

**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](http://www.parentsassociationbhc.com)



**NEWSLETTER    MAY 2024**

**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.

**MEETING DATE: SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2024**

**MEETING TIME: 2:00 P.M.**

**MEETING PLACE: ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

**2024 MEETING DATES**

**MAY 19    AUGUST 11    NOVEMBER 10**

**The long-awaited road and parking lot repair began on March 14, 2024.** Be careful when driving on BHC campus during these extensive repairs.

**Electronic Health Records** project is underway at BHC as part of the Department of Mental Health plans. See page 4 for more information.

**Residents have been enjoying** the new Therapy Chairs of Chill Out Chairs and Thera Glide Auto Lock Chairs.

**The Hidden Treasure Thrift shop has reopened.** Find your treasure from: clothes, shoes, household furnishings, toys, books, DVD's, electronics, glassware, kitchen accessories, baskets, electronics, jewelry, holiday decorations, and much more. Come and visit us on Wednesdays, 10:00-3:00, building #1901.

**Thank you to the Thrift Shop volunteers** for donating their talent and time to the Shop to benefit the residents living at BHC.

**Missouri habilitation centers are an essential part** of a continuum of care for persons with intellectual disabilities and are supported by federal law.

**The Olmstead decision of the Supreme Court states:** "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.

**The VOR Legislative Initiative is being held May 7-9, 2024 in Washington, D.C.** to continue to educate U.S. Senators and Representatives and federal agencies about the needs of our family members. VOR is our national voice. [VOR needs your support. Become a member or donate at www.vor.net.](http://www.vor.net)

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

**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.

<b><u>DONOR</u></b>	<b><u>RECIPIENT</u></b>	<b><u>OCCASION</u></b>
Jeanette Craig	Coll family	in memory of Betty Coll
Jeanette Craig	Slawson family	in memory of Mickey Slawson
Darlene Desroches		donation
Jacqueline Endraske		in memory of Mary Deschu
Joe & Lydia Gorczyca		donation
Lee & Jackie Kearney		donation
Lyn McQueary		donation
Anne O'Connor Miller & family	Slawson family	in memory of Mickey Slawson
Judith O'Connor	Slawson family	in memory of Mickey Slawson
Becky Post	Slawson family	in memory of Mickey Slawson
Mary Lou Sammelman & family	Slawson family	in memory of Mickey Slawson



**FUNDS APPROVED BY PARENTS ASSOCIATION BOARD**

\$471.00 Valentine parties

\$440.00 Easter parties

\$1200.00 Birthday gifts for residents, July – December 2024



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The Parents Association extends appreciation and thanks for a generous donation from:

Knights of Columbus

Fr. Griffin Council No. 3586

Annual Tootsie Roll Drive





**BHC RESIDENTS ENJOY WINTER/SPRING ACTIVITIES**

Dietary instructions are observed for the residents at all activities.

Thanks to staff for helping residents prepare and participate in these Winter and Spring activities:

**ON CAMPUS**

**January** - Residents took part in crafts supported by Winter Craft Activities package received by each home.

**February** - Valentine’s Day Party with music, dancing, and craft activities. Delicious desserts served were Cupcakes, Strawberry Pudding and Mousse, and Chocolate Covered Strawberries.

**March** - Easter Party with music, dancing, and crafts. Refreshments included Deviled Eggs, Banana Pudding, Chocolate Covered Strawberries, Peep Mousse, and Punch.



**IN THE COMMUNITY**

**Events**

Science Center, Butterfly House, St. Louis Aquarium, Fox Theatre, St. Louis Arch, Concert in the Park, Moolah Circus, Monster Truck Show, Flea Market, World Wrestling, Crestwood Bowl, Poplar Bluff

**Out to Eat**

Chili’s, Subway, Steak n Shake, Raising Canes, Culvers, The Kitchen, Fazoli’s, Golden Corral, Doozles, Olive Garden, Red Lobster, Panda Express, Crystal Custard



**Shopping**

Family Dollar, Ross, Marshall’s, Galleria, VStock, Great Clips, Schnucks, Walmart

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**AN ELECTRONICS HEALTH RECORDS SYSTEM BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH INCLUDES BELLEFONTAINE HABILITATION CENTER**

<https://dmh.mo.gov/node/41816>

Tue, 10/31/2023

Jefferson City, MO



The Department of Mental Health (DMH) announces it will partner with Oracle Cerner, to implement a fully automated and integrated Electronic Health Records (EHR) system. The vision is to create an electronic platform that documents, communicates, and enhances the journey for DMH service recipients in state-operated programs, and connects with contracted agencies and other organizations.

The EHR procurement began in July 2021, with the Governor and State Legislature recognizing the need for one system across the department’s 15 state operated psychiatric hospitals, habilitation centers, and home and community-based waiver programs. DMH was appropriated funding to acquire an EHR system for these facilities. The system will ultimately advance service delivery throughout DMH state operated facilities.

Oracle Cerner, formerly Cerner, is a leading provider of digital information systems used within hospitals and health systems to enable medical professionals to deliver better healthcare to individual patients and communities. More than 27,000 facilities globally utilize Cerner products. The company has more than 29,000 employees globally, with over 13,000 in Kansas City, Mo.

Implementation is estimated at 24 months with completion of the project expected in October 2025.



**MISSOURI SHELTERED WORKSHOPS HIGHLIGHT SKILLS AT MISSOURI CAPITOL**

“Missouri's Sheltered Workshops Elevate Employees with Disabilities, With A Day at The Capitol.”  
Lake Expo, 4-2-2024  
[https://www.lakeexpo.com/community/community\\_news/missouris-sheltered-workshops-elevate-employees-with-disabilities-with-a-day-at-the-capitol/article\\_fcd53ff2-f12d-11ee-934a-6bfb8b1c6ef9.html](https://www.lakeexpo.com/community/community_news/missouris-sheltered-workshops-elevate-employees-with-disabilities-with-a-day-at-the-capitol/article_fcd53ff2-f12d-11ee-934a-6bfb8b1c6ef9.html)

Over 60 representatives—managers, staff, parents, and employees—from 30 Missouri workshops gathered earlier this year at the Capitol, for Missouri Association of Sheltered Workshop Managers’ Goods and Services Day.

The annual event, held this year on Jan. 24, is a chance for workshop supporters to show state leaders the dramatic range of workshop products and services – and talk about what workshops do that is often unseen outside of workshops.

Several shops brought jigs and other adaptive devices custom made to help employees with disabilities in ways that private businesses rarely attempt. Others showcased the array of products and services that workshops deliver to both local businesses and large corporations.

Legislators were impressed, with several noting they didn’t realize the extent of workshops’ involvement in Missouri’s economy or the many efforts to provide employment choice for Missourians with disabilities.

“It’s a great opportunity for Missouri’s leaders to see what workshops do on many levels,” MASWM President Rob Libera said.

“It is impressive to see how many services the workshops across the state offer! Our legislators are always amazed by the abilities of our nearly 5,000 employees statewide,” states Natalie Couch, Executive Director of Lake Area Industries. In Camden County, Lake Area Industries serves 55 individuals by offering services such as packaging and assembly, secure document destruction, cardboard and dock foam recycling, mobile work crews, and even operates their highly popular garden center, Gifted Gardens.

For more information on Missouri workshops, visit [moworkshops.org](http://moworkshops.org). and for more information on your local workshop, Lake Area Industries, visit [lakeareaindustries.org](http://lakeareaindustries.org).

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**HOSPITALS BEING REIMBURSED FOR EXPENDITURES BECAUSE OF LACK OF APPROPRIATE PLACEMENTS FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

<https://dmh.mo.gov/media/pdf/post-discharge-hospital-reimbursement-agreement-and-attestation-memo-2024>

The Missouri 102nd General Assembly, 2023 passed two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00)in Fiscal Year 2024 through House Bill 10 section 10.425 for the distribution of funds to hospitals for reimbursement of expenditures related to individuals who qualify for placement and support through the Division of Developmental Disabilities(DD), who may otherwise be eligible for discharge, but were not discharged for a specified period of time due to a lack of availability within an appropriate community placement. The \$2M covers hospital services provided to individuals who qualify for placement and support through the Division of DD and otherwise eligible for discharge from an inpatient or emergency room admission, but were unable to be discharged due to a lack of availability within an appropriate community placement for the period April 1, 2023to March31, 2024

## **CRISIS IN SERVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES-STAFF SHORTAGES**

<https://www.casey.senate.gov/news/releases/amidst-caregiving-crisis-casey-kaine-baldwin-introduce-bill-to-revitalize-nations-long-term-care-workforce>

One U.S. Congressional bill that addresses the shortage of Direct Support Professionals is the *Long-Term Care Workforce Support Act*.

Below are excerpts from a news release about this legislation:

April 15, 2024



**Washington, D.C.** – Today, U.S. Senators Bob Casey (D-PA), Chairman of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, Tim Kaine (D-VA), and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) introduced legislation to tackle the caregiving crisis by reprioritizing long-term caregivers and supporting their work based on the value they bring to families across the Nation. Millions of families with aging loved ones and people with disabilities require skilled care to live, but many caregivers today work long hours for low pay, resulting in some workers being forced to leave their field for higher paying jobs. This instability has resulted in widespread worker shortages for those in need of essential care. The *Long-Term Care Workforce Support Act* would ensure that caregiving can be a sustainable, lifelong career by providing substantial new funding to support workers in every part of the long-term care industry, from nursing homes to home-care to assisted living facilities. By improving caregiver compensation, benefits, and support systems, the bill would ensure the Nation has a strong, qualified pipeline of workers to provide desperately needed care for older adults and people with disabilities. Companion legislation was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (D-MI-6).

...Caregiving is in crisis across the United States. Caregivers are widely underpaid, earning a median wage of \$15.43 an hour and often living in poverty. The result is caregivers are in short supply—a recent survey revealed 92% of nursing home respondents and nearly 70% of assisted living facilities reported significant or severe workforce shortages. Another recent survey of home and community-based services (HCBS) providers showed all 50 states experiencing home care worker shortages, and 43 states reported that some HCBS providers have closed due to worker shortages.

The *Long Term Care Workforce Support Act* will address this crisis by stabilizing, growing, and supporting the direct care professional workforce. Specifically, the Long-Term Care Workforce Support Act will:

- Increase the number of direct care professionals, including in rural communities;
- Provide pathways to enter and be supported in the workforce for women, people of color, and people with disabilities;
- Improve compensation for direct care professionals to reduce vacancies and turnover;
- Ensure that direct care professionals are treated with respect, provided with a safe working environment, protected from exploitation, and provided fair compensation;
- Improve access and quality of long-term care for families;
- Document the need for long-term care, identify effective recruitment and training strategies, and promote practices that help retain direct care professionals.
- Strengthen the direct care professional workforce in order to support the 53,000,000 unpaid family caregivers who are providing complex services to their loved ones in the home and across long-term care settings.

...The *Long-Term Care Workforce Support Act* is endorsed by 44 organizations, including Caring Across Generations, the Long-Term Care Community Coalition (LTCCC), PHI, the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN).

The bill is co-sponsored in the Senate, including U.S. Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), Angus King (I-ME), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), John Fetterman (D-PA), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Peter Welch (D-VT), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Tina Smith (D-MN), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Patty Murray (D-WA), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Laphonza Butler (D-CA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), and Ed Markey (D-MA).

**CRISIS IN SERVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES-CLOSURES AND CUTBACKS**

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2024/01/02/survey-of-disability-service-providers-finds-deepening-crisis/30679/>



**“Survey Of Disability Service Providers Finds Deepening Crisis”**  
by Michelle Diamant | January 2, 2024

Disability service providers across the nation are cutting back their offerings, turning away new clients and struggling to maintain quality and advocates say the situation is poised to get worse.

A survey of 581 providers of community-based services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities shows that nearly all are facing staffing shortages.

As a result, 77% of providers said they are refusing or no longer accepting referrals and 44% have discontinued various offerings. Moreover, 60% said that they’re considering closing additional programs or services.

The fourth annual survey comes from the American Network of Community Options and Resources, or ANCOR, which represents disability service providers nationally. The latest survey was conducted over a four-week period beginning in September 2023.

The findings largely illustrate trends that have persisted in recent years as the industry has struggled to attract people to low-paid and difficult direct support professional positions while less-demanding fast food and retail opportunities dangle higher wages.

“Providers want to offer better compensation in order to attract more direct support professionals and retain the ones they have, but decades of underinvestment in the Medicaid program has left them powerless to raise wages to a competitive level without reducing services and shuttering programs at the same time,” said Barbara Merrill, CEO of ANCOR. “(Community providers) simply can’t support people if they lack the qualified staff to do so.”

About three-quarters of providers said they have delayed the launch of new programs and services and nearly the same number indicated that they are having trouble meeting quality standards. More than half of the providers surveyed said they operate in areas where few — if any — provide similar services.

Among people with developmental disabilities who are able to access services, ANCOR found that pressures on the industry are forcing individuals to live farther from their communities, putting them at greater risk of hospitalization and institutionalization.

Even still, officials with ANCOR note that the situation could be even more dire. Currently, providers are leaning on significant extra federal funding from the American Rescue Plan, a \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package passed in 2021. The Biden administration said in December that the federal government has distributed \$37 billion to states for Medicaid home and community-based services under the law, most of which is going toward retaining, expanding and training the direct care workforce, but the money must be used by March 2025.

“As our report starkly illustrates, the wind down of temporary pandemic relief funding could prove devastating for community providers and presents an imminent threat to the people with IDD they serve,” said Lydia Dawson, senior director for government affairs at ANCOR. “Immediate legislation is needed to stabilize the DSP workforce, ensure home and community-based services remain sustainable and available to people with IDD, and to guarantee the right of people with disabilities to live in fully inclusive communities.”

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**DO YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO HAS A DESIRE TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES?**

Let them know of opportunities with the Missouri Department of Mental Health at:

1706 East Elm Street Jefferson City, MO 65101

Phone: 1-573-751-4122

Phone: 1-800-364-9687

<https://dmh.mo.gov/>

**APRIL WAS NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH****AUTISM NEWS**

Missouri has an Office of Autism to help families find appropriate services for persons diagnosed with autism.

<https://dmh.mo.gov/dev-disabilities/autism>

The website states:

“The Office of Autism Services (OAS) was established in 2008 (633.225 RSMo) to provide leadership in program development for children and adults with autism spectrum disorders. OAS is committed to supporting the independence and self-sufficiency of individuals with autism by leading collaborative efforts to improve system supports for individuals with autism and their families.”

**The Missouri Autism Center Consortium**

<https://dmh.mo.gov/dev-disabilities/autism/center-consortium>

The Department of Mental Health contracts with six Autism Centers to provide ASD diagnostic evaluations and intervention services. Missouri's Autism Centers are clinics that provide best practice diagnostic evaluations and referrals for children, as well as training for families and communities. In addition, Missouri's Autism Centers provide clinical training to and serve as a statewide resource for the medical and clinical community to advance evidence-based and emerging best practices for ASD diagnostics and intervention.

**MU-Thompson Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders**

Phone: 573-882-6081 or 1-888-720-0015

**Knights of Columbus Developmental Center****SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center**

Phone: 314-577-5609

**Children's Mercy Hospital and Clinics Developmental and Behavioral Sciences**

Phone: 816-234-3674

**Southeast Missouri State University Autism Center for Diagnosis and Treatment**

Phone: (573) 986-4985

**Washington University Autism Clinical Center**

Phone: 314-286-1700

**Mercy Kids Autism Center**

Phone: 314-872-3345

**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON SEVERE AUTISM (NCSA) HELPING FAMILIES**

<http://www.ncsautism.org/>

The mission of NCSA states:

Pursuing recognition, policy and solutions for the surging population of individuals, families and caregivers affected by severe forms of autism and related disorders.

**What We Do**

We are committed to improving the long-term welfare of individuals, families and caregivers affected by severe forms of autism and related neurodevelopmental disorders. To that end, we:

- **Educate the public** about these disabilities, and how they require special attention and services.
- **Provide a platform** for think tanks and serious discourse addressing policy and services.
- **Educate policy makers** about the impact of legislation and policy on our vulnerable, growing, and often overshadowed population.
- **Promote research** into therapeutics, neurobiology, and causes of severe forms of autism and related disabilities.
- **Promote acceptance and awareness** of individuals, families, and caregivers affected by severe forms of autism by giving voice to their realities and needs.

Position papers, resources, webinars, and podcasts cover a multitude of topics such as: Guardianship, Vocational Options, Personal Safety and Abuse Prevention, Access to Appropriate Health Care & Crisis Care, Medicaid HCBS Residential Policies, Federal and State Housing Policies, Educational Placements, Need for Innovative Research, Facilitated Communication, DSM Diagnostic Labels, Language & Images & Depictions Concerning Severe Autism

TRIBUTE FUND FORM (please print)

ENCLOSED CONTRIBUTION \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

ON THE OCCASION OF \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE SEND TO (name) \_\_\_\_\_

(address) \_\_\_\_\_

FROM (name) \_\_\_\_\_

(address) \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO "BHC Parents Association"

MAIL TO: PARENTS ASSOCIATION 10695 BELLEFONTAINE ROAD ST LOUIS MO 63137



**COME VISIT US**



**THE HIDDEN TREASURE SHOP**  
**SHOP TILL YOU DROP!! BEST THRIFT SHOP PRICES!!**  
**BLDG #1901** FIRST BUILDING ON THE LEFT AS YOU ENTER BHC CAMPUS.

**WEDNESDAYS, 10:00 A.M. TO 3 P.M. AT BHC**

Please leave donated items at the Parents Association shed near the Thrift Shop.

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

**FORWARDING AND ADDRESS**  
**CORRECTION REQUESTED**