Interstate Connections
DISABILITY JUSTICE, ACCESS & INDEPENDENCE IN THE GREATER NORTHWEST

SEPTEMBER 2022

Registration is open!

Be sure and register for this fun and engaging conference! With 20 workshops you're sure to be able to "Choose your own adventure" and learn some great stuff along the way. Shorter workshops, more breaks will make this a better experience all the way around. Plus, fun extras, like a "Campfire Program" and resource booths, great food and inspiring Keynote Speakers. You won't want to miss it!

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- Plus lots more!
From the Editor....
BY VICKI LEEPER

CURBING NEGATIVITY

We have all done it - spent time venting about something awful in the news. And there is always something in the news to feel negative about. But research is showing that giving in to Negativity Porn does not serve you well.

Focusing on the bad things you read about on a day to day basis brings you and those around you down.

When you hear something negative, stop and think "How does this affect me right now? Is there anything I can do about it? And is there really any value in repeating it?"

Just about everyone likes a good horror movie. But let's face it, a steady diet of nothing but horror films can start to warp you. So take a step back, and instead find 3 things everyday that you can feel happy about. Your outlook will become much better.

"You have to take action and stand up for yourself - even if you're sitting in a wheelchair."~ Christopher Reeve, actor and humanitarian
COMMUNITY EVENTS FOR YOU!

September 2022

Sept 10th - Walk to End Alzheimers - Quad Cities
Lewiston, ID

Sept 10th - Break the Silence 5K
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Sept 22nd - Health & Wellness Fair
Lewiston, ID

Sept 23rd - ADA Celebration and Resource Fair
Pinehurst, ID

Sept 25th - Courageous Kids Climbing - Pullman
WSU Climbing Center

Sept 28th - LGBTQIA2S+ with Disabilities Support
Spokane, WA

For registration and details of events visit
www.dacnw.org/events/

Register NOW!
Independent Living Conference
G.O. * Get Outside!
September 14-15
DAC NW - GETTING READY TO G.O.!

Staff at DAC NW and from the Nez Perce Tribe have been busy putting together a great statewide (and Washington) Independent Living Conference for this month. After comments from the last one - more options, shorter classes and longer breaks, we have updated the schedule to accommodate that.

There is something for everyone! We cover topics like budgeting, cooking, employment, housing, mental health, advocacy, and have a focus on getting outdoors for accessible recreation.

Our keynote speaker on Wednesday is Todd J. Holcomb from Clearwater Trekkers. He will share information about how getting outdoors and into wild spaces can lead us to the center of ourselves and become a catalyst for personal transformation.

Our keynote speaker on Thursday is David Grassi, a parasport athlete who works at WSU in University Recreation. He will talk about how he competed in all kinds of adaptive sports like wheelchair basketball and track and field.

Our inspiration for the conference is the many advocacy projects across the state to make outdoor recreation accessible for all. Whether it is wheelchair or blind accessible trails and water sports, or community gardens where people of all abilities can grow their own food, getting outside is a proven boost to mental and physical health and people with disabilities need to get outside too! You can register here: https://dacnw.org/volunteers-supporters/donate/ Scholarships available for those who can't afford the conference fee.
LINC - REINVENTING OURSELVES

By Jen Grush-Dale

The last few years have seen changes for all of us for a lot of different reasons. We are no exception here at LINC. Between the pandemic, a new executive director and the ever-changing needs of our consumers, it’s been busy!

To better serve our community here in southwest Idaho, we are redesigning existing programs, creating new ones and more. One of the first, and most obvious change, is our website. After a year of discussion and planning, we have completely redesigned our website!

Thanks to the effort of our team, our website has a clean, uncluttered feel that is more in line with current website trends.

Along with our website redesign, we have renamed our weekly videocast. Lunch with LeAnn will now be known as Lunch with LINC. LeAnn still plans to host most of the time and will cover topics around community engagement and systems advocacy. The episodes will now be 30 minutes long, allowing us more time to spend with our guests. However, Lunch with LINC will air every other week rather than every week.

Plus, we are adding a new podcast! Independent Together will be hosted by Jeremy Maxand, our Executive Director. The podcast will focus on disability policy issues in Idaho and beyond. Each episode will be 45 minutes and episodes will drop every two weeks.

To find out more about all of this, check out our newly redesigned website at www.lincidaho.org or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/LINCIIdaho.
Navigating life is tough with general day to day stressors. Can you imagine not feeling adequate enough for the people in your life? Feeling so low you are questioning your existence? I can imagine it because I have lived it. I question myself almost every day and it has been six years since I have tried to complete the act of suicide. Fortunately, I was not successful but sadly there are plenty of people who have died by suicide. On average, 108 youth and young adults die of suicide in Spokane County each year. Each death affects around 135 people (roughly 14,600 people total are affected).

Suicide, suicidal ideation and self-injurious behavior are often underdiscussed in mental health services, possibly because of a consensus of opinion. Suicidal patients are pigeon holed into thinking they won’t get better. How do we, as survivors, get better without resources? What is available for survivors of suicide? Typically, you would get in to see a therapist, but there are excessively long wait lists in our area and not many places are offering treatment services for suicide attempt survivors. Perhaps peer support groups are something that would be helpful. Support groups are designed with confidentiality and respect of another’s story in mind. No one can tell you how you’re supposed to feel but opening up to people who have experienced a similar event can be a cathartic moment.

Suicide loss survivors tend to ask the common question “What could I have done differently? Why didn’t I see the signs?” In my personal opinion and experience, it is about the sliding door moments we have in our lives.

Drs. John and Julie Gottman are relationship researchers, and define sliding door moments as “the seemingly inconsequential everyday moments that make or break the most important relationships in our lives.” Their research also brings up the four horsemen of the apocalypse; criticism, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling. These feelings happen when we search for the opposite of who we are, and we attempt to mold ourselves into something we are not. In time of need, a suicide attempt survivor will reach out for support - not for criticism and judgements. The lack of interest we might have of one another’s day causes the four horsemen to appear and potentially doom the relationships that are important us.

Working for Independence, Equity, and Justice!
LIFE, INC - FOUR STEPS TO SELF ADVOCACY

1. **Identify the issue you need to resolve**
   Know yourself and your disability: what are your strengths and preferences. Set a goal for your desired resolution: what are your needs and desires? Understand all the possible solutions: what will get you the results you need?

2. **Investigate the issue thoroughly**
   Learn your rights and responsibilities: what legal and medical services are available? Keep yourself organized: what paperwork will help support your case? Clarify your desired outcome: what is most important to you and who is best to help?

3. **Create a Plan**
   Focus on the problem and anticipate potential barriers: what do you need happen? And what are the next steps?
   Develop a list of action items: whom do you need to communicate with and when to stay ahead of the problem to prevent it getting worse? Create a timeline to complete your list: what is a reasonable schedule to complete each task?

4. **Take Action**
   Be prepared with your goal in mind: what do you need for each task and what are the next steps. Use time wisely: how can you plan ahead and stay on track? Engage with confidence when asking for help: what are your questions and concerns? Keep good notes and stay grounded and open so you can respond to what comes up: how will you respond to new information? Stay focused and clear about solving your problem: ask others to problem solve with you and ask again and again.

Your local CIL is ready to help you with this process. Give us a call!

A CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING
You may have been hearing Pete Buttigieg of the Department of Transportation talking about addressing climate change and the need for accessible transportation - both things disproportionately affecting people with disabilities. The DOT is working to provide funding and grants for communities to address these needs.

An estimated 900 railway stations are not ADA accessible. And those that are often have elevators closed for repairs.

To remedy this the DOT is developing a bipartisan infrastructure investment called All Stations Accessibility Program or ASAP.

"One thing we’re trying to support is active transportation. We need to make sure that people are able to walk or bike or roll to wherever they need to be. I think that’s something that has been maybe more familiar for people living in city centers or dense urban areas, but it can bring benefit everywhere in the country. When we adopted a Fleet Streets approach in my hometown of South Bend, for example, that really opened up what had been a road pattern that was almost hostile to any traffic besides vehicles. It opened that up to people, and through that to small business, too because it became a more inviting place to have a cup of coffee or browse a store.

All of these things add up to a more vibrant local economy, and they add up to more ease for people getting to where they need to go, especially when you start from the principle of safety. That’s really what’s on our minds as we work to make active transportation available to more Americans, and many of our grant programs do just that." ~ Pete Buttigieg
What happens with a SCI?

Once you are injured and suspect a spinal cord injury, the first goal is stabilization of your breathing, blood pressure, and other vital signs. Most likely you have been in a Level 1 Trauma Center. Medications may be used to control the damage to the spinal cord, alleviate pain, treat infections and other issues. You may even be sedated and put into traction to prevent further damage. These could be braces, harness, weights or a neck collar or halo.

Neuroprotection therapy will be started to stop immediate responses of swelling. Steroids can help reduce damage to nerve cells if given in the first 8 hours. Lowering of the body's core temperature can protect cells from damage as it reduces swelling and inflammation. Then they will classify the injury using x-rays, MRI’s and CT scans. Classifications may be orthopedic (broken bone) or neurological. They will pinpoint the lowest level on the spine where nerves are fully functioning and that will be your category. They may recommend surgical intervention. This can remove bone fragments, foreign objects, blood clots, herniated disks, fractured vertebrae, spinal tumors or anything else that may compress the spine.

The lungs themselves are not usually affected by paralysis, but muscles in the chest, abdomen and diaphragm may be. You may need a ventilator for assistance for short periods of time. If you were injured in a water sport you may be at risk of pneumonia, lung damage and other issues. Your age and level of injury impacts successful weaning from a ventilator. An injury at the mid-thoracic level may cause difficulty in taking deep breaths or exhaling forcefully. You will learn proper posture, how to cough regularly or with assistance. Be sure to follow a healthy diet, exercise, drink plenty of fluids, and avoid smoking or being around smoke.
IDAHO SILC - YOUR THOUGHTS MATTER

Every three years the State Independent Living Council and Centers for Independent Living gather information from people with disabilities around the state of Idaho to build our goals for the next three years. The feedback we receive is critical.

Many times, people question what is done with the information once we collect it and ask if it really makes a difference. The answer is YES!

We use the information you give to talk with Legislators and Policymakers around the state. The stories you share is what makes a difference. Data is always important, but when that data can be backed up with a comment, quote or story.... THAT is what sticks in people’s minds. It’s the difference between saying X percentage of people are struggling with finding affordable and accessible housing and telling a story of an individual who is working two jobs and selling their possessions, just to try and stay another month in their home. YOUR thoughts are important, YOUR input matters.

You can complete the survey online at www.silc.idaho.gov, call our office at 208-334-3800 or toll free 1-800-487-4866 or use the QR code below.

For more information, check the website here: www.silc.idaho.gov
MENTAL HEALTH PEER SUPPORT GROUPS
By Jolene Cliffe

DAC NW in Lewiston has started a peer support group, available in person and on zoom which is held every Monday, from 5:30pm - 6:30pm. Our start date was August 15th, and is off to a great start. Our 1st meeting hosted 9 participants and it was a very positive experience, lots of laughing. It is proven that peer counseling and mental health groups have a positive impact on hope, empowerment, and quality of life. Peer support can also result in higher levels of engagement with self-care, confidence needed to self-advocate in their care, increased self-esteem, which facilitates actively engaging in social situations, and decreases anxiety, depression and the tendency to isolate. In addition, peer support groups also empower people to work toward solving life challenges as they come.

Local mental health care providers and treatment centers in the LC Valley have been very supportive in helping to get the word out about our Mental Health Monday group, so that we keep the groups attendance consistent, but also in hopes of better targeting the specific needs we as a community lack.

It is common knowledge that people with mental illness benefit from the support of friends and family. Unfortunately, there are many people living with some form of mental illness who have very little family or friends to turn to - often times, due to lack of understanding, and stigma. In starting this peer group, my hope is to help facilitate those in attendance to start and grow new friendships amongst themselves, and eventually become self-sustaining. I believe that to be a real possibility. I look forward to sharing our progress once we have more group meetings under our belt.
HUGGER PROTECTS WALLS AND CORNERS

The HUGGER™ helps to protect your home from cords, hoses and wheelchairs and walkers which otherwise might scratch and ding their walls, corners, stairwells, doors, wood floors. The HUGGER™ is typically used to replace traditional Corner Guards but some use The Hugger along with their corner guards for added protection. It doesn't move when you bump into it.

$30.00 from www.wandersproducts.com

EYE DROP GUIDE

The Autodrop Eye Drop Guide clips into place over most eye drop bottles and positions the bottle at the correct angle over the eye. This eye drop applicator holds the eye open and directs the drops, allowing for accurate eye drop installation. Autodrop has a special cup that prevents blinking by keeping the lower eyelid open. A unique pinhole directs eyesight upward and away from the descending drops. For the elderly or those with limited hand/eye coordination, and/or with arthritic hands.

$4.95 from www.maxiaids.com

STUFF TO MAKE LIFE EASIER
**Did U Know?** About 176 Americans die from a TBI every day? A TBI is an injury that affects how the brain works. TBI is a major cause of death and disability in the United States. Anyone can experience a TBI, but data suggest that some groups are at greater risk for getting a TBI or having worse health outcomes after the injury. https://www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/index.html

A head injury during childhood, especially when misdiagnosed and not properly treated, can lead to prolonged lifelong suffering, a new collaborative study by Tel Aviv University, Kaplan Medical Center and Shamir Medical Center has found. One in four children who have suffered a minor head injury are liable to suffer from chronic post-concussion syndrome. https://www.jpost.com/health-and-wellness/article-702148

How do you know if you have a TBI? Prompt diagnosis of a TBI can lead to a fuller recovery. Signs and symptoms of traumatic brain injuries include headaches, dizziness or loss of balance, nausea and vomiting, blurred vision or ringing ears and more. Check out the article for a complete list of symptoms. https://phelanpetty.com/blog/signs-you-may-have-an-undiagnosed-traumatic-brain-injury/

Depression is a common problem after TBI. About half of all people with TBI are affected by depression within the first year after injury. Even more (nearly two-thirds) are affected within seven years after injury. In the general population, the rate of depression is much lower, affecting fewer than one person in 10 over a one-year period. More than half of the people with TBI who are depressed also have significant anxiety. https://msktc.org/tbi/factsheets/depression-after-traumatic-brain-injury

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The Washington State TBI Council has a new video. This promotes a No Wrong Door system with strategic partners so that information and referral help is just a contact away.
https://youtu.be/O67ujuxPVRY

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**GOT A MINUTE? CHECK THEM OUT!**
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

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