

Ranking Names States With Best Disability Services

by Shaun Heasley

October 3, 2016

disabilityscoop

A new national ranking of developmental disability services finds states with top offerings coast to coast, but warns that a growing number of people are facing long waits for supports.

The best Medicaid service systems for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are found in Arizona, Vermont, New Hampshire, Michigan and Hawaii, according to the annual Case for Inclusion report released by United Cerebral Palsy.

This is the fifth year that Arizona has taken the number one spot on the list.

The analysis looks at a variety of data points to assess how people with disabilities live and participate in their communities, their ability to access supports and how satisfied they are with their lives.

The findings are based on the most recent data available, primarily from 2014.

Nationally, nearly 350,000 people are on waiting lists for community-based services, an additional 28,000 over last year, the report found, though an increasing number of states — now 18 — have little or no wait.

The analysis also found growth in the number of states allowing individuals to use self-directed services, providing family supports to a large number of residents and placing at least a third of those with developmental disabilities in competitive employment.

Some states — Arkansas, Illinois, Mississippi and Texas — have consistently performed poorly in the ranking since 2007, the report notes. Montana rounded out the bottom five on the list this year.

As in past years, top-performing states included those that are both big and small, rich and poor, high and low tax as well as large and small spenders. States that ranked high did tend to lean Democratic, but three predominately Republican states made the top 10.

“The fact is real progress is being made. More Americans with (intellectual and developmental disabilities) are living in the community rather than being isolated in large state institutions. But much more work needs to be done to reduce waiting lists, increase employment and expand support to families,” said Tarren Bragdon, the author of the report. “This annual ranking clearly shows the true picture of what’s happening and what should be happening in the states for our friends and neighbors with (intellectual and developmental disabilities).”

SSI Benefits To Increase In 2017

by Michelle Diamant | October 18, 2016

Individuals with disabilities receiving Supplemental Security Income or other Social Security benefits will see a small increase next year.

Payments will rise 0.3 percent in 2017, the Social Security Administration said Tuesday. The bump up is due to an automatic cost-of-living adjustment, known as COLA, which is mandated by law and based on inflation.

The increase, which takes effect in January, will mean more money each month for 60 million Americans on Social Security and 8 million receiving SSI, officials said.



With the change, the maximum federal SSI benefit for individuals will be \$735 per month, up from \$733 in 2016. For couples, the highest federal payment will grow to \$1,103 per month from \$1,100.

Many states provide additional funding to SSI beneficiaries so actual payments could be higher.

Despite the modest increase, the adjustment is greater than what was announced at this time last year. Benefits for 2016 were unchanged compared to the year prior.



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Board Meeting
Monday, Nov. 7, 2016

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From the Director

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is providing opportunities for public comments regarding the State’s consideration to move the management and provision of behavioral health care from our publicly run Community Mental Health organizations to private HMOs (Health Management Organizations). MDHHS meetings titled “Affinity Groups” are held around the state to allow comments from individuals who receive CMH/Medicaid services for intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness, and substance use disorders, and their family members.

State privatization of behavioral health care is a public policy issue that is complex and difficult for most of us to understand.

I encourage you to share your comments with the state on this important issue. Here is my brief editorial of the changes under consideration.

The basic change proposed by the State is that private entities, such as HMOs, will more effectively manage Medicaid funds and save the state dollars. No mention has been made of how this change will improve service to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders. As citizens, we currently have a say about mental health public policies including the policies managing the provision of behavioral health care, paid for by Medicaid dollars, through Community Mental Health.

Community Mental Health organizations are public entities overseen by the State. Your votes and your voices (public comments) effect the creation and implementation of State policies.

There is little disagreement that Michigan’s behavioral health care system is in need of improvements. Privatization is not the answer. HMOs only talk about their desire to manage the over \$2 billion Michigan Medicaid dollars with no mention of how those funds will be used to improve lives. You can improve lives by sharing your thoughts and experiences on the Affinity Group questions link at **MDHHS298@michigan.gov**. Go to the **Affinity Groups** link and at the bottom of the page click on **Questions for Eligible Populations and Families**.

Chris

Supreme Court To Weigh FAPE Mandate

disabilityscoop

by Michelle Diamant | September 29, 2016

Free and Appropriate Public Education

For the first time in more than three decades, the U.S. Supreme Court says it will consider how much educational benefit schools must provide students receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The nation's high court said Thursday that it will hear arguments in a matter known as *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*.

At issue is the IDEA's mandate that public schools provide children with disabilities a free appropriate public education, or FAPE.

The case was brought by parents known in court papers as Joseph F. and Jennifer F. who pulled their son with autism out of his Colorado school district and sent him to a private school. They then sought reimbursement from the Douglas County School District arguing that the boy, Drew, was not provided FAPE. Both a hearing officer and the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado found in favor of the school district, saying that FAPE was provided because the boy received "some" educational benefit.

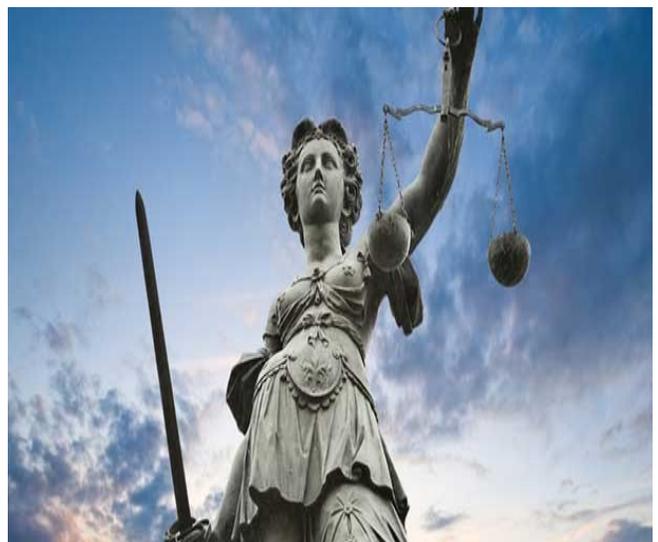
The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit agreed prompting the parents to appeal to the Supreme Court, citing differing standards from courts across the country.

"Some courts, including the Tenth Circuit ... hold that an IEP satisfies the (IDEA) if it provides a child with a just-above-trivial educational benefit, while others hold that the act requires a heightened educational benefit," the parents said in their petition to the Supreme Court. "Resolving the conflict among the circuits will ensure

that millions of children with disabilities receive a consistent level of education, while providing parents and educators much-needed guidance regarding their rights and obligations."

The Douglas County School District argued that it would be up to lawmakers to impose a higher standard in asking the high court to decline the case.

The Supreme Court's decision to take up the matter comes at the urging of the Obama administration. In a brief issued last month, the U.S. solicitor general agreed with the parents that the IDEA requires schools to provide more than minimal benefit to students with disabilities.



"This court should hold that states must provide children with disabilities educational benefits that are meaningful in light of the child's potential and the IDEA's stated purposes. Merely aiming for non-trivial progress is not sufficient," the solicitor general indicated.

The case will mark the first time since 1982 that the Supreme Court has addressed the FAPE mandate.

However, it's not the only special education matter the high court plans to weigh.

The Supreme Court said this summer that it will hear the case of a Michigan girl with cerebral palsy who sought to bring her service dog to school, which centers on whether families must exhaust their options under the IDEA when they have a dispute with schools before seeking remedies under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Support Needs Assessment Center



Join Us for an Informational Session . . .
Presented By: Ryan Leininger | Katie Lord | Julia Whitcher, SIS® Trainers
Macomb-Oakland Regional Center, Inc.

Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS) Overview

Presented on behalf of ConsumerLink Network

Tuesday, September 27, 2016, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
BHPI 1333 Brewery Park Blvd., Suite 300, Detroit, MI 48207

or

Wednesday, November 30, 2016, 10 am – 12:00 pm
Community Living Services, 35425 Michigan Avenue W., Wayne, MI 48184

Informational sessions include the following SIS® Assessment Overview topics:

- SIS® History and Background
- Measuring Support Needs
- Person-Centered Planning with the SIS®
- Assessment Expectations

Space is limited, reserve your spot now!

Call: 586.464.2618 or Email: Sabrina.Makris@morcinc.org

Please RSVP at least 5 days before event. Sessions are open to anyone, individuals served, families, advocates, caregivers, providers, and staff.

CE credits are available for industry professionals.

MORC, INC. | Michigan

MORC, Inc. has a 40 year history of providing high quality services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities. Our efforts and goals are to empower the individuals we serve to live self-determined lives, find successful employment, advocate their rights and reach their dreams through person- centered supports and quality programs.

Have you experienced our continued education and support in the area of Gentle Teaching through the Center for Positive Living Supports? We are furthering our commitment to training and best practices by offering Supports Intensity Scale® Training and expertise in partnership with AAIDD.

As AAIDD recognized SIS® trainers we are committed to assisting individuals, organizations, homecare staff, vocational staff, and support coordinators with the successful implementation of the SIS® interview tool.



ACTION ALERT



ABLE Rollout is HERE!

Greetings everyone!!

We have great news to share! Michigan MiABLE program will be **OPEN FOR ENROLLMENT TUESDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2016**. This will allow for people with disabilities to plan for their future by saving and investing up to \$100,000 and still qualify for their benefits. If the account reaches levels over \$100,000, your benefits will be suspended until the account drops below that figure. Currently, Michigan has the highest level in the nation for ABLE account maximum contribution levels of **\$500,000**.

Please join us on the **CAPITOL STEPS** for the official press conference with **LT. GOVERNOR BRIAN CALLEY** Tuesday November 1, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. the Michigan Department of Treasury will have people on hand to help people enroll into the MiABLE program.

Sponsored by The Arc US

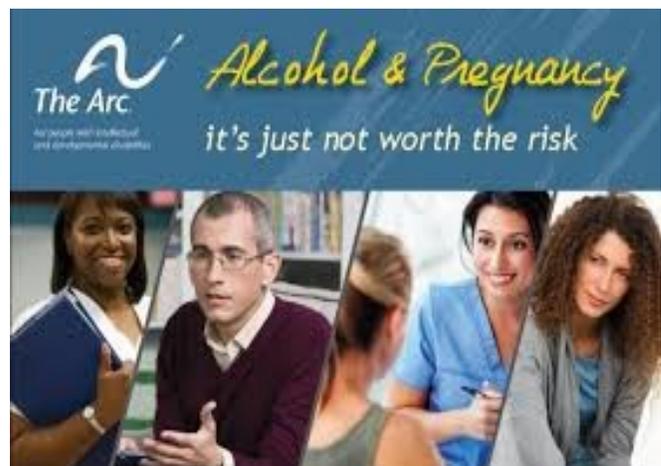
Four FREE CEU-accredited online courses about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders are now available for physicians, nurses, medical and nursing students through December 31, 2016.

Participants will learn how they can help detect and address risky drinking in patients that are pregnant or of reproductive age.

- FREE of charge
- Between 15 and 60 minutes
- Available for CME and CNE credits:
- Physicians: Between .25 and 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™
- Nurses Practitioners and Nurses: Between .25 and 1.0 contact hour, including up to 0.5 pharmacology hours
- Pharmacists: 1.0 contact hour

Available through **December 31, 2016**

For additional information, contact FASD@TheArc.org



The Arc of Northwest Wayne County/
The Arc of Western Wayne County

After I'm Gone Program

Information sessions are held monthly during the school year at the **Western Wayne Skill Center, 8075 Ritz Road, Westland, MI 48185**
All sessions are Thursday evenings from 6:30pm - 8:30pm.

November 10, 2016

“Estate Planning for Your Future”

November 17, 2016

“Here's How I Did It”



JUST FUN CLUB NEWS

What an absolutely beautiful evening we had for our first Halloween Dance held on Friday, Oct. 7. There were so many great costumes to see! We had Policemen, Doctors, Nurses, Spartans, 1950's Sock-hop poodle skirt girls, Phantoms, Hippie Flower girl, Hobo, Witches and even a graduate in a cap and gown. A happy crowd danced to the music played by the Trademark band.

A special 'thank you' to Sandy Harshman and her special talent in decorating every table with green, blue, pink and orange pumpkins lighted and draped with Halloween garland. She also filled colorful boxes with pretzels and assorted candies for everyone to enjoy. A variety of yummy donuts and cider was served to a happy crowd. Our raffle winners were: Carl Solak, Ann Munn, Shari Holly, Jimmy Brooks, Tony Samborski, and Michael Hibner.

Hope to see to everyone next month at our Country Western dance on Friday, Nov. 18, 7:00-9:30 at Thurston High School.

Happy Autumn,
Jackie Norris

The Arc Sports News

Happy Thanksgiving Sport Group.....

Good luck Floor Hockey teams as you travel to Lansing for the **State Tournament the weekend of November 12 & 13**. Enjoy and have fun!

Basketball will be starting in December.

Coaches: Check the health form lists for your players before the season starts. If any player form expires before the season ends in March advise the player to get an updated health form before practice starts in December.
Coaches: If you'd like to attend Area 23 County meeting it will be November 7, 6pm, at Stevenson Middle school on Palmer Rd., Westland. This is your time to come and bring up any concerns or ideas to Jackie.

SAVE THE DATE – May 5, 2017 – Sport Program Bowling Fundraiser - Oak Lanes.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving ~ Janice

The Arc NW website has been rebuilt and will offer more timely up-dates and information

VISIT

thearcnw.org

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Memorials

If you hear of the passing of an Arc member please let us know. Help us honor the memories of our members and support one another through difficult times. Call The Arc NW office at 313-532-7915

In Memory of Maybelle Munn

Marlene DiPonio & Fred Ward

In Memory of Marjorie Kurzmann

John & Carol Zago

Donations

Mary Lubeck
Jack & Trina Lengyel

Membership Renewals

November 2016

Don & Patricia Clark
Jake Guthard
Peter A. Gutierrez
Matt Heslop
Joey L. Klonica
Dave, Darlene & Clint Miller
Thomas & Valerie Schilling
Daniel Selewski
Marie Snyder





The Arc

Northwest Wayne County

November 2016

| SUN | MON | TUES | WED | THURS | FRI | SAT |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| | | 1  Poly Hockey Hotsports 6 - 7pm Skill Center | 2  Poly Hockey <i>Wings</i> 7 - 8pm Skill Center | 3 | 4 | 5 Bowling 9:30am Oak Lanes  <hr/> Guys & Dolls Bowling 1:30pm |
| 6 | 7 Board Meeting Date Change 6:00pm Arc Office | 8 Election Day  | 9  Poly Hockey <i>Wings</i> 7 - 8pm Skill Center | 10 After I'm Gone 6:30pm Skill Center | 11 | 12 No Afternoon Bowling  <hr/> State Poly Hockey Tournament Nov 12 - 13 Eastern HS, Lansing |
| 13 State Poly Hockey Tournament Nov 12 - 13 Eastern HS, Lansing | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 After I'm Gone 6:30pm Skill Center | 18  JFC Country & Western Dance 7 - 9:30pm Thurston HS | 19 Bowling 9:30am Oak Lanes <hr/> Guys & Dolls Bowling 1:30pm  |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24  | 25 | 26 Guys & Dolls Bowling 1:30pm  |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 Basketball Pistons  7-8pm Skill Center | | | |

CHECK IT OUT!

The Arc of Northwest Wayne County's
Web Site

www.thearcnw.org



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Each edition of this newsletter is prepared for mailing by volunteers from Zeta Tau Alpha.



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thearcnw.org
Call 313-532-7915 to end your printed mailed newsletter.**

Membership Application

Name _____

Email Address _____ **Daytime Phone** _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Name _____ **Birth Date** _____

(Name line above for member(s) with intellectual and developmental disability)

Address (if different) _____

Telephone (if different) _____

Welcome!

Membership Dues

New Member

Renewing Member

Associate Member

\$35 Annual Family or Group Home Membership

\$25 Individual Membership

\$25 Associate Membership

DONATIONS **\$10** **\$25** **\$50** **\$100** **\$150** _____ **Other**