



Member Update - July 2025

Follow 5 Steps to Water Safety

Swimming is a great way to beat the summer heat. It is also a life-saving skill.

According to the [Arizona Department of Health Services](#), drowning is the leading cause of death among children ages 1 to 4 years old in Arizona. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), every year in the United States over 4000 people die from unintentional drowning. Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury and death for children ages 5-14. Most often, those deaths could have been prevented with a few steps:

1. Watch. Be sure an adult is always watching children and those with disabilities when they are around bathtubs, hot tubs, pools, lakes, rivers, or the beach. Never leave anyone unattended around water. It is best to have someone nearby that knows CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).
2. Prevent. Make sure children or those with disabilities cannot wander into areas with pools or lakes. Fences with locking and self-closing gates need to surround pools or other water areas to stop children or others who cannot swim from getting into the water.
3. Be aware. The best way to avoid drowning is to watch those around the water. Never leave a child or person with disabilities alone in or near water, not even for a moment.
4. Learn to swim, or help others learn to swim.
5. Wear a life jacket. These jackets can save the lives of those who do not know how to swim. The jackets can be worn as an extra safety measure whenever a child or person with disabilities is around water.

Disability Benefits 101

The Division supports many members who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) and health care coverage from the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) and believe they cannot work or they will lose their benefits. This is not always true. The Social Security Administration has safeguards in its program to keep people from losing benefits when they start working. A job is a great place to meet new people and make friends. It can also give a person a sense of purpose and belonging. Disability Benefits 101, <https://az.db101.org/>, is a great resource for people with a disability who want to work. It has great information about how working may impact benefits.

The [DB101 website, Getting Past the Myths](#), has details about seven common myths related to work and benefits.

1. I can't work.
2. If I work, I will lose SSI/SSDI.
3. If I work, I will lose health benefits.
4. If I work, I will lose disability status.

5. I can't get help finding work.
6. I can't afford to work.
7. If my benefits stop, I will never get them again.

Members interested in working should review these myths to get the truth about how work may impact their benefits. The Division has Employment Specialists who can be part of a member's planning team and help identify the type of job they want and support they may need. Members who are interested in working should talk to their Support Coordinator.

Maintain Oral Health for Good Overall Health

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), many children and adults experience poor oral health due to common oral diseases like cavities and gum disease. In the United States, more than half of people aged 12–19 and almost all adults 20 or older have had cavities in their permanent teeth.

Poor oral health can also impact a person's overall health. For example, gum disease can:

- Cause heart and kidney problems.
- Worsen symptoms for people living with diabetes.
- Trigger changes in the brain that lead to mood disorders like depression or anxiety.

Seeing a dentist can help identify oral health diseases early so they can be treated. The following tips can help maintain good oral health between dental visits.

1. Brush twice a day. An electric toothbrush can help improve hygiene
2. Floss regularly to remove food pieces that could cause cavities and gum disease. A floss holder can help.
3. Eat a healthy diet. Stay away from foods high in sugar and carbohydrates.

DDD Provider Search

Members and families can search for Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) providers online. The [DDD Provider Search tool](#) allows members and families to search for a provider near them.

1. First, select to search for a provider at a facility or one that provides services in the member's home.
2. Then search by the service type. The search can be narrowed down by service area, provider name, language, and accessibility features. Clicking on a provider will bring up details about their business.

Encircle Families

On May 15, 2025 Raising Special Kids formally changed their name to [Encircle Families](#). This change was made based on feedback and recommendations from the families they support. This new name reflects inclusion and connection while honoring the entire family's journey. While their name has changed, their mission has not. Encircle Families continues to be a valuable resource for families supporting Arizonans with a developmental disability or special health care need. Their contact information, email addresses, and website URLs continue to work as they are. If you haven't seen the changes, consider visiting their website to see the new look!

Meeting the Cultural and Linguistic Needs of Members

The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) serves about 60,000 members. All members come from unique cultural backgrounds. Culture includes a person's beliefs, values, norms, and language. About 40 different languages are used by members. DDD provides language support for meetings or other encounters with DDD staff. All Qualified Vendors (QV) do as well.

DDD and QV's value each member's cultural needs. DDD has policies to meet their cultural and language needs. Both DDD and QVs train their staff. These trainings include how to be more culturally aware and how to meet each member's language needs. Being culturally aware improves communication with members while receiving services. DDD and QVs may do the following to meet a member's language needs:

- Use a member of their staff who can speak the member's language, or
- Contract an interpreter who speaks the member's language.

Interpreters include those who specialize in American Sign Language (ASL). These supports are available at no cost. Members who need an interpreter should contact their Support Coordinator or speak to their Qualified Vendor.

Get Physically Active

Being physically active can be a challenge. Life is busy. It is hot outside this time of year. There are other ways to stay busy. However, the benefits of physical activity are reason enough to get physical. Physical activity can provide immediate benefits. According to the [National Institute on Aging](#), physical activity can reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure, and improve sleep.

Regular physical activity can also have long-term benefits including:

- Protection against osteoporosis which weakens bones.
- Prevention of diseases and chronic conditions like heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, obesity, and depression.
- Improved emotional and mental health.

Being physically active doesn't mean running marathons. Individuals should start with what they are comfortable with. Walking, bicycle riding, and dancing are low-impact activities. Doing chores or gardening are also great activities to get your body moving. Swimming can improve heart function and strengthen muscles and bones. The key is to choose an enjoyable activity. Doing something is better than doing nothing. The [American Heart Association](#) has some great tips on its website about how to get active.

Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council (DDAC) Public Forums

The Developmental Disabilities Advisory Council (DDAC) is an advisory council to the Assistant Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). The DDAC includes [volunteers from different groups](#). They are appointed by the Governor's Office.

The DDAC holds Public Forums and Listening Sessions to hear concerns, questions, and comments from the public. These sessions help the DDAC better advise DDD's Assistant Director on what is most important to Arizonans. Public Forums and Listening Sessions take place every other month. They are held virtually via Google Meet. DDD members, families, providers, and advocates are invited to attend. They can share their thoughts and ask questions. The schedule for 2025 is:

- [Thursday, July 17, 2025](#) · 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- [Thursday, September 18, 2025](#) · 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
- [Thursday, November 20, 2025](#) · 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Visit the [DDAC online](#) or contact the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500, option 1 for more details about these events.

A disability-related reasonable accommodation or [language interpretation](#) may be requested for this meeting by emailing the [DDD Customer Service Center](#) or calling them at 1-844-770-9500 option 1. Requests should be made as early as possible.

Public 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 Thursday, August 7, 2025.** 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 that DDD may not cover. [Visit the community resources section of the DDD website to learn more](#) or the 2-1-1 Directory at <https://211arizona.org>.

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 | 4:30pm to 10:30pm Monday to Thursday 3:00pm to 10:30pm Friday to 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 |

| Area Covered | Provider | Phone Number | Hours |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|--|
| 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, seek help right away. Trained crisis staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help via phone, text, or chat. The crisis lines are at no cost, 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
- 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>

Videophone

- Visit the [988 website](#) and look towards the bottom of the page where it states "ASL NOW."

For TTY Users

- Use your preferred relay service or dial 711 then 988

For those who are Deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind, and late-deafened, and their families

- Contact [DeafLEAD](#), which provides 24-hour videophone access to crisis interpreters and crisis intervention services
 - Voice Phone: (573) 445-5005
 - Video Phone: (573) 303-5604
 - Text: HAND to 839863

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: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 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: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-877-756-4090
- Maricopa County: Mercy Care, 1-800-631-1314
- Mohave: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 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
- Yavapai County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-877-756-4090
- Yuma County: Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan, 1-866-495-6735
- 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

- AHCCCS online reporting form for FWA: <https://www.azahcccs.gov/Fraud/ReportFraud/onlineform.aspx>

- 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

Previous versions of 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.