



Summer Fun is for Everyone

Sesame Place in Bucks County, PA, recently became the first theme park in the world to be certified by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards, designated as a Certified Autism Center. It's among a growing number of entertainment venues focusing on being inclusive of people with developmental disabilities and autism.

At Sesame Place, services such as a Ride Accessibility Program, Sensory Guides, Ride Accessibility Guides, and other amenities, will be offered to guests with developmental needs and autism.

(More info: <https://sesameplace.com/philadelphia/help/autism-resources>.)

Knoebels Amusement Park in Elysburg, PA, will host Autism Awareness Day Sunday, June 3. Park visitors can participate in a scavenger hunt focused on autism spectrum disorder facts. Cool down and sensory friendly activity areas will be set up throughout the park. Registration is not required for the event itself, but is needed for a meal event.

More info: <https://www.knoebels.com/plan-your-visit/events/knoebels-events>.

The Penny Hoarder website, published by Taylor Media Corporation, recently posted this list of sensory-friendly parks, museums, cinemas, and more. (thepennyhoarder.com/life/sensory-friendly/?aff_id=86&aff_sub2=sensory-friendly&aff_sub3=daily180423_SENSORYFRIENDLY041618)

Disability Rights PA has general information regarding the rights surrounding purchasing tickets and attending events for those with disabilities. Learn more at Disabilityrightspa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/EventTicketingFeb2018.pdf



Julia, a Sesame Street Muppet with autism, greets guests at Sesame Place.

Information, Upcoming Events, & Training

Senators: End Sub-minimum Wage Regs

Senators seek to end regulations allowing disabled workers to be paid less than the minimum wage.

Read more: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2018/04/27/senators-subminimum-accusations/25025/>

Tips on Finding Employment

Brandon Yorty, Director of Adult Employment at Vista Adult Services, offers people with disabilities some tips for seeking employment and discusses resources and supports available in this ASERT online Q&A: paautism.org/ASDSeminar/itemid/8872/Ask-The-Expert-Employment.

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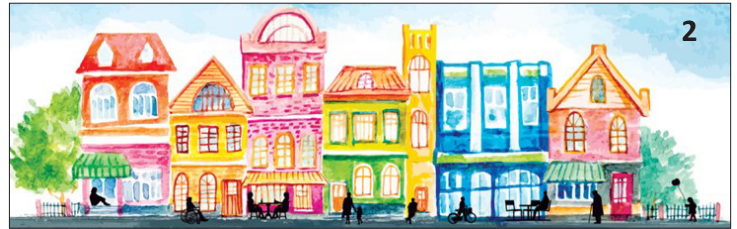
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New ISAC Hub Available Online

The Information Sharing and Advisory Committee (ISAC) members are stakeholders who share information to and from the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) and advise the Deputy about pertinent issues. In order to enhance communication, ODP has created the online ISAC hub, featuring meeting calendar, agenda, topics of discussion, as well as the Everyday Lives booklet, and recommendations.



The ISAC hub is hosted on MyODP.org, Training and Resource Center, which has more than 34,000 registered users. To view the ISAC hub, you may create a MyODP account, or login as a guest. After you have logged in with your account, or as a guest, you may access the ISAC hub and enter the page immediately. It may also be accessed by clicking on the Resources tab, and selecting the ISAC hub within the dropdown. Please note that some items may be restricted to only ISAC members.

Secretary Miller Visits Spectrum Friends

Secretary Miller celebrated Autism Acceptance month by attending a meeting of Spectrum Friends, a group of self-advocates who meet monthly in the back dining room of Isaac's Restaurant in Lemoyne.

"At the department, we want all individuals with a disability to have autonomy, choice, and opportunities to lead everyday lives," said Miller.

"The Spectrum Friends meeting was a celebration of these individuals breaking barriers by becoming contributing members of their communities, gainfully employed, and promoting self-advocacy. I encourage everyone to be more kind to one another, not just during Autism Acceptance month, but every day. All Pennsylvanians deserve to be treated with respect and dignity."



Secretary Miller attends the April Spectrum Friends meeting.

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Autism Rates Continue to Climb

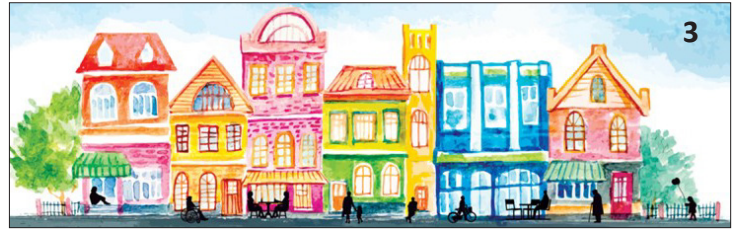
Autism rates continue to rise, according to data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control: usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2018/04/26/autism-rates-climb-experts-dont-know-why/554247002/

NIDILRR Grant

A new funding opportunity from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) has been announced for a Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on community living and participation for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. View details at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=299931>. This grant opportunity closes on June 4, 2018.

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ODP Releases FY2016-'17 Annual Report

ODP has posted the FY2016-17 Annual Data Report, online at MyODP.org and dhs.pa.gov.

The annual report enables individuals, families, advocates, providers, government officials, and taxpayers to see and measure how many individuals ODP serves, what services are provided, where the individuals live, and what the costs are.

Information about ODP's autism services are listed separately from intellectual and developmental disabilities in some cases within this report. Because the Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) and Adult Community Autism Program (ACAP) are administered directly by the Bureau of Autism Services, and not by the county systems, the information about the programs is tracked and measured through different processes.

An electronic version of the [FY2016-'17 Annual Data Report](#) is available.

Lifesharing Provider Spotlight: North East Region

We have been highlighting winners of the Excellence in Lifesharing Awards, featuring providers from our four regions. This month we highlight Patricia Gardner O'Brien, Lifesharing provider to Roger. She was nominated by Jennifer Tomaino of Human Resources Center, Inc.

Roger's move into Patricia Gardner O'Brien's home is a story of commitment, advocacy, creativity, and quality. Roger's vision of a good life included an opportunity to work, marry, be self-sufficient, and be happy. He shared this vision with Pat, who felt she could help him to map out his journey to the life he desired. Roger and Pat worked together to make it come to fruition.

Roger is active, and committed to fitness. He is employed and also volunteers in his community. Roger will be married Sept. 8. After that, he will no longer need Lifesharing services but he and Pat will continue sharing life stories.

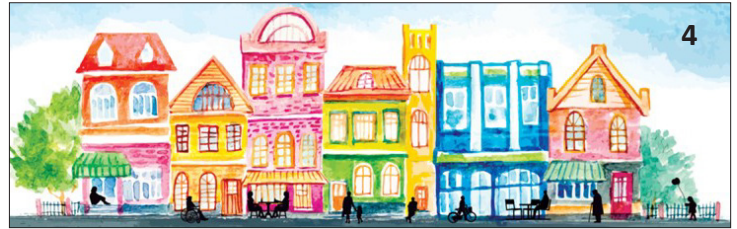
"Roger has had the potential to be all of these things and it warms my heart to see a Lifesharing provider who knew that, from the beginning," Jennifer adds.



Pat, right, helped Roger achieve his goal for an everyday life through Lifesharing.

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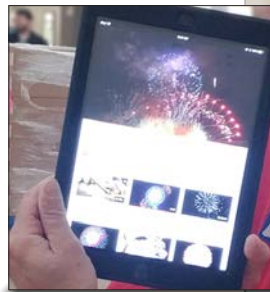


Once Living at State Center, Now a Big Part of Community

Monday through Wednesday, Ricky helps sort produce, baby supplies, and canned goods for Project SHARE (<https://projectsharepa.org/>) food pantry in Carlisle. The organization offers basic assistance to about 1,000 families in the Greater Carlisle area who are in need.

Ricky is part of the ODP Adult Community Autism Program (ACAP). He recently moved from Selinsgrove Center into the community.

The move from Selinsgrove Center wasn't entirely easy. It was a big change after decades of living in one place. Ricky especially missed his caregiver, Amy. She checked in on him after his move to reassure him. Since then, he looks forward to volunteering in his new community.



When he isn't helping Project SHARE, he is volunteering at Carlisle Fire & Rescue Services (cfrs45.com) by helping to set up for banquets and weekly bingo nights. He also helps clean the fire trucks.

His volunteerism is coordinated through ACAP and Keystone Autism Services (keystonehumanservices.org/autism-services).

He plans to help with the Farmstand this summer, open two-three days a week to anyone in the community who is in need of fresh foods, and he also helps with the monthly Project SHARE Distribution.

Ricky has made friends at these venues and enjoys the banter with full-time staff members at Project Share, but he's a dedicated worker too. If his palette of supplies is not in place at his arrival, he is not shy about getting things moving and to alert coordinators.

Ricky will be meeting with his job developer to begin [customized employment](#) to determine his strengths, needs and interests in order to obtain competitive and integrated employment in Carlisle.

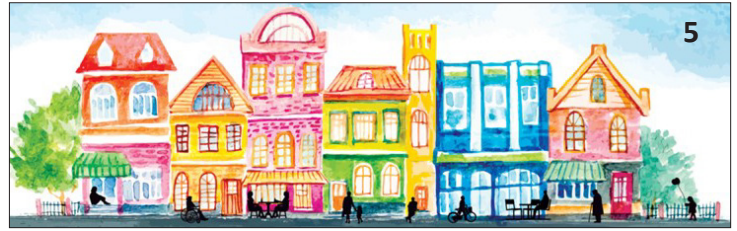
Ricky likes to get right to work when he arrives at Project SHARE in Carlisle. He often keeps video of fireworks playing on his tablet to entertain him during his shift.

Group Seeks Individuals with Autism to Join College-run Club in E-town

LINK, a student-run club at Elizabethtown College with the goal of linking the college community to the autism community, is asking for kids ages 3-14 with autism to join its Buddy Program and teens/young adults ages 4-21 with autism to join its Social Skills Program. Learn more at these free programs at <http://www.paautism.org/community/Support-Groups/Support-Group-Details/itemid/5217/LINK>.

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PA attends 2nd Annual Charting the LifeCourse Showcase

Pennsylvania was well represented at the 2nd Annual Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) Showcase held in Kansas City, Missouri, in April.

Deputy Secretary Nancy Thaler served as the event's keynote speaker. PA, along with 15 other states, joined the National Community of Practice. The showcase was attended by 350 stakeholders from across the nation. In addition to the panel discussions, presenters from Pennsylvania facilitated several breakout sessions. ODP staff are excited to share what was learned at the CtLC Showcase with Regional Collaboratives here in PA.



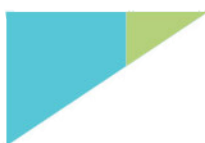
From left: Amy Millar, Melissa Morgan and Lisa Tesler from the PA Family Network, Jenn Fraker, Nancy Richey, Angela Fortney, Cathy Traini, Marie Craven and Cortney McCaleb from ODP.



Kansas City, Missouri

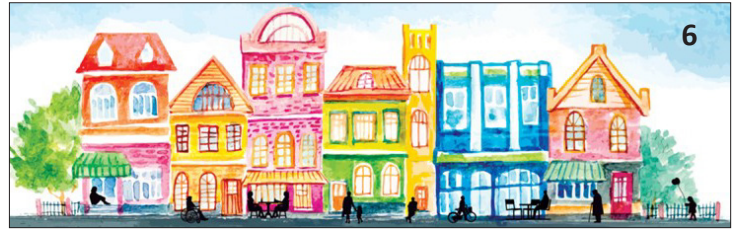


Nancy Richey shares her experiences in the pursuit of establishing statewide Communities of Practice Structures.



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Love of Animation Helps Jacob Launch Autism Walk

Jacob Leavell, 26, is a fan of animation. He's quite knowledgeable about it and enjoys making lists related to it, such as Top 10 darkest moments in Disney animation (which includes Ichabod encountering the Headless Horseman and Lampwick becoming a donkey).

He believes Max Fleischer, arguably the true father of animation, was unfortunately overshadowed by Walt Disney and says it was Disney's marketing talents (not his animation skills) that catapulted his fame.

In high school, Jacob sang in talent shows, including the song "Today Is Gonna Be a Great Day," from the popular cartoon "Phineas & Ferb."

Jacob participates in the ODP Adults Autism Waiver (AAW) program. His love of animation helped him organize and launch the Everett Autism Walk last year, with more than 80 participants. The theme of the charity event was "Phineas & Ferb." It raised nearly \$2,000 to help fund the Central PA Autism Support Group, which he hopes will grow in membership.

This year, with funds raised by the walk, the group enjoyed trips to New York City and Philadelphia. Jacob enjoys cooking and cooking shows, and especially appreciated being able to visit Ms Tootsie's Soul Food Cafe during their trip to Philadelphia.

Twice a week, Jacob works at the Everett Library in Bedford County. He wants everyone to know that they should not be afraid of people with autism. Most especially, he says, "I don't want other kids to get bullied."

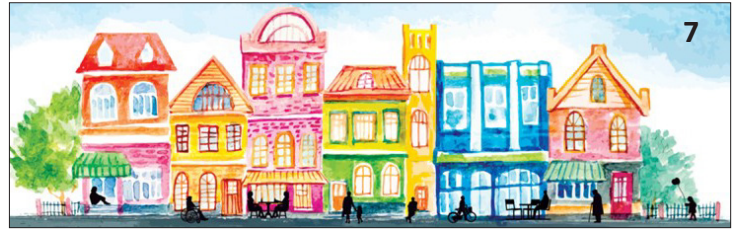


Jacob Leavell knows a lot about popular animation and organized a fundraiser with a "Phineas & Ferb" theme.

If your organization is hosting webinars
that anyone can attend,
please send information to
RA-PWODP_OUTREACH@pa.gov

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Summary of ODP Communications Issued April 2018, With Links



1. [Supporting Healthy Aging Across the Lifespan: A Facilitated Panel Discussion presented as part of the Dual Diagnosis Professional Conference Series](#)
2. [CHC Southeast Kickoff Communication](#)
3. 031-18 : [Electronic Visit Verification Update](#)
4. 032-18 : [Certified Investigator Peer Review Spring Courses Now Open for Registration](#)
5. [PAEFLMP 2018 Community of Practice Webinar Series : Best Practices in Rural Areas Part 1 \(of a 3 part series\) The Martin TN Experience](#)
6. 033-18 : [Person Centered Thinking Training Available](#)
7. ODP News : [April 2018 \(Accessible Version\)](#)
8. Registration Open : [Pennsylvania Autism Training Conference \(PATC\) 2018](#)
9. 034-18 : [Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2017-2018 Vacancy Exception Process](#)
10. 035-18 : [Home and Community Based Services \(HCBS\) Settings Self-Assessment Period](#)
11. BAW18-12 Announcement : [Spring 2018 Schedule of Virtual Trainings Presented by the BAS Clinical Team](#)
12. [Wolf Administration Celebrates Individuals with Autism](#)
13. 036-18 : [Additional Face-to-Face Medication Administration Summer Face-to Face-Classes 2018](#)
14. 037-18 : [Launch of the ISAC Hub](#)
15. 038-18 : [Mental Health First Aid Course](#)
16. 039-18 : [Charting the LifeCourse Webcasts Now Available on MyODP](#)
17. 040-18 : [Guidance Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2018-2019 ISP Renewal Period](#)
18. 041-18 : [College Of Employment Services](#)
19. 042-18 : [Changes in Money Follows the Person Funding for Start-Up and Transition Activities](#)
20. 043-18 : [ODP Releases 2016-17 Annual Data Report](#)
21. [BAW 18-13 Admin Notice : Entering SIB-r Information into QuestionPro](#)

We'd love to hear from you.
Email us at RA-PWODP_OUTREACH@pa.gov with news or suggestions!