We are not ‘brave’ for having a disability: it’s not a choice. We didn’t pick up a semi-defective body from the line-up so no one else had to. It’s just who we are.
LOCAL EVENTS - Please join us!

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, around the world festivals, sporting events, community workshops and celebrations are being cancelled or postponed. We support these decisions but also understand the important role these events play in community life. They serve as an emotional connection to share a common experience, and they build stronger, more resilient communities. We have moved to offering our event experiences online. Last months Ramps & Beer fundraiser changed from an on-site event to virtual fundraiser within 3 days. It was very successful, raising over $1500 for purchasing temporary wheelchair ramps! Here is a listing of a few we know of are still being held “virtually.” Be sure to connect with us via our regional Facebook accounts to watch for future live events and workshops. And check out our videos on YouTube as we make them available. And be ready to return to our events when it’s safe and we will celebrate at in-person gatherings then. We love our communities!

Apr 22 - Arts & Crafts Workshop - LIVE!
DAC NW Post Falls Office via Facebook, 10:00 am - 12:00 noon
Post Falls, ID

BRAIN INJURY SYMPOSIUM MOVED

May 30, 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.
Things I have Learned in Self Quarantine...

During the darkest of times, I turn to humor to lift my spirits. Nothing better than funny memes, uplifting stories, and yes, even cat videos, to get me through these times. Learning to work from home, while also checking in on my high school senior doing his work from home can be a challenge, so I try to be creative as I stay at home.

I find I cook….a lot. It helps me feel more in control. But I also find I eat….a lot. This could end up very bad. Even with all this cooking, I haven’t changed my shopping habits one bit, so I am mystified at the lack of supplies in the store. Really? No brown sugar? These are being bought up by people who have never bought supplies to bake before. (And apparently they never wiped before either :)

I try to balance this close proximity to food with a good workout on my exercise bike every morning. Did you know that Doobie Brothers song China Grove is just the right speed for biking to? I would love to be out gardening more but the weather has not cooperated so far. So I have been painting my bedroom ceiling. That has to count as a work out, right?

Then there is always crafts. I pulled out my Easter decorations right after St. Patricks Day and decided they hadn’t been updated in like thirty years. So I did spend some time reworking them. Only thing I had to buy was a bit of moss. For the most part, I had everything else. I even put together some grown up Easter baskets for my adult children using some of their childhood Easter things.

For work, it took a couple of days to get a good routine set up. For the most part it works well, although the ergonomics at my kitchen table leave a lot to be desired. And pretty sure I don’t look much like that photo anymore. Only 9 of my acrylic nails are left, and I have taken to cutting my own hair - this does not look good.

But like everyone else, bingeing on movies, checking out virtual games, Skype dinner parties and the like breaks up the monotony and helps me feel connected. Mostly going ok.

Except when I pulled my dust mop head from the dryer, warm and fluffy and clean. I discovered it makes a great hand puppet! Would I have ever thought of that before? Noooo.

If you have something for the newsletter email it to dac@dacnw.org
Seed Gardening At Home -
With DAC Consumers!

Going a little stir crazy at home? How about some indoor gardening? Ironically, we have been having workshops every month at DAC and I hosted last months workshop - a Seed Biodome Workshop.

This workshop demonstrated how to easily incubate seeds and get them started for a garden at home. DAC supplied the seeds, peat moss, and the pots, which consumers filled with dirt for transplanting the seeds into the pot once the sprouts got big enough. It was pretty fun!

Often times a poor diet can affect or cause secondary conditions for people with disabilities. And low income families especially face difficulty affording fresh foods that are healthy. It’s amazing how little space you need to grow some fresh veggies. Things like lettuce or strawberries can grow on a balcony, patio or even in a sunny window.

After the workshop, I brought my seed starts home and set them near my east side window and let them incubate for only about a week or two. And here is what they look liked only 20 days later.

Jamie’s results were great and she is SUPER proud of her edible plants. She’s excited to plant them in her garden that she started last year.

Tara’s seeds took a little longer to get going but finally did sprout. Here she is hamming it up with her biodome. Anne will be starting her very FIRST edible garden this year with these sprouts. She doesn’t really know what she planted as she forgot to write it down, so she will have a reveal party at harvest time.

If anyone is interested, it’s not too late, but almost… Contact me at michelle@dacnw.org and I can walk you through it. What else do I have to do?

May love and light surround you all!! Michelle Porter
Wheelchair Use and Precautions for COVID-19

If you push a manual wheelchair, there are unique precautions you should take related to hand washing. COVID-19 can survive on surfaces of your wheelchair, such as handrims. Any virus that may be on your hands can be transferred to your handrails as you push your wheelchair.

Clean hands: Washing your hands is incredibly important. Wash with soap for 20 seconds whenever you return home from ANY activity where people have been. Use a fingernail brush, as you may have really rough skin from pushing the wheelchair. Carry anti-bacterial wipes or hand sanitizer to clean hands before eating, regardless of where you are. Try to avoid touching the tires, use FlexRims to get great grip without hand-to-tire contact. Wear gloves when pushing, but think about where to set them after, as they may now be infected with a virus. And it is like the inside of the gloves can become infected unless you always wash your hands before putting them on.

Clean Wheelchair: Wash the surfaces on your wheelchair, especially the handrails and tires. After washing your hands, have two washcloths or anti-bacterial wipes you can use to wash the rims as you wheel around the house. Or spin around in circles doing this, such as in a public bathroom. Wipe the hand rims three times. Wash the other surfaces that you regularly touch including wheel locks, the frame, and seat cushion. Arm supports, push handles and foot supports should be cleaned as well. If it is a power wheelchair, disinfect your joystick and controls. Be careful of bleach, it can damage some surfaces. Regularly clean grab bars and other surfaces in your home. And consider washing your hands again after cleaning it.

Social Distance: Wheelchair users sit lower than most people that are standing, so there is more exposure to saliva droplets. Observe a minimum of 6 ft from those around you. You may consider wearing some type of face mask to protect from getting sprayed. The virus can go through a mask that is not an N95 one, but anything is better than nothing. This can also act as a barrier to keep you from touching your mouth or nose. Consider a paint stir stick to scratch with when you have an itch.

For more information about the ADA contact

NWADACENTER.ORG/IDAHO
Dana Gover, MPA, and
ACTCP Certification
ADA Training & Technical Assistance
Email: dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com
Phone: Voice & TTD 208-841-9422
Peer Providers – How Your Experience Helps

Living, learning and working with a disability can be challenging. Sometimes, the best person to understand what you’re going through might be someone who’s also been there. A peer provider is someone who draws on their own lived experience of disability, along with professional training and support, and they provide services like coaching to people with the same type of disability.

According to recent studies, peer providers are a rapidly growing part of the workforce that supports people with disabilities and chronic conditions. They are a familiar sight in substance use disorder programs like AA. They can be paid or volunteer and may have a title with something like support specialist in the name.

Centers for Independent Living have utilized peer providers for years. They self-identify as a person with a disability, either generally or with a specific condition. Being a peer provider can be both rewarding and challenging. It’s rewarding in seeing your peers learn, grow and do well. It can be challenging to maintain that professional relationship. Our local CIL provides leadership skills training and technical assistance to a variety of consumers. It’s all about self-empowerment and self-advocacy through this peer engagement. And with a statewide network, there’s a chance we can provide a peer support program for any type of disability.

Some of the newer areas to find peer support is Opioid misuse and addiction. There are a lot of people with disabilities that also live with opioid use disorders. Another area is integrated community living with students with intellectual disabilities attending post secondary programs at universities. This model matches peer mentors and students participating in an off-campus community setting.

A group that can directly benefit from peer providers is transitioning youth with disabilities. It helps to have a mentor with a similar disability who has been there/done that provide support.

An area that has always benefitted from peer providers is spinal cord injury. A former patient who has successfully returned to an active and productive life after injury is matched to a newly injured patient.

Another group to benefit from peer providers are parents empowering other parents who have children with disabilities. This network of support groups help parents cope and understand the new ‘normal’ they are living.

If you are interested in becoming a peer provider, contact your local Center for Independent Living. The contact information is listed at the end of the newsletter.
A Letter from the Director:

We know that these are uncertain times, and we understand that with this it can cause fear and anxiety, especially for the disability community. First and foremost, we want our communities to know that we are still hard at work for you. If you are feeling isolated please reach out to us at 208-380-1401 or 208-308-1997 and an Independent Living Specialist will be happy to talk to you, even if all you need is to hear a voice at the other end.

On our website at IDLIFE.ORG, under the resource tab, we have added many resources specifically related to COVID-19. If you know of a resource that would be good to add, please email us and we will be sure to add it.

If you require assistance accessing food, medical supplies, medication or other necessities please email or call us and we will work with you to ensure your issues are resolved. We are working hard, with our community partners to ensure that we are able to provide home delivery for these things. Please use our contact information at the end of this page.

During these times, I have been so impressed and inspired by communities and community partners coming together to take care of and help our most vulnerable neighbors. In Idaho, we have heard stories of Fire Departments doing grocery shopping, teachers doing reading time for their students, schools providing lunches, Senior Centers continuing to provide meals. Things like Barry’s Bike & Ski handing out free potatoes and so much more. These stories and actions give us hope for a better tomorrow and show us that during the hard times, we truly band together to take care of our Idahoans. We would like to start featuring positive stories on our Facebook page, so if you would like to recognize an organization or a person in your community please email us and we will put the story on our Facebook page.

We are going to create an email list, to keep in touch with our community if that is the preferred method of communication and we will send agency updates, positive stories, resources and some ideas of what to do during isolation. If you are interested in joining our email list, please email or call and we will add you to the list. Please let us know what county you are in, so we can provide localized resources in your area.

Email: chelsie@idlife.org
Phone: 208-380-1401 or 208-380-1997
Sincerely, Mandy Greater, Executive Director

Living Independently for Everyone
What to do During Social Distancing

By James Pickard

Hi All! How have you been lately? It’s been a minute since I have written an article for Idaho IL Newsletter, that’s because I have delved into DAC’s YouTube Channel and it has consumed a lot of my time, trying to figure out all the in’s and out’s of it. That being said, there is still more to learn. Isn’t that the way with computers, always in a state of progression, never standing still.

Anyways, I just wanted to drop you a line to give you all some ideas on things to do during this Social Distancing period. Now I’m sure that you all have some ideas of your own, or event that she of the ideas I pass along to you, you already know. But there might be a couple that you didn’t know. I know a couple of them took me by surprise and I hope that that may be the case for you as well.

First, I’ll start off with one that everybody probably already knows. Streaming a movie or binge watching a series. Now there are multiple sites you can do this on: Netflix, Hulu, ABC, NBC, or if you would like multiple channels you can go to sites like Sling TV. If you are sick of movies then have you thought about streaming Opera? That’s right, you can stream the Metropolitan Opera nightly. If you’re not into Opera maybe you might want to try streaming a show on Broadway, it’s in HD too. They have plus or minus 300 shows, musicals, or plays to pick from.

Maybe neither of those are your forté, maybe you would rather watch music concerts. A couple of websites that I happened to come across is nugs.net and Songkick, which both have live streams to various concerts. The last idea I have for you is to go on a safari! Yes, a safari! Now you can go on a Safari online thanks to major zoos in our country. For instance, the San Diego Zoo has live cameras where you can watch Polar Bears, Pandas, Baboons, Penguins, Giraffes and more. The Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens offers a live Home Safari every day at 3pm EDT where they highlight an animal and include an activity you can do from home.

Hopefully this will aid you through these long days and even longer nights that have been brought forth due to the Coronavirus. Oh, and a side note, you will want to check these sites out thoroughly due to the fact that some sites charge a fee to use. Other than that, have fun perusing the net.

~ Peace
What I’ve been doing each day to stay somewhat sane. By Michelle P.

One. Challenge Myself Physically
I have been challenging myself to move my body a bit more each day. So, I am in a wheelchair, and I started by rolling around my kitchen 5 laps. The next day I did six laps, the next day I did 7, etc. After a week this got so boring I turned on the music and dance a little more each day. I am proud to say that today, I finally fit into the jeans I couldn’t fit last year.

Two. Challenge Myself Spiritually
Everyday, I reach out to people who I know are also stuck at home and I tell them a stupid joke or something. Not only does it make them feel amazing and not so isolated, but it also makes me feel amazing. I also TAKE phone calls from people because, hey, maybe they need to do a good deed for the day and who am I to deny them that?

Three. Challenge Myself Mentally
I have a job and now I am working from home without internet or a laptop. But as you can see, I am writing this article. I do not love technology, but I just found out about 3 new apps that I can use on my phone to write articles on a document. I make a goal each week of something that I am going to accomplish for the week. Currently, I am cleaning out my garage. I put in a couple hours each day. I should be done by the end of the year!
SELF-DIRECTED PERSONAL ASSISTANT SERVICES

Addressing Caregiver Shortage

For the first time ever, a new proposal to track the number of direct support caregivers will help address the shortage of workers to assist people with disabilities. A bipartisan bill was introduced in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives in March will change the way the government categorizes direct support professionals.

Currently, these workers are lumped in with home health care aides in the system used by Bureau of Labor Statistics to monitor workforce trends. Advocates say that category is far too broad and leads to a lack of reliable information about how many people across the nation are employed as direct support professionals and where more are needed.

Known as the Recognizing the Role of Direct Support Professionals Act, it directs the White House Office of Management and Budget to create a new code for “direct support personnel.” That would include individuals who assist people with disabilities with activities of daily living and with services that allow them to live in the community.

With better data, lawmakers behind the measure should be able to identify shortages, report accurate turnover rates and determine where to target to make improvements.

We know first hand what a difference the self-directed in home care providers make in the lives of those they work with. One of the first changes that could help with finder workers and retaining them is increasing the per hour Medicaid reimbursement rate.

Senator Maggie Hassan, D-NH introduced the measure and she has a son with cerebral palsy. She hopes the bipartisan support will help address this workforce shortage, and she will continue to work across the aisle to ensure people with disabilities have the support they need to survive. In addition to Hassan, the bill is sponsored by Senators Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Kirsten Gillibrand, D-NY.

In the meantime, we love our dedicated caregivers that do their work quietly, lovingly and around the clock.

Services you control!
Video consultations with your general practitioner are a viable means for maintaining continuity of care for at-risk groups. In general practice this means using a web platform, similar to Skype, but utilizing secure technology that protects patient confidentiality.
https://eandt.theiet.org/content/articles/2020/03/video-gp-consultations-a-viable-alternative-during-social-distancing-measures/

What exactly does “social distancing,” “self-quarantine” and “flattening the curve” mean, and how might it apply to you, your family and your community? This health website helps clarify these concepts so you can understand better why they are being recommended.

Bored at home? Here is a list of 100 things to do while stuck at home. From riding roller coasters and checking out museums (virtually of course), you can take classes, learn a craft, cooking, organize your closets and many more ideas, with resources included.

How do you date when you are social distancing? NPR hosted an interview with tips on socializing long distance - from greeting friends to dating. Learn the best way to start or keep a relationship going and stay healthy in the process.
https://www.npr.org/2020/03/21/819629063/tips-on-dating-while-social-distancing

Here is the latest guidance from the CDC and John Hopkins experts on measures to curtail the coronavirus outbreak. It explains in detail what social distancing is and how it helps stop the spread when we all work together.
https://hub.jhu.edu/2020/03/13/what-is-social-distancing/
FAQ: COVID-19 FAQ

Public health officials in the United States and in other countries are working to stop the spread of a new respiratory illness. Confirmed cases of COVID-19 are popping up across Idaho. It is important that people with disabilities understand this disease and stay safe and healthy.

**What is COVID-19?** Symptoms include a dry cough, fever, and in more severe cases, difficulty breathing. Protect yourself by washing your hands often, don’t touch your face, and avoid close contact (6 feet) with people who are sick.

**I have a disability. Am I at risk?** Older adults and people of any age who have serious medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Based on current information, those at high-risk include:
- People who are 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home
- People with preexisting medical conditions

**What if I use a personal attendant?** If you use other people to help you live at home you should do the following:
- If you have it, provide hand sanitizer for anyone entering your home.
- Review your emergency back up plan in case your helper is sick or absent.
- Identify other people who can fill in when your staff doesn’t show up.

- Follow the CDC recommendations below to avoid illness.

**CDC Guidelines to Avoid Illness:** The CDC recommends that everyone, regardless of age or disability, takes the same steps to avoid getting sick. These include following everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of respiratory disease including colds and flu.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Stay at home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using regular household cleaning spray or wipes.

**Where can I get more information?**
- State of Idaho Official Coronavirus Page
- Centers for Disease Control
- Idaho SILC

Promoting Independent Living for all Idahoans
Be Boundless!

Dance is dance, whether you are walking or rolling. Chelsie Hill is the founder of the Rollettes of Los Angelas, a dance group that use wheelchairs. A lifelong dancer, she was a popular high school senior when she was a passenger in a drunk driving accident that left her paralyzed from the waist down. A community leader, she has dedicated her life to encourage others to pursue their passions despite the physical obstacles they face. Live life independently mentally, physically & emotionally. Check her out on Instagram. Her posts are a sure way to brighten your day! @chelsiehill

Quotes to make you think!

“That quote, ‘the only disability in life is a bad attitude’, the reason that’s bullshit is …No amount of smelting at a flight of stairs has ever made it turn into a ramp. No amount of standing in the middle of a bookshelf and radiating a positive attitude is going to turn all those books into braille.”

~ Stella Young  1982-2014

Durable Medical Goods Exchange

We are not accepting any durable medical goods at this time since it’s difficult to clean them. But we are distributing them. 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
Pouring has never been easier! Simply insert desired beverage in this product and just tilt downward with two fingers to pour. After use, tilt the Pour Thing back into place for the next use. This product is designed for those with disabilities or spill-prone children, and is a must have for every home. Comes in half gallon and gallon size. Perfect for milk, juice or other beverages. No hand strength needed to pour!

About $38 from
www.liveoakmed.com

Eyestick uses rays and ultrasonic sensors to measure the distance with the ground and delivers sound alarms to BlueTooth earpiece to alert you to stairs, prevent collisions with pedestrians and let others know that you are blind. It also can get information from products. It can scan books and read barcodes, or read paper money, all sending the information to your earpiece. Power button is labeled in Braille. It can even send an emergency signal. From Yankos Design