



IFSP Digest

October 2020

IFSP provides a monthly news digest to highlight resources, events, and trainings that may be of interest to self-advocates and families. The digest is distributed electronically via the IFSP Listserv.

As we expand our shared resources, we invite you to share information that you think would be of interest to others.

You can share your newsletter subscription recommendations with us at ifspcom@dbhds.virginia.gov.

To join the IFSP Listserv, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/IFSPlistserv>.

Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Office of Integrated Health

OIH distributes health and safety alerts that emphasize the unique needs of people with developmental disabilities.

OIH, October 2020 Newsletter Highlights

- **Influenza/Flu Vaccines and Pneumococcal Vaccine-** Fall is the beginning of flu season. In order to lower your risk of getting the flu, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that individuals, aged 6 months and older, get a flu vaccine by the end of October. The CDC also suggests that some individuals get a pneumococcal vaccine. Pneumococcal infections can cause pneumonia and meningitis. It is common in children under the age of 2, adults over 65, and those with chronic health conditions.
- **Wellness Corner-** The environment can have an impact on your overall wellness and health. Going for a walk outdoors to get fresh air and keeping an organized home are a couple of ways to adopt a stress-free environment. Learn what else you can do to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- **Dental Facts and Tips-** Individuals with developmental disabilities are at an increased risk for poor dental hygiene. Suggestions are given on how to increase tooth brushing compliance.

To access the newsletter, please visit:

<http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/assets/doc/OIH/october-2020-newsletter.pdf>

Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Office of Community Quality Improvement

The Office of Community Quality Improvement seeks to refine the quality of care to individuals with developmental disabilities by standardizing, improving, and monitoring the quality of services in state facilities and community programs.

Office of Community Quality Improvement, Recruitment Announcement

- **Regional Quality Councils Needed-** The Office of Community Quality Improvement division of DBHDS is currently seeking individuals receiving waiver services or on the waiver waiting list, and their family members to serve as representatives to RQCs across the state. Ideal candidates will have the ability to attend quarterly meetings, which are typically two hours long during the day and held virtually, as well as the willingness to review provided data and in turn offer input at council meetings.

To access the recruitment details, please visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/RQCRecruitment2020>

National Autism Association

NAA is a nonprofit organization that responds to the needs of the autism community.

Resources Announcement

- **Big Red Safety Box Program-** There is a free resource available to families and individuals in the autism community. The NAA's Big Safety Box is a safety toolkit that offers materials to prevent wandering. The boxes are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

To access the resources, please visit: <https://nationalautismassociation.org/big-red-safety-boxes-now-available/>

Easterseals UCP

Easterseals is a nonprofit organization that provides services so that individuals with disabilities and mental health challenges can live, learn, work, and play in their communities.

Easterseals UCP, Blog Highlight

- **October Is Disability Employment Awareness Month: Meet an Architect Who Is Totally Blind-** Read the story of Chris Downey, an architect who lost his sight after undergoing surgery to remove a brain tumor. He persevered and started his own business as a design consultant for people that are visually impaired.

To access the blog, please visit: <https://blog.easterseals.com/october-is-disability-employment-awareness-month-meet-an-architect-who-is-totally-blind/>

Autism Society of Central Virginia

The ASCV is a nonprofit organization that offers advocacy and support to children, youth and adults with autism, their families, and the professionals who serve them.

ASCV, October Newsletter Highlights

- **ASCV Conference Series-** Join ASCV as they host their virtual conference, Building a Spectrum of Opportunity, this fall. The conference will include presentations on autism-related topics for caregivers, self-advocates, teachers, and other professionals. The conference fee starts at \$25.
- **ASCV Member Spotlight-** An ASCV member is recognized for her journey towards learning, accepting, and loving after her daughter's diagnosis of autism.
- **ASCV Virtual Programs Calendar-** ASCV offers a list of programs that are available to both members and nonmembers.

To access the newsletter, please visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/ASCVOct2020Newsletter>

Child Mind Institute

Child Mind Institute is a nonprofit organization that strives to transform the lives of children, families, and communities affected by mental health history and learning disabilities.

Child Mind Institute, October 2020 Newsletter Highlights

- **Talking to Toddlers-** Communicating with toddlers can have its challenges because they don't have the same attention span or knowledge as adults. Experts give suggestions on how parents can better communicate with their little ones.
- **How to Build Independence in Preschoolers-** As a parent, there are multiple things you can do to give your toddler a sense of independence. To promote freedom, try giving your toddler chores or the ability to solve problems.
- **How to Discipline Toddlers-** Disciplining toddlers not only keeps them safe, but it also teaches them right from wrong. Learn how to lay the groundwork for good behavior in your children for the future.
- **The Power of Positive Attention-** According to experts, giving toddlers positive attention is much more effective in changing their behavior. Instead of calling them out for things you want them to stop doing, praise them for the behavior that you want to encourage. Get tips on how to how to create positive reinforcement.
- **What NOT to Do When Your Child is Having a Tantrum-** It is possible to remain calm, cool, and collected during your child's tantrum. Discover six things that you should not do during a toddler meltdown.
- **Can Screen Time Be Educational for Toddlers?-** The verdict is in, screen time will never be as beneficial to toddlers as real life activities and human interaction, but there are some helpful things to consider if you are going to allow them access to technology.

To access the newsletter, please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/ChildMindOct2020>

Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services

DMAS is an agency that administers Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program in Virginia.

DMAS, October 2020 Bulletin Highlight

- **Interested in Joining the Medicaid Member Advisory Committee?**- DMAS is looking for participants for its 2021 Medicaid Member Advisory Committee. If you are a Virginia Medicaid member (or an authorized representative) and want to help improve Virginia Medicaid, consider joining! DMAS has established the Medicaid Member Advisory Committee in order to provide a formal method for enrollees voices to be included in the DMAS decision-making process.

To access the bulletin, please visit:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/VADMAS/bulletins/2a3f1ca>

University of Virginia Supporting Transformative Autism Research Initiative

The University of Virginia's STAR initiative focuses on research and interventions to improve the lives of people with autism.

STAR, October 2020 Newsletter Highlights

- **2020 Autism Hope Summit**- The second annual Autism Hope Summit will take place virtually this year and is free to attend. The conference is an opportunity for individuals with autism, families, researchers, and service providers to connect with one another, share resources, and network. Register today!
- **Benefits of Social Skills Intervention for Adolescent Girls with Autism**- Watch a short interview with Dr. Erica Rouch, an assistant research professor at STAR, as she discusses her current research on autism diagnosis for females.
- **Social Skills Group for UVA students**- If you are an UVA student on the autism spectrum, consider joining PEERS. PEERS is a group for students interested in developing and maintaining relationships.

To access the newsletter, please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/STAROctober2020>

Children's Assistive Technology Service

CATS serves Virginia families, with limited resources, who have children with disabilities by providing access to adaptive equipment.

CATS, Fall 2020 Newsletter Highlights

- **Hallowheels 2020**- Voting begins soon for the Hallowheels costume contest! Hallowheels is the annual costume fundraiser for CATS. It gives families the opportunity to create a Halloween costume for their children and win a prize.

- **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony-** A local business man helps provide a headquarters for Roanoke CATS. A ribbon cutting ceremony and open house will take place next month.
- **CeCe Bell Special Art Offering-** Author, CeCe Bell, creates an exclusive holiday card for CATS donors. A CATS employee, who is a fan of Bell's work, gave CATS the idea to reach out to the author to design the card.
- **Emory and Henry-** Despite the pandemic, CATS is expanding thanks to Emory and Henry College. A building located on the college campus will be home to the new CATS location. This site will serve the far southwest location of Virginia.

To access the newsletter, please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/CATSFall2020>

Disability Scoop

Disability Scoop is a source for developmental disability news that covers topics such as autism, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome.

Disability Scoop, October 2020 Newsletter Highlights

- **Disability Groups Oppose Supreme Court Nominee-** There are concerns surrounding Supreme Court nominee, Amy Coney Barrett. Several disability advocacy groups find her to be a threat to disability rights based on her past record.
- **Nation's Cities Ranked on Disability Friendliness-** 182 U.S. cities are ranked to determine the best cities to live in for people with developmental disabilities. Top on the list include Scottsdale, Ariz., St. Louis, South Burlington, Vt., Huntington Beach, Calif., and Bismarck, N.D. Ranking on the bottom of the list are Providence, R.I., Gulfport, Miss., and Bridgeport, Conn.
- **An Additional 13 Allege They Were Sexually Assaulted as Children by Devereux Staff-** Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health receives unfavorable attention as many come forward stating they were assaulted while staying at this Pennsylvania facility when they were children. The assaults, committed by Devereux staff members, date back to the past 25 years.
- **Schools Get Creative in Serving Preschoolers with Special Needs-** Educators are learning to adjust as COVID-19 continues to plague the country. A group of preschool teachers, working with students who have special needs, are holding classes outside, in the school courtyard. In addition, they are practicing social distancing and wearing masks.

To access the newsletter, please visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/emailers/ds201009.html>

Virginia Department of Education

VDOE provides public education to Virginia students.

VDOE, October 2020 Bulletin Highlights

- **Special Olympics Virginia- Disability Awareness Month Videos-** In honor of Disability Awareness Month, Special Olympics Virginia encourages you to embrace inclusion and celebrate the differences we all possess. They are offering free videos to promote inclusive practices.
- **Learning Opportunities from the Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center-** PEATC is a parent information and training center serving families and professionals of children with disabilities. Register for their Transition University, a free online course that focuses on providing parent-friendly transition information to help make transition planning easier.

To access the bulletin, please visit:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/VADOE/bulletins/2a5d14b>

The Arc of Northern Virginia

The Arc is a nonprofit organization that promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Arc of Northern Virginia, Event Announcement

- **Annual Meeting-** Join The Arc of Northern Virginia as they host their annual meeting, virtually, this year. As a guest, you will learn about the accomplishments of the past year and plans for the upcoming year. Board members will also be elected and a panel of special guests will be present to answer questions about disability-related policy issues. This event is free to attend.

To access the event, please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/ArcNova2020Meeting>

Journey of Hope

Journey of Hope is a farm in Chesterfield, Virginia that offers equine assisted services and therapeutic riding to address mental health, human development needs, and healing.

Journey of Hope, Event Announcement

- **Midlothian Farm Swap-** Come out to the final Midlothian Farm Swap of the season at Journey of Hope Farm! Enjoy a day of outdoor fun, shopping, swapping, and good food. COVID-19 safety measures will be in effect. This event is free to attend.

To access the event, please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/Nov2020FarmSwap>

COVID-19 Resources and Tools

The following links provide information to families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Center for Family Involvement (CFI):

https://centerforfamilyinvolvementblog.files.wordpress.com/2020/04/covid-19-information_toolkit_041020.pdf

Virginia Department of Health:

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/76/2020/03/Faith-Leaders-Virtual-Meeting-Resources.pdf>

Virginia Department of Social Services:

<https://covid.virginia.gov/?fbclid=IwAR1b0aifg7vTXkbwZSgJpzZjAgLP89Y5C5doZ7sp-LG3NPP4hrZNz6tyY4>

Virginia Institute of Autism: <https://viacenters.org/resources/resources-for-families/>

Cover Virginia:

https://coverva.org/covid19/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Scholastic: <https://www.scholastic.com/parents/school-success/home-learning-resources.html>

SeniorNavigator:

<https://seniornavigator.org/article/74200/important-covid-19-information-older-adults-caregivers-people-disabilities-and>

disAbilityNavigator: <https://disabilitynavigator.org/article/74237/covid-19-resources-people-disabilities>

Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules (AFIRM):

<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/supporting-individuals-autism-through-uncertain-times>

Nami: <https://www.nami.org/Your-Journey/Frontline-Professionals>

Be sure to like the Facebook pages below for additional information.

- ❖ Center for Family Involvement (CFI):
<https://www.facebook.com/CenterforFamilyInvolvement/>
- ❖ The Arc of Northern Virginia: <https://www.facebook.com/TheArcofNoVA/>
- ❖ Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services:
<https://www.facebook.com/DBHDS/>
- ❖ Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC):
<https://www.facebook.com/PEATCVA/>
- ❖ Camp Easterseals UCP: <https://www.facebook.com/campeastersealsucp/>
- ❖ Charlottesville Region Autism Action Group (CRAAG):
<https://www.facebook.com/CRAAG1/>
- ❖ The Arc of Central Virginia: <https://www.facebook.com/The-Arc-of-Central-Virginia-149058858468400/>
- ❖ The Arc of Northern Shenandoah Valley: <https://www.facebook.com/arc.nsv/>
- ❖ Autism Grown Up: <https://www.facebook.com/autismgrownuptogether>
- ❖ National Autism Association: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalAutism/>
- ❖ Nami Virginia: <https://www.facebook.com/NAMIVirginia1/>
- ❖ Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)s:
<https://www.facebook.com/AUCDnetwork/>
- ❖ Autism Speaks: <https://www.facebook.com/autismspeaks/>
- ❖ Autism Society of North Carolina:
<https://www.facebook.com/AutismSocietyofNorthCarolina/>
- ❖ Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules (AFIRM):
<https://www.facebook.com/AFIRMmodulesandresources/>
- ❖ Virginia Department of Education (VDOE):
<https://www.facebook.com/VDOENews/>
- ❖ Disability Scoop: <https://www.facebook.com/disabilityscoop/>
- ❖ Virginia Rural Health Association: <https://www.facebook.com/VaRuralHealth/>
- ❖ Virginia State Parks: <https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaStateParks/>
- ❖ Remote Area Medical (RAM): <https://www.facebook.com/RAMUSA.ORG/>
- ❖ Ability Unlimited: <https://www.facebook.com/abilityunlimitedVA/>
- ❖ Able National Resource Center: <https://www.facebook.com/theABLENRC/>
- ❖ Moms in Motion: <https://www.facebook.com/MomsInMotionVA/>
- ❖ I'm Determined: <https://www.facebook.com/imdeterminedvdoe/>
- ❖ Journey of Hope 4 Autism: <https://www.facebook.com/JourneyOfHope4Autism/>

- ❖ Massachusetts General Hospital: https://www.facebook.com/massgeneral/?brand_redir=1423512124455810
- ❖ Mental Health America (MHA): <https://www.facebook.com/mentalhealthamerica/>
- ❖ American Association on Health and Disability (AAHD): <https://www.facebook.com/aahdus/>
- ❖ University of Delaware: <https://www.facebook.com/udelaware>
- ❖ Cover Virginia: <https://www.facebook.com/coverva/>
- ❖ Down Syndrome Association of Greater Richmond (DSAGR): https://www.facebook.com/DSAGRRichmond/?ref=br_rs



Thank you for reading the IFSP Digest!

We are always looking for recommendations on newsletters we can subscribe to. Please send your suggestions to ifspcom@dbhds.virginia.gov.

To subscribe to our monthly IFSP Newsletter, join the IFSP Listserv: <https://tinyurl.com/IFSPlistserv>.

Be sure to like our new IFSP Community Facebook Page! https://www.facebook.com/virginiaprogram/?modal=admin_todo_tour

To receive more frequent updates for news in your community, please like your regional IFSP Council's Facebook Page.

- ❖ Central: www.facebook.com/IFSPRegion4/
- ❖ Eastern: www.facebook.com/IFSPeasterregion/
- ❖ Northern: www.facebook.com/IFSPnorthernregion/
- ❖ Southwestern: www.facebook.com/southwesternifsp/
- ❖ Western: www.facebook.com/VirginiaIFSPWesternRegion/