

Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program

Online News

June 22, 2012

ADAP Happenings

Mississippi Disability Mega-Conference

In collaboration with the Mississippi P&A and other State Agencies, Delshonda Thomas and James Tucker will be speaking at the Mississippi Disability Mega-Conference in Jackson, Mississippi on June 21, 2012. Delshonda Thomas, Senior Case Advocate, will participate in two panel discussions; "Planning Your Move to the Community" and "ADA Community Integration Mandate". She will share the progress Alabama has made toward community integration for individuals with disabilities. James Tucker, Associate Director, will be the keynote speaker addressing the ADAP Community Integration Mandate.

Disability Inclusion Sunday, June 24

ADAP Director, Dr. Ellen Gillespie, will speak on Disability Inclusion Sunday, at the Edgewood Presbyterian Church in Homewood June 24 at 9:30. Her sermon title is "A Stronghold for the Oppressed". The sermon features several stories about the difficulties experienced by people with disabilities, as well as some success stories. All are welcome at the worship service, and dress is casual.

YOU CAN VOTE IN ALABAMA, IF:

- You are a citizen of the United States;
- You live in Alabama;
- You will be at least 18 years old on election day;
- You have not been convicted of a disqualifying felony;
- You have not have been declared "mentally incompetent" for voting purposes by a court

Please note, you only need to register to vote one time; however, you must update your voter registration whenever you move to a new address or change your name.

IMPORTANT DATES

Special Constitutional Amendment Election – September 18, 2012

- September 7 - Last day to register to vote for the special election
- September 13 - Last day to request an absentee ballot for the special election
- September 17 - Last day to return an absentee ballot (hand-delivery or postmark)

General Election – November 6, 2012

- October 26 - Last day to register to vote for the general election
- November 1 - Last day to request an absentee ballot for the general election
- November 5 - Last day to return an absentee ballot (hand-delivery or postmark)

If you have any questions, please contact Kirk Walter at ADAP (205)348-3118 or KDWalter@adap.ua.edu

Click here (<http://www.alabamavotes.gov/downloads/election/vr/nvra-2.pdf>) for a voter registration application.

Upcoming Webinar

Webinar on Support Services for People with Disabilities Interested in Going Back to Work - June 27

If you receive Social Security disability benefits and are thinking about going back to work, register for this free National Work Incentives Seminar Event that will be held on **June 27, 2012** from 3 - 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Time). You'll learn about Social Security programs and rules that can help you return to work, and hear from disability benefit experts about the [Ticket to Work](#) program and other [work incentives](#). Register online or call 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY/TDD).

Visit [Disability.gov](#) for more information about how work may affect your Social Security disability benefits, as well as job search and career planning tools that can help you find employment.

News

Children with Multiple Needs

Alabama law defines a Multiple Needs Child as "a child coming to the attention of the juvenile court or one of the entities listed herein who is at imminent risk of out-of-home placement or a placement in a more restrictive environment, and whose needs require the services of two or more of the following entities: Department of Youth Services, public school system (services for exceptional needs), Department of Human Resources, Department of Public Health, juvenile probation officers, or Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation." Alabama Code §12-15-501 (1975). These children's needs are often multifaceted and require intensive collaborative efforts and service coordination from the child care agencies. Each county in the state has a **County Children's Services Facilitation Team (CCSFT)** that is responsible for collaboratively staffing and providing services to children identified as multiple needs children. Children staffed by the CCSFT may be eligible for a variety of services including in home behavioral supports, counseling, and if necessary residential treatment. Only children under the age of 18 are eligible to receive services through a CCFST. If you think your child may qualify for these services, contact ADAP for more information about how to obtain a referral to your local CCSFT. For more information, click the link to access the State Multiple Needs Child website.

<http://www.mnc.state.al.us/>

How Money is Distributed to Public School Students in Alabama

A recently released report by Rutgers University and the Education Law Center shows Alabama is lagging behind other states in terms of fairness for how money is distributed to public school students. In 2009, Alabama spent an average of \$9,071 per student. This amount ranks 39th for all states and is about \$1,700 less than the national average. However, the most disturbing data is that Alabama is one of only six states with a "regressive funding distribution." The means the poorer the school district, the less money per student is spent. Schools in the richest districts receive almost \$1,200 more per student than those in the poorest districts. Alabama was given a failing grade of "D" for funding distribution while neighboring Gulf Coast states Louisiana and Mississippi were given passing grades of "C."

Complicating fair funding issues further is the disparity between public school children and private school children. In 2009, 87% of Alabama's school aged children attended public schools. The median income for families with students attending private schools was more than 75% greater than families with public school students. This means that public schools have a greater concentration of low income students. Furthermore, the report asserts that this imbalance makes it more difficult to obtain a fair distribution of funding through public and political efforts.

Citation: Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card. Second Edition 2012. *Education Law Center and Rutgers University*.

Goodwill Takes Heat For Paying Those With Disabilities Less

A national disability advocacy group is urging a boycott of Goodwill arguing that the collector of unwanted clothes and furniture should not be paying workers with disabilities less than minimum wage. Read story:

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2012/06/12/goodwill-paying-less/15827/>

Alabama School Connection Released Results on Student Harassment

Bullying, in the form of name-calling, exclusion, or violence - is an issue that many individuals with special needs cope with on a daily basis. The Alabama School Connection (ASC) has released the results of a review conducted to determine whether Alabama's 132 school districts are in compliance with specific pieces of the Student Harassment Prevention Act of 2009, which took effect October 1, 2009. See the study results:

<http://alabamaschoolconnection.org/2012/06/13/the-student-harassment-prevention-act-does-it-do-what-it-said-it-would->

[do-a-first-look/](#)

Brain Injury Study: A Single Season Of Hits May Harm College Athletes' Ability To Learn

According to a new study, just a single season of contact sports can take a toll on college athletes' ability to learn. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/16/brain-injury-concussion-college-athletes_n_1522145.html

The Eric Peebles Journey ...

For more than a decade Eric Peebles has been dedicated to the pursuit of an extraordinary mission. That is, to empower individuals with disabilities to achieve their full human potential through the teaching and advocacy of self-determination techniques, which emphasize autonomy and beneficence in all life activities including; Independent living; economic self-sufficiency and full inclusion in all aspects of society from the earliest possible juncture. <http://ada2000.org/website/845/> .

Just For Fun

Citizens with Disabilities Can Get Free Lifetime National Parks Pass

Did you know that U.S. citizens with documented disabilities could get a free lifetime pass to all national parks and recreation areas? The Access Pass is a free pass available to U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the United States that have been medically determined to have a permanent disability; it provides access to more than 2,000 recreation sites managed by five Federal agencies. A National Parks Pass usually costs \$80 yearly. Read more:

<http://store.usgs.gov/pass/access.html>

National Disability Rights Network

Study Finds Medical Procedures Violating the Civil Rights of People with Disabilities

Stunting growth, removing body parts with no judicial review

Washington, DC – In a first of its kind study, the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) determined that performing certain medical procedures or withholding life sustaining treatment in non-terminal situations without judicial review violates the civil rights of people with disabilities.

The initial catalyst for the report is the so-called Ashley Treatment, which received worldwide attention 5 years ago. Ashley was a six-year-old child with developmental and physical disabilities whose growth was stopped through estrogen treatments and whose uterus and breast buds were removed. The intent of this treatment was to keep her permanently small and child-like. NDRN believes this practice is spreading worldwide.

“The thought of doctors and guardians, together, deciding to remove the body parts and stunt the growth of a child based on assumptions about their awareness and quality of life is shocking and disgusting,” said NDRN’s executive director, Curt Decker.

Further investigations by the nation’s federally mandated Protection and Advocacy agencies, which NDRN represents in Washington, DC, have uncovered other cases in which medical treatment and even basic food and water are being denied to individuals with disabilities during minor illnesses with the intent of letting the illness progress until death.

“In one case, the parents of a 13-year-old boy with a developmental disability refused to allow him access to antibiotics so that the cold he had would progress to pneumonia. They got their wish and the boy died,” said Decker.

“Every person is born with civil and human rights and an inherent dignity,” continued Decker. “The reality that this is happening in the United States is anathema to the core values that we as

Americans say we hold. That it is happening to those unable to use their own voice is even worse. This report is meant to start the conversation about how society can and should make medical decisions that uphold the constitutional rights of all people with disabilities.”

The report, *Devaluing People with Disabilities: Medical Procedures that Violate Civil Rights*, puts individuals with disabilities at the center of discourse. It reviews the facts of Ashley X, as a case study and presents a continuum of similar experiences and treatment of individuals with disabilities within a context of medical decision-making that

devalues them as people and discriminates against them based on their disability.

The report explores the conflict of interest that medical decision making may present between a parent and their child. It describes the vital role that the legal and judicial systems have in ensuring that the civil and human rights of individuals with disabilities are protected regardless of their severity and in contrast to opinions regularly expressed in the medical and ethics community.

Finally, the report presents a series of recommendations for how the legal and medical systems at a local, state and national level, including protection and advocacy agencies, ethics committees, institutional review boards, and the courts can perform critical "watch-dog" functions to ensure that the human and civil rights of persons with disabilities are protected.

[Read the full report,](#)

http://www.ndrn.org/images/Documents/Resources/Publications/Reports/Devaluing_People_with_Disabilities.pdf

[Download the executive summary and recommendations:](#)

http://www.ndrn.org/images/Documents/Resources/Publications/Reports/Executive_Summary_and_Recommendations.pdf

View the report webpage here <http://www.ndrn.org/en/media/publications/483-devaluing-people-with-disabilities.html>

The University of Alabama

[Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program](#)

Box 870395 - Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0395

web site: <http://www.adap.net>

e-mail: adap@adap.ua.edu

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