

510 Daniel Webster Hwy. P.O. Box 1435, Merrimack NH 03054



## THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CHALLENGE

DISABILITY ISSUES FROM A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

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**Winter 2020**  
Vol. 30, Issue 8

# Breaking New Ground

## Visions for Creative Housing provides new opportunities for those with disabilities

By Chris Dugan

**Enfield, NH:** Sylvia Dow, executive director and founder of Visions for Creative Housing, didn't necessarily set out to develop specialized housing opportunities for those in need, rather the cause found her. "We were running a family inn as a business for many years" she recalls. "Our two daughters were diagnosed with developmental disabilities and we researched how to connect them to services. The challenges we encountered along the way, convinced us that there were not a lot of opportunities where people with disabilities could live independently as adults and still be connected to the community."

Proving that necessity is indeed the mother of invention, Dow built a process from the ground up, not only becoming familiar with how to navigate NH's health and human services landscape, but also gaining certification as a provider.

Fast forward to 2014 when Dow founded Visions For Creative Housing. The facility-Sunrise Farm-houses individuals with disabilities and offers a safe, home-like environment staffed with well-qualified individuals. Beyond the great care and support the residents receive at the physical location, Dow and her team work with area agencies, non-profits, employers and businesses to fully integrate the residents into the community.

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# From the Desk of Chris Dugan



*Christopher Dugan, Editor, The NH Challenge*

Hello readers and friends of the NH Challenge,

On behalf of our leadership and board, best for a happy and healthy 2020!

As is the case in each edition, you'll view insights from our columnists on a broad range of topics. Feature stories will include a look at a unique charter school in Pembroke, the concept of supportive housing for those with disabilities and a short story on music therapy.

We're also excited to announce a new "marketplace section" where readers and others are invited to interact with one another on key issues. Share your ideas, tips and lessons learned, equipment you no longer need but would like to sell, trade or give away. If you'd like an item included in the next edition of our newspaper, please email me at [Chris@newhampshirechallenge.org](mailto:Chris@newhampshirechallenge.org).

Finally, thank you for your readership and support; please keep those comments and ideas coming!

Yours in good health,

*Chris*

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## The New Hampshire Challenge Officers

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Institute on Disability/UCED  
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## The New Hampshire Challenge

The New Hampshire Challenge is a quarterly publication which disseminates in-depth information on disability issues from a family perspective. Printed items do not necessarily reflect the view of *The Challenge* or its publisher, The New Hampshire Challenge, Inc. The Challenge reserves the right to exercise editorial judgment in the selection and publication of materials.

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The New Hampshire Challenge is printed four times a year, and welcomes the submission of articles. Copy must be typed and may be mailed or e-mailed. Pictures are welcome. Questions should be directed to the editor.

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## INDEPENDENT CASE MANAGEMENT / SERVICE COORDINATION

The Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire offers this **Conflict Free** service for all disability populations:

- Private Pay Case Management
- Choices for Independence (CFI) Community Care Waiver
- Acquired Brain Disorder (ABD) Community Care Waiver
- Developmental/Intellectual Disabilities (DD/ID) Community Care Waiver

We are a consumer and family directed non-profit organization, founded by New Hampshire families who came together to strengthen individual and system-wide advocacy.

For additional information about Independent Case Management, contact Erin Hall at 603-225-8400 or email at [erin@bianh.org](mailto:erin@bianh.org)



52 Pleasant Street – Concord, NH – 03301  
Phone: 603-225-8400 Helpline: 1-800-773-8400

## News You Can Use Brain Injury Association Announces Educational Offerings

### February 24, 2020: 2020 Disability Legislative Leadership Training Announcement

This leadership training is for individuals with disabilities, their parents/family members and professionals working in the community to support individuals with disabilities. The training provides information on legislative leadership relating to disability issues.

Lunch will be provided at the statehouse cafeteria along with a tour of the statehouse. For more information or to attend, please contact Ellen Edgerly at the Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire at (603) 834-9570 or [Ellenedge@bianh.org](mailto:Ellenedge@bianh.org).

Limited Registration.  
8:30 am-4:15 pm  
Rooms 206-208, Legislative Office Building, Concord, NH

### February 25, 2020: A New Decade for NH's Brain Injury Services

Matthew Ertas, former Director of the Bureau of Developmental Services, will lead this program. This presentation will begin with a panel discussion from individuals currently receiving services in NH. Mr. Ertas will then discuss the history of services beginning with the Laconia State School, what transpired after the school closed, and finally what services are being provided today.

To register, please visit: <https://bianh.salsalabs.org/nhbis>  
9:00 am-12:00 pm  
Marriot Courtyard & Grappone Conference Center, Concord, NH

### March 4, 2020: Brain Matters 2020 - Brain Injury 101

Jennifer Parent-Nichols, DPT, EdD, PCS, CBIS  
Using typical brain function as a basis for understanding brain changes following neurologic injury, this introductory course serves as a basis for understanding challenges commonly experienced by individuals with brain injury. Learners will explore the science of brain injury and develop evidence-based strategies aimed at supporting recovery.

To register, please visit: <https://bianh.salsalabs.org/bi101>  
8:30 am-12:30 pm  
BIANH, 52 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH

## Please consider advertising in The New Hampshire Challenge

The New Hampshire Challenge is a quarterly publication and has a current circulation of 8700 or more homes, schools and businesses. The Challenge reports on disability issues from a family perspective and audience consists of those in NH's disability community and other stakeholders. What better way to reach that community than by advertising in the Challenge?

- No fees, long-term contracts or hidden costs.
- Gain access to loyal and influential newspaper readers.

Advertising Rates:  
Full page: \$1500.00  
Half page: \$750.00  
Quarter page: \$375.00

Discounts for annual contracts  
Advertising space is limited in each edition. For more information contact Chris Dugan at [Chris@newhampshirechallenge.org](mailto:Chris@newhampshirechallenge.org), or via phone (603) 391-4703.



# Making Advocacy Accessible

By Kathy Bates



Kathy Bates

*“Vote as if your life depends on it – Because it does!”*

– Justin Dart

I love to vote at my polling place. I never vote by absentee ballot because I want to be seen when I'm practicing my civil rights. I've seen some positive changes over the years at polling places, bigger voting booths and machines to read the ballots for example. That said, even though the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) was passed in 2002 some 60 % of polling places have some accessibility issues that make it more difficult for people with disabilities to vote. Exit polls don't ask about disability; if they did politicians and election officials would know that 24 million voters come from households that include people with disabilities. Politicians would have no choice but to listen to our issues and people with disabilities would be a very

powerful voting bloc. Check out the attached article. <https://www.njtvonline.org/news/video/study-people-with-disabilities-are-a-powerful-voting-bloc/>

Civic engagement refers to the ways in which citizens participate in the life of a community, in order to improve conditions for others, or to help shape the community's future. Activities such as volunteering at a local food pantry, working with a group of people to clean up a neighborhood park, or joining a service organization such as a Rotary Club, are all great examples of community engagement. In my opinion, however, there is no easier or more important way to show you care about local issues as well as larger societal concerns than to cast your vote. Disability Issues are community issues and they are typically Bipartisan because disability never discriminates! It has nothing to do with what party you belong to. One in four of us are disabled. That number goes up even higher after the age of 65. That is why informing ourselves as voters and helping to educate candidates about issues that we deal with daily, is so important. When it comes to letting our voices be heard, voting is definitely at the top of the list! An issue like health care, which became so important in the 2018 mid-term elections, has always been important to people with disabilities and their families.

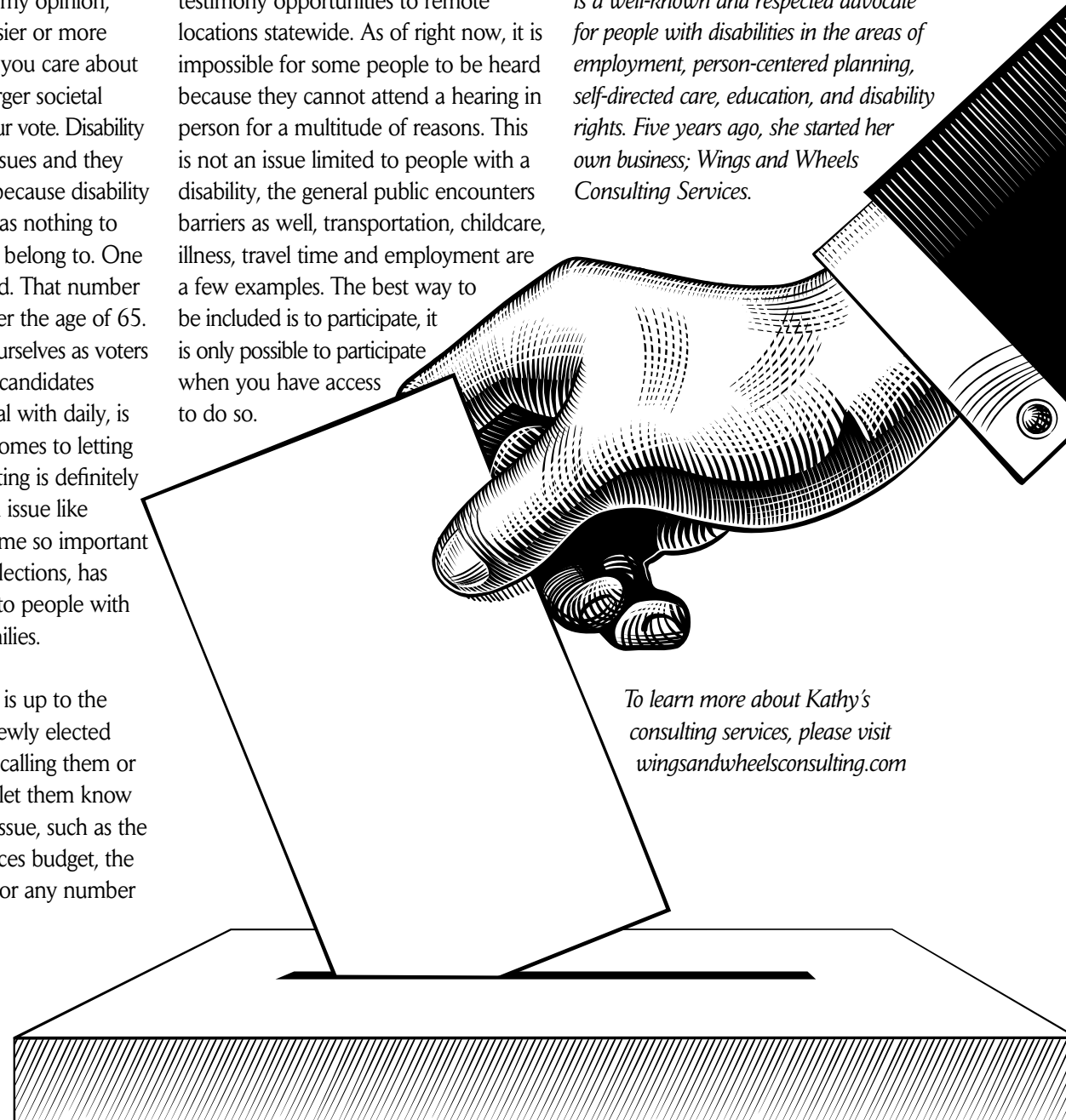
After the votes are in, it is up to the public to educate our newly elected officials. This can mean calling them or writing them a letter to let them know where we stand on an issue, such as the health and human services budget, the addition of dental care, or any number

of direct support issues. Testifying on issues like these is often the best way to make the biggest impact. The disabled community needs the opportunity to speak out, but sometimes it can be challenging to attend a hearing and do so. Many must travel up to two hours just to get to Concord and, many of them have family members with direct support needs who cannot be left behind.

It is important to testify about issues that will impact your life directly such as, LSR 2020-2183 establishing a commission to study expanding public testimony opportunities to remote locations statewide. As of right now, it is impossible for some people to be heard because they cannot attend a hearing in person for a multitude of reasons. This is not an issue limited to people with a disability, the general public encounters barriers as well, transportation, childcare, illness, travel time and employment are a few examples. The best way to be included is to participate, it is only possible to participate when you have access to do so.

LSR 2020-2183 is filed by title only at this point, but the language of the bill will be added in January. The prime sponsors are Representatives William Hatch, Peter Schmidt and Jeanne Dietsch. This is an idea whose time has come.

*For the past fifteen years Kathy has been a group leader for the Leadership Series through the Institute on Disability and has been an advisor for People First of New Hampshire. She is currently working with the Self Advocacy Leadership Team (SALT) as a Facilitator. Kathy is a well-known and respected advocate for people with disabilities in the areas of employment, person-centered planning, self-directed care, education, and disability rights. Five years ago, she started her own business; Wings and Wheels Consulting Services.*



*To learn more about Kathy's consulting services, please visit [wingsandwheelsconsulting.com](http://wingsandwheelsconsulting.com)*

# News from Special Olympics of NH: Great Events on Tap

**President's Luncheon**  
**February 18, 2020**  
**12:00pm – 1:15pm**  
**Manchester, NH**

The President's Luncheon is a Law Enforcement Torch Run Event hosted by Charlie Dennis, President NHACOP, Inc. for Chiefs, Troop Commanders, Sheriffs and other Law Enforcement Personnel. The luncheon is an opportunity to learn about the Law Enforcement Torch Run and Special Olympics New Hampshire.

To RSVP (by February 13th) please contact Jessica Marchant at 624-1250 x39 or [JessicaM@sonh.org](mailto:JessicaM@sonh.org).

The luncheon will take place at the Doubletree by Hilton which is located at 700 Elm Street in Manchester.

**2020 NH State Winter Games**  
**presented by Eversource**  
**March 1, 2020, 12:00pm to**  
**March 3, 2020, 5:00 pm**  
**Waterville Valley, NH**

Save the dates for the Special Olympics New Hampshire 2020 State Winter Games presented by Eversource. Winter athletes will go for the gold in alpine skiing, snowboarding, snowshoe and cross-country skiing.

Please stay tuned for more information! To learn more about this amazing agency, please visit [www.sonh.org](http://www.sonh.org)



## Save the Date!

*The New Hampshire Challenge presents:*  
**Empowerment 2020:**  
**A workshop for families of disability**  
**Wednesday, March 25, 2020**

7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
The Falls Event Center,  
21 Front Street  
Manchester, NH

Please join for an informative and engaging half day workshop aimed at families of disability, caregivers, advocates and others. Hear from local experts on such topics as: Advocacy 101, Special needs trusts and legal issues, Financial planning do's and don'ts and more.

Registration fee is just \$25.00/person and includes breakfast, study materials and a special gift. As space is limited, pre-registration is required. To get your name on the list, please send an email to: Chris Dugan at [Chris@newhampshirechallenge.org](mailto:Chris@newhampshirechallenge.org).

## Breaking New Ground *(Continued from page 1)*

"Our mission is all about inclusion," she stated. "Where needed, we connect residents with transportation to work and other appointments." Sunrise Farm started with six residents five years ago and now serves ten. Plans are underway for expansion into Lebanon for a second facility where an additional ten people will be served. Dow shared that there is a waiting list beyond that, which is part of the impetus around the development of Supportive Housing Toolkit: a resource guide for families of adults with developmental disabilities.

According to Dow, the tool kit (available online) is designed for parents and community members interested in developing permanent supportive housing options for adults with developmental disabilities.

"The need for supportive residential options

for adults with developmental disabilities in New Hampshire is significant and we wanted to provide our concept to others in need," said Dow. "According to a recent study by the University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability, slightly more than 12% of our state's population report having a significant disability."

The Toolkit, supported through a \$50,000 Emerging Opportunities Grant from the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, is the first in the nation aimed at educating and empowering family members and others who may be new to real estate development, affordable housing financing, and the adult services world. It is a free, online resource developed in direct response to inquiries Visions has received from throughout the state and region. When speaking to Dow, one frequently hears the words connected and included. "People with disabilities want the same

things that any of us do as adults," says Dow. "They want to work, to participate in community activities, to choose who they live and spend time with and to have the opportunity to engage in activities they enjoy. At Visions we make that possible."

The Toolkit was created for Visions for Creative Housing Solutions by principal author Ben Sahl and contributing author Liz Nickerson of Nickerson Development Services, Inc. Sahl is the parent of a daughter with significant disabilities and has advocated in favor of expanding opportunities for integrated community living for individuals with developmental disabilities since 2012. A lawyer and acclaimed writer, he has extensive experience with multiple organizations advocating on behalf of people with disabilities in New York State and has served as the legal director of the Disability Rights Center – New Hampshire.

According to Sahl, "This Toolkit is designed to provide an overview of the elements involved in developing a supportive housing. It is written for anyone with an interest and does not assume knowledge about, or experience with, housing development, capital finance, public benefits, the adult services system, or any other piece of the supportive housing puzzle. This Toolkit is not a recipe for supportive housing. Our hope is that it provides enough of an understanding of the entire development process for others to determine whether to pursue a similar model, and for those who do to be as prepared as possible for what is ahead."

The Toolkit can be accessed at no charge here: <http://www.visionsnh.org/housingtoolkit> For further information, please contact Dow at (603) 632-7707 or via email at [vfchsorg@gmail.com](mailto:vfchsorg@gmail.com).

# A Voice for Inclusion

By Jeff Symes



Jeff Symes

Among the panelists slated to address an audience of national leaders in healthcare at a conference in Seattle last summer was an unassuming 38-year-old from Nashua who found himself sitting next to U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams on the dais. When it was his turn to speak, he took the podium and introduced himself plainly: “Good morning everyone. My name is Parker Thornton and I have a disability.”

As a Health Messenger for Special Olympics, Thornton has traveled the world preaching a message of health and fitness among people with disabilities. And advocating for their recognition in a healthcare system that doesn’t fully account for those same people with disabilities.

A paper published jointly by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Special Olympics notes, “Due to a range of systemic challenges, including inadequate provider training and inaccessible facilities, people with ID (Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities) have less access to quality health care and health promotion programs. As a result, people with ID experience dramatically higher rates of preventable health issues than peers without ID. According to the National Council on Disability, people with ID face a “constellation of health and health care disparities, including

inadequate health and wellness promotion and inconsistent access to high-quality health care services.”

The CDC summarized data that showed that adults with a disability were more likely to have cardiovascular (heart) disease, be obese, be a current smoker, and engage in no leisure-time physical activity and were less likely to be receiving needed medical care because of the cost of care. Indeed, although they have higher rates of chronic diseases than the general population, adults with disabilities are significantly less likely to receive preventive care.



Parker Thornton, Nashua, NH

As a retired coronary care nurse, Parker’s mother, Joslyn, has seen the healthcare system up close, both as a parent and a provider. “Unless they have caretakers who know them really well,” she says, “people with disabilities can get lost through the cracks.”

Parker was born at the start of the holiday season in 1980. But he spent most of those holidays simply trying to live, sustained on life support at Boston Children’s Hospital before he was diagnosed with viral meningitis. By then, doctors had informed Joslyn and Parker’s father, Mark, that it could be arranged for Parker to be institutionalized – if he lived. Spurning that recommendation, Parker’s parents brought him home on

New Year’s Day, 1981. He had brain damage and was paralyzed on his left side.

At age 39 now, Parker’s parents accompany him to all his medical appointments. Parker’s father, Mark, jokes, “We’re probably a good example of helicopter parents well past the timeline.” But Parker’s issues with audio-processing mean that he can listen but doesn’t grasp abstract concepts. “If you are not able to advocate for yourself, you need to have an advocate who understands the system,” says Mark. “Doctors have to base their judgement on what they know, and if their information is incomplete ...”

His point is well taken – in a 15-minute visit with a doctor, if you can’t articulate your issues clearly and the doctor isn’t asking questions, it’s a scenario that can only breed inadequate care ... or worse.

These concerns are what spur Parker to overcome his anxiety and make very public appearances. He has testified before both the NH House and Senate Finance and Education Committees numerous times. Along with tv and radio appearances, school assemblies, conferences, and fundraising events, Parker uses his voice to promote inclusion whenever and wherever he can, to whomever will listen. And that journey has taken him across the U.S. and to four continents representing the issues that are so

important to him and everyone with a connection to disabilities.

But it is an ongoing effort for Parker to maintain his voice. His apparent comfort as a speaker is a studied effort in overcoming what can be paralyzing anxiety, and yet another measure of both his determination and his lived experience as a person with a disability. At one point, Parker told his Seattle audience, “I have a hard time expressing myself. That’s why I use notes, and a podium; and practice, practice, practice.”

Unfortunately, Parker will likely have plenty of opportunities to practice. As the CDC/Special Olympics article observes, “People with ID continue to face barriers to health as the public health and health care systems have been slow to keep pace with the social changes. People with ID remain one of the most medically underserved groups in the world and still face significant health disparities, not directly caused by their disability.”

Parker hopes to change that, as he told those healthcare leaders and professionals in Seattle: “We are all peaceful protestors against the stigma and indifference which has plagued every person who has a disability. We can no longer measure the value of a person with a disability by their productivity. We cannot focus on what is but focus on what ought to be.”

*Jeff Symes works as a service coordinator in Consumer Directed Services at Gateways Community Services in Nashua. For more than ten years, he has been active in NH in a number of roles supporting people with disabilities, from direct support and advocacy to job development and service coordination. Before he found a calling in developmental services, he spent two decades as a freelance writer and photographer for newspapers and magazines throughout the country.*

# A View from the Statehouse: 2019-2020-Legislative Report

By Jon Eriquezzo



Jon Eriquezzo

The new 2020 legislative session in New Hampshire is now underway. These LSR's eventually become bills that are considered for legislation. Right now, we can only see the titles of these LSR's, but in January we should start seeing the language for these being developed.

Below is a sampling of LSR's to follow. For a more complete list, go to <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/>.

HB 2097, relative to regulation of interpreters for the deaf, deaf blind, and hard of hearing.

HB 2204, relative to early voting for persons with disabilities.

HB 2336, relative to autism spectrum disorder insurance coverage.

HB 2496, eliminating fees for walking disability placards.

HB 2646, relative to the installation of video surveillance cameras in community homes and group homes.

HB 2647, relative to the installation of video surveillance cameras in special education school buses.

Here's a list of bills that were introduced during the last legislative session, and then referred to committees for further consideration. In these bills, the house committees voted "ought to pass" which indicates that they should be put to a full house vote. Here's a sampling of these bills:

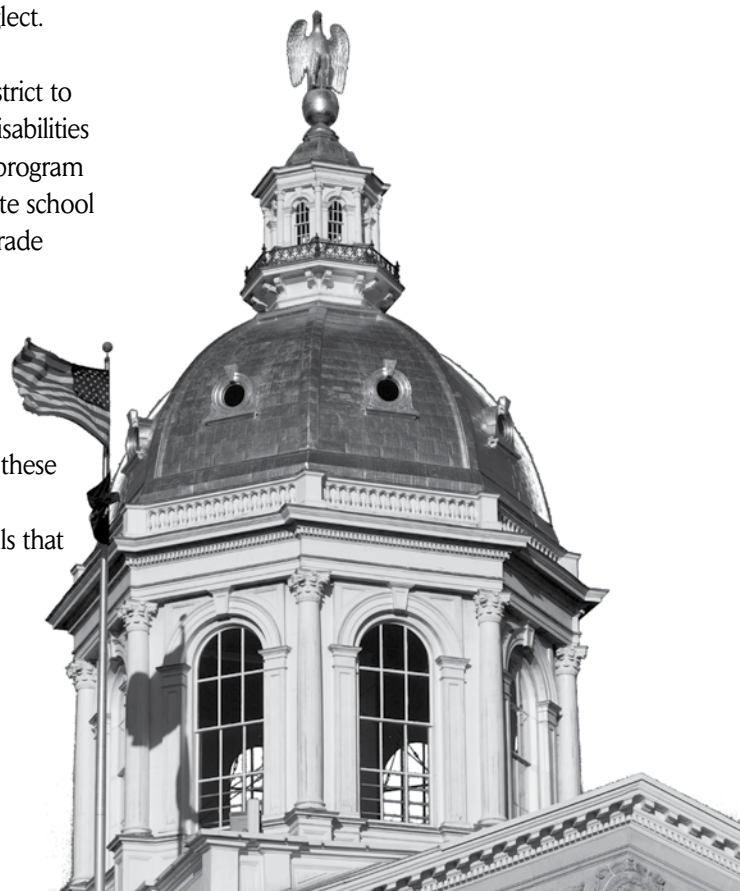
HB 513: When taking the testimony of a victim or witness under the age of 18, a person who has an intellectual disability, a victim of a sexual offense, or a witness to a sexual offense, the court may allow the use of a facility dog or therapy animal in any proceeding involving a sexual offense, child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

HB 721: This bill requires the resident school district to provide and fund the education of a child with disabilities according to the child's individualized education program when such child is attending a nonsectarian private school because there is no public school for the child's grade level in the child's resident district.

During the legislative session, "commissions" are created to address (or study) certain issues.

It is important to note that these sessions such as these are open to the public. In our next edition, we'll continue to focus in on those newly proposed bills that may influence you and your family.

*Jon Eriquezzo is the board chair of The New Hampshire Challenge. He serves as Vice President for St. Joseph Community Services, where he oversees daily operations, finance and development. He has over 40 years of experience working in the disability field throughout New England and was Vice President of Innovation at Crotched Mountain Foundation prior to joining SJCS. A graduate of Springfield College, Jon holds a master's degree in Organizational Management and Leadership, a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services and a certificate in Community Healthcare Management from Antioch University New England. He is an adjunct faculty member of Granite State College and teaches through the New Hampshire Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) training partnership. He is a recent graduate of Leadership New Hampshire.*



## Donating to The New Hampshire Challenge via PayPal

Your donations of any amount support our cause. We are a proud 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization which serves all of New Hampshire. Tax ID: 02-0439854.



When you visit The New Hampshire Challenge website, click on the Donate link, it will take you [paypal.com](https://www.paypal.com) to complete the donation. Contributions can also be made via money order or check and mailed to: New Hampshire Challenge, 510 Daniel Webster Highway, PO Box 1435, Merrimack, NH 03054

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR SUPPORT**



# The Story Behind Blue Pumpkins

By Wendy E. N. Thomas, Executive Director of The New Hampshire Challenge



Wendy E. N. Thomas

By the time you read this it will be well past Halloween, but I want to let you know about efforts that took place in some of our communities to build tolerance and acceptance for young people with disabilities this past fall.

This past season, there was a campaign to use teal or blue plastic pumpkin bowls when handing out Halloween treats. One bowl, the orange one, is for the regular treats and then the teal pumpkins are typically filled with non-food items like small party toys or pencils for those children who have food allergies. Kids with allergies know to go to the teal pumpkins. It's a great way to include kids who may have severe and sometime life-threatening reactions to the typical candies and treats that are given out. The kids still get to experience trick-or-treating, but now they are safe.

This year I saw that there was also an additional Halloween effort to include blue plastic pumpkins as an indication that the child carrying such a pumpkin has autism. If you saw someone with a blue plastic pumpkin come to your house, you could then use modified behavior in addressing that child. Perhaps you'd understand why the child didn't answer your questions, or why she or he didn't look you in the eye when you spoke to them. You might even be more understanding if the child didn't or was unable to say "trick-or-tweet" but instead just held out his/her blue pumpkin for a treat. If you had a spooky sound system or light show you might even turn it down or off until the child was well past your house; some children are sensitive to loud and sudden noises. The blue pumpkin would be a signal for you to perhaps modify your behavior to be more accepting.

I even saw posts from some advocates alerting people to not challenge older kids accompanied by adults who might be trick-or-treating. Some of these children, according to the posts, are challenged and have a younger mind-set, which might match the age of other trick-or-treaters.

It is so inspiring that people are thinking of ways to respectfully include those who have disabilities in more and more activities. I'm even seeing a demand for "sensitive Santas" who have been trained in how to work with children who have disabilities (You'll read a story on that elsewhere in this paper). After all, all kids want to have fun on Halloween and at all holidays.

At a recent NAMI walk, the color theme was lime green. Now when I see a lime green pin or ribbon, I understand that the person wearing it is a supporter of mental health issues. An orange ribbon means that someone is a survivor of gun violence, a pink ribbon can signify someone who has had breast cancer or who supports efforts to cure breast cancer. This doesn't mean that we should be labeled by our disabilities, but I think using color identifiers helps others to be just a little bit more tolerant and respectful.

In our busy society where we often spend too much time looking at our phones or being constantly on the run, getting a message like this is important.

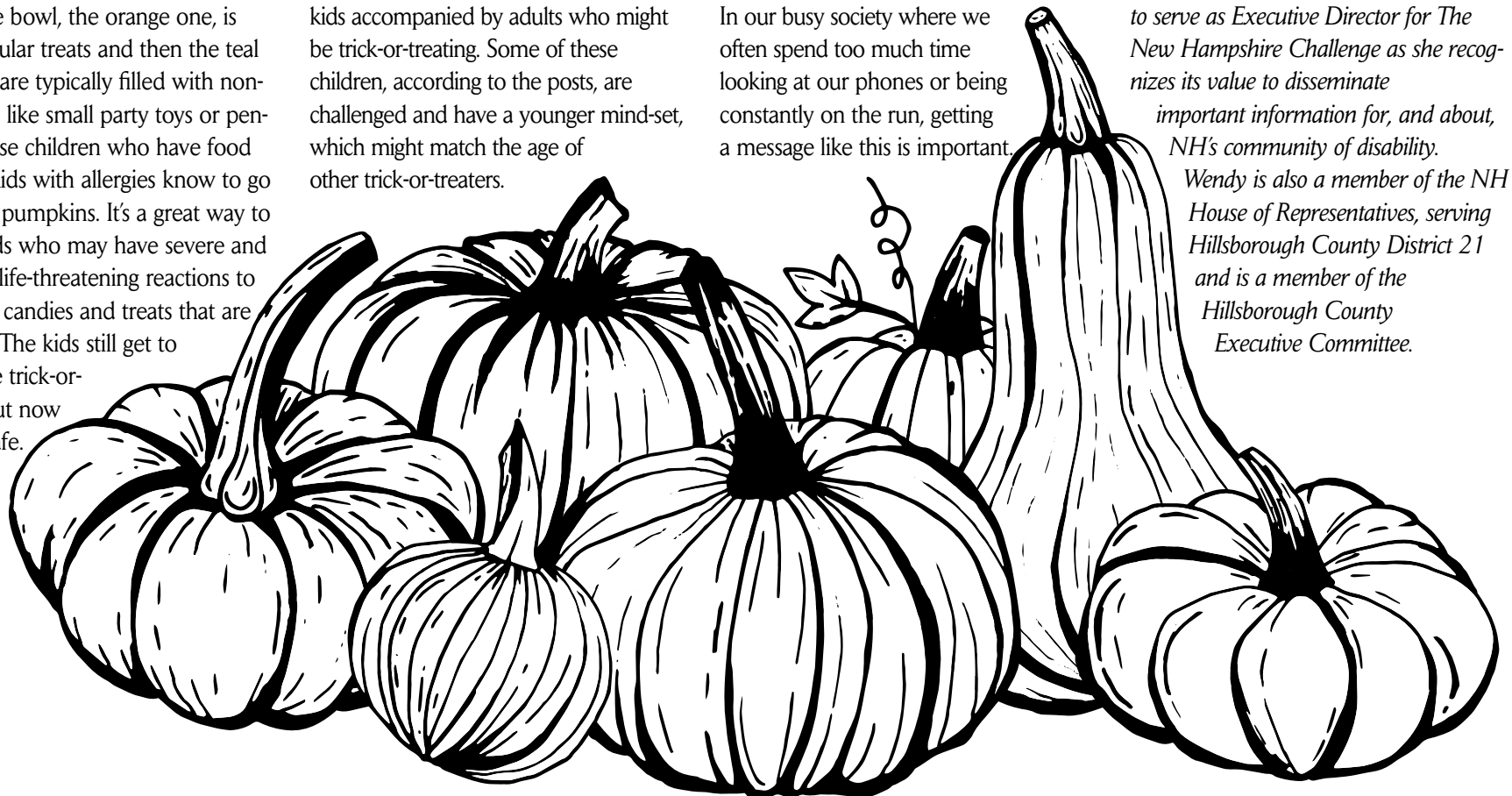
It's a reminder of how we should act, of how we're supposed to be acting toward everyone – with compassion and understanding.

We are coming up on the holiday season. There will be many people who will be overwhelmed by the activities and there will be some who will need some extra reassurance and assistance. While I love the idea of color coding as a way to alert people and I hope it continues, why don't we all simply try to enter the holiday season this year with compassion and good will toward all?

*As The New Hampshire Challenge's Executive Director, Wendy has been involved in disability advocacy for years after some of her children need Special Education Assistance in the public schools. After having advocacy training through the Parent Information Center (PIC), Wendy served as a volunteer Special Education Advocate for many families in Southern New Hampshire. She is proud to serve as Executive Director for The New Hampshire Challenge as she recognizes its value to disseminate*

*important information for, and about, NH's community of disability.*

*Wendy is also a member of the NH House of Representatives, serving Hillsborough County District 21 and is a member of the Hillsborough County Executive Committee.*





# Area Agencies for Developmental Services

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## Region 1 North Country

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### Northern Human Services

www.northernhs.org  
87 Washington St., Conway, NH 03818

**Chief Executive Officer:**  
Eric M. Johnson, 447-3347  
ejohnson@northernhs.org

### Family Support Council Co-Chairs:

Emily James, 651-8912  
emily\_james@brewsteracademy.org  
Carrie Duran, 219-6777  
carriemartinduran@gmail.com

### Family Support Coordinators:

Stacy Bilodeau, 752-1005 (Coos),  
sbilodeau@northernhs.org  
Shannon Smith, 837-9547 (Upper  
Grafton), ssmith@northernhs.org  
Amanda Emery (Carroll  
County), aemery@northernhs.org

### Family Centered Early Supports and Services

Karen Willet, 447-4356  
kwillet@northernhs.org

### Coordinator of Public Policy and Marketing

Karen M. Blake, 348-8830  
kblake@northernhs.org

### Northern NH Mental Health and Developmental Services

Main Office: 447-3347  
Berlin: 752-7404  
Conway: 447-2111  
Colebrook: 237-4955  
Littleton: 444-5358  
Wolfeboro: 569-1882

## Region 2 Lower Grafton & Sullivan County

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### Path Ways of the River Valley

www.pathwaysnh.org  
Administrative Office  
654 Main St., Claremont, NH 03743  
542-8706 or 448-2077

**Executive Director:**  
Mark Mills, 504-1517  
mmills@pathwaysnh.org

### Family Support Council Chair:

Dianne Milliken, 826-4361  
deemilliken@ymail.com

### Family Support Coordinator:

Cory Shomphe, 443-4107  
cshomphe@pathwaysnh.org

### Family Centered Early Supports and Services:

Heather Murphy Hicks, 504-1520  
hhicks@pathwaysnh.org

**Respite Coordinator:**  
Kristin LaRocque, 504-1538  
klarocque@pathwaysnh.org

### West Central Community Mental Health Services

Main Office: 448-0126  
Claremont: 542-2578, 542-5449

## Region 3 Lakes Region

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### Genesis Behavioral Health

Main Office: 524-1100  
Plymouth: 536-1128

### Lakes Region Community Services

www.lrcs.org  
719 North Main St., Laconia, NH 03247  
524-8811

### President & CEO:

Rebecca Bryant, 524-8811  
Rebecca.bryant@lrcs.org

### Family Support Council Chair:

Lynn Hilbrunner  
Lynn.hilbrunner@nhvh.nh.gov

### Executive Vice President – Individual and Family Services:

Shannon Kelly, 581-1502  
shannon.kelly@lrcs.org

### Vice President –

**Resource Coordination:**  
Robert Landry, 581-7994  
Robert.landry@lrcs.org

### Director – Family Resource & Autism

Centers of Central New Hampshire:  
Erin Pettengill, 581-1571  
Erin.pettengill@lrcs.org

### Home Assist – Elder Services:

Darlene Bolduc, Coordinator,  
581-1516  
Darlene.bolduc@lrcs.org

### Family-to-Family Coordinator:

Kaitlin Levesque, 581-1558  
Kaitlin.levesque@lrcs.org

### Benefits Technician:

Lisa Richardson, 581-1513  
Lisa.richardson@lrcs.org

## Region 4 Capitol District

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### Community Bridges

www.communitybridgesnh.org  
70 Pembroke Rd., Concord, NH 03301  
225-4153

### Executive Director:

Ann Potoczak, 225-4153, x239  
apotoczak@communitybridgesnh.org

### Family Support Council Chair:

Amy Girouard, urban12@comcast.net

### Director of Operations Individual & Family Supports:

Terri Warren, 225-4153 x269  
twarren@communitybridgesnh.org

### Family Centered Early Supports and Services:

Karen Lofgren  
klofgren@communitybridgesnh.org

### Director of Public Policy and Long Term Planning:

Sarah Aiken, 724-7039  
Saiken@communitybridgesnh.org

### Riverbend Community Mental Health Center

Main Office: 228-1600  
Franklin: 934-3400

## Region 5 Monadnock Region

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### Monadnock Developmental Services

121 Railroad St., Keene, NH 03431  
352-1304

### Executive Director:

Alan Greene, 352-1304,  
alan@mds-nh.org

### Family Support Council Co-Chairs:

Linda Phelps, lin29\_000@yahoo.com  
Steven Nelson, steven.nelso@tsa.dhs.gov

### Family Support Coordinator:

Lynn Yeiter, 352-1304,  
lynny@mds-nh.org

### Benefits Technician:

Piper Reason, 352-1304,  
piper@mds-nh.org

### Respite Coordinator:

Katie Sickles, Katie@mds-nh.org

### Monadnock Family Services

Main Office: 357-4400  
Jaffrey: 532-4291  
Keene: 357-6870  
Peterborough: 924-7236  
Walpole: 756-4735  
Winchester: 239-4376

## Region 6 Nashua

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### Gateways Community Services

www.gatewayscs.org  
144 Canal St., Nashua, NH 03064  
882-6333

### President/CEO:

Sandra Pelletier, 882-6333  
spelletier@gatewayscs.org

### Family Support Council Chair:

Mike Poulin, 402-2703  
Mpoulin11@comcast.net

### Sr. Director of Child and Family Services:

Mindy Pond, 459-2745  
mpond@gatewayscs.org

### Director Early Supports and Services:

Nancy Lucci, 459-2773  
nlucci@gatewayscs.org

### Gateways Autism Center:

484-4135

### Intake for Under 3 Years:

Roxanne Bouchard, 459-2775  
rbouchard@gatewayscs.org

### Intake for 3 Years and Older:

Claudia Slaney, 459-2787  
cslaney@gatewayscs.org

### Greater Nashua Mental Health Center at Community Council

Main Office: 889-6147

## Region 7 Manchester

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### Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester

Main Office: 668-4111

### Moore Center Services

www.moorecenter.org  
195 McGregor St., Unit 400  
Manchester, NH 03102

### President and CEO:

Paul Boynton, 206-2742  
paul.boynton@moorecenter.org

### Vice President of Individual & Family Services

Maureen Rose-Julian, 206-2726  
Maureen.rose-julian@moorecenter.org

### Regional Director, Family Centered Early

Supports and Services:  
Diane Bolduc, 206-2782  
Diane.bolduc@moorecenter.org

### Intake Coordinator, Family Support Ser- vices:

Lindsey Magee, 206-2879  
Lindsey.magee@moorecenter.org

### Intake Coordinator, Family Centered Early

Support and Services:  
Beth Warner, 206-2732  
Beth.warner@moorecenter.org

### Family Support Council Chair:

Pam McDonald, 471-0052  
Pmcdonald0@comcast.net

### Respite Coordinator, Family Support Services:

Aida Schneider, 206-2714  
Aida.schneider@moorecenter.org

# Area Agencies for Developmental Services

## Region 8 Seacoast

### One Sky Community Services

www.oneskyservices.org  
755 Banfield Rd. Suite #3  
Portsmouth, NH 03801  
436-6611

**CEO/Executive Director:**  
Chris Muns, x103  
c.muns@oneskyservices.org

**Manager of Family Services:**  
Sheena Farmer, x138  
s.farmer@oneskyservices.org

**Intake/Resource Coordinator:**  
Misty Riley, x147  
m.riley@oneskyservices.org

**Manager, Rep Payee and  
Benefits Services:**  
Denise Larsen  
d.larsen@oneskyseervices.org

**Family Advocacy and Education**  
Audrey Gerkin, x155  
a.gerkin@oneskyservices.org

**Family Support Council Chair:**  
Ann Sanok, annsanok@comcast.net

**Seacoast Mental Health Center**  
Main Office: 431-6703  
Exeter: 772-2710

## Region 9 Strafford County

### Community Partners

www.communitypartnersnh.org  
Forum Court, 113 Crosby Rd. Suite 1  
Dover, NH 03820  
516-9300

**Executive Director:**  
Brian Collins, 516-9300  
bcollins@communitypartnersnh.org

**Family Centered Early Supports  
and Services:**  
Suzanne Iverson, 516-9300  
siverson@communitypartnersnh.org

**Director of Family Support:**  
Deirdre Watson, 516-9300  
dwatson@communitypartnersnh.org

**In Home Supports:**  
Kristina Elliott, 516-9300  
kelliott@communitypartnersnh.org

**Respite Coordinator:**  
Emily Harring, 516-9300  
eharring@communitypartnersnh.org

**Transition Coordinator:**  
Nicolette Powers, 516-9300  
npowers@communitypartnersnh.org

**Director of Family Education and Advoca-  
cacy:**  
Jackie Hookway, 516-9300  
jhookway@communitypartnersnh.org

**Family Support Council Chair:**  
Denice Albert, 516-9566  
dalbert@communitypartnersnh.org

**Partners in Health Coordinator:**  
Paula Fraser, 516-9300  
pfraser@communitypartnersnh.org

**Partners in Health Council Chair:**  
Loretta McGrail, 866-0146

## Region 10 Atkinson/Salem

### Center for Life Management

Main Office (Derry): 434-1577  
Salem: 893-3548  
Windham: 434-9937

### Community Crossroads

www.communitycrossroadsnh.org  
893-1299, Fax 893-5401  
8 Commerce Drive, Suite 801  
Atkinson, NH 03811

**President/CEO:**  
Dennis Powers, x315  
dpowers@communitycrossroadsnh.org

**Area Agency Director:**  
Cynthia Mahar, x341  
cmahar@communitycrossroadsnh.org

**Director of Community Services  
(including FS and Adult Services):**  
Kelly Judson, x331  
kjudson@communitycrossroadsnh.org

**Director of Community Partnerships:**  
Jennifer Bertrand, x358  
jbertrand@communitycrossroadsnh.org

**Partners in Health Family  
Service Coordinator:**  
Maura Pennisi, x359  
mpennisi@communitycrossroadsnh.org

**Respite Coordinator:**  
Anita Trudel, x334  
atrudel@communitycrossroadsnh.org

**Family Centered Early Supports and  
Services:**  
Tammy Dudal, x326  
tdudal@communitycrossroadsnh.org

**Benefits Coordinator:**  
Deanna Johnson, x323  
djohnson@communitycrossroadsnh.org

**Family Support Council Chair:**  
Laurie Giguere, 893-1299484-4135

**Intake for Under 3 Years:**  
Roxanne Bouchard, 459-2775  
rbouchard@gatewayscs.org

**Intake for 3 Years and Older:**  
Claudia Slaney, 459-2787  
cslaney@gatewayscs.org

**Greater Nashua Mental  
Health Center at  
Community Council**  
Main Office: 889-6147

## Publications of Interest

### Ability Magazine

FREE

Provides information on New Technologies, the "Americans with Disability Act", Travel and Leisure, Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities, Human Interest Stories, National and Local Resource Centers and more.  
www.abilitymagazine.com

### Dialogue Magazine

FREE

Blindskills, Inc. is a non profit corporation, based in Salem, Oregon, that publishes Dialogue, a magazine written specifically for persons who are blind or are experiencing sight loss.  
www.blindskills.com

### Disabled Peoples' International

FREE

Disability magazine supported by Disabled Peoples' International.  
www.dpi.org

### Disability Solutions

FREE

A resource for families and others interested in Down syndrome and related disabilities. Published six times a year. For information on subscriptions, call 503-244-7662.

www.disabilitysolutions.org  
subscription@disabilitysolutions.org

### Exceptional Parent Magazine

Paid subscription, \$39.95 a year  
(201) 489-4111 or 1-877-372-7368  
Feature articles; extensive listing of national organizations for specific disabilities/conditions.  
www.EParent.com

### Headway

A quarterly newsletter provided by the Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire, giving out up-to-date information on brain injury, services and programs, and survivor stories. You may find current issues and information on our website at BIANH.org.

### New Developments

FREE

(301) 652-2263  
While membership is free, we encourage a donation. Published quarterly by Developmental Delay Resources, resource network integrating conventional and holistic approaches for parents and professionals.

devdelay@mindspring.com  
www.devdelay.org

### Parents Make the Difference

FREE

For Parents of Children Age 3-26 A publication of the Parent Information Center © 2010 The Parent Information Center of NH Parent Involvement is the "hidden in plain sight solution."  
www.nhparentsmakethedifference.org

### Pass It On

FREE

New Hampshire Family Voices  
800-852-3345 x4525  
Family to Family Health Information & Education Center. Supporting families having children with special healthcare needs and disabilities. Resources and information for families with special health care needs; quarterly. nhfv@yahoo.com  
www.nhfv.org

### Ragged Edge

FREE

Fax: (502) 899-9562  
Magazine written by and for people with disabilities with information on issues pertinent to the disability movement; bi-monthly circulation@raggededgemagazine.com  
www.raggededgemagazine.com

### NH Rap Sheet

A collaborative newsletter of the NH Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Disabilities Rights Center of NH, and UNH the Institute on Disability.  
www.nhddc.org/publications.html

### Stepping Stones NH

FREE

www.stepsstonesnh.com  
A guidebook for people with disabilities, their families and the professionals who support them. A specialty publication of Parenting New Hampshire sponsored by the NH Council on Developmental Disabilities.

# Where to Find Help—Statewide Resources

Readers: If you know of resources that are not listed here, please email me so I can add them to the list. To agencies: If your information has changed, please email the corrections to: [chris@newhampshirechallenge.org](mailto:chris@newhampshirechallenge.org). Thank you!

## Ability Jobs

[www.abilityjobs.com](http://www.abilityjobs.com)

Ability Jobs is the Leading Website dedicated to employment of people with disabilities. Ability Jobs is the largest resume bank with tens of thousands of job seekers with disabilities, from entry level candidates to PhDs. The goal of Ability Jobs and Job Access is to enable people with disabilities to enhance their professional lives by providing a dedicated system for finding employment. By posting job opportunities, or searching resumes, employers can find qualified persons with disabilities as well as demonstrate their affirmative action and open door policies.

## ABLE-NH

### Advocates Building Lasting Equality in New Hampshire

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

ABLE NH is a grass roots organization dedicated to working toward equality and advocating for the civil rights of individuals and families with disabilities. Local Chapters throughout the State.

## APSE

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

Association of Persons in Supported Employment (APSE): Advancing Employment, Connecting People. APSE is the only national organization with an exclusive focus on integrated employment and career advancement opportunities. See also [www.nhddc.org](http://www.nhddc.org).

## NAMI-NH

### National Alliance for the Mental Illness – NH

85 North State Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
603-225-5359

[info@naminh.org](mailto:info@naminh.org)  
[www.naminh.org](http://www.naminh.org)

Statewide organization and affiliates offer information and support to people with serious mental illnesses and their parents, children, spouses, siblings and friends.

## The Arc National Office

1825 K Street NW, Suite 1200  
Washington, DC 20006  
Phone: 202-534-3700 / 800-433-5255  
Fax: 202-534-3731

Email: [info@thearc.org](mailto:info@thearc.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/thearcus](https://www.facebook.com/thearcus)

Twitter: [twitter.com/thearcus](https://twitter.com/thearcus)

YouTube: [youtube.com/user/thearcoftheus](https://www.youtube.com/user/thearcoftheus)

## The Arc's Public Policy Office

Phone: 202-783-2229

Fax: 202-783-8250

Medicaid Reference Desk: The Arc of The United States now has a new Medicaid Reference Desk which is intended to help individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and their families as they navigate the complexities of Medicaid benefits, services and supports. Currently, there is no state chapter of The Arc in New Hampshire.

## Concord Regional Arc, Inc.

228-8279

PO Box 1173, Concord, 03302-1173

## Salem Arc

### SARC located at the Voter Center

893-9889

8 Centerville Drive

Salem, NH 03079

Elaine Lavin, Executive Director

Provides programs for Developmentally Disabled persons, conducts a public education campaign, assists with volunteer services, and provides counseling and information and referral services. Provides Classes in cooking, computers, etc.

## Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire

52 Pleasant Street

Concord, NH 03301

225-8400 or 1-800-773-8400

[mail@bianh.org](mailto:mail@bianh.org)

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

Statewide organization provides resource information to survivors of brain injury and their families.

## Bureau of Special Medical Services

271-4488

1-800-852-3345 x4488

Division of Public Health; broad range of health programs for diagnosis and treatment of children (0-20) who have physical disabilities, chronic illnesses or developmental delays.

## Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation

271-3471 or 1-800-299-1647

Fax: 271-7095

[www.ed.state.nh.us](http://www.ed.state.nh.us)

Provides individualized guidance, counseling and placement services to eligible consumers; also provides family services around needs of individual.

## Cedarcrest Center for Children with Disabilities

91 Maple Avenue

Keene, NH 03431

603-358-3384

[www.cedarcrest4kids.org](http://www.cedarcrest4kids.org)

Cedarcrest Center offers children with complex medical and developmental needs a healthy, safe environment where they can grow to their fullest potential. The Center provides a warm home-like setting where children are surrounded by caring, dedicated staff who encourage and nurture them every moment of the day.

## Child Development Center

653-6060

Assessment, diagnosis, follow-up; information and education.

## Council for Children and Adolescents with Chronic Health Conditions and their Families

105 Pleasant Street

Concord, NH 03301

Denise Brewitt

225-6400

1-800-852-3345 x4991

Fax: 271-5166

[ccachc@conversent.net](mailto:ccachc@conversent.net)

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

## Crotched Mountain REM (Refurbished Equipment Marketplace)

57 Regional Drive, Suite 7A

Concord, NH 03301

603.226.2900

[sales@atechservices.org](mailto:sales@atechservices.org)

[www.shopREM.com](http://www.shopREM.com)

Sale of quality refurbished equipment at affordable prices. Inventory on website and at our showroom in Concord.

## Crotched Mountain Ready, Set, Connect!

57 Regional Drive, Suite 7

Concord, NH 03301

340 Granite Street, Unit 3

Manchester, NH 03102

603.226.2900

[www.cmf.org/aba](http://www.cmf.org/aba)

Young children with autism can improve social, communication, daily living and motor skills through Crotched Mountain's Ready, Set, Connect! — an intensive site-based Applied Behavior Analysis treatment program led by Board Certified Behavior Analysts.

## Crotched Mountain Accessible Recreation and Sports

1 Verney Drive

Greenfield, NH 03047

603.547.3311

[cmars@crotchedmountain.org](mailto:cmars@crotchedmountain.org)

[www.cm-cmars.org](http://www.cm-cmars.org)

CMARS brings people of all abilities together with family and friends to enjoy sporting activities. Certified recreational therapists and volunteers provide needed support, equipment modification and expert instruction.

## Department of Education Bureau of Special Education

101 Pleasant Street

Concord, NH 03301

603-271-3494

Fax: 271-1953

[www.ed.state.nh.us](http://www.ed.state.nh.us)

Information and advocacy. Responsible for ensuring that school districts provide a free and appropriate education to all educationally handicapped students.

## NH Department of Education Public Information Office

Lori Temple

(603) 271-6646

Email: [Lori.Temple@doe.nh.gov](mailto:Lori.Temple@doe.nh.gov)

"If children cannot learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn."

## Department of Health & Human Services

[dhhs.state.nh.us](http://dhhs.state.nh.us)

This website is for the entire array of services that are provided by State government. One program is SMS, Special Medical Services, the NH Title V Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs is just one of the programs offered by the Bureau of Developmental Services. SMS offers a broad array of diagnostic, treatment and coordination services for children birth to 21 with chronic illness, physical disabilities or developmental delays. Programs are Nutrition, Feeding and Swallowing, Care Coordination, Child Development evaluation and Neuromotor Disabilities clinics and access to Family Support and Resource programs. Call Nurse on Call to get more information.

## Direct Connect

[DDhttps://directconnect.unh.edu](https://directconnect.unh.edu)

A grant from the Department of Labor to provide training opportunities for Direct Support Professionals to anyone who would need someone to assist them, especially anyone with a disability and/or elderly. DirectConnect will address the growing direct care workforce shortage in New Hampshire by providing recruitment, training and retention opportunities aimed at creating a sustainable workforce.

## Disability is Natural

[www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com)

Kathie Snow's email [kathie@disabilityisnatural.com](mailto:kathie@disabilityisnatural.com). Kathie Snow is best known for her website and eNewsletter, Disability is Natural. She is a marvelous resource for parents and professionals as well as policy makers.



# Where to Find Help—Statewide Resources

## **Disability Rights Center – NH**

64 N Main Street, Suite 2, 3rd Flr  
Concord, NH 03301-4913  
603-228-0432  
1-800-834-1721  
Fax: 225-2077  
advocacy@drcnh.org  
Provides legal services and other advocacy assistance to persons with disabilities; information/referral and publishes the Rap Sheet @www.drcnh.org/rapsheet.htm.

## **Dreamcatchers NH**

1087 Elm Street, Suite 257  
Manchester, NH 03101  
info@dreamcatchersnh.org  
www.dreamcatchersnh.org  
Our mission is to provide opportunities for young people living with a disability to catch their dreams of being part of a community and making friends.

## **Early Education and Intervention Network of NH**

10 Ferry St. #416  
Concord, NH 03301  
603-228-2040  
eeinnh@earthlink.net  
www.eeinnh.org  
Information/referral; early intervention and pre-school programs for children with Developmental Disabilities or at risk for developmental delay.

## **www.family-friendly-fun.com/disabilities/coping-stress.htm**

This website offers parents information on coping strategies and parent groups along with interactive sections where parents can ask questions and get the thoughts & support of other parents. It also has several Guides that can be down loaded.

## **Enable Mart**

www.enablemart.com  
Assistive technology devices can help make the lives of all individuals easier. EnableMart is the worldwide leader in assistive technology distribution.

## **Governor's Commission on Disability**

121 S. Fruit St., Suite 101A  
Concord, NH 03301  
603-271-2773  
1-800-852-3405  
Fax: 603-271-2837  
www.state.nh.us/disability  
email: disability@nh.gov  
disability@gcd.nh.gov  
www.nh.gov/disability  
The Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD) is a State of New Hampshire agency that serves people with disabilities and is

created pursuant to NH RSA 275-C. The GCD advises the Governor, legislature, state agencies, and assists citizens with the many available disability-related services, disability-specific state and federal laws, as well as provides referrals, education, and information on subjects important to citizens with disabilities.

## **Granite State Independent Living (GSIL)**

603-228-9680 (V/TTY)  
1-800-826-3700 (V/TTY)  
www.gsil.org  
Information and referral, peer support and counseling, skills training, advocacy, interpreter and personal care attendant services, transportation, social and recreational programs and accessibility services.

## **Institute on Disability/UCED**

(Concord office)  
Phone: 603-228-2084  
Fax: 603-228-3270  
(Durham office)  
Phone: 603-862-4320  
Fax: 603-862-0555  
www.iod.unh.edu  
Training, technical assistance and resources with the goal of improving the quality of life and level of participation of people with disabilities in schools, the community and the workplace.

## **Medical Genetics**

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center  
603-653-6044  
Genetic testing and counseling, information and referral. The National Clearinghouse on the Direct Care Workforce  
www.directcareclearinghouse.org/i\_workerassolist.jsp  
The National Clearinghouse on the Direct Care Workforce collects, analyzes, and disseminates information concerning the health care paraprofessional workforce. In New Hampshire you can find more information at www.nhddc.org.  
See also www.nadsp.org.

## **New Hampshire Council on Developmental Disabilities**

2.5 Beacon Street  
Concord NH 03301  
Phone: 603-271-3236  
1-800-852-3345, x3236  
www.NHCDD.org  
Monitors services; promotes policy; advocacy.

## **NH Family Ties**

Ashlee Fye, M.Ed  
NH Family Ties Statewide Coordinator  
P2PUSA Alliance Member of NH  
Community Bridges  
70 Pembroke Road  
Concord NH 03301  
(603) 226-3212 x241  
1-800-499-4153 x241  
afye@communitybridgesnh.org  
www.nhfamilietyes.org  
Specializes in networking families of children who have a special health care need, disability or mental health issue; support and information.

## **NH Family Voices, Family to Family Health Information Center**

271-4525  
(800) 852-3345 x4525  
nhfamilyvoices@nhfv.org  
www.nhfv.org  
Assists families in finding their way through the maze of services by providing information and emotional support, identifying resources available within the community, and making available a lending library of books, videos and audio tapes; distributes free newsletter, Pass It On.

## **NH Family Voices Lending Library**

The Lending Library provides information and resources free of charge (upon request) to residents of NH including families, caregivers, educators and other professionals seeking information, referrals or resources on topics relating to children of all ages. The Lending Library maintains a user-friendly website with access to 1) the Online Lending Library Collection containing over 5,000 books, videos, dvds, etc. Patrons can easily request items using the convenient Online Request Form. Requested materials are then delivered to the individual's Local Public Library. 2) a Statewide Directory of NH specific programs and services connecting families, caregivers and professionals; as well as a 3) Statewide Listing of workshops and events for families and professionals.

## **Future in Sight**

603-224-4039  
(800) 464-3075  
services@futureinsight.org  
www.futureinsight.org  
Provides information, education, advocacy, referral services and rehabilitation to children and adults who are blind or visually impaired to enable them to maintain their independence.

## **Northeast Passage**

UNH/Recreation  
862-0070  
northeastpassage@unh.edu  
www.nepassage.org  
Provides (for a fee) equipment and expertise to individuals, schools and companies to ensure access to educational outings and recreational activities.

## **Office of Public Guardian**

603-224-8041  
Provides legal guardianship services for people with Developmental Disabilities and mental illnesses.

## **Parent Information Center**

54 Old Suncook Road  
Concord, NH 03301  
224-7005  
www.nhspecialied.org  
Information, support and training around educational issues and advocacy.

## **People First of NH**

Janet Hunt  
4 Park Street, Suite 304B  
Concord, NH 03301  
603-568-2128  
www.peoplefirstofnh.org  
www.institutionsclosethem.org  
www.linkedin.com/in/janetehunt  
Self-advocacy group of people "working together to help each other take charge of our lives"; help team available for new or existing groups; 24-hour answering service.

## **Seacoast Child Development Clinic at UNH**

603-862-0561 (Voice/TDD)  
603-862-0034 (fax)  
www.seacoastclinic.unh.edu  
An interdisciplinary clinical consultation service, assisting families of children with Developmental Disabilities by using a team approach. Evaluation may include home and/or school visit, depending on needs of child and family. The program is affiliated with Dartmouth Center for Genetics and Child Development and the Institute on Disability, UNH.

# Additional Resources

## **seriweb.com**

This site offers Internet accessible information resources of interest to those involved in the fields related to Special Education. This collection exists in order to make on-line Special Education resources more easily and readily available in one location. This site will continually modify, update, and add additional informative links.

## **Service Link**

1-866-634-9412

ServiceLink Resource Centers are the places in your community to get answers about healthcare and other services for older adults, persons with disabilities and family caregivers.

## **Special Olympics NH**

603-624-1250

1-800-639-2608

Fax: 624-4911

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

SONH is a sports organization providing year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

## **“Talking Books”**

(NH Bureau of Services to Persons with Disabilities)

271-3429 or 1-800-491-4200

[www.nh.gov/nhsl/talking\\_books](http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/talking_books)

FREE service for people with visual, physical, and reading disabilities. Supplies (by mail) cassette books and records and equipment needed to use them. Fiction, non-fiction and popular magazines available.

## **TECH-LAB**

117 Pleasant St., Dolloff Bldg.

Concord, NH 03301

603-226-2900

[mpeabody@nhaat.mv.com](mailto:mpeabody@nhaat.mv.com)

Hands-on technology exploration; loans of assistive technology; training; technical support.

## **The Laura Foundation**

1014 Eaton Rd., Madison, NH 03849

[laurafoundation@gmail.com](mailto:laurafoundation@gmail.com)

## **Tri-County CAP, Inc./ Guardianship Services**

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

Whitefield Office:

34 Jefferson Rd.,

Whitefield, NH 03598-1221

Phone: (603) 837-9561

Fax: (603) 837-2613

Concord Office:

18 Low Avenue, Concord, NH 03301-4902

Phone: (603) 224-0805

Fax: (603) 229-1758

A private, non-profit agency providing guardianship, protective and fiduciary services to persons with disabilities in New Hampshire. Provides legal conservatorship

services, court appointed SpecialNeeds Trustee, Representative Payee, Federal Fiduciary, and we provide consulting services to family guardians, etc. Our scope of clients also include individuals with TBI, PTSD, and elderly dementia.

## **UNH Institute on Disability**

10 West Edge Drive

Suite 101

Durham, NH 03824

phone: 603.862.4320 relay: 711

fax: 603.862.0555

[iod.unh.edu](http://iod.unh.edu)

## **Vision and Hearing Support Services at PIC**

224-7005 ext. 112

VSA arts of New Hampshire

228-4330

[info@vsartsnh.org](mailto:info@vsartsnh.org)

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

Provides opportunities in the arts for people with disabilities and technical assistance for programmatic and cultural access.

## **www.211nh.org**

An initiative of Granite United Way. Call 2-1-1 and talk to a trained information and referral specialist with information on all the health and human services available to NH citizens.

## **aapd.com**

American Association of People with Disabilities is the country's largest cross-disability membership organization, organizes the disability community to be a powerful voice for change—politically, economically, and socially.

## **www.ablenh.org**

Advocates Building Lasting Equality in New Hampshire is a new grassroots advocacy organization for families & professionals concerned with achieving inclusive natural supports for children and adults with disabilities in New Hampshire.

## **www.access-able.com**

Access-Able Travel Resource providing access information and resources to the mature and travelers with disabilities.

## **www.ada.gov**

American Disability Association provides access to Americans with Disabilities Act regulations for businesses and State and local governments, and technical assistance.

## **www.albinism.org**

The National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation is an organization where people with albinism, their families and those that work with them can get information, ask questions and share their experiences.

## **www.autismnow.org**

The Autism NOW Center is the nation's source for resources and information on community-based solutions for individuals with autism, other Developmental Disabilities.

## **www.autism-society.org** **asanet@autism-society.org**

The Autism Society, the nation's leading grassroots autism organization, exists to improve the lives of all affected by autism. Founded in 1965 by Dr. Bernard Rimland, Dr. Ruth

Sullivan and many other parents of children with autism, the Autism Society is the leading source of trusted and reliable information about autism.

## **www.benefitscheckup.org**

A nonprofit initiative led by the National Council on Aging which features a database of roughly 1,000 federal and state programs for the elderly and people with disabilities.

## **www.csni.org**

Community Support Network, Inc. is a not for profit organization that works in support of the 10 Area Agencies throughout the state of New Hampshire that provide services to individuals with Developmental Disabilities and acquired brain injury and their families disabilities.

## **www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/bds/qualitycouncil/index.htm**

The Developmental Services Quality Council was established to NH Department of Health and Human Services

## **www.dot.gov/accessibility**

The US Department of Transportation's site for information about air travel for people with disabilities.

## **www.Benefits.gov**

The official benefits website of the U.S. government Informs citizens of benefits they may be eligible for Provides information on how to apply for assistance.

## **www.disabilityscoop.com**

The national Developmental Disability news site covering Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Down syndrome, Intellectual Disability and more.

## **www.dredf.org**

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, founded in 1979 by people with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities, is a national law and policy center.

## **www.emerginghorizons.com**

Consumer oriented magazine about accessible travel. Available in print and on-line.

## **www.easterseals.com**

## **www.cms.hhs.gov**

Information from the US. Centers on Medicare and Medicaid (formerly the U.S. Health Care Financing Administration).

## **www.crotchedmountain.org**

Crotched Mountain is a charitable organization employing more than 900 people, whose mission is to serve individuals with disabilities and their families, embracing personal

choice and development, and building communities of mutual support. More information & resources on the website.

## **www.dhhs.state.nh.us**

NH Department of Health and Human Services web site. Information on benefits programs.

## **www.hhs.gov/newfreedom**

US Department of Health and Human Services' New Freedom Initiative.

## **www.nh.gov/disability**

The Governor's Commission's goal is to remove the barriers, architectural or attitudinal, which bar persons with disabilities from participating in the mainstream of society.

## **www.inclusionresearch.org**

Inclusion Research Institute—a nonprofit organization whose activities include education, research and dissemination of information promoting inclusion.

## **www.nhspinal.org**

NH Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association.

## **www.nod.org**

National Organization on Disability

## **www.nhspecial.org**

Parent Information Center (PIC), is a state-wide parent center for families of children with disabilities.

## **www.sath.org**

Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality

## **www.silcnh.org**

Information and Resource Newsletter NH Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) is updated monthly with a host of resources from A to V under resources that can be sent by email, just hit subscribe or send to: NH Statewide Independent Living Council c/o Governor's Commission on Disability

## **www.maineadaptive.org**

Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation promotes year-round education and training for individuals with disabilities in order to develop skills, enhance independence, and provide enjoyment through active recreation.

## **www.socialsecurity.gov**

Information on Supplemental Security Income (SSI), disability and related benefits.

## **www.yourtickettowork.com**

Information on the Social Security Ticket to Work program.

## **www.family-friendly-fun.com/disabilities/coping-stress.htm**

This website offers parents information on coping strategies and parent groups along with interactive sections where parents can ask questions and get the thoughts & support of other parents. It also has several Guides that can be down loaded.

# The Holiday Feast – Have Fun, But Stay Safe

By Cynthia Diane Foss



Cynthia Diane Foss

While one holiday season has passed, other celebrations like St. Patrick's Day and Easter are on the "food horizon" for many of us. For most of us, the biggest challenge is not overdoing it calorically. The late show hosts all have a field day joking about how much food they and their friends consume. "Prairie Home Companion" the famous radio show, even had an imaginary sponsor for a business that rented "self-storage" units. It focused on those of us who need to lock ourselves up for a month to lose all the weight we gained between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Articles that focus on helping folks avoid overeating are pretty common this time of year. However, there are some people who struggle with being able to swallow favorite foods safely. The least of their worries are the calories. For some people, being able to safely swallow foods and liquids without choking or aspirating portions of food into their lungs is a real challenge. It's hard enough to manage calories during the holidays, but what strategies are available for family members and friends that physically struggle to consume holiday meals?

Well, there's mostly good news. First, almost all of the traditional holiday meals this season are easy to eat. For example, take Thanksgiving. Almost every food on the cornucopia of Thanksgiving treats is soft. Baked potatoes? Slather them in seasonings, gravy, mash them, and most people can eat them. Mashed potatoes are even easier to consume because they are already seasoned and mashed. Just add gravy and they're done. Turnips, squash, cranberry sauce (jelled, not whole), sweet potatoes, and creamed spinach are of a similar consistency and need little, if any, doctoring to be edible by all at the table. Desserts are also soft: think pumpkin pie, cheesecake, squash pie, chocolate cream pie, chocolate mousse, moist cakes, etc. Christmas with only a few exceptions (e.g., the ever-popular Christmas ham) is very similar to Thanksgiving. With a little planning, most of the favorite seasonal foods can be prepared so that they are safe for all.

Now, the semi-bad news involves the traditional meats of the season. Tom Turkey and Harry the Easter Ham should be approached with caution along with the corn beef and cabbage that will be at the center of many St. Patrick's Day celebrations. I am not saying you can't have them, but what I am saying is that there are a few caveats to

servicing them. First of all, moist meat is easier for everyone to tolerate, especially if they have trouble swallowing foods. Meats are safest for everyone if cut up into bite size pieces and chewed slowly. Some people do best with moist, cut up meats that are consumed with mashed potatoes or another mashed vegetable. The key is that moisture helps people chew food and prepare it for swallowing. Small bites of cut up, moist meat eaten with mashed veggies is easier to prepare for swallowing because the mashed veggies make it easier for folks to chew and form a food ball that the tongue can propel down the esophagus to the tummy. The drier the food, the harder it is for loved ones with swallowing issues to swallow it without choking.

There are also some caveats to serving liquids. If a loved one has specifically been told that they need to thicken their liquids, encourage them to bring their choice of thickening agent with them for the meal. Pre-thickened liquids are also available for purchase online, so planning accordingly may be helpful. If a loved one has no liquid precautions, then liquids can be alternated with solid foods to help moisten them and make them easier to swallow.

The only bad news I have about favorite holiday foods is regarding anything that falls under the category of dry, small, hard, or slippery. These foods are difficult to manage once they get in the mouth. For example, rice is considered a scatter food because no matter what one does to it, the result tiny little pieces of food that tend to spread out when eaten. This makes rice more difficult to form into a ball and swallow. Chunky stuffing is not as bad as rice,

but a smooth stuffing with no chopped celery, onions, or mushrooms is easier to manage. Nuts are risky. They are hard, dry, and while tasty, very easy to lose control of when popped into one's mouth. Hard cookies like shortbread or Russian tea cakes also tend to be dry. A nice cream pie would be much easier to manage.

So, my best advice for eating safely this holiday season is the following:

1. Cut up meats into small bites. Avoid dry meats.
2. Eating mashed vegetables with small bites of meats can help the swallowing process be more efficient.
3. Gravy can be used to moisten meats and vegetables.
4. Liquids can be alternate with solids to help with the swallowing process.
5. Take the time to chew foods thoroughly.
6. Take small bites and small sips of food and drink.
7. Avoid hard, slippery foods like nuts, pickles, raisins, etc.
8. Serve moist soft desserts, as opposed to shortbreads or hard cookies.

I feel stuffed just writing this article. Let's face it: Holiday meals this time of year are very easy to survive if you are serving family and friends with unique eating needs. Just take a few precautions to ensure a fun and safe celebration.

*Cynthia Diane Foss is a speech language pathologist with over 30 years of experience. She is nationally certified by ASHA, and holds licensure in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Louisiana, and California. She has her own private practice, Mindful Communication. She specializes in child language disorders.*



# Keeping Pace

## Pembroke charter school offers a personalized and dynamic learning experience

By Chris Dugan



**Pembroke, NH:** When touring PACE Career Academy and talking to students, it quickly becomes evident that the educational approach truly resonates for certain kids. “I feel like we’re getting support for learning certain subjects, while also getting a sense of the working world,” said Magnus, one of the school’s 56 students. At 17, the senior hopes to become an electrician after graduation, or acquire skills for another trade.



“We have a close-knit environment here,” Magnus continued. “You are able to create strong friendships with other students as well as with our teachers. That means a lot to me.”

Unassuming on the outside, the Academy bustles with activity inside and houses grades 9-12 with a singular focus on creating the best possible outcome for each

student upon graduation, be it post-secondary education, technical training or immediate entry in the workforce.

“People learn in different ways,” notes Jorge Santana, PACE’s Executive Director. “Our goal is to understand each student’s needs and develop a personalized plan to help she or he succeed and thrive.”

Santana added that children who attend the charter school come from a large swath of the state and arrive at the school for a variety of reasons. “They might be seeking a smaller educational environment; they may have special needs, require different services and support programs, or they may have other challenges to overcome.”

Rachel Carver, the Academy’s Assistant Director, has been with PACE for five years and helps students connect their classroom experiences with “real world opportunities through internships, business tours, and other community opportunities.”

The school has visiting professionals as frequent classroom speakers and arranges internships and job shadow opportunities for students with a variety of area businesses, Carver added.

She went on to say that mission of the school is to work closely with students and parents to “self-design” academic, career, and personal growth plans. “Our goal is to position the students to become an important part of their community.”

Santana noted the PACE is among a network of charter schools in the state and that those schools share best practices and often partner on key initiatives. He added

that end, he added that PACE has created partnerships with the NH Food Bank and local health care providers among others. “We really are trying to view this from a big picture perspective.”

As is the case with other public schools, there is no charge to attend PACE. While the school does receive some level of support from sending towns, fund-raising is part of Santana’s job description. He



that charter schools like PACE are held to the same state educational and regulatory standards as all public schools, utilizing both Common Core concepts and other cross-cutting competencies to provide students with a concrete, focused and practical pathway to graduation and their adult lives.

Vesper, 17, hopes to work in computer programming upon graduation. The soft-spoken senior shared that he greatly values the “one on one support we get from our teachers. I feel very connected here.”

Santana joined PACE a little over a year following a social services career in Massachusetts and stated that the Academy can also serve as a hub for non-educational services for students in need. “Some students have other needs like health care, social services or other programs in order to flourish.” To

writes several grants each year and the school holds annual fund-raisers to offset operational costs.

“At the end of the day, we’re seeking to create an environment to help all of our kids find their voice, understand their passion, and grow into happy and productive young adults.” Santana concluded.

PACE is currently accepting student applications for 2020-2021 academic year. To learn more, please visit: [www.pacecareeracademy.org](http://www.pacecareeracademy.org).

# Forget PC Viruses and Get a More Secure Chromebook

By Marc Nozell



Marc Nozell

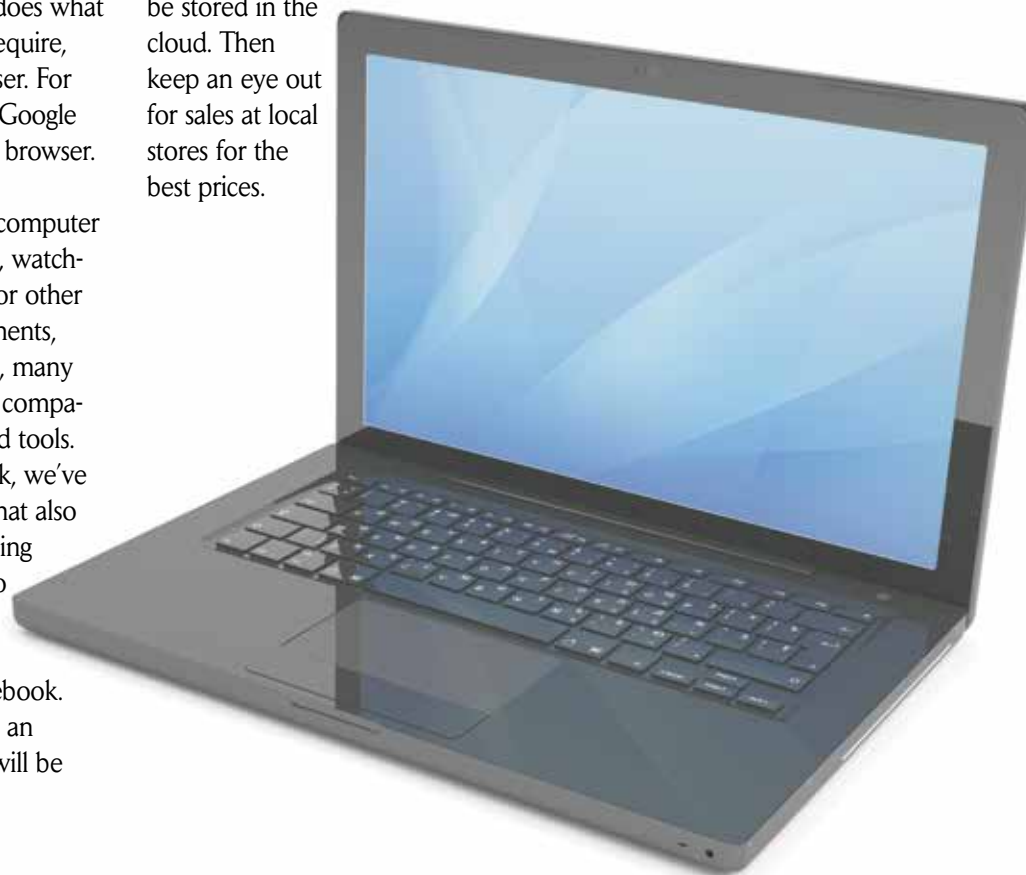
Is this the year to ditch the hassles of using a Microsoft Windows laptop? Everyone has heard of malware or viruses that infect traditional PCs. And the headache of recovering from one. And worrying about purchasing a good antivirus package. It may be time to try something new.

In the last few years, there has been an alternative to a Microsoft Windows laptop - the Google Chromebook. Google has alternative software that does what 90% of most internet users require, namely, running a web browser. For instance, you are likely using Google Chrome as your current web browser.

Think about what you use a computer for - email, browsing the web, watching movies on Netflix, Hulu, or other streaming services. For documents, spreadsheets or presentations, many people, including many large companies, are moving to web-based tools. At the company where I work, we've embraced the Google Suite that also includes a calendar -- all running in a web browser. Even photo editing tools like Adobe Photoshop or Lightroom are available to run on a Chromebook. Generally speaking, if there is an Android smartphone app, it will be available on a Chromebook.

Google has worked with various hardware companies (HP, Acer, Lenovo, Dell, Samsung, etc.) to create relatively inexpensive laptops in the \$250 to \$400 range. There are some models that include a touch screen for more of a smartphone experience. Some slightly more expensive models can convert into a tablet form. And there are higher-end versions suitable for more demanding business use. For a home user, if you only have a few browser tabs open at a time, the performance is very snappy.

The market is rapidly evolving which makes it nearly impossible to make a recommendation for a particular model. That said, here's some advice. Search for "best Chromebook" and you'll find several articles with current recommendations for various price ranges. I suggest getting at least 4G or 8G of memory and a screen size that you prefer. The amount of disk space is not a big concern since your files will be stored in the cloud. Then keep an eye out for sales at local stores for the best prices.



So, what kind of user is a Chromebook \*not\* suitable for? If you have a need to use PC software that must be installed on the laptop. Maybe you are using an accounting package that doesn't have a web version. Or some software for assistive technology that is only available for Windows (NB: Chromebooks includes Chrome Vox), or some hardware that isn't supported by the Chrome operating system like a FAX or direct connect scanner.

So, consider your needs and budget, then take a minute to think about how you use your laptop and consider switching to a Chromebook for 2020!

*Marc Nozell is a Senior Cloud Success Architect at Red Hat, Inc and is a long-time disability rights advocate and board member for the New Hampshire Challenge.*

## Did You Know?

### Granite State Music Therapy

Dating back to the late 1700's, music as a form of healing and therapy has been accepted by many medical professionals. According the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA), the first published studies as to its efficacy were written in 1804 and over the past 200 years, it has become a valued part of treatment for many.

Beyond the acute care setting, music therapy is also a growing practice for communities of disability. According to Elizabeth Ferguson, MT-BC (Music Therapist Board Certified) and founder of Granite State Music Therapy (GSMT), it is a related service intervention under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Ferguson, who began practicing music therapy in 2010 and formed Granite State Music Therapy in 2014, treats a range of clients in multiple settings. "Part of the process is providing support in a location to best meet the needs of the client," she says. "I provide therapy in my office, in the home, and in schools."

According to Ferguson, individuals of all ages and abilities can participate in, and benefit from, music therapy. Her clients have a broad range of conditions including mental health needs, physical disabilities, speech and communication disorders, Autism spectrum disorders and Alzheimer's disease.

New clients are assessed and an individualized treatment plan, with goals, is developed. Progress is closely documented and shared with clients and families.

To learn more about Granite State Music Therapy, please visit [www.granitestatemusictherapy.com](http://www.granitestatemusictherapy.com).