



MCDD QUICK NEWS

Here's What's Happening in Council Offices
for the month of March 2005

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PROGRAM HOLDING MEETINGS TO DISCUSS CUSTOMIZED SERVICE DELIVERY APPROACH

The Developmental Disabilities Program is holding a series of meetings to discuss the new approach for service delivery. These meetings will include a Case Manager and Mom from Florida where the person centered approach to service delivery has been in place for some time. The following is the information for these meetings:

"CHOICE - IT'S A GOOD THING"

Please Join Us for a Get-together. . .

to discuss a new customized approach to service delivery for person with developmental disabilities in Montana. This new approach is a **team effort that includes you!**

Who is invited? Individuals receiving services, family members or friends, guardians, advocates and case managers

What is included?

- **Conversations** with a Mom and Case Manager from Florida who have been involved with Person-Centered approaches to service delivery for many years
- **Discussion** will also include:
 - Plans for piloting new system approaches to services
 - Impact for changes on individuals, families and existing providers
 - Enhancing persons choice by focusing on a Person-Centered planning approach
 - Things to consider when choosing services and supports
 - What you can do right now
 - Time for questions and answers

When is it happening?*

2:00pm – 3:30pm Case Managers

4:00pm – 5:30pm Individuals Receiving Services

6:00pm – 7:30pm Families

* on March 15 at meeting will be held for Service Providers from 8:30-10:30AM in Billings at the DDP Region 3 Conference Room, 2121 Rosebud

MCDD AND PEOPLE FIRST TO HOLD LEGISLATIVE DESSERT EVENT, MARCH 23

Save room for dessert on March 23 as People First of Montana and the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities host a Legislative Appreciation Event for legislators at Jorgenson's Restaurant, from 7:00pm – 8:30pm. This event will give persons a chance for legislators to meet their constituents away from the frantic pace of the Capitol, and enjoy dessert and coffee too! People First President Jason Billehus and Council Chair PJ Rismon-Beckley will each present brief remarks to the group. For additional information please call Council offices at 443-4332.

DISABILITY AWARENESS RALLY SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 30 IN CAPITOL ROTUNDA

There will be lots of activity in the Capitol Rotunda on March 30 as the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Statewide Independent Living Council, People First and the Governors office host a Disability Awareness Rally! There is room for 22 tables to be set up in the Rotunda from various disability organizations showcasing the work each group performs. This is a great opportunity to raise awareness of not only disabilities, but the many organizations that work to promote independence, productivity and integration of persons with disabilities. For more information please call Council offices at 443-4332 or 1/866-443-4332 or the Statewide Independent Living Council housed in the Department of Public Health and Human Services at 444-4076 to RSVP your participation in this wonderful event.

NEW STRUCTURE SET FOR US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The US Department of Education announced a restructuring plan on March 4 that will move several offices under one of two umbrellas, as well as create a new office that will handle communications and a new office dealing with policy development.

The Office of the Deputy Secretary of Education will now focus on K-12 policy, which includes the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and President Bush's High School Initiative. The deputy secretary will supervise the offices of elementary and secondary education, innovation and improvement, English language acquisition, special education and rehabilitative services, and safe and drug-free schools, along with other precollegiate initiatives.

The new Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development will supervise the budget service, the strategic accountability service and the policy and program-studies service. It will coordinate the work of the educational technology office. The new offices will be headed by assistant secretaries who are subject to confirmation by the Senate, and will report directly to Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings.

TAX FACTS+ AUDIO CONFERENCE SCHEDULED

The US Tax System: Opportunities and Challenges for Persons with Disabilities, Their Families and Their Employers

On March 16, 2005 from 12:00 - 2:00PM, Eastern Standard Time (10:00AM to 12noon in Montana), an audio conference will be held which may be helpful to persons with disabilities, their families and employers preparing to file their tax returns. The tax code contains a number of provisions of special interest to people with disabilities, their families and employers such as the disabled access credit. Others, such as the medical expense deduction derive their significance from the interpretation the courts have given to various words and concepts to benefit individuals with disabilities.

The audio conference will explore the law from three standpoints:

1. Examine what benefits and opportunities the Tax Code currently offers by way of credits, deduction or other tax advantages that are specifically related to disability.
2. Explain technicalities involved in making the best use of the existing law and address some of the way in which these provisions fail to achieve their intended goals, and propose alternative approaches for the consideration of policymakers and citizens; and
3. Explain what a tax advisor and families need to do to surface relevant tax issues; what the key issues are and how they are addressed.

Registration for the audio conference is FREE. The registration form may be accessed by visiting www.mastermymoney.org Registration information and questions can be sent to Margaret Callahan at mcallahan@nbdc.org in advance of the audio conference.

This event is being cosponsored by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the Office on Disability, the US Dept of Health and Human Services, the Internal Revenue Service, Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication (SPEC) and the Law, Health Policy and Disability Center, University of Iowa, College of Law.

DATES OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Here's an overview of meeting dates and events that may be of interest:

March 9	Disability Issues Mtg/Wingate Inn	Helena
March 14	DDP/Individualized Services Mtg	Billings
March 15	" " " " "	Bozeman
March 16	" " " " "	Helena
March 16-17	Quality Council	Helena
March 22-23	People First Senate/Jorgensons	Helena
March 23-24	MCDD Meeting/Wingate Inn	Helena
March 30	Disability Awareness Rally/Rotunda	Helena

Contact Council staff for more information on any of these meetings.

ETC. . . .

We hope this brief and informal newsletter is helpful for Council members and others. If you have a question on any item presented or would like to see additional items in future newsletter please contact Council staff at 866-443-4332.

