



INDEPENDENT



SEPTEMBER 2024

YOUR INDEPENDENCE IS OUR MISSION

A Letter From The Director

Fall is in the air and the leaves will soon begin to turn all kinds of brilliant colors, all beautiful, all different. It serves as a reminder to me that we are all different and yet we are all beautiful, all talented and all deserve to be respected and treated as equal citizens with dignity. November and our country’s elections are coming soon. Remember you are a citizen and have every right to participate in the electoral process. You should not stay home, you should not be shy, you need to vote. As we chanted during our parade “We are here.” If we don’t vote, we do not show that we are here, we do not count, and we have no opinion. I certainly have opinions and will be voting for my rights and privileges. If you have trouble at your polling site, call the County Board of Elections and they will help you. Remember to show the world that “We are here.” Vote, Vote, Vote.

-Anthony Mignone, CEO



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Consumer Directed Update

From the New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL)

Despite a number of lawsuits and increasing public pressure, New York is continuing to move forward with implementation of the Single Fiscal Intermediary for the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP). Applications were due August 21st and the state is expected to contract with the selected entity by October 1st. Advocates are anxiously waiting to see how the courts may intervene via legal proceedings scheduled in September.

NYAIL, its member Independent Living Centers (ILCs), and partner organizations have been getting needed press coverage on the value of CDPAP and increasing concerns around this budget proposal. News stories and opinion pieces have been published in many outlets, with more in the pipeline. Check out this story from Mother Jones, along with this Spectrum News piece featuring Carlos Martinez, the Executive Director of Bridges. The Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) and Western New York Independent Living (WNYIL) have both published op-eds that speak on the harmful proposed changes.


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website: ssip.info



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World Suicide Prevention Day

World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) is observed annually on September 10 and is organized by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP), in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO). The day is dedicated to raising awareness about suicide prevention, reducing the stigma surrounding mental health and suicide, and encouraging worldwide commitment and action to prevent suicides.

This year's theme is "Changing the Narrative on Suicide." According to the WHO, "suicide is a major public health challenge, with more than 700,000 deaths each year globally. Each suicide has far-reaching social, emotional, and economic consequences, and deeply affects individuals and communities worldwide.

The triennial theme for World Suicide Prevention Day for 2024-2026 is 'Changing the Narrative on Suicide' with the call to action 'Start the Conversation'. This theme aims to raise awareness about the importance of reducing stigma and encouraging open conversations to prevent suicides. Changing the narrative on suicide is about transforming how we perceive this complex issue and shifting from a culture of silence and stigma to one of openness, understanding, and support.

The call to action encourages everyone to start the conversation on suicide and suicide prevention. Every conversation, no matter how small, contributes to a supportive and understanding society. By initiating these vital conversations, we can break down barriers, raise awareness, and create better cultures of support." For more visit: <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-suicide-prevention-day/world-suicide-prevention-day-2024>

If you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts they can call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 988. ([Learn more](#))

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE



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DINE TO DONATE

⇒ *Support* ⇐

RCAL

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

4PM-9PM

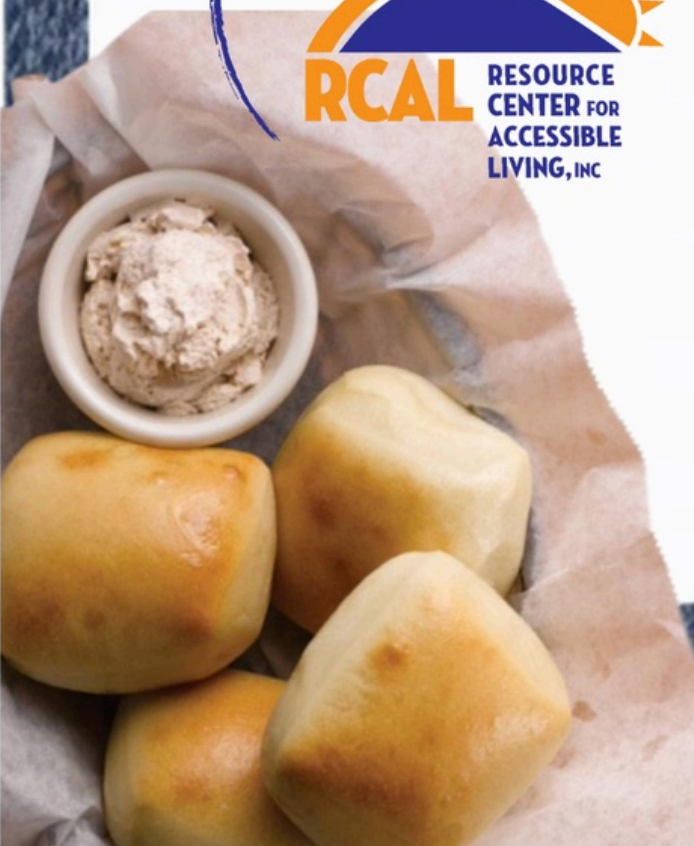


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Present this flyer at the Kingston location and Texas Roadhouse will donate **10%** of your total food purchases to **RCAL!**

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Reflecting on Sensory Safe Space at the Ulster County Fair

For the second year in a row, the Ulster County Fair provided a Sensory Safe Space for anyone feeling overstimulated, needing a place to rest, cool off, recharge their body, mind, or communication devices, or to borrow a set of noise-canceling headphones.

It was a pleasure to Co-Chair this space with Dr. Barbara Tischler Hastie, Instructional Services School Development, from Ulster County BOCES.

Over 700 people, of all ages and sensory needs, utilized the Sensory Safe Space. A few parents shared that because of the space, they went to the fair because it allowed their entire family to enjoy it. People from group homes were able to take a rest from the sun and cool off. Senior citizens as well.

Many kids did not want to leave because they enjoyed the sensory activities and toys. Families divided and conquered, with one parent staying with a child and the other taking the other kids to fair activities and rides they wanted to enjoy.

The most surprising group of people who stopped by were older teens and young adults. Many of them shared that they did not realize how over-stimulating the fair can be, and that the Sensory Safe Space was amazing and they thanked our volunteers for doing this.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who made sure the space was open the entire time the fair was open! Some of the volunteers were kids who accompanied their parents who were volunteering. These kids interacted with the visitors, engaging them with the various toys and activities. I am also happy to share that last year, Herkimer County Fair officials looked at our space and this year they too offered a Sensory Safe Space at their County Fair!

I look forward to next year's fair and spreading the word that Ulster County Fair will once again, have a Sensory Safe Space. If you are interested in volunteering or donating money, please email me at Rfalanga-brenner@rcal.org.

Renée Falanga-Brenner
Special Education Advocate



THE RESOURCE CENTER FOR ACCESSIBLE LIVING'S

Third annual

FRIENDRAISER

November 7, 2024, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Stonehedge Restaurant

1694 Rte 9W, West Park, NY 12493

In collaboration with the Ulster County Chamber of Commerce, we invite you for a cocktail party featuring hors d'oeuvres, pasta, music, and a silent auction!

To donate to RCAL for our silent auction, please contact Robert Miraldi
rmiraldi@rcal.org or 845.331.0541 ext. 12



Purchase tickets at
rcal.org/friendraiser





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September is National Preparedness Month

September marks National Preparedness Month, the annual campaign to remind everyone that preparing for emergencies and disasters can keep them, their families, and their communities safe.

While the resources and information shared during National Preparedness Month and on Ready.gov can be used by anyone at any time to get prepared for whatever may come their way, this year, the campaign is focused on preparing Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities. The Ready Campaign aims to ensure all of our friends and neighbors have the tools they need to prepare for disasters and build resilience before disaster strikes.

2024 Theme: "Start a Conversation"

Talking about bad things that could happen like a disaster or emergency isn't always easy. We may think we're protecting the people we love by avoiding these conversations, but they are important to start taking steps to get ready and stay safe.

Starting a conversation today can help you and your family to take more action to prepare. By taking simple steps, you can build your preparedness at your own pace:

- Set aside a time when everyone is calm and relaxed.
- It may help to hold the discussions over a set time period, so decisions aren't rushed, and people feel more comfortable talking about the topic.
- Talk about steps you've taken to prepare and encourage others to ask questions about preparedness actions that might work for them.

For further information go to: <https://www.ready.gov/september>

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency



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Jim Garvey Memorial

DISABILITY RESOURCES FAIR



**November 9
10 AM - 2 PM**

At St. James United Methodist Church

**Parking lot and entrance with elevator:
29 Pearl Street, Kingston, NY**

Please save the date! You are invited to attend this **free** event designed to connect individuals, caregivers, and professionals to educational workshops and local agency support! Anticipated workshops will include special education law, classroom accommodations for Autism, Medicaid benefits, a teen disability pride art time, and more! Please RSVP for workshops and find updates via the QR code below.

Please help us spread the word about this free event by sharing this flyer with someone you know who is interested in learning more about these workshop topics!

Brought to you by the Resource Center on Accessible Living (RCAL) and Saint James United Methodist Church

For more information please contact:

- Roxanne Ferber at RCAL: (845)331-0541 ext. 33.
rferber@rcal.org
- Pastor Rebecca Leibowitz at St. James: (845) 331-3030.
kids.saintjames@gmail.com

**Scan to RSVP for
workshops and
event updates**





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New CMS Report Finds New York Nursing Home Transition Rates High: Successes in Money Follows the Person Program

A new report from CMS on the Money Follows the Person grant, which funds the Open Doors Transition Center, showed New York State consistently ranked in the top 5 states for the number of individuals successfully transitioned to their communities from nursing home placement.

[On August 20] CMS released the Money Follows the Person (MFP): Updated MFP Grant Recipient Transitions as of December 31, 2021 Report. The report relies primarily on self-reported data provided through MFP grant recipients' semi-annual progress reports from 2017 – 2021. The data reports summarize progress toward the annual goals of transitioning eligible people to the community and increasing Medicaid support for community-based long-term services and supports (LTSS). Additionally, the reports help track progress and challenges encountered in all dimensions of the program.



The [full report](https://www.Medicaid.gov) can be found on [Medicaid.gov](https://www.Medicaid.gov).

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ULSTER COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

EARLY VOTING

What is early voting?

Early Voting is nine days of voting, prior to Election Day, for you to vote at any of our six Early Voting Centers.

Who can vote early?

ALL registered voters are entitled to vote during Early Voting and may cast their ballot at any one of the Early Voting Centers across Ulster County.

When can I vote early?

The early voting period will be from **Saturday, October 26, 2024** to **Sunday, November 3, 2024**.

2024 EARLY VOTING DATES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				OCTOBER		26 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
27 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	28 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM	29 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	30 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM	31 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	1 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	2 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
3 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	NOVEMBER					
SATURDAY		October 26, 2024		9:00 AM - 5:00 PM		
SUNDAY		October 27, 2024		9:00 AM - 5:00 PM		
MONDAY		October 28, 2024		12:00 PM - 8:00 PM		
TUESDAY		October 29, 2024		9:00 AM - 5:00 PM		
WEDNESDAY		October 30, 2024		12:00 PM - 8:00 PM		
THURSDAY		October 31, 2024		9:00 AM - 5:00 PM		
FRIDAY		November 1, 2024		9:00 AM - 5:00 PM		
SATURDAY		November 2, 2024		9:00 AM - 5:00 PM		
SUNDAY		November 3, 2024		9:00 AM - 5:00 PM		

2024 EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS

You can vote at ANY Early Voting location in Ulster County. When you vote on Election Day, November 5th, you must vote at your designated polling site.



- 1 Olive American Legion Hall**
26-28 Mountain Rd., Shokan, NY 12481
- 2 Midtown Neighborhood Center**
467 Broadway, Kingston, NY 12401
- 3 Ellenville Public Library**
40 Center St., Ellenville, NY 12428
- 4 New Paltz Community Center**
3 Veterans Dr, New Paltz, NY 12561
- 5 Marlborough Community Center**
1520 Route 9W, Marlborough, 12542
- 6 Saugerties Senior Center**
207 Market St., Saugerties, NY 12477

How will I vote during early voting?

Voting during early voting is the same as voting on Election Day. When you get to the early voting center, you will check in to vote, receive your ballot and vote as any other election.

There will be instructions available at the early voting centers to familiarize you with the ballot. There will also be a notice to voter and bill of rights. You may ask an election inspector to explain how to vote, or if you need any assistance.

If you vote during the early voting period, you are not eligible to vote on Election Day.

When will early voting results be posted?

Early voting votes will be canvassed and reported after 9pm on Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

Is Early Voting safe?

The Ulster County Board of Elections has taken proactive steps to ensure the safety of our voters and our poll inspectors that serve the public that include additional training, social distancing, and personal protective equipment. Early Voting allows for shorter wait times and lines during the 9 days of Early Voting, and also on Election Day, Tuesday, November 5th.

Can I still vote by absentee ballot?

Yes! You can download an application from our website at VoteUlster.Com.

How can I get more information about Early Voting?

You can contact the Ulster County Board of Elections at **845-334-5470** for more information about Early Voting, request an absentee ballot, or find out more about the 2024 General Election on November 5th. Visit us on the web at VOTEULSTER.COM

WE ARE HIRING

Part-Time Benefits Advisor: (21 hours) Assist individuals with their Social Security Benefits, Medicaid, Medicare, TANF, Section 8, and other low-income benefits. Social Security Retirement, Supplemental Income, and Social Security Disability.

QUALIFICATIONS: Associate's Degree or prior experience with Benefits Advisement. Belief in the Independent Living Philosophy. Ability to learn fast and take online courses to expand your knowledge. A valid NYS driver's license and automobile insurance that meets the requirements set by the program and our insurance company are also required. Ability to work on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

RESPONSIBILITIES: Assist individuals with obtaining, retaining, and re-certifying their benefits. Understand and explain the impact of working on an individual's benefits. Assist with management of needs and other tasks. Keep records. As a working part of the team, assist with Durable Medical Loan Closet and tasks around the office. Contact Robert Miraldi, at rmiraldi@rcal.org.

Respite: RCAL is seeking a compassionate and responsible individual to join our team as a Part-Time Respite Provider. In this role, you will provide care and support to individuals with disabilities, allowing their primary caregivers to take a break and recharge. The Respite Provider will assist clients with daily living activities, engage them in meaningful social interactions, and ensure their safety and well-being during the respite period. Salary is \$16.75/hour.

Com Hab: RCAL is seeking compassionate and dedicated individuals to join our team as Part-Time Community Habilitation Support Staff. In this role, you will provide direct assistance and support to individuals with developmental disabilities to help them achieve their goals, enhance their independence, and participate more fully in their communities. The Community Habilitation Support Staff will work closely with clients, their families, and other members of the support team to implement individualized plans and promote meaningful engagement and skill development. Salary range is \$16.50- \$18.50/hour (Clean driver's license and own transportation required.)

Please contact Leah Gherardi at lgherardi@rcal.org if interested



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