Respect the blue spaces. If you don’t have a permit, saying “I was only here for a minute” is not acceptable.
LOCAL EVENTS - Please join us!

FREE ABLE Accounts Workshops in Southern Idaho! Call 208-332-1713 for more information.

Mar 2  -  **Prepare for Gardening Workshop**  
          DAC NW Post Falls Office, 11:00 am - 8:00  
          Post Falls, ID

Mar 4  -  **Power of Choice: Not Allowing What Other People Think Influence You**  
          Cub Junior Ballroom, Washington State University, 10:00 am - 11:00 am  
          Pullman, WA

Mar 5  -  **VIGOR: Students with Disabilities Dance**  
          BSU Special Events Center,  7:30 pm  
          Boise, ID

Mar 13 -  **Spring Fling Dance & Game Night**  
          Lewiston Community Center, 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm  
          Lewiston, ID

Mar 14 -  **Autism in the Wild**  
          Our Savior Lutheran Church, 1:00 - 5:00 pm  
          McCall, ID

Mar 19 -  **Ramps & Beer Fundraiser**  
          Tapped Taphouse & Kitchen, 5:00pm - 7:00 pm  
          Moscow, ID

BRAIN INJURY SYMPOSIUM

March 14, 2020  8:00 am - 4:30 pm  
Mirabeau Park Hotel & Convention Center

This one day symposium is designed to increase awareness and education of brain injury through practical presentations and workshops. These tackle topics from brain injury management, return to work, social support and much more. Two tracks to follow, one for those with TBI and their caregivers and one for community partners and professionals.
Sleep historically has not been difficult for me. My mum said as a baby I slept well right from the beginning. And it wasn’t until a few years ago that I had trouble either falling asleep or staying asleep (anyone else in the 2am club?) Even my kids were good sleepers. My eldest son could be relied on to sleep about 12 hours from an early age. In fact, if you had somewhere to be the next day say at 7, put him to bed at 7 the night before and he would be ready!

Sleep now is a hot topic. A program was just featured on NOVA devoted to sleep, or the lack of it, and what problems that can cause on your health. They understand now that sleep can heal your brain as well as other parts of your body, but they don’t understand how. It also plays an important role in day to day memory. Some theories are saying as we sleep less with age that, for whatever reason, is what leads to memory problems like CRS (can’t remember $#@). In Alzheimer’s disease, beta-amyloid can build up in your brain because you are unfortunate enough to have the genetic mutation that causes you to make too much of it. It’s possible that sleep helps clear this insoluble protein out of your brain. So sleep might protect your brain against Alzheimer’s disease!

Sleep can affect young people too. Doctors are seeing sleep disorders in those who have Autism, whether it’s directly related or the autism symptoms just make the problem worse. Things like unwillingness to go to bed, difficulty falling or staying asleep, getting too little sleep are followed by behavior issues during the day - you can see the vicious circle it can cause. So far solutions include checking if medications are interfering with sleep, establishing consistent sleep routines, not using computers or other screens for an hour before bed, etc. Besides behavioral issues, lack of sleep reduces memory recall - this is particularly bad if your kid has been up late the night before studying.

So as a link to Alzheimer’s and to autism issues, missing that middleman of sleep sounds depressing, but there is a sunny side. Sleep is something we can improve!

Things like daily exercise, spending time outdoors, lowering the bedroom temperature, weighted blankets, cutting back on caffeine in the afternoon and trying a soothing drink at bedtime, listening to relaxing sounds, using aromatherapy with lavender and damask rose scents are all something you can try. Even wrapping up in a blanket and stepping outside in the fresh air for 5 minutes to look at the moon, can jump start the circadian rhythms to help us fall asleep and stay asleep. There are many apps on your phone for calming stories, music or nature sounds - even hypnotherapy, that can help with sleep. Just be sure to set your phone where you are not looking at the screen.

Remember the old adage “You sleep away a third of your life - quit wasting it”? We need to rethink sleep in our culture, it’s not a luxury or a waste of time. It is imperative to our health. So I will embrace my history of being able to sleep anytime, anywhere. And in the future I will take sleep seriously and do what I can to get the most out of it. Sweet dreams!

If you have something for the newsletter email it to dac@dacnw.org
NEWS FROM DAC NW

RAMPS AND BEER FUNDRAISER PLANNED FOR MARCH

DAC NW has been involved in the Ramp Project since 2016, securing funding, purchasing modular ramp parts, finding community partners, and installing these ramps at people’s homes so they can have more independence. This vision of reducing barriers to home accessibility is a core to the independent living philosophy.

This month, DAC has working with some students from Washington State University to host an event at Tapped Taphouse and Kitchen, March 19th from 5-7 pm. Everyone who comes can enjoy a $1 discount on beer and wine and be entered to win some cool swag from local businesses. $2 from every pint sold will be donated to purchase more of these needed ramp parts. There is a waiting list for people to receive ramps for their homes. These ramps could mean the difference from staying in an institution or being able to come home.

DAC is partnering with Palouse Habitat for Humanity and the Moscow Central Lions Club to host this event. Northwest Region Thrivent has helped us organize this event for several years now. Come out and drink for a good cause!
Interviewing Disability Guide

Interviews are important and preparing for them can be challenging. That’s why Zippia.com answered a few common questions about interviewing a person with a disability to help.

What do I do if I am asked to take a medical examination?
Interviewers cannot legally ask you to take a medical examination before making a job offer. After an employer offers you a job, they can only ask you to take one if all other employees are required to as well.

What do I do if someone asks me whether or not I have a disability?
Your employer is not legally allowed to ask you if you have a disability, to explain what your disability is or any other questions about your disability.

How do I explain gaps in my work history?
If an interviewer asks you about a gap in your work history where you could not work due to your disability, talk about what you did instead of working and the things you learned by doing that. Keep the gap in the past and clearly state that you are ready to work.

When do I have to tell my employer that I have a disability?
This decision is voluntary. You never have to tell anyone if you do not want to. If you choose to disclose this information, focus on your strengths and explain how you can still perform the job at the same quality as other employees. The 411 on disability disclosure is a great guide that outlines how to make informed decisions.

What if I cannot fill out an application or go through the interview process because of my disability?
The employer can provide you with an accommodation during the process. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Some of these include having an accessible interviewing space, receiving extra time for questions, or answering orally instead of on paper. Job Accommodation Network has a sample accommodation form letter that is very helpful.

Next month we will have information on creating an accessible work environment.

For more information about the ADA contact

NWADACENTER.ORG/IDAHO
Dana Gover, MPA, and
ACTCP Certification
ADA Training & Technical Assistance
Email: dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com
Creative Idea for DD Housing

People from all walks of life struggle to afford housing. One group is particularly vulnerable to the crisis, but often forgotten - people with developmental disabilities.

There is such demand for appropriate housing that supports people with this kind of disability. They are currently being housed in settings that aren’t what they want. They are living with their parents, and they are 30 years old. Some are living in group situations, sharing bedrooms. It’s estimated that 80% of adults with developmental disabilities live with their parents. And these parents worry about what will happen when they are gone.

Several things have to happen to make change. We need to evaluate public laws and zoning, policies and programs affecting the housing opportunities available to Americans with disabilities. We need to analyze what housing supports, or benefits are available through public, non-profit, and/or private sectors, and then make recommendations that can improve housing opportunities.

We need to draw from real examples, the best and most promising practices - summed up it’s find what works and make more of it.

Affordable, appropriate housing is critical and the most inclusive thing we can do to make a community more livable for people with disabilities. Young people with disabilities are stagnating. And this kind of permanent, affordable housing is hard to come by because typically people with disabilities are very low income. Add to that conditions that limit physical, learning, language or behavior skills and you need something specific - not just affordable.

In Denver, Colorado, a group of parents got together and raised $3 million of the $10 million needed to build their own set of 68-unit apartments. The project will be managed as a cooperative. A little more than half of the units are for people without disabilities and need affordable housing. They can help manage the project. By doing this they ensure people won’t be segregated. There will be a common dining room and kitchen for residents who can’t prepare their own meals. And there will be areas where everyone can socialize. Staff will be on site 24/7 to ensure safety. There will even be a model apartment where prospective tenants can practice independent living skills with supervision before moving to their own place.

It sounds like a unique solution to a problem that is everywhere in the United States.
The Truth about Medicaid Block Grants

There’s a lot going around right now about the new federal budget calling for block grants or per capita caps to Medicaid - it all equals cuts. This budget is the latest partisan move to deny health care to some of our most vulnerable citizens. It’s a gimmick that fails to protect parents and adults trying to take care of themselves and their families. Legal experts raise serious questions about this proposal which tries to skirt federal Medicaid law and will likely result in costly litigation while making it harder for low income Americans to have affordable health insurance.

What this does is rip away the guarantee of coverage for adults and parents, allowing states to pick and choose who gets Medicaid and what benefits they receive. It also allows them to change the rules on a whim, without seeking federal approval.

Time and again, studies show that Medicaid expansion leads to more people with coverage, increased access to care and financial security. Under this new budget, these benefits would no longer be guaranteed to all eligible adults - many of them mothers. Instead, states could roll the dice with their health, deciding who gets coverage and who gets cut.

States would get fewer federal dollars through a block grant for part of their Medicaid programs, putting state budgets at serious risk. States’ hands would be tied, with nothing but bad choices, cutting people from the program, creating waiting lists, roll back doctor recommended services, or raise taxes on everyone to make up for a budget shortfall.

Block grants are just another way to cut people, including parents, from health insurance or cut the benefits they need. Research shows when parents are covered, kids are more likely to be covered too. And with the number of uninsured kids in the state climbing, we should be doubling down on efforts to keep parents and children covered. We need to call our state leaders and ask them to keep Medicaid strong to ensure everyone can keep their health insurance.

Block grants mean less federal funding for each state. It does nothing to address the health care crisis we are facing; opioid epidemic, mental health, rural hospitals closing. It could threaten the state’s ability to respond in times of need like an epidemic of coronavirus or a natural disaster. It limits who Medicaid can help and when it can help them.

We should be investing in simplification, and taking up Medicaid expansion across the country to ensure families get and keep the coverage they need.
By Mary Wilson

If you’re house hunting with a disability, you have probably already noticed that most homes are not constructed to suit your needs. Therefore, you’ll have to go forward with certain renovations before you can officially move in.

Whether you’re a home buyer with a disability who wants to ensure that you’ll always be safe in your new house, or a senior who needs to go forward with some modifications so that you can spend your golden years in your own home, you’ll need some clear guidelines for an accessibility bedroom remodel. Here’s how to redesign your bedroom for accessibility.

**Find the Funds:**
You might feel overwhelmed by the cost of an accessibility remodel. Thankfully, you probably won’t have to drain your savings account to cover the costs. Instead, you can utilize your home equity and opt for cash-out refinancing to fund your renovations. How does that work? To sum it up, you’ll replace your current mortgage loan with a new, larger loan. In return, you’ll get the difference between the two loans in cash. You’re free to use this money for remodeling expenses. You can also research grants available in your state to see if you are eligible for additional funding. If you are a veteran, you likely will qualify for certain financial assistance programs.

**Create Open Space:**
Before you decide which features and fixtures you will need, consider the floor plan. Ideally you will want to design a space with an open floor plan that allows for ease of movement, especially if you use a mobility aid.

Think about how your furniture could be adjusted to open up the room and make it feel larger. Consider which pieces could get in your way, and ensure they won’t block your path. Plan for bright lighting too, because dark corners can be trip hazards.

**Make Closets Accessible:**
How will your store your belongings? You’ll want to make sure nothing is out of reach. According to Closet America, having a walk-in closees can be more convenient for people with limited mobility. Using single hanging rods for your clothes means that you will be able to grab most items on your own, rather than storing certain outfits above your height. You might want to store accessories on a “lazy susan,” which creates extra storage space.

**Choose Safe Flooring Materials:**
When you’re planning an accessibility remodel, your choice of flooring material is important because slippery material can lead to injuries.

According to Caregiver Aid, carpeting is generally poor choice, but there are plenty of other choices for slip resistant flooring. Standard wood flooring can be safe, but because of the higher cost, it’s not always the best option. Instead, you may want to opt for vinyl flooring, which is fairly easy to clean and maintain.

**Find a Bed for your Needs:**
You may need to choose the right bed for accessibility. After all, you need to be able to get a good night’s sleep! Focus on Disability suggests an electric, remote controlled adjustable bed. And the bed frame isn’t the only crucial component; purchasing the right mattress is also essential.

A comfortable orthopedic mattress is usually a smart choice, but depending on your personal needs, you may want to do some further research on mattress brands and models that will suit you best. Spending a little extra on the right mattress is a good use of your funds.

In the future, we might see more houses specifically designed to be accessible. For now, people with disabilities will generally have to be proactive about remodeling their own homes. It’s an opportunity to customize your space and ensure that you’ll have all the features you need, once everything is finished. You’ll know the investment was well worth it!
This Life Hack comes to us from Michelle P as an affordable way to help her load her wheelchair in her vehicle by herself.

She had a mechanic install a winch in the space behind the front seat of her vehicle. She attached a cable to her wheelchair and hooks up the S hook on the winch.

Then she pushes the winch control button that is stored near the front seat console. The motor pulls in the wheelchair!

And then it’s in! Brilliant!
Handling Family Squabbles

In any family there can be awkward situations, moments of conflict and hurt feelings. And they may react differently to your decision to become more independent. People have so much interdependence, you can hit some bumps along the way. The same goes for business settings. That means, when you hire a family member to be your personal assistant - employee - you can hit some bumps along the way.

Add to that, when you hire a family member to be your personal assistant, it can be really hard to establish a “boss” role. And sometimes the issues go back as far as the childhood sandbox. Work-life balance can be hard, you can’t just fire them because they are not doing a good job, and then have Thanksgiving dinner with them. You end up postponing hard decisions to avoid triggering battles.

The underlying issues in these relationships can be your opposing goals. You want to be independent, but your family member wants to stay in control. Or perhaps you both have different tolerances for risk. And then there is the historical baggage that family members carry around - “Mom always loved you best.” Resentment can be a roadblock to moving forward.

But you can resolve these issues. Lay out a clear vision and strategy for the independence you want, then decisions that affect it will follow into place. Adding structure can help. Set up clear goals and expectations up front. Try an organizational chart with goals and policies. Try coaching the family member so they can see the same future that you do. Remember, it may mean you need to make changes or compromises along the way. But if you both commit to the goal of being independent, then each step is easier to do.

Family members can squabble passionately, but would still go to the ends of the earth for each other. For the most part, disputes can be resolved, forgiven and moved past. Handling family conflict is like a game of Whack-A-Mole. Knock one down and another will erupt. Instead, try to think of it like a chess match. All the pieces are related, they have ways they can and do move around the board, and you have to be strategic and look at the whole picture.

Set your independence goal, decide what you need to do to achieve it, prepare for unexpected things that may happen, and make a plan to deal with them and you can reduce potential disputes.
Mindset Matters: How Disability will influence the next decade of innovation and shape the future of business. Jonathan Kaufman, a writer about disability in corporate culture, management and society, touches on technology and the future of work.

The Disability Innovation Summit will look at the global potential of the disability innovation movement, from products and services to thinking and research. It will be an opportunity to bring together global experts and emerging talent to explore the future of disability innovation and its potential to change lives around the world.
https://10times.com/disabilityinnovationsummit

Human-centered design is the foundation of this article on how to make design thinking more disability inclusive. It addresses the gaps in the everyday quality of life for those with disabilities to ensure they can fully participate in our society.
https://ssir.org/articles/entry/how_to_make_design_thinking_more_disability_inclusive

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was signed into law in 2014 to help job seekers access the training and support services they need to succeed in the labor market. They are in all 50 states, and provide local support to include this underemployed population.

Cities are difficult to navigate at the best of times, but for people with disabilities they can be like an obstacle course and a maze wrapped up into one. Assistive tech is playing a big role in the transformation. Check out the latest high tech solutions.
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & DISABILITY WORKSHOPS

If you have a disability or support a person with a disability, plan to attend!

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2020
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Skyline Activity Center
1575 W Skyline Dr, Idaho Falls

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2020
1:30 - 3:30 pm
Church of the Nazarene
1232 Washington Street N, Twin Falls

Learn how to think through what you will need in an emergency, how to write your own emergency plan, how to make an emergency kit (go bag), and how to communicate and stay informed. Participants with a disability will receive their own emergency supply starter kit.

For accommodations, including ASL interpreters, please contact Idaho SILC by Friday March 13 at 208-332-1713.

Promoting Independent Living for all Idahoans
Durable Medical Goods Exchange

Please call an office near you to make donations of durable medical items you no longer use or see if there is something you may need! Explain your needs and our trained staff may know the perfect item that will help you!

James Pickard in Moscow 208-883-0523
Valerie Johnson in Idaho Falls 208-529-8610
Todd Wilder in Boise 208-336-3335

TIDBITS!

Categorically left over but no less important

Quotes to make you think!

“The way my brain processes information is quite odd. I mean, I have Attention Deficit Disorder and another learning disability I can't even spell. I don't even have a high school diploma. I'm smart, but you can't prove it on paper.”

~ Ron White, Comedian

Boys with CP playing Tiny Tim on Broadway

For nearly two centuries Tiny Tim has been seen simply as the poor boy on crutches. But these two actors with Cerebral Palsy see something different.

“He's really like me. Very happy, very hopeful. But he has a disability,” said Jai Srinivasan.

“Being in the show is so much fun. I just want kids who think they can’t do it, to know that they can. Believe in yourself, “ said Sebastian Ortiz. The boys believe they can deliver something other actors can’t - authenticity. This is a character from the past redefined for the present.
TECHNOLOGY FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Tilt Switch

Children and adults with motor limitations can still use technology through special switches. Easier than turning a knob, the Tilt Switch is perfect for users who aren’t able to activate a switch manually. This is a gravity sensitive switch that has a velcro strap that attaches to a head, arm or leg and is activated when the user tilts that body part. Extremely versatile, this switch can be adjusted for tilt sensitivity. Many things can be operated with a single switch: home appliances, fixtures, toys, remote controlled cars, electric razors, lights or the tv, or even a fan.

About $50 from enablingdevices.com

Cast Protector

The new Seal-Tight Infinity protects your cast or bandages so you can bathe or shower. The unique infinity edge prevents water from pooling in the ring and forms a watertight seal.

The design features molded grips for easy, no-slip application. Latex free its guaranteed to last the life of your cast. Also works for chronic wounds, diabetic ulcers and more. Many sizes available.

Around $25 from Brownmed.com