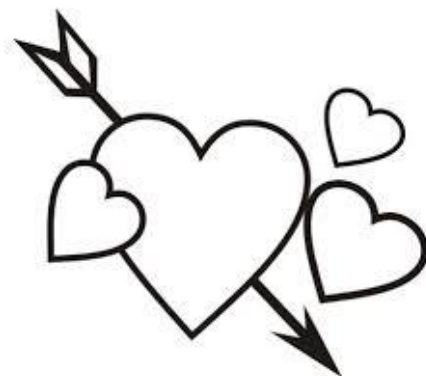


PARENTS ASSOCIATION
BELLEFONTAINE HABILITATION CENTER
10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD
ST. LOUIS, MO 63137



PHONE 314-264-9100 BHC Switchboard

PHONE 314-340-6002 Thrift Shop

WEBSITE www.parentsassociationbhc.com

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2021

PARENTS ASSOCIATION MEETING

All Parent Association members, friends and staff are invited. Keep up with the latest news about Bellefontaine Habilitation Center. Bring your talents and expertise for our advocacy efforts. With everyone's involvement, the lives of the residents at BHC will be the best possible. All are encouraged to stay informed and take some action. Attend a parents meeting, talk with other families, share your concerns and ideas, write a letter, or make a phone call to help provide a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for the residents of BHC and others. They have no voice but ours, so we must continually speak up for them. Refreshments served.

THE FEBRUARY PARENTS ASSOCIATION MEETING HAS BEEN CANCELLED

PENDING 2021 PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETING DATES MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

FEBRUARY 21 MAY 16 AUGUST 8 NOVEMBER 14



Residents and staff have begun to receive the COVID 19 vaccine. Yaaay!!

Restrictions on family visits continues.

Wishes for a return to complete health to all who have contracted the virus.

Thanks to all BHC staff for your dedicated daily work during this COVID pandemic

The 2021 Missouri Legislative Session began on January 5 and ends on May 15, 2021.

On the national level, there will continue to be a strong, persistent effort to close all congregate care facilities like habilitation centers and to close vocational work centers (previously called sheltered workshops). Keep updated and take action on these issues.

Remember, according to current federal law, families have the legal right to choose from all available Medicaid services including habilitation centers as they search for appropriate services for their family member with an intellectual disability.

The switchboard phone number for Bellefontaine Habilitation Center is 314-264-9100 or 314-264-9101.

Our Parent Newsletter is online at www.ParentsAssociationBHC.com. Pass it along to friends, family, and political leaders.

Wash your hands, social distance 6 feet, wear a mask.

Keep informed. Take action. Mary A. Vitale, President, Bellefontaine Parents Association

FEBRUARY 2021 PAGE 2

2021 BELLEFONTAINE HABILITATION CENTER

PARENTS ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS

10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD ST. LOUIS, MO 63137

314-340-6002 Thrift Shop

314-264-9100 or 9101 BHC Switchboard

www.parentsassociationbhc.com

OFFICERS

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VICE PRESIDENT Betty Coll

TREASURER Thomasine Branneky

RECORDING SECRETARY Leslie Terrebonne

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY Patrick Wells

DIRECTORS

Kathleen Berkley

Jeanette Craig

Michael Brophy

Mickey Slawson

Ruth Vondras

Members of the Parents Association of the Bellefontaine Habilitation Center enhance the lives of the residents. Examples of resident support by the Parents Association include:

BIRTHDAY CAKES AND GIFTS

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

HOLIDAY PARTIES

HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

HOME FURNISHINGS

SPECIAL PROGRAM FUNDS

PICNIC FUNDS

DANCE BANDS

CAMP FUNDS

STAFF APPRECIATION

A Parent Association Newsletter is published 4 times a year, and can be accessed on our website, www.parentsassociationbhc.com. Do you have a relative, friend, or community leader that would be interested in the Parent Association? 2020 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE \$5.00 annually. Pass along the membership form in this newsletter issue.

For questions about the Parents Association, call 314-340-6002.

Much appreciation goes to retiring board members Izella Moore and Bonnie Kirksey for their many years of dedicated service on the BHC Parent Association Board.

+++++

The Parents Association extends a note of thanks for a generous donation from the annual Tootsie Roll Drive from:

Knights of Columbus
Fr. Griffin Council No. 3586



TRIBUTE FUND

Celebrate a birthday or anniversary, offer get well wishes or congratulations, remember a loved one by sending in a tribute - support the residents at Bellefontaine Habilitation Center. A few examples of the use of funds are: annual picnic, Christmas gifts and decorations, birthday cakes and presents, holiday decorations, treats and dances, household items, and special programs. The tribute form is on the last page of the newsletter.

<u>DONOR</u>	<u>RECIPIENT</u>	<u>OCCASION</u>
Chris Bomze Patsy Christen Jeanette Craig Mary Vitale	Izella Moore Izella Moore	donation in memory of Patrice Christen in memory of Bettie Ivy in memory of Bettie Ivy

The BHC Parents Association expresses our deep sympathy for Department of Mental Health staff and clients who have died from the COVID 19 virus.



FUNDS APPROVED BY PARENTS ASSOCIATION BOARD

- \$ 380.00 Home Apt B, home decor
- \$ 380.00 Home 1606, home decor



THE HIDDEN TREASURE THRIFT SHOP HAS BEEN CLOSED DURING THE PANDEMIC.

LESS FUNDS ARE COMING IN.

**NOW WOULD BE A GOOD TIME TO MAKE A DONATION TO THE
BHC PARENTS ASSOCIATION**

+++++

PARENT ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR YEAR 2021

Dues are \$5.00 a year. Make checks payable to "BHC Parents Association".

NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

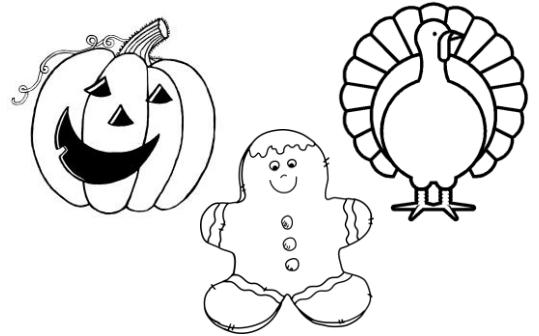
PHONE NUMBER _____

NEW MEMBER ____yes____no_____

If you are a new member, please let us know for mailing the newsletter.

Mail to: PARENTS ASSOCIATION 10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD ST. LOUIS, MO 63137

FEBRUARY 2021 PAGE 4



BHC RESIDENTS ENJOY ACTIVITIES/FALL AND WINTER

During COVID 19 restrictions, staff continue to engage residents led by the Active Treatment team.

Residents have been provided with daily activity packages of adult coloring pages, puzzles, word searches, and mazes. Worksheets, Bingo games, and memorabilia conversation cards are used to address Daily Objectives – identifying objects, foods, drinks, colors, shapes, numbers, personal hygiene and chores.

Holiday festivities include:

Halloween: There was pumpkin decorating, craft centerpieces, decorating in the homes, movies, art and puzzle packages, and parties in each home. Parties had snacks for all food levels, flavored water, and candy according to diets.

Thanksgiving: Turkey wreath crafts, art and puzzle pages, and decorating the homes were Thanksgiving activities.

Christmas: December was a fun and active month. Homes were decorated as music filled the air. Holiday movies were given to the homes for entertainment. Crafts were Christmas wreath, snowman and ornament crafts along with art and puzzle packages.

MISSOURI 2021 LEGISLATIVE SCHEDULE

- Wednesday, January 6, 2021 - First Day of the Missouri Legislative Session
- Monday, January 11, 2021 -Gov. Parson’s Inauguration – State Capitol
- Monday, January 18, 2021 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day - observed
- Wednesday, January 27, 2021 - Gov. Parson State of the State Address
- March 1, 2021 - Bill filing deadline per House & Senate rules
- March 15 thru 19, 2021 - Legislative spring break
- Monday, April 5, 2021 - Easter holiday
- Friday, May 7, 2021 - Last Day for floor action on Appropriations Bills
- Friday, May 14, 2021 - Last Day of Missouri Legislative Session
- Wednesday, September 15, 2021 - Veto Session



All dates are subject to change

As of 1/10/21 there are a total of 777 House bills <https://www.house.mo.gov/LegislationSP.aspx> and 364 Senate bills https://www.senate.mo.gov/21info/BTS_Web/BillList.aspx?SessionType=R filed this legislative session.

The House now has 114 Republicans and 48 Democrats with one seat vacant.

The Missouri Senate has 24 Republicans and 10 Democrats.

Get to know your legislators. To find your legislators, call the Missouri Capitol Switchboard at 1-573-751-2000 or go to www.mo.gov.

COVID 19 INFORMATION

An information and education webinar concerning COVID 19 is hosted by the Division of Developmental Disabilities every other Friday. Previous webinars are posted. <https://dmh.mo.gov/dev-disabilities/webinar>

Positive COVID 19 Cases for the Department of Mental Health can be tracked at the following website. <https://dmh.mo.gov/disaster-services/covid-19-information/dmh-positive-cases-data>

Department of Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities
<https://dmh.mo.gov/dev-disabilities>

Much appreciation is sent to all staff in the Department of Mental Health - Developmental Disabilities under the leadership of Director Valerie Huhn for their ongoing dedication to the health of our families during the COVID crisis.

FEBRUARY 2021 PAGE 5

BLATANT HOUSING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Intermediate care facilities for individuals with an intellectual disability (ICFs/IID) - habilitation centers in Missouri – serve people with severe intellectual disabilities. Many of these individuals also have multiple physical impairments, dangerous behavior challenges, and ongoing medical conditions.

Their homes at ICFs/IID provide the array of services they need to be safe, healthy, and to enable them to attain their highest abilities.

Despite this successful environment at ICFs/IID, many of these facilities are being closed by states because of threat of litigation from the U.S. Department of Justice. The Supreme Court Olmstead decision is misused to support these closures.

These forced closures amount to blatant housing discrimination against persons with disabilities.

Why are people with severe intellectual disabilities being discriminated against and forced out of their facility based homes where they want to stay?

How is the land of these ICFs/IID used after closure?

The state of Virginia is one example in answer to these questions.

In 2012, as part of a settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, Virginia agreed to close the Northern Virginia Training Center, as well as centers in Petersburg, Hillsville and Lynchburg.

These closures began to happen despite widespread support for the centers from families of the residents who lived at the centers. Distraught families had no choice but to begin to find other homes and services for their family members. They were being evicted from their homes.

Some moved to the few centers that might remain open. Others moved into group homes in the wider community. Many times it has been difficult to find and receive the same level of services that were available at the training centers.

The first center to close and be sold was the Northern Virginia Training Center.

What is to be built on that site?

Plans are for an expansive senior continuing care retirement community that will include independent living, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing to help seniors age in the same place. Medical services available on site will be doctors, nurses, social workers, lab testing, vaccinations, pharmacies, and rehabilitation services. Meals are provided. There are a variety of social activities on campus. Transportation is available for off campus trips. Individuals have to be a certain age to be eligible to live at this site.

The above description is exactly what ICF/IID homes like the Northern Virginia Training Center provide for people with severe intellectual disabilities. These ICF/IID homes excel in providing on campus comprehensive medical care and speech, physical, and occupational therapies. They have a variety of active treatment programs, and work and recreational opportunities, on and off campus. Meals are provided. Transportation is available for off campus trips. To be eligible for an ICF/IID home an individual has to have an intellectual disability.

Why can one population of retired people be able to choose a living environment of continuing care and comprehensive services, while one population of people with severe intellectual disabilities are denied the opportunity to choose the same type of environment?

If you are of retirement age, you have this choice. If you are severely intellectually disabled you do not have this choice, and you may be forced out of your current home by the U.S. Department of Justice!!!

This is a clear picture of blatant housing discrimination against persons with disabilities.

It is well known that there is a rising need for retirement communities that include comprehensive services. These continuing care retirement centers should be built.

It is also becoming well known that there are a rising number of families in desperate need of help in caring for their family member with a severe intellectual disability. Persons with disabilities and their families should not face discrimination concerning housing options. **According to current federal law, families have the legal right to choose** from all available Medicaid services including ICFs/IID as they search for appropriate services for their family member with an intellectual disability.

The following article on page 6 shows this critical need of help for families looking for appropriate services.

FEBRUARY 2021 PAGE 6

PARENTS OF AUTISTIC ADULTS WITH AGGRESSION LACK ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE SERVICES

<https://www.fox2detroit.com/news/for-parents-of-autistic-adults-with-aggression-there-are-few-mental-health-care-options-available>

By Taryn Asher November 5, 2019 FOX 2 Detroit, Michigan

While he became aggressive at an early age, a strong support system and daily routine helped Jacob Malec keep his frustrations under control. And then he turned 18.

"All of a sudden he turned 18 and something clicked in his brain. So this has been going on since August and he's having sometimes two, three, four meltdowns a day," said Jodi Malec, Jacob's mom.

Jacob is non-verbal and has autism. It was age 4 when he began to show aggressive tendencies, but his family found ways to control and divert outbursts. But since becoming an adult, those outbursts have turned physical.

His parents have videos and photos of Jacob where his hand is bloody from him biting it or holes in the drywall where he's slammed his head against. Every time his dad or caregivers try to stop Jacob from the outbursts, he goes into attack mode.

"I just try and keep him away from the walls and the windows so he's not injuring himself. That frustrates him more. He lashes out more, hitting me, smacking me, grabbing my wrist, pinching me trying to bite me," said Keith, Jacob's dad.

Family with autistic son can't find facility that will care for him

Despite the Malec's frequent calls to the police to help with their son who hurts himself during tantrums, they say that even hospitals aren't equipped to handle the needs of their sons.

Keith will hold his son on the floor until the medication kicks in. However, since August, the Malecs have needed to rely on first responders for help.

"We literally have tried everything. The only reason that we take him in to the hospital and call 911 is because at some point we're just like 'okay, we can't handle him anymore,'" said Jodi.

Unfortunately, the Malecs believe not even those institutions are capable of taking care of Jacob or his needs. It would take an inpatient facility to help Jacob - the kind that just isn't available in Michigan. They say the state has nothing available for adults like Jacob who suffer from aggressive episodes.

"We were on a Ferris wheel, right? And there isn't anywhere to go from here. The system - this has been going on too long," Keith said. "With all the adults and children with autism now, it has to change. We can rattle off 20 names of other families that are in the same boat right now."

What the family does have is a friend in the State Senate. Pete Lucido, who represents families like the Malecs and has been fighting for more access to mental health facilities. Unfortunately, since the state gutted funding for mental health care there hasn't been any new investment. Of the state's \$26.5 billion budget for the Department of Health and Human Services, by the time the money is dispersed for mental health, there isn't enough to go around.

Instead, parents are placed on a waitlist for a facility that doesn't exist. The only solution for families like the Malecs' now is the perfect combination of medication to keep their son under control.

"It's destroying us. It's destroying us physically and emotionally right? We need help. At this day in age there needs to be facilities that are available to do this," said Keith.

WORDS WORTH REPEATING AGAIN AND AGAIN

Justice Ginsburg can be remembered for the majority opinion in the 1999 Olmstead decision, interpreting the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The 1999 Supreme Court Olmstead decision states:

“Nothing in the ADA or its implementing regulations condones termination of institutional settings for persons unable to handle or benefit from community settings...Nor is there any federal requirement that community-based treatment be imposed on patients who do not desire it.” *Olmstead*, at 601 – 602

“It would be unreasonable, it would be a tragic event, then, were the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) to be interpreted so that States had some incentive, for fear of litigation, to drive those in need of medical care and treatment out of appropriate care and into settings with too little assistance and supervision.” *Olmstead*, at 610.

FEBRUARY 2021 PAGE 7

Stay informed. Take action.
Contact Information

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Marcy Hargis, Assistant Superintendent
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St. Louis, Mo 63137
314-264-9100 or 314-264-9101

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

Mark Stringer, Director of Department of Mental Health
Valerie Huhn, Director-Division of Developmental Disabilities
April Maxwell, Director-State Operated Services

Department of Mental Health
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Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-751-4122
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www.mo.gov

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www.mo.gov

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United States Capitol Switchboard: 1-202-224-3121
www.house.gov
www.senate.gov

U.S. PRESIDENT

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
Switchboard: 1-202-256-1414
www.whitehouse.gov

AFSCME COUNCIL 61 (American Federation of State and County Municipal Employees)

3230 Emerald Lane Suite 400
Jefferson City, MO, 65109
(573) 635-9145
www.afscme.org

VOR (a national organization representing a full continuum of care for persons diagnosed with an intellectual disability, including ICFs/IID, habilitation centers in Missouri)
1-877-399-4867
www.vor.net

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(address) _____

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BEST THRIFT SHOP PRICES!!**

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BELLEFONTAINE HABILITATION CENTER
10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD
ST. LOUIS MO 63137**

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