

DISABILITY INDEPENDENCE, EMPOWERMENT &amp; FAIRNESS

# INTERSTATE CONNECTIONS



As the year winds down and the holidays are upon us, we want to extend a merry greeting to everyone! Remember, staying connected over the holidays is important because it reminds us that we are a part of a community. When the season can feel busy, emotional, and overwhelming, a simple phone call or text, or shared cup of coffee can lift spirits and reduce loneliness. So reach out to someone, whether family, friends, or neighbors, who might be feeling isolated. Connecting is a gift we can give and receive, and even small gestures make a big difference.

## UPCOMING EVENTS JUST FOR YOU!

### American Sign Language Club!

**Held Weekly on Wednesdays 3:15–4:15 pm**

**Moscow Middle School, 1410 E. D Street**

Interested in learning ASL? Or just want to socialize in ASL? Held weekly on Wednesdays. This free club is open to all. Transportation to and from Moscow Middle School is your own responsibility. Moscow School District staff will be at the meetings from start to finish. Attendees K–2nd grade must be accompanied by a parent. Questions? email to [mds28laslclub@gmail.com](mailto:mds28laslclub@gmail.com).



*Find more accessible events at [www.dacnw.org/events](http://www.dacnw.org/events)*

## What's it Like to attend a Craft Workshop?

### NEWS FROM DAC NW

DAC NW is hosting a variety of craft workshops this month. Ever wonder what it's like to attend? Number one: we make sure the workshop is accessible - from the space it's held in to what ever tools you may need to be successful, regardless of ability, hand strength, etc. We provide everything you need!

But it's also more than that. You have an opportunity to connect socially with other people with disabilities. People that share the same struggles you might have can offer ideas on how to make life better. We all have something valuable to share!



### MOSCOW DACNW OFFICE

This month **DActivity Club** has two sessions starting Dec 4th and 11th to design your own t-shirt. Sessions will be peer led by a local business owner with a disability. Snacks and supplies will be provided. Crafts and working with our hands can help with your mental health too! You must attend both workshops to complete your shirt.

**“Yes, and....” Improv Workshop** is designed to help people with social anxiety! This fun, interactive improv class will be held monthly, the first one is December 10<sup>th</sup> 4:30-5:30. The workshop will be led by Sobeloff, LMSW, MFA. Register [here](#) or call 208-883-0523 to sign up.

**Peer2Peer Parkinson's Support Group** is back this month on December 18<sup>th</sup> at 4pm and will have information on how you can best prepare for an emergency room visit. Guest speaker Pam Kohlmeier, M.D., J.D will join us.

### LEWISTON

**The Art of Feather Painting** will be hosted by the Lewiston team. Join us December 19<sup>th</sup> in the Lewiston City Library from 10am - 2pm and create a beautiful feather ornament for a gift or for your own tree.

You can find more accessible events on our [website](#)!



# Living on Earth with Disabilities

## News from DAC NEW – Spokane

By Hannah Adira, DAC NEW Volunteer

Living on this planet with disabilities is incredibly challenging. No matter how accommodating you try to make a place, event, or a home there is going to be a barrier that can cause issues for navigating the system. From the simplest things to the most daunting tasks, those with disabilities face barriers to be able to live independently. These barriers can be people, buildings, infrastructure, pathways, technology, food, education, medical care, and so much more. Barriers can be anything and everything.

From my perspective, barriers can feel like hitting a brick wall. Experiencing a barrier can cause your body to feel physical pain due to your disability, as well as emotional and mental stress. Imagine a simple task of brushing your hair and putting your clothes on every morning is equivalent of running a marathon, and you still have to do all your other tasks for the day.



I struggle with daily tasks due to my disabilities. My physical disabilities got progressively worse as I grew older and were undiagnosed. Luckily, I now have a diagnosis and a good support team. I am learning new skills in order to be independent and learn how to do things a different way. This is not only a barrier for physical health but also emotional and mental health. The strain on my physical health means I have less “spoons” or energy to handle the stress of daily life. In turn, this makes it difficult for me to process and understand the sensory input I get from the world around me.

Now, combining this with all the barriers I face in my home, with transportation, and in town, I am always creating plans trying to figure out the best routes to be able to access something. I am always worrying about whether I will be able to get into a building. Does the building have an elevator? Do I need to have extra time to climb stairs? Do I need to be dropped off at the curb because the parking is too far away? Do I have to give myself an extra 30 minutes because now I have to walk a few blocks?

The cycle is never ending. Living on this Earth with disabilities is like a never-ending trial about who can last the longest. The ones with the disabilities have voices that tend to be stifled and forgotten about. In times like these, when things are in chaos and the barriers that we face only increase and become more problematic, we must become a fighting force that becomes so loud that it creates ripples through time.

**We are stronger together!!! Our voices are loud!!! Time to create ripples of Disability Unity throughout time!!!**



**WORKING FOR INDEPENDENCE, EMPOWERMENT, AND FAIRNESS**

## NW ADA CENTER ~ Idaho

### ADA Question of the Month

#### QUESTION:

Are temporary conditions covered under the ADA?

#### ANSWER:

**Yes, temporary conditions can be covered under the ADA if the condition is sufficiently severe and substantially limits a major life activity.**

Minor short term issues like the flu are not covered, but temporary impairments like broken bones can be.

The factors that determine ADA coverage include:

**Severity.** The condition must be severe enough to "substantially limit" a major life activity. A minor injury that doesn't significantly impact your ability to work or live is not covered.

**Impact.** The focus is on the limitation caused by the condition. For example, an inability to walk because of a broken leg could qualify, even if the injury is expected to heal within six months.

**Duration.** While duration is a factor, it's not the only one. A condition that is temporary but not minor can still be covered.

**EEOC Guidance.** The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) states that the effects of an impairment lasting or expected to last fewer than six months can be a "substantial limitation" for proving an actual disability.

What to do if you have a temporary condition?

Request an accommodation: Even if your condition is temporary, you can request a "reasonable accommodation" <sup>3</sup> to help you perform your job. Engage in an interactive process. The employer must engage in a good-faith discussion to find an effective solution.



For additional information contact Dana Gover, MPA, ADAC, Training & Technical Assistance Consultation  
Northwest ADA Center-Idaho Email: [dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com](mailto:dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com) ADA TA  
Hotline: voice and text  
208-841-9422

## In Home Care Advocacy Priorities

### SELF-DIRECTED PA SERVICES

The National Alliance for Care at Home is the largest organization representing, advocating for home-based care representing more than 10,000 agencies nationwide. Here are the key issues impacting care, why it matters, and what you can do about it.

#### **Protecting Home Health Care**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is proposing a 9% cut to the home health payment rate. These cuts mean fewer home health agencies, longer wait times for people during critical illness and recovery, and loss of vital care for seniors. Contact your representative to pause home health cuts for two years to allow for a better solution.

#### **Expand Access to Telehealth**

Telehealth flexibility is essential for people with disabilities who struggle to get transportation to a medical appointment. Allowing providers to supplement care with telehealth has yet to be permanently cemented into law. After 2020, we all learned how helpful telehealth is - and it works!. This could disrupt care for those in rural areas, or high-traffic urban areas. Ask your representative to make telehealth flexibilities permanent, like CONNECT Act (HR 4206 and S 1261).

#### **Support Medicaid HCBS**

Chronic underfunding means many people go without needed care each year. Home care workers are paid low wages because compensation funding is so low. It is proven that Medicaid HCBA is cost-effective and can help people stay in their own home. But these low reimbursement rates hurts worker recruitment and retention. Call your representative to support policies and funding to build a more robust Medicaid HCBA program.

By working together, our voices CAN be heard! Your vote matters! Let's work together to make some positive change. Contact your local CIL to see what else you can do.



**Services YOU control!**

## VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES

### AARP is Standing Up for Veterans

AARP offers a number of resources for Veterans with disabilities. They have a Military Caregiving Guide that can help you organize details regarding your expenses, travel, surgical and post-surgical needs and more.

But that is just one resource. At their website: **AARP.org/vetresources** you can find downloadable handbooks on the following topics:



#### Health Benefits information

- There is a health benefits navigator for veterans and their families that can help guide you through application for the VA, and find free help online or over the phone with trained representatives.

#### Help making your home accessible

- There are VA home modification grants to help you build, buy, or adapt homes to live safely and comfortably. There is a primer on home modifications for those with certain service related disabilities so you can live the life you want in a home you love.

#### Support for Caregivers

- This booklet teaches how to assess and address needs, create a plan, build a team, and more. There's also another booklet that offers information on how caregivers can seek help managing the stress that comes with that role. And a financial workbook to help with estate planning and paying for health care and other tasks. Visit

**AARP.org/veterans**

#### Help with Work and Jobs

- They include a free veterans career course, an online AARP Job Board to browse, and more tips.

#### Fulfilling a Wish

- AARP's Wish of a Lifetime helps thousands of older Americans including veterans, achieve a dream. Go to **wishofalifetime.org** and nominate someone's wish.

#### Fraud Victim Support

- Veterans and their families are nearly 40 percent more likely than civilians to lose money to scams. You can get help by calling the AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline at **877-908-3360**.



**VETERAN-  
DIRECTED  
CARE**

**Questions about Veteran Directed  
Care?**

**Call Spokane 509-434-7000**

**Or Walla Walla 509-525-5200**



## Learning how to Advocate Young Adults – Next Chapter

The one who needs to speak up is - ME! Being an advocate means that you ask for what you need while respecting the needs of others. Learning advocacy skills helps you obtain what you need, live independently and make your own choices, be able to say no and not feel guilty, and express disagreement respectfully.

And the change you advocate for you can open the path for those coming behind you. But be patient! Making change can take some time. Here's how to get started.



### **Think about what you want to be different.**

Before you talk to another person, make sure you know what you want to have happen. Do you need to be treated differently? Do you want the other person to stop doing something? Do you need a barrier removed?

### **Speak clearly and slowly.**

Take a deep breath and start with something like, "I would like to talk with you about...." and describe the situation.

### **Do your research.**

Gather background information. Your local CIL can help. Who is affected? How does this divide segments of the community? And find specific solutions to offer.

We will talk about more tips for advocating next month!



## Rewriting the narrative of what's possible!

### QUOTES TO MAKE YOU THINK

**"It is so important to showcase people with disabilities with intersectional identities because that allows viewers to see beyond disability....People with disabilities are multilayered—we are complex breathing human beings defined by more than just what we lack." ~ Lauren Ridloff**

## "Wheel Fix It" Workshop & Store

News from LINC

### Workshop & Store Hours:

**Tuesday & Thursday, 10a-12p | 1-3pm**

The Wheel Fix It Workshop is a community-driven resource that provides people with the tools, workspace, and expert guidance needed to repair and maintain their wheelchairs, motorized scooters, and other mobility equipment.

Whether it's a minor tune-up or a more involved fix, participants can access a fully equipped workshop and work alongside a skilled technician to restore your mobility, independence, and confidence—at no cost or low cost.

In our workshop, you can:

- Change tires (we have a lot on hand)
- Replace bearings
- Basic maintenance and adjustments
- Check and replace batteries
- Electrical diagnostics
- Try different styles of joysticks and motor controllers
- Help searching for and ordering parts

Want to schedule time in our shop? Don't see what you need here? No problem. Reach out to our Mobility & Equipment Specialist, Sam, at [stiegs@lincidaho.org](mailto:stiegs@lincidaho.org) or by calling/texting (208) 336-3335.



## Empowering Independence!

### Joke of the Month

A boy asks his father, "Dad, are bugs good to eat?" His dad replies, "We don't talk about things like that at dinner, it's gross." After dinner the father asks, "Now son, what did you want to ask me?" "Oh nothing," the boy says. "There was a bug in your soup, but it's gone now."



## BLUEPATH –

A picture is worth a thousand words...



When you are trying to decide if a business or park will be accessible to your specific needs, a picture is worth a thousand words! On BluePath, you can upload photos of specific ADA accessibility items, so someone can judge whether they can access it. Check out this one on Hells Gate State Park. <https://blue-path.org/biz/hells-gate-state-park-trails-2/>

You can show how high a threshold is, where the accessible parking is located, and what material a pathway or trail is made of. You can post photos of the restroom to see which side you transfer from, or even the accessible shower. These details can help someone with a disability to travel or access businesses with confidence. And it's easy to do! Just snap a photo with your smart phone or device and upload it to the specific section when filling out the Quick Look Survey. Then describe the photo for those who use screen readers and you're done!



**BLUE**  **PATH**

**Find YOUR path!**

## LIFE HACKS For Disability – Playing Board Games

**At this time of year we often gather and play board games. Make it accessible to all!**

### Play by Touch Scrabble

You can play Scrabble with letter tiles that have both braille and raised tactile letters to play by touch for the blind and visually impaired

Includes 100 letter tiles, 4 wooden tile racks and rotating game board  
Accessible play for the blind and visually impaired



**\$57.00 from maxiaids.com**



### Bananagrams with Braille Tiles

A fast paced, fun word game! Form words with your letter tiles. Tiles have braille and bold print. For 2-8 players, 10 years old and up. 144 tiles and a cute banana carrying case.

**\$39.95 from Maxiaids.com**

**Stuff to make life easier!**

## CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING



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

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Post Falls, ID 83854  
208-457-3891 VOICE-TDD  
208-457-3893 FAX

330 5th Street  
Lewiston, ID 83501  
208-746-9033 VOICE -TDD  
208-746-1004 FAX  
888-746-9033

505 N Main St  
Moscow, ID 83843  
208-883-0523 VOICE-TDD  
208-883-0524  
800-475-0070

222 W Mission Ave  
Suite 230  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509-606-4639



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

640 Pershing Ave Ste A  
Pocatello, ID 83204  
208-232-2747 VOICE-TDD  
208-232-2754 FAX  
800-631-2747

725 Jensen Grove Dr Ste5  
Blackfoot, ID 83221  
208-785-9648 VOICE  
208-785-2398

250 S Skyline Ste 1  
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[www.lincidaho.org](http://www.lincidaho.org)

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