vaboard.org](http://www.vaboard.org)), which has the information below, with associated links, posted to its website.*

## VOTER REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

- ✓ Register in-person at your local registrar's office or register at home and mail your completed Voter Registration Application to your local registrar's office.
- ✓ New registrants must show an acceptable form of ID when registering to vote.
- ✓ For more information on registration, please visit the State Board of Elections website: [www.sbe.virginia.gov](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov)



Publications are available in alternate formats upon request.

If you would like to apply to serve as an Officer of Election on Election Day, please visit: [www.sbe.virginia.gov/officers](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/officers)

## Contact Information



**Virginia State Board of Elections**  
804.864.8901 • [www.sbe.virginia.gov](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov)



**Virginia Board for People with Disabilities**  
804.786.0016 • [www.vaboard.org](http://www.vaboard.org)

*continued next page*



### Annual Application Process

- Request an Annual Application from your local registrar.
- If you are a first-time applicant, you must have the form signed by your physician.
- Return the completed form to your local registrar's office.
- After the registrar processes your application, you will receive a ballot for every election for which you are eligible during the calendar year.
- In December, your local registrar will mail you another Annual Application for the following calendar year.



### Application to Vote Absentee

#### By Mail

- Request an Absentee Application from your local registrar.
- Return the completed form to your local registrar's office.
- After the registrar processes your application, you will receive your ballot in the mail.
- Fill out your ballot and return to your local registrar by 7pm on Election Day.

#### In-Person

- Within 45 days prior to the election in which you wish to vote, visit your local registrar's office to vote absentee in-person.
- At the registrar's office, fill out an Absentee Application. You must show an acceptable form of ID.
- After completing the application, you will be allowed to vote absentee in-person using a voting machine in the registrar's office. Accessible equipment is available upon request.



### Voting on Election Day

- Present an acceptable form of ID to the poll worker.
- Cast your ballot using one of the voting machines located in the polling place. Accessible equipment should be available upon request.
- If needed, Assistance Forms are available for your use.



### Curbside Voting

- Notify poll workers of your arrival at the polling place by activating the call bell located outside.
- A poll worker will come to your vehicle and request to see an acceptable form of ID.
- The poll worker will return with accessible voting equipment on which you will cast your vote.

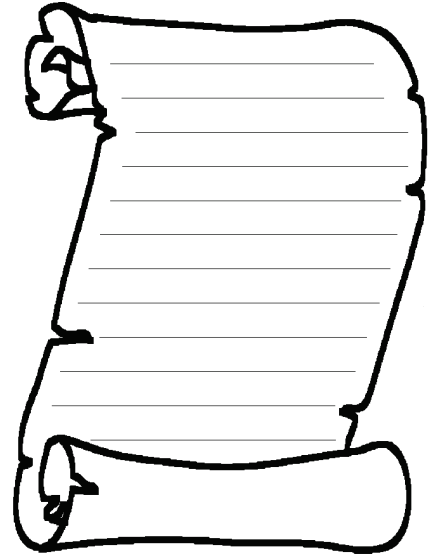
**The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD)**, serves as Virginia's Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, addressing the needs of people with developmental disabilities as established under the federal "Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act" and the state "Virginians with Disabilities Act". Since 1992, the Board has been an executive branch state agency located within the Secretariat of Health and Human Resources. The Board has autonomy over the use of its federal funding and the hiring of its staff. For more information, visit [www.vaboard.org](http://www.vaboard.org)

# ONE-PAGE INFORMATIONAL SHEET

A few weeks ago, I was asked to provide hard-copy issues of the resource guide that we created and distributed all over the state for several years. But, as we are no longer a hard copy publication, I instead created a one-page informational sheet that could be handed out to parents, clients, educators, and other professionals to let them know what they can find through our online resource.

It occurred to me that this might be useful for you as well! So, feel free to print out the next page and give to whomever you feel might benefit from it.

Laura Nelson, Editor



Look for the next issue of *disAbilities Celebration Connection* to be posted during the month of January, 2015. Send us story ideas, interesting links, and events. We can't do it without you! Questions? Comments?  
Use the CONTACT US form at [www.celebratingspecialchildren.org](http://www.celebratingspecialchildren.org)

*disAbilities*  
*Celebration Connection*

is published by  
Celebrating Special Children  
P.O. Box 11384  
Burke, VA 22009

**Editor in Chief**  
Laura Nelson, M.Ed

**Contributing Writers**  
Carrie Smoot

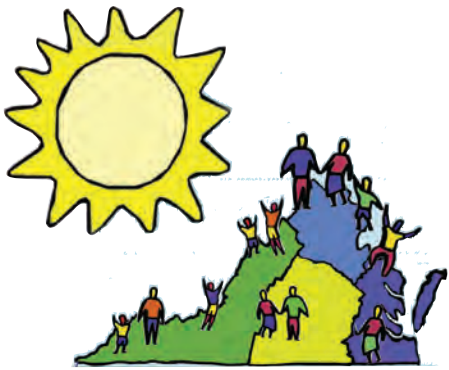
**Chairwoman of the Board**  
Bonita M. Pennino, M.S.

**Secretary**  
Patti Cettin

**Treasurer**  
Carol Hagen



**THANKS TO OUR  
FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS!**



# *Celebrating Special Children*

**Welcome to our website**

[www.celebratingspecialchildren.org](http://www.celebratingspecialchildren.org)

**and facebook page**

[www.facebook.com/CelebratingSpecialChildrenInc](http://www.facebook.com/CelebratingSpecialChildrenInc)

---

*The mission of Celebrating Special Children, Inc. is to provide the necessary information to ensure that all individuals with disabilities realize their fullest potential of development, independence and quality of life.*

---

---

## **Brief History**

---

- **2002** ~ Celebrating Special Children (CSC) was founded and received an innovative grant award from the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities to publish a resource guide for Virginia parents of children with disabilities. It was published as a hard-copy guide and distributed throughout Virginia until 2009 when non-profit funding became difficult to obtain. Prior to this first publication, information for individuals with disabilities had never before been put together in quite this way. While the earlier editions of Celebrating Special Children focused primarily on school-age children, CSC's vision in later publications expanded to include life beyond the school age years.
- **2009** ~ CSC was added to a list of approved non-profits eligible to receive donations through Virginia state tax returns See [www.tax.virginia.gov/taxforms/Individual/Income%20Tax/2013/760Instr.pdf](http://www.tax.virginia.gov/taxforms/Individual/Income%20Tax/2013/760Instr.pdf). Over time enough funds were accumulated to be able to review and update the website.
- **2011** ~ CSC website was updated and re-launched. A quarterly newsletter, *disAbilities Celebration Connection* was created and continues to be posted and disseminated each quarter to the present day.
- **2013** ~ CSC facebook page was launched.

---

## **What We Do Today**

---

*With the relaunch of the website and facebook page, CSC now exists only in cyberspace but has further expanded its vision and scope in order to also address the many and varied issues faced by adults with disabilities, as well as their families and the disability community at large.*

- Website contains:
  - ~ **ARCHIVES:** All articles published in the hard copy; sorted by category with date of original publication.
  - ~ **COMMUNITY RESOURCES:** Extensive list of national and Virginia based resources.
  - ~ **CALENDAR:** Events of interest taking place, primarily in Virginia.
  - ~ **NEWSLETTER:** *disAbilities Celebration Connection* is posted to CSC website in January, April, July and October. Use **CONTACT US** tab to be added to listserve for notice of publication.
- Facebook page is monitored and updated on a daily basis and contains information from many disability advocacy groups, primarily in Virginia.

---

## **For More Information**

---

*Celebrating Special Children • PO Box 11384 Burke, Va 22009*

[www.celebratingspecialchildren.org](http://www.celebratingspecialchildren.org)

# The Teal Pumpkin Project

This Halloween, FARE (Food Allergy Research and Education) is encouraging communities to start a new tradition that will help make this holiday season less scary for children with food allergies: the Teal Pumpkin Project. This campaign encourages people to raise awareness of food allergies by providing non-food treats for trick-or-treaters and painting a pumpkin teal - the color of food allergy awareness - to place in front of their house along with a free printable sign from FARE to indicate they have non-food treats available.

The Teal Pumpkin Project is designed to promote safety, inclusion and respect of individuals managing food allergies - and to keep Halloween a fun, positive experience for all. For more information, visit [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)

**NON-FOOD TREATS  
AVAILABLE HERE**



We support kids with food allergies.  
Our teal pumpkin means that we have  
non-food treats available!



**FARE**  
Food Allergy Research & Education

[www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)

# The Possibility Dogs:

## What a Handful of “Unadoptables” Taught Me about Service, Hope, and Healing

A Review By Carrie Smoot

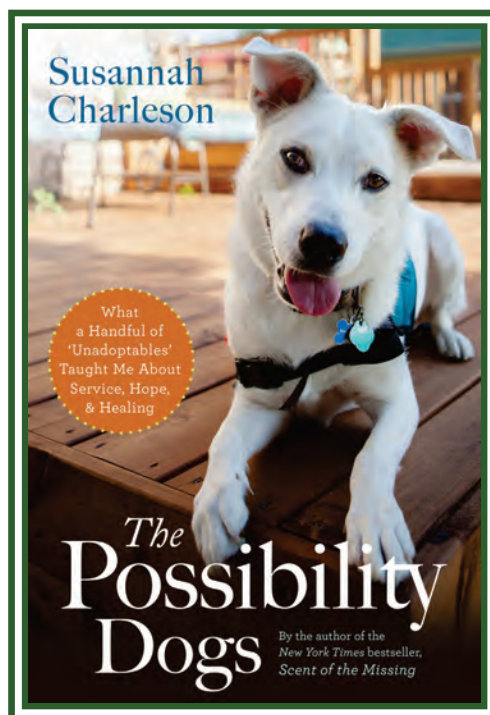
Anyone curious about service dogs has a great deal of information available for research. And if working with a service dog is someone’s first time as a dog owner, shelves of current books and magazines provide guidance and tips. Many people with disabilities have written about their canine partners. These memoirs are educational, entertaining, and moving.

Susannah Charleson does all this and more in her 2014 book,

***The Possibility Dogs: What a Handful of “Unadoptables” Taught Me about Service, Hope, and Healing.*** She focuses primarily on psychiatric and emotional support service dogs.

Charleson has a diverse background in communications. A pilot and flight instructor, Charleson is a veteran search and rescue or recovery team member with her golden retriever, Puzzle. Their partnership is chronicled in Charleson’s first book, *Scent of the Missing*. In her spare time, she is a dedicated animal rescuer whose home, along with Puzzle, is filled with a lively crew of Pomeranians, German shepherds, pit bulls, Labs, and at least one cat. Several help out in the Possibility Dogs program.

Personal experiences led Charleson to her current venture. Possibility Dogs, Inc., is a Texas-based non-profit 501(c)3 organization that trains rescue dogs



with an aptitude for the work to be service dogs for people who have mental or physical disabilities. In many cases, people train their dogs—with assistance from professionals—rather than acquiring a dog trained by an agency. Charleson makes clear that training one’s own dog for service work takes consistent daily effort and commitment.

One day, on a break during a Baltimore, Maryland, conference, Charleson met Bob, a former

firefighter, and his service dog Haska. Familiar with people’s stares and questions as she traveled with Puzzle, Charleson sought to give them their privacy. Later, however, they struck up a conversation. Bob told her about the fire that caused his traumatic brain injury and PTSD. He doesn’t remember much of that day. Other people have filled in the details for him. But Haska keeps him calm, motivated, independent, and on the right track, sensing when he needs her help. At first, Bob was never comfortable talking about what happened to him. But as some restaurant owners, store owners, and others in public places questioned why he brought his pet dog with him, Bob spoke up and set them straight. Now he’s comfortable advocating for himself and educating others.

*continued next page*

*continued from last page*

That chance meeting piqued Charleson's curiosity about psychiatric service dogs. Her own struggle with progressive kidney disease, along with encouragement from doctors, led her to think about eventually getting a service dog. In addition, a particularly traumatic search and rescue mission was rough on Charleson. Her usual coping method of "just get on with it" wasn't working, and she was diagnosed with PTSD and anxiety disorder. She has now recovered, but monitors that condition.

Dog people know that their canine buddies seem to have a knack for knowing when and how to care for them. Though not trained as a psychiatric service dog, Puzzle has a calming presence. She practiced her own type of intervention in pulling Charleson away from negative behaviors and whatever bothers her.

"Sometimes, when laughter seems as far away as the moon, my dog knows it's time to be a clown," says one of Charleson's clients, who has depression. Readers will meet Merlin, who helped a father and son heal from the emotional and physical wounds of a car accident. As the son gained strength and needed him less, Merlin helped the father recover from anxiety

disorder—bringing them out into the world in the process. Juice Box, another rescue dog, assists his owner, a high school student, with finding her way when she gets lost. An extremely active pit bull mix who loves the outdoors helped his owner recover so completely from severe social anxiety that he doesn't think he'll need another. His dog's needs forced the

man to leave his apartment and interact with other people.

Finally, a woman curious about a service dog she sees is thrilled to learn that such dogs can be trained to keep someone with Alzheimer's or dementia from wandering away. She thinks a dog would help her husband—who has Alzheimer's. The list

***Dog people know that their canine buddies seem to have a knack for knowing when and how to care for them.***

goes on.

Most of all, Charleson lets readers know that whatever their issues, they are not alone. ■

For more information, visit <http://possibilitydogs.org> and <http://susannahcharleson.com>. The book is available in a variety of formats.

*Carrie Smoot is a Northern Virginia freelance writer.*



**visit the Calendar page of our website  
[www.celebratingspecialchildren.org/events/](http://www.celebratingspecialchildren.org/events/)**

**and our facebook page  
[www.facebook.com/CelebratingSpecialChildrenInc](http://www.facebook.com/CelebratingSpecialChildrenInc)  
for more events in and around the Commonwealth of Virginia**





# Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services

## Exceptional Supports Rate Approved

DBHDS has received word that Governor McAuliffe has signed Emergency Regulations for the ID Waiver Congregate Residential Services Exceptional Supports Rate. These regulations will be effective November 1, 2014. Therefore, DBHDS anticipates we will soon be authorized to begin accepting applications for providers interested in supporting individuals with exceptional medical and/or behavioral needs, and this will be followed by service authorization requests for specific individuals. The Exceptional Supports Rate is available to qualifying individuals currently in training centers or nursing facilities who are unable to transition to the community without Exceptional Supports as well as individuals currently in the community whose maintenance there is at risk.

While a Medicaid Memo announcing the Exceptional Supports Rate is imminent, providers may wish to familiarize them-

selves with the regulations (found on the Town Hall website). Three Exceptional Supports Rate documents may be found on the DBHDS website under Waiver Services:

The Exceptional Supports Rate Application for Providers: required for providers to complete and send via the supports coordinator to DBHDS prior to requesting the Exceptional Supports Rate for a particular individual.

The Exceptional Supports Rate Process Flow Chart: illustrating the Exceptional Supports Rate provider application process and the individual service authorization process.

The Individual Exceptional Supports Request Check Sheet: required to accompany service authorization requests for the Exceptional Supports Rate. This should act as a guide for providers and a confirmation for DBHDS Preauthorization staff that all of the needed elements are attached to the service authorization request in IDOLS.

DBHDS encourages providers to begin the process of applying to be an

Exceptional Supports provider for those individuals who qualify.

While the regulations focus a great deal on provider requirements, it should be noted that support coordinators also play a role in the Exceptional Supports Rate process. Support coordination related requirements can be found at this link.

DBHDS staff are thrilled that the Exceptional Supports Rate will soon be operational and look forward to working with support coordinators and providers to implement these supports for individuals with complex medical and behavioral needs. More information will be forthcoming. In the meantime, please feel free to direct questions to Dawn Traver, Waiver Operations Director, at dawn.traver@dbhds.virginia.gov. ■

Copyright © 2014

Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services  
1220 Bank St, Richmond, VA, 23219  
804-786-3921  
www.dbhds.virginia.gov



*Governor* **Terry McAuliffe**

## Dyslexia Awareness Month October 2014

WHEREAS, dyslexia is a language-based learning disability that causes difficulties with reading, writing, spelling, and word pronunciation; and

WHEREAS, the onset and severity of dyslexia varies for each individual; and

WHEREAS, because it takes individuals with dyslexia longer to process phonemic information, the disability directly affects academic growth, achievement, and self-esteem; and

WHEREAS, it is important to provide effective teaching approaches and related clinical educational intervention strategies for individuals with dyslexia; and

WHEREAS, Dyslexia Awareness Month is an opportunity to acknowledge educators specializing in effective teaching strategies, and to celebrate the many achievements of adolescents, students and adults with dyslexia;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Terence R. McAuliffe, do hereby recognize October 2014 as DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH in our COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.

# INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK theme

DECEMBER 1-5, 2014

[www.inclusiveschools.org](http://www.inclusiveschools.org)

*Inclusive Education:*  
**ONE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**



Thank you for all of your support in making Inclusive Schools Week 2013 a success. Please mark your calendars for the December 1-5, 2014 event.

The Inclusive Schools Network is pleased to announce the **14th Annual Inclusive Schools Week** will be celebrated December 1–5, 2014, in classrooms, schools, and communities throughout the world. Inclusive Schools Week™ (ISW) highlights and celebrates the progress schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to all students, including those who are marginalized due to disability, gender, ethnicity, geography and language. It also provides an important opportunity for educators, students, and families to discuss what else needs to be done to ensure that schools continue to improve their ability to successfully educate all children. ISW is sponsored by the Inclusive Schools Network at Stetson & Associates, Inc.

This week celebrates how schools can make progress on their journey from “*Awareness to Action*” follow a path of reflection, planning and action. This year’s Celebration Kit contains updated resources to plan a successful Inclusive Schools Week™ celebration and includes new tools aimed at supporting schools in the process of becoming more inclusive.

The Celebration Kit is available for download at the extensive Inclusive Schools Network website at [www.inclusiveschools.org](http://www.inclusiveschools.org). You may also purchase the Celebration Kit along with several other resources on a USB drive at the Inclusive Schools Network Shop- [blog.inclusiveschools.org/shop](http://blog.inclusiveschools.org/shop).

Inclusiveschools.org has a fresh look and a wealth of innovative resources. It is the home of the Inclusive Schools Network and the place to find updated information about Inclusive Schools Week 2014 and to order new ISW products. Leading up to the ISW 2014 Celebration there will be weekly postings of ideas, events, and resources to support schools in planning their ISW activities.

For more information about the Inclusive Schools Network and Inclusive Schools Week, please visit [www.inclusiveschools.org](http://www.inclusiveschools.org) or email [inclusiveschools@stetsonassociates.com](mailto:inclusiveschools@stetsonassociates.com). Be sure to sign up for Inclusive Schools Network News for regular updates as well as other news and information related to building schools and communities that are welcoming of all children and youth. ■

© 2014, Inclusive Schools Network TM

Frances Stetson  
Stetson & Associates, Inc.  
Telephone: 281-440-4220 • Fax: 281-440-4280  
[support@inclusiveschools.org](mailto:support@inclusiveschools.org) • [www.inclusiveschools.org](http://www.inclusiveschools.org)



### Editor's Note:

These informational pages are reprinted with thanks from The United Cerebral Palsy website. To learn more, visit <http://ucp.org>. To download the full report, visit <http://cfi2014.ucp.org>

Every year since 2006, United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) — an international advocate, educating and providing support services for children and adults with a spectrum of disabilities through an affiliate network— produces *The Case for Inclusion*, an annual ranking of how well state Medicaid programs serve Americans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD). Individuals with ID/DD, including the aging, want and deserve the same freedoms and quality of life as all Americans.

Medicaid affects all of us — children and adults with disabilities, as we are aging, as our family ages, and when the unexpected happens. It is the critical safety net that provides financial and healthcare security, and community supports to Americans with ID/DD, aging, and low-income individuals and families, so that their desired freedom, quality of life and community participation can be fully realized.

It is the duty of a civil society such as ours to aid these individuals, who are often the most vulnerable among us. Yet some states do much better than others in having the needed political will and sound Medicaid policies necessary to achieve this ideal. *The Case for Inclusion* ranks all 50 states and the District of Columbia (D.C.) — not on their spending — but on their outcomes for Americans with ID/DD.

*The Case for Inclusion* shows how well each individual state is performing overall; how each state matches up against other states regarding key data measures; and, most importantly, the top performing states with policies and practices that should be replicated.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Significant Takeaways from the 2014 Ranking

#### **Promoting Independence**

- All states still have room for improvement, but some states have consistently remained at the bottom since 2007, including Arkansas (#47), Illinois (#46), Mississippi (#51) and Texas (#50).
- 38 states now meet the 80/80 Community standard, which means that at least 80 percent of all individuals with ID/DD are served in the community and 80 percent of all resources spent on those with ID/DD are for community support. Those that do NOT meet the 80/80 standard are Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah and Virginia, although Nebraska, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah and Virginia are very close.
- As of 2011, 14 states have no state institutions to seclude those with ID/DD, including Alabama, Alaska, Hawaii, Indiana (new this year), Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New

Hampshire, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia and Washington, D.C. Another 11 states have only one institution each. Since 1960, 219 (10 more in the past year alone) of 354 state institutions have been closed, according to the University of Minnesota's Research and Training Center on Community Living. Another 16 more are projected to close through 2015.

- 18 states now meet the 80 percent Home-like Setting standard, which means that at least 80 percent of all individuals with ID/DD are served in settings such as their own home, a family home, family foster care or small group settings like shared apartments with fewer than three residents. The U.S. average for this standard is 77 percent. Just eight states meet a top-performing 90 percent Home-like Setting Standard: Alaska, Arizona, California, Kentucky, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico and Vermont.

*continued next page*

*continued from last page*

- Six states report at least 10 percent of individuals using self-directed services, according to the National Core Indicators survey in 19 states. These states include Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan and Ohio.

### **Tracking Health, Safety and Quality of Life**

- 39 states participate in the National Core Indicators (NCI) model, a comprehensive quality-assurance program that includes standard measures to assess outcomes of services but only 19 states reported data outcomes in 2012. (nationalcoreindicators.org). In January 2012, the Obama Administration made available grant funding so that even more states could participate and ensure their quality assurance efforts were benchmarked and comprehensive. (NCI has more than 100 measures; see Endnote #3 for more details).

### **Keeping Families Together**

- Only 15 states were supporting a large share of families through family support (at least 200 families per 100,000 of population). This is important, because those support services provide assistance to families that are caring for children with disabilities at home, which helps keep families together and people with disabilities living in a community setting. These family-focused state programs were in Alabama, Arizona, California, Delaware, Louisiana, Minnesota,

Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont and Wisconsin.

### **Promoting Productivity**

- Just 10 states have at least one-third (33 percent) of individuals with ID/DD working in competitive employment. These states include Connecticut, Louisiana, Maryland, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Vermont, Virginia and Washington State. Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania were very close.
- 13 states report successfully placing at least 60 percent of individuals in vocational rehabilitation in jobs. With six states reporting the average number of hours worked for those individuals placed being at least 25 hours and five states reporting at least half of those placed remaining in their job for at least one year. Only Nebraska and South Dakota meet the standard on all three success measures.

### **Serving Those in Need**

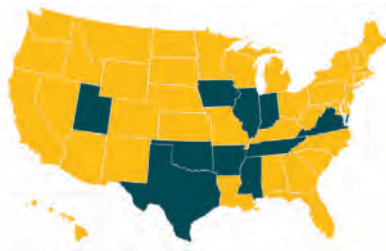
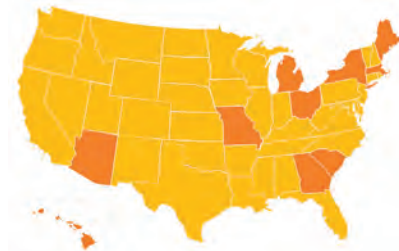
- Waiting lists for residential and community services are high and show the unmet need. Almost 317,000 people are on a waiting list for Home and Community Based Services. This would require a daunting 46 percent increase in states' HCBS programs! However, 22 states report no waiting list or a small waiting list (requiring less than 10 percent program growth).

## **The Best, the Worst and Facts about the Top 10 Performing States**

### **The Best**

1. Arizona
2. Michigan
3. Hawaii
4. Georgia
5. New York

6. South Carolina
7. Maine
8. Massachusetts
9. Ohio
10. Missouri



### **The Worst**

1. Iowa
2. Utah
3. Illinois
4. Arkansas
5. Indiana

6. Tennessee
7. Oklahoma
8. Virginia
9. Texas
10. Mississippi

*continued next page*

*continued from last page*

## Facts about the Top 10 Performing States

- Top Performers are both big and small states in population – “*big*” population states include New York (3rd biggest) and Ohio (#7), Michigan (#8) and Georgia (#9) as well as “*small*” population states include Hawaii (#41) and Maine (#40).
- Top Performers are both rich and poorer states in terms of median family income – “*rich*” states include Hawaii (9th richest) and Massachusetts (#5), and *less affluent* states include Arizona (#31), Georgia (#40), Michigan (#32), and South Carolina (#47).
- Top Performers are high tax and low tax burden states – “*high tax burden*” states include Massachusetts (#10) and New York (#1) as well as “*low tax burden*” states include Arizona (#35), South Carolina (#42) and Georgia (#36).
- Top Performers are big and low spending per person, served through the Home and Community Based Services – “*big spender*” states are New York (#7) and Maine (#6) and “*low spender*” states are Arizona (#49), Georgia (#40), and South Carolina (#48).

## How the Rankings Were Developed

The Case for Inclusion rankings were developed through a broad, data- driven effort. Demographic, cost, utilization, key data elements and outcomes statistics were assembled for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Ninety-nine individual data elements from numerous governmental non- profit and advocacy organizations were reviewed. Dozens of Medicaid, disability and ID/DD policy experts were consulted as well as members of national advocacy and research organizations. They were asked to consider the attributes of top performing Medicaid programs and offer opinions and recommendations on key data measures and outcomes.

To comprehensively determine the top-performing states, a weighted scoring methodology was developed. Thirty key outcome measures and data elements were selected and individually scored in five major categories on a total 100-point scale. If a person is living in the community, it is a key indicator of inclusion; therefore the “Promoting Independence” category received half of all possible points.

In general, the top-performing state for each measure was assigned the highest possible score in that category. The worst-performing state was assigned a zero score in that category. All other states were apportioned accordingly based

on their outcome between the top- and worst-performing.

As noted, most data is from 2012, but all data is the most recent available from credible national sources. Therefore, these state rankings are a snapshot in time. In addition, changes and reforms enacted or beginning in 2013 or later have not been considered.

When reviewing an individual state’s ranking, it is important to consider action taken since 2012, if any, to accurately understand both where that state was and where it is presently. Also, it is important to note that not all individuals with disabilities were considered, only those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This limited the scope of the effort, allowing focus on subsequent initiatives of meaningful, achievable improvement.

A note of caution: Although nearly 60 points separate the top performing state from the poorest performing state, 12 points separate the top 10 states, 20 points separate the top 25 states and only 12 points separate the middle 25 states. Therefore, minor changes in state policy or outcomes could significantly affect how a state ranks on future or past Case for Inclusion reports. ■

**About the Author:** Tarren Bragdon has been involved in healthcare policy research and analysis for more than a decade. His work has been featured in newspapers and media outlets nationwide including *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *New York Sun* and PBS. He served two terms in the Maine House of Representatives on the Health and Human Services Committee and served as chair of the board of directors of Spurwink Services, one of the largest social service providers in Maine.

**About United Cerebral Palsy:** Together with nearly 100 affiliates, UCP has a mission to advance the independence, productivity and full citizenship of people with disabilities by supporting more than 176,000 children and adults every day—one person at a time, one family at a time. UCP works to enact real change—to revolutionize care, raise standards of living and create opportunities—impacting the lives of millions living with disabilities. For more than 60 years, UCP has worked to ensure the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in every facet of society. Visit [www.ucp.org](http://www.ucp.org) for additional resources in your area, or phone UCP at (800) 872-5827



## Common Modifications and Accommodations

Written by NCLD Editorial Team

**T**here are many ways teachers can help children with learning and attention issues succeed in school. Here are some common accommodations and modifications to discuss with the school as possible options for your child.

### Presentation accommodations allow a student to:

- Listen to audio recordings instead of reading text.
- Learn content from audiobooks, movies, videos and digital media instead of reading print versions.
- Work with fewer items per page or line and/or materials in a larger print size.
- Have a designated reader.
- Hear instructions orally.
- Record a lesson, instead of taking notes.
- Have another student share class notes with him.
- Be given an outline of a lesson.
- Use visual presentations of verbal material, such as word webs and visual organizers.
- Be given a written list of instructions.

### Response accommodations allow a student to:

- Give responses in a form (oral or written) that's easier for him.
- Dictate answers to a scribe.

- Capture responses on an audio recorder.
- Use a spelling dictionary or electronic spell-checker.
- Use a word processor to type notes or give responses in class.
- Use a calculator or table of "math facts."

### Setting accommodations allow a student to:

- Work or take a test in a different setting, such as a quiet room with few distractions.
- Sit where he learns best (for example, near the teacher).
- Use special lighting or acoustics. Take a test in small group setting.
- Use sensory tools such as an exercise band that can be looped around a chair's legs (so fidgety kids can kick it and quietly get their energy out).

### Timing accommodations allow a student to:

- Take more time to complete a task or a test.
- Have extra time to process oral information and directions.
- Take frequent breaks, such as after completing a task.

### Scheduling accommodations allow a student to:

- Take more time to complete project.
- Take a test in several timed sessions

or over several days.

- Take sections of a test in a different order.
- Take a test at a specific time of day.

### Organization skills accommodations allow a student to:

- Use an alarm to help with time management.
- Mark texts with a highlighter.
- Have help coordinating assignments in a book or planner.
- Receive study skills instruction.

### Assignment modifications allow a student to:

- Complete fewer or different homework problems than peers.
- Write shorter papers.
- Answer fewer or different test questions.
- Create alternate projects or assignments.

### Curriculum modifications allow a student to:

- Learn different material (such as continuing to work on multiplication while classmates move on to fractions).
- Get graded or assessed using a different standard than the one for classmates.
- Be excused from particular projects

#### Editor's Note:

This page is reprinted with thanks from the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) website. NCLD connects parents and others with essential resources, provides educators with evidence-based tools and engages advocates in public policy initiatives. For more information visit [www.nclld.org](http://www.nclld.org)

# Links I Love ~



## Editor's note:

*October is Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month. See links below for several useful resources.*

### ➤ **Character Counts ~**

Defines Six Pillars of Character through which schools can send a clear message to students that bullying, or even standing by idly while it happens, is just not something a person of character does.

<http://charactercounts.org/resources/youthviolence>

### ➤ **National Association of School Psychologists Bullying Prevention Resources ~**

Resources, guidelines, articles and research related to bullying and student safety.

[www.nasponline.org/resources/bullying/](http://www.nasponline.org/resources/bullying/)

### ➤ **National Education Association (NEA) Bullying Prevention Kit ~**

Designed by educators for educators, this kit reflects the best available research on bullying prevention.

[www.nea.org/home/neabullyfree.html](http://www.nea.org/home/neabullyfree.html)

### ➤ **National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) Bullying Prevention Resources**

Resources, publications, and tool kits related to bullying and student safety, and geared to elementary school-aged children.

[www.naesp.org/bullying-prevention-resources](http://www.naesp.org/bullying-prevention-resources)

### ➤ **PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center ~**

Info provided included: Bullying Info and Facts; Educator Toolkits and Activities; Free Bookmarks featuring information and graphics from the Teens Against Bullying and Kids Against Bullying websites; Information Handouts and; Students With Disabilities Fact Sheet.

[www.pacer.org/bullying/resources](http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources)

### ➤ **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) ~**

**KnowBullying** is an App that provides tips, warning signs, conversation starters, and more to help spread the word about bullying

[http://store.samhsa.gov/apps/bullying/?WT.mc=GOOGLEPPC\\_KnowBullying\\_IQ\\_EndSchoolBullying](http://store.samhsa.gov/apps/bullying/?WT.mc=GOOGLEPPC_KnowBullying_IQ_EndSchoolBullying)

### ➤ **StopBullying.gov ~**

Get tips, facts, toolkits, training materials, and more by entering a topic related to bullying in the keyword search box. Inventory includes federal and non-federal training materials, evidence-based program directories, articles, and other resources helpful in addressing the problem of bullying. *Inclusion of non-federal resources in this directory does not imply any endorsement or promotion of the materials. Only non-federal materials that have been nominated and have been verified to meet criteria set out by StopBullying.gov are included. StopBullying.gov does not guarantee the accuracy of any non-federal resource listed.*

[www.stopbullying.gov/resources/index.html](http://www.stopbullying.gov/resources/index.html)