



DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

OIFA Member Update - July 2023

What DDD Topics Do You Want to Know More About? Take the Survey

DDD wants to improve its communication to the members and families it serves. However, the Division needs your help to do that.

Please take a few minutes to complete a quick survey to help DDD understand what you want to learn about, and how. It only has five questions.

[Take the Survey](#)

The survey asks you about:

- Whether you've attended DDD Public Town Halls
- What topics you want to know more about
- Which social media platforms you use.

The Division will use the data collected in this survey to provide DDD members with information they want. It will also use the data to communicate better with DDD members and their families. All responses are anonymous.

[Take the Survey](#)

Volunteers Needed! Will You Help?

DDD needs volunteers in two areas: the Independent Oversight Committee and the Program Review Committee. Will you consider helping? See the details below.

Volunteers for Independent Oversight Committee Needed

DDD needs volunteers to support the district Independent Oversight Committees (IOC). IOCs provide oversight on topics related to the human rights of people with developmental disabilities.

Responsibilities include:

- Review incidents that may have involved neglect, abuse, or denial of rights of members receiving services from DDD
- Review Behavior Plans
- Make recommendations to DDD about changes needed to protect members' rights.

Each IOC has between seven and 15 members who have expertise in any of the following areas:

- Psychology
- Law
- Medicine
- Education
- Special Education

- Social Work
- Criminal Justice

The Committee also includes at least two parents of children who receive services from DDD. Each IOC meets virtually once a month. Visit <https://ioc.az.gov/> to learn more and apply.

Volunteers for Program Review Committee Needed

DDD is looking for volunteers to serve on the Program Review Committee (PRC). Volunteers will:

- Review Behavior Plans
- Provide guidance on strategies addressing unsafe or inappropriate behaviors
- Help members reach their full potential.

People who fall into any of the following categories are encouraged to apply:

- Persons qualified in the use of behavior management techniques, such as a Psychologist, Psychiatrist, or a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst
- Parent/Guardian of an individual with a developmental disability
- Habilitation services professionals
- Individuals with a developmental disability
- A person with no ownership in a facility and who is not involved with directly providing services to people with developmental disabilities

Visit the DES Volunteer Engagement Center at <https://des.az.gov/how-do-i/volunteer-engagement-center> if you are interested in joining a Program Review Committee.

Department of Labor Shares FMLA Resources for Caregivers of Adult Children

* Note: The following article is re-posted verbatim from a Federal News Brief by the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services originally published on May 12, 2023.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has launched a webpage with fact sheets, frequently asked questions and other materials to help workers know their rights under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), including some with a special focus on how the law applies to caregiving to adult children with disabilities.

The materials include a fact sheet that clarifies that “Employees may use FMLA leave to care for an adult child with a serious health condition who is incapable of self-care at the time the FMLA leave will start because of a mental or physical disability.” Incapable of self-care means the employee’s adult child requires active assistance or supervision with three or more “activities of daily living” or “instrumental activities of daily living.” The FMLA uses the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) definition of disability. The site also includes an FAQ document concerning the use of FMLA leave to care for a son or daughter age 18 or older.

The resources are available at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/family-caregiver>.

The Gift of Well-Care

Summer break goes by fast! Check your child's annual well-care visit off the Back-to-School list, and receive a \$25 gift card from your health plan.

Who is eligible?

In order to be eligible for the \$25 gift card, children must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be enrolled with the Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Be 3-19 years of age
- Have completed their first well-care visit of 2023 between June 5 and September 5, 2023
- Be enrolled in an AHCCCS managed care health plan

A well-care visit is an annual appointment that includes a physical exam and discussion that can include:

- Checking developmental milestones
- Monitoring chronic conditions
- Updating immunizations
- Discussing any concerns
- Renewal of medications
- Screening for mental health conditions or concerns
- Sports clearance
- Answering your healthcare-related concerns

Schedule an appointment today. For more information, call the Member Services number on your AHCCCS ID card.

Mesa: The US' First Autism-Friendly City (BBC)

The BBC ran an article on May 30, 2023 about Mesa, Ariz. called, "[Mesa: The US' First Autism-Friendly City.](#)" The article tells the story of how Mesa became the first autism-friendly city in the United States. Read the blurb below, pulled verbatim from the BBC article. Then, click the button to read the full article.

From the BBC

On a family holiday in 2018, Marc Garcia was shocked at the strange looks and lack of patience that hospitality staff had for his autistic son. As the CEO and president of tourism bureau Visit Mesa in south-central Arizona, he vowed on his return to ensure neurodiverse travellers who visited his city would have a better experience on their trip than his family had on theirs.

In fact, travel can be so stressful for neurodiverse people that 87% of autistic families don't take vacations, according to a survey by Autism Travel, an arm of the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES). The sensory overload involved in travel – including loud noises, dietary changes and a disruption in routine – can cause discomfort and outbursts if not compassionately managed and addressed. But cities like Mesa are finally putting the training and accessibility tools in place so that everyone can enjoy the benefits of travel – not just the neurotypical.

SAFETY CORNER

Strong Social Relationships Key to Happiness Factor

Strong social relationships are the most important aspect of long-term happiness for most people. That's according to DDD Chief Medical Officer Dr. Anthony Dekker.

"Those who are happy are devoting the most time to family, friends, and colleagues," Dr. Dekker said.

In fact, social relationships are so important to mental health, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy made fighting loneliness through social connection a public health priority. On May 2, 2023, the American Psychological Association (APA) [issued a statement](#) supporting that priority.

"Being socially connected to others is a basic human need—crucial to both well-being and survival," the APA said in its press release.

Nurturing healthy relationships is part of something called the Happiness Factor. Dr. Dekker said the Happiness Factor teaches that being happy is a choice, even if someone is going through hard times.

How to Improve the Happiness Factor

What can you do to improve the happiness factor in your life? How can you choose to feel happier? Here are some suggestions from Dr. Dekker:

- Nurture and prioritize social relationships, such as with friends and family
- Try to see the positive in things, not just the negative
- Savor past experiences rather than concentrating on negative memories
- Try to change the way you react to life circumstances
- Actively work to choose a positive thinking style

Town Hall Meetings

DDD hosts town hall meetings for members, families and providers. You can join via the Internet or by telephone. Attendees can also ask questions. **The next town hall will be held on Thursday, August 3, 2023.** Guests from Arizona Special Olympics will present at the meeting. Visit <http://bit.ly/dddtownhall> for details to join.

Community Resources

DDD has information for local, state, and national groups that support members and their families. The DDD website has links to many of these groups that can assist with day to day tasks and other services that may not be covered by the Division. [Visit the community resources section of the DDD website to learn more.](#)

Arizona Warm Lines

Trained peer support specialists are available to provide help if you need it. These warm lines are available to all Arizonans ages 18 and older. Peer support specialists have lived experience with behavioral health challenges. They are trained to listen and support you.

Area Covered	Provider	Phone Number	Hours
All Arizona Counties	NAZCARE	1-888-404-5530	4pm to 10pm Monday – Thursday 3pm to 10:30pm Friday – Sunday
Central Arizona	Crisis Response Network	602-347-1100	24 hours
Southern Arizona - Pima County	Hope, Inc	520-770-9909	8am - 10pm Seven days per week, 365 days per year, holidays open 8am - 6pm
Southern Arizona - All Other Counties	Hope, Inc	1-844-733-9912	8am - 10pm Seven days per week, 365 days per year, holidays open 8am - 6pm

The Family Involvement Center offers a warm line for family members. They offer support to family members that deal with behavioral health challenges. This service is also available at no cost.

- Statewide phone number: 1-877-568-8468
- Hours:
 - Monday - Friday: 8:30am - 5:00pm

Crisis Services

If you, a family member, or a friend have a mental health emergency, it is important that you seek help right away. Trained crisis staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help over the phone. The Crisis lines are free, confidential, and open to anyone who needs help. For medical, police and fire emergency situations, always call 911.

National 24-Hour Crisis Hotlines

Phone

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988 (call or text)
- National Substance Use and Disorder Issues Referral and Treatment Hotline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Text

- Text the word “HOME” to 741741
- Send a text to 988

Chat

- Chat link for 988: <https://988lifeline.org/chat>

For TTY Users

- Use your preferred relay service or dial 711 then 988

Arizona Statewide Crisis Hotline

- Phone: 1-844-534-4673 (HOPE)
- Text: 4HOPE (44673)
- Chat: [Chat with a Crisis Specialist](#)

Suicide and Crisis Hotlines by County

- Apache County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-866-495-6735
- Cochise County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-866-495-6735
- Coconino County: Care1st, 1-877-756-4090
- Gila County: Mercy Care, 1-800-631-1314
- Graham County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-866-495-6735
- Greenlee County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-866-495-6735
- La Paz County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-866-495-6735
- Navajo County: Care1st, 1-877-756-4090
- Maricopa County: Mercy Care, 1-800-631-1314
- Mohave: Care1st, 1-877-756-4090
- Pima County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-866-495-6735
- Pinal County: Mercy Care, 1-866-495-6735
- Santa Cruz County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-866-495-6735
- Yuma County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-866-495-6735
- Yavapai County: Care1st, 1-877-756-4090
- Ak-Chin Indian Community: 1-800-259-3449
- Gila River Indian Community: 1-800-259-3449
- Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community: 1-855-331-6432
- Tohono O'odham Nation: 1-844-423-8759

Especially for Teens

- Teen Life Line phone or text: 602-248-TEEN (8336)

Especially for Veterans

Veterans Crisis Line: 988 (press 1)

Be Connected: 1-866-4AZ-VETS (429-8387)

Report Fraud, Waste or Abuse

Medicaid fraud, waste and abuse (FWA) are crimes. Report fraud, waste, and abuse right away. You will not get in trouble or lose services if you report any suspected fraud, waste, or abuse.

You can report FWA to DDD by:

- Calling DDD at 1-877-822-5799
- Sending an email to dddfwa@azdes.gov
- Sending a letter to DES/DDD, Attn: Corporate Compliance Unit, 1789 W Jefferson St., Mail Drop 2HA1, Phoenix, AZ 85007
- Completing this [online form](#).

You can also report FWA to AHCCCS

- Provider Fraud
 - In Arizona: 602-417-4045
 - Outside Arizona: 1-888-ITS-NOT-OK (1-888-487-6686)
- Report Member Fraud:
 - In Arizona: 602-417-4193
 - Outside Arizona: 1-888-ITS-NOT-OK (1-888-487-6686)
- If you have questions about AHCCCS fraud, abuse of the program, or abuse of a member, email the AHCCCS Office of Inspector General (OIG) at AHCCCSFraud@azahcccs.gov.

Stay Up to Date

All old OIFA newsletters are available to view on DDD's website. Visit the [Member Services](#) page and click on the "Member Newsletters" section.

DDD is Here to Help

Please contact your Support Coordinator or the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1 (TTY/TDD 711) if you have questions.

Call the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1, TTY/TDD 711, to ask for this material in other formats. Language help is available at no cost to you.