
Booster Newsletter

"WE DO SO THEY CAN"

BOOSTER ORGANIZATION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

What's going on in the Legislative Session

The 2024 Iowa legislative session has begun and Governor Reynolds has introduced her areas of focus as well. A number of issues that may impact people with disabilities will face the legislature this year.

Governor Reynolds outlined a plan to overhaul the state's Area Education Agencies (AEAs). A new Special Education Division within the Iowa Department of Education would receive some of the money saved by paring down the AEAs. While this plan will not affect adults at Empowering Abilities, it may have an impact on children in special education around the state.

The Governor has also asked legislators to consider legislation that would reorganize the 13 existing mental health/disability services regions and replace them with 7 districts. Each district would contract with Iowa Health and Human Services, and the disability services portion would be relocated to the Aging and Disability network, currently housed in Area Agencies on Aging. This initiative has many moving parts, so more information will be coming as those details are determined.

Some bills of interest that have already been introduced are:

House File 2009—Requires the state to survey state parks each year to find out if they are accessible to people with disabilities.

House Study Bill 509—Increases how much a legal guardian can take out of a Medicaid trust fund for personal needs before getting court approval (from \$10/mo. to \$50/mo.).

House File 243—Eliminates the age (21) and maximum benefit (\$36K/yr.) for autism coverage in health insurance.

House File 626—No longer allows insurance companies to switch a person's medication to a cheaper or similar product without doctor approval.

In other news

- Beginning in 2024, the IRS raised ABLE account limits. Individuals are now allowed to set aside \$18,000 in their ABLE accounts without the fear of losing government benefits.

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- Amerigroup, one of Iowa's Medicaid managed care organizations, changed its name to Wellpoint Iowa. New ID cards will be sent to members; however, the old cards can still be used.

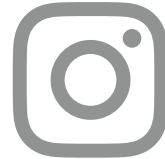


- A new national survey of disability service providers showed that providers are increasing their waiting lists for services, struggling to maintain quality services, and cutting back on services. Reasons for this included low reimbursement rates for services and staff shortages.

Contact Your Legislators

Visit the Empowering Abilities website at www.empoweringabilities.org for contact information for the governor or legislators.

Follow legislators on social media to stay informed!



Dates to Note



INSERVICE

Hickory Grove and Brady St. inservice day is Tuesday, February 13th. Daily Discovery Services will be closed for participants that day.

BOOSTER MEETING

The next Booster meeting will take place Tuesday, February 20th at 1 PM at the Hickory Grove Road location.

BOOSTER VALENTINE'S DAY DANCE

The Booster's dance for Empowering Abilities participants will be at Hickory Grove Road on Friday, February 2nd, from 6-8 PM. Anyone who is able to volunteer should arrive between 5-5:30 PM.

NUTS AND CANDY SALE

Need some Super Bowl snacks? NO PROBLEM! Some nuts and candy remain at our Hickory Grove Road location. Contact Lexi Keppy: lexikeppy@empoweringabilities.org/563-391-4834.

BOWLING REMINDER

Bowling is now on Sunday evenings from 5:30-7:30 PM. To eat dinner, please arrive between 4-4:30 PM. If you are not eating dinner, please arrive by 5 PM.



**Day Services are
open on
President's Day.**



Here's what you can do to help *Spread the Word: Inclusion*

There has been a time in everyone's life where they have felt excluded. Being excluded can be incredibly hurtful and make people feel isolated. That is exactly what the "R-word" does. It targets a certain group of people making them feel isolated and the "Spread the Word to End the Word" campaign has worked tirelessly to improve inclusivity.

Take the Pledge: Go to www.spreadtheword.global to make a pledge to be more inclusive in the community.

Spread the Word: After taking the pledge to spread inclusion, spread the word so others will too. Share your pledge on social media.

Be a leader: Challenge others to make a pledge and promote inclusion.



“What began as a movement to eliminate the 'R-word', "Spread the Word to End the Word" has evolved into a campaign to promote inclusion. Now known as **Spread the Word: Inclusion**, the vision is to encourage communities, schools, and workplaces to take action for inclusion.

Take the pledge on **March 6th!**

HANDS Golf Outing

Crow Valley Golf Club
03 June 2024

\$225 per golfer/\$900 per foursome

Registration Includes:

- Green fees and cart
- Golfer Gift
- On-course beverages
- Cocktail party with heavy appetizers after golf
- Traveling lunch wagon
- Pin events
- Scoring prizes



REGISTRATION
OPENING SOON.
STAY TUNED.



Saturday, August 24th Scavenger Hunt

\$30 per person

Up to 6 person teams

Includes: shirt, food and beverage, the event, and a whole lot of fun!

More details to come.

If you are interested in supporting the HANDS Golf Outing or Empowering Abilities Scavenger Hunt through a sponsorship, contact: Lexi Keppy 563-391-4834/
lexikeppy@empoweringabilities.org.



EMPOWERING ABILITIES

Empowering Abilities
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Davenport, IA 52806
<http://empoweringabilities.org>

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2024 BOOSTER DUES JOIN/RENEWAL



\$25 for individual, family or corporate membership

Name _____

(Please include both spouses' names, if applicable.)

Business (Associate Members) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(_____) _____ E-Mail _____

Please make checks payable to: Boosters

Return to: 3402 Hickory Grove Rd., Davenport, IA 52806