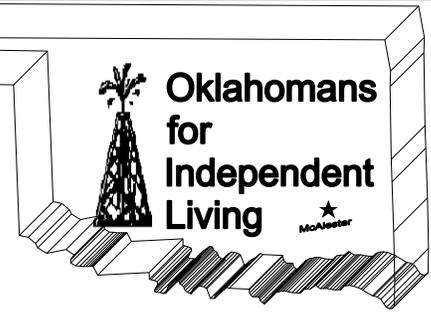


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OIL Newsletter



A monthly publication of THE OKLAHOMANS for INDEPENDENT LIVING

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If you are trying to go green and would like to help save trees, call us and we will send it via e-mail. If you are receiving this newsletter in error or no longer wish to receive it, call and we will remove you from our mailing list.

Register! Educate! Vote!

REV UP!

MAKE THE **DISABILITY VOTE** COUNT!

REV UP THE VOTE

People with disabilities have a right to be heard just like any other American citizen; but often, individuals with disabilities are overlooked or not given the opportunity to vote in a local, state or federal election. How is that possible, you ask? If a person is not properly educated on how the system of democracy works, the prospect of voting might be intimidating or confusing. Some adults of voting age, in America, don't exercise their right to vote, in an election, because they simply don't understand how the process works.

People with disabilities face the same confusion as anyone, in

addition to other issues that can complicate the process; lack of transportation to and from their designated polling place, lack of an accessible entry into their polling place, and many other things that hinder their ability to vote.

Oklahomans for Independent Living is proud to participate in "REV UP"! "REV UP" is an initiative that recognizes the disability vote. "REV UP" stands for Register, Educate, Vote, Use, Power. It promotes the influence of the disability vote and will also ensure access to the polls on election day for Americans with disabilities.

OIL will be offering an informational presentation about the "REV UP" campaign around Pittsburg County, in the near future, to promote the importance of voting assistance to individuals with disabilities, their friends and families.

If you are not a registered voter and would like the opportunity to become a part of the population that has a voice in policy making for the disabled community, come to the office at 601 E. Carl Albert Parkway

and the staff will answer questions and help you register to vote, or call us at (918) 426-6220.

OIL FUNDRAISER!



**On Saturday, June 11,
from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.,
we will be selling 2 Hot
Dogs & a Soda for \$1
at Atwood's.**

All money raised will go toward OIL recreational programs. **Please come out and show your support!**

OKLAHOMA PARENT E-NETWORK

Taken from the Oklahoma Parent e-network
We are a grassroots organization of families of children and adults with disabilities and professionals seeking to connect, share and learn from one another.

Our Purpose is to unite Oklahoma families of children & adults with disabilities via the World Wide Web, an email list and caregiver/provider network.

Come share your thoughts and experiences with other Oklahoma families. Let's learn from one another, share info & resources pertinent to our state.

Caregivers / Providers get listed in our directory for only \$5.00 per year! We're in the process of developing a directory of people interested in providing care for children & adults of all ages with disabilities.

Join our support / discussion email list by visiting Yahoo Groups. Members of the email list receive important updates via email on services and programs available in Oklahoma. All new subscribers will receive access to the following information on: IDEA, IEP's & Due Process, An Explanation of Waivered Services & EPSDT, Respite Voucher Program Guidelines & Application, A List of Conferences & Workshops in the state, Home of Your Own, CASSA, & Olmstead updates, Special Needs Trusts & Estate Planning and more...

Check out our Classifieds Section if you're looking to buy, sell or trade an item or if you have a service to provide!

Visit our GuestMap if you're from Oklahoma and post a note to let us know you've been here! Just find your county on the map of Oklahoma & click to

Are you on the DDSD waiting list for waived services? Tell us your story! Read our stories!

Read our list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for info about the listserv, classifieds, directory, guestmap and other features of our website! Submit a question if you don't find what

you're looking for and we'll add it to our FAQ!

COMMUNITY LIVING SKEPTICS OFTEN HAVE CHANGE OF HEART

Despite initial opposition; a new study suggests that many families of those with disabilities required to transition from institutions to community living are ultimately pleased with the outcome.

Researchers assessed the experiences of Oklahoma families whose relatives were part of a mandatory deinstitutionalization process when the state closed its last two large state-run institutions for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in 2015.

At the time, all remaining residents were offered home and community based services waivers so that they could move to small homes with roommates where they would receive 24-hour care and supports in the community.

Within months of making the transition, 153 parents and siblings who had legal guardianship over individuals who had left the institutions completed a state survey about their experience. Subsequently, researchers with Oklahoma State University conducted in-person interviews with 23 of the family members.

Participants had family members who had been institutionalized for anywhere from 27 to 58 years before making the switch to community living, where they had been for one to three years at the time of the interviews.

Fourteen family members said they were initially opposed to deinstitutionalization, but were now satisfied with their relatives' community living arrangement, according to findings published in an issue of the journal *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*.

One man described his brother-in-law's transition to the researchers as "the best thing that ever happened." Another woman said "(we) wished we moved her 20 years ago" when asked about her daughter's experience.

At the same time, however, five family members continued to find the transition troubling. They cited broken promises by state officials, with one woman reporting that when her brother came into the community "they had nothing for him to do." Whether or not they were ultimately satisfied with the transition to community living, however, family members agreed that certain elements were key. Chiefly, relatives felt it important to respect the history of their family member, ensure a collaboration with the individual's siblings or parents, provide quality care and consistency, include the individual in the community and remember who's family.

"Professionals may know the research and support the changes in practice and policy regarding deinstitutionalization, but families are often unaware and skeptical of community living. Family members need ongoing support as they adapt to community living and new service systems," wrote Jennifer L. Jones and Kami L. Gallus of Oklahoma State in their findings.

Often, the researchers noted, deinstitutionalization changes family members' responsibilities. In many cases, loved ones are located closer, allowing for more frequent contact and more day-to-day involvement in advocating for appropriate activities and relationships, they said.

"The emotion expressed by family members in this study highlights how significant changes, such as deinstitutionalization, affect all members of the family system," Jones and Gallus indicated.
by Shaun Heasley

Living Working Well with a Disability

To continue with our healthy initiatives, we would like to help keep you motivated. We will meet on Tuesday, June 14th at 11:00 a.m. so you can continue your campaign to a healthier lifestyle. Or if you missed us last month, let us help you get started with us. **We will provide free, local lift-equipped transportation to the Mike Deak Field, between MaCarthur Lane and South 13th Street.** Bring your healthy sack lunch and let's walk and roll our way to being more fit!

LAKE DAY

On Saturday, June 18th, OIL will have an evening of fun at Lake Eufaula from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. We will have fishing poles and bait for those wanting to fish. Bring your bathing suit if you want to swim or wade and an extra set of clothes to change in to. You will be swimming at your own risk but life jackets will be available. Don't forget your lawn chair or blanket! We will provide the weenies to roast as well as the drinks, and s'mores. We ask that you bring a family size package of chips. Come

join us by the bonfire for some summer fun!!! However, it will be dependent upon the weather and the water level. Call early for details and or free lift-equipped transportation.



WOMEN'S GROUP

We will meet at Chadick Park on Tuesday, June 21st at Noon. Bring your sack lunch and come and share with one another. Free lift-equipped transportation is available.

SATURDAY TRANSPORTATION

O.I.L. will take individuals anywhere needed in the McAlester area whether it is to visit friends/family or just to see an afternoon movie matinee. The cost is \$2 per stop. The dates are set for June 11th and 25th starting at 8:00 a.m.

STATE SUMMER GAMES

The Oklahomans for Independent Living Special Olympics team, The FreeSpirits, competed in the 2016 Summer Games in Stillwater, Oklahoma on May

11-13. The athletes did well and several medals were brought home to Southeastern Oklahoma. All FreeSpirits athletes showed great sportsmanship and enjoyed themselves during the three day competition. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the people in the McAlester and surrounding area for your donations and support that made the trip possible, without your generous contributions the trip to the State Summer Games would not have been possible. A well-deserved thank you also goes out to the staff and volunteers that helped make the trip fun for all who attended. Post your message in your county!

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

If you have a wheelchair, bath bench, walker with a seat, or cane that you are no longer utilizing, please call OIL. These items are among the most needed by individuals with mobility concerns and your donation would certainly be appreciated. A donation letter can be given for tax purposes.



Transportation



O.I.L. provides lift-equipped transportation in McAlester and the surrounding area.

**Monday – Thursday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

A twenty-four hour minimum notice is required. The cost is \$2 per pick up in McAlester and \$3 for Krebs and Frink Chambers. Outside this area, fees are based on actual costs of gasoline needed to provide the service.

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Return Service Requested

All donations to OIL are tax deductible.

The contents of this newsletter were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

*Events are held at OIL unless otherwise noted						
EVENTS						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2 <u>Shopping</u> 7:00-10:45am	3	4
5	6 <u>Brain Injury Gp.</u> 1 pm	7 <u>Craft Class</u> 1:00 pm	8	9	10	11 <u>Saturday Transportation</u> 8 am <u>Hot Dog Fundraiser!</u>
12	13 <u>Men's Gp.</u> Rib Crib 4 pm	14 <u>Walk 'n Roll to Fitness</u> Mike Deak 11 am	15	16 <u>Shopping</u> 7:00-10:45am	17	18 <u>Swimming/Fishing/Bonfire at the Lake</u>
19	20 <u>Brain Injury Gp.</u> 1 pm	21 <u>Women's Gp.</u> Chadick Park 11 am	22	23	24	25 <u>Saturday Transportation</u> 8 am
26	27	28	29	30		
<p>*Low Impact Exercise Class for Sr.'s meets Mon., Wed., & Fri., 10:00 a.m., Stipe Center *Alzheimer's Support Group, 3rd Wed., 12:30 p.m., Main & OK Church of Christ *Diabetes Support Group, 1st Tue., 6:00 p.m., McAlester Regional Health Center Wellness Conf. Room, call Kathy at 421-6812 *For information on Men's & Women's Grief Support Groups – call Hospice of McAlester at 423-3911 . For information on a 7 week Dealing with Grief Course, call Heartland Hospice, 3rd Tues., 6:00 p.m., Pittsburg County Health Dept., 423-1267</p>						

