

REACH of Dallas
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Dallas, Texas 75235-2275

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PLEASE HELP US SAVE MONEY!

If you no longer want to receive this newsletter
or are receiving multiple copies, please call/contact
Robin @ (817) 870-9082 or reachftw@reachcils.org.

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REACHing Out

HELPING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REACH FOR INDEPENDENCE

July-September Vol. XXIV No. 4 Editor: Sarah Stepp

REACHing Out is published four times a year in January, April, July & October at REACH of Dallas, 8625 King George Drive, Suite 210, Dallas, Texas 75235-2275

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On Thursday, September 23, 2021, the REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living are participating in the Communities Foundation of Texas' North Texas Giving Day event. NTGD is a one-day online giving extravaganza for the whole North Texas region. Last year, REACH was part of the success as CFT brought together local nonprofits and raised over \$48 million in donations for them. Since it's founding in 2009, NTGD has inspired people to Get Up and Give. We invite you to join the movement and help us reach our goal of \$10,000 on Sept 23.

Here's how you can help:

Get up and Give on September 23 by visiting <https://www.northtexasgivingday.org/reach-resource-centers-on-independent-living>. Your gift matters! On Sept 23 if you donate to the REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living between 6am and midnight, your dollar will be stretched by bonus funds, possible matching funds, and prizes raised by CFT! Not available on September 23? No worries! Schedule your donation between September 1 and September 16 and make your gift count.

Spread the word! Spread the word to your friends and loved ones about the REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living and North Texas Giving Day! Don't forget to tag @REACHcil and #NTxGiving Day, like us on Facebook at REACH-Inc. If you are posting online, encourage your friends and family to get up and give as well! CFT is even offering a prize for the social media post that is shared the most! Follow us! Follow our twitter @REACHcil, and Facebook REACH-Inc as well as facebook.com/NorthTexasGivingDay to stay up to date on NTGD! For more information on North Texas Giving Day, visit www.NorthTexasGivingDay.org

Call us if you need any accommodations such as a sign language interpreter, Braille materials, etc.

July 2021

7/29/2021: Movie and popcorn at the center

August 2021

8/12/2021: West 7th Movie Tavern, bring money

for movie and snacks

8/26/2021: Games at the center

September 2021

9/2/2021: Pei Wei on W. 7th

9/16/2021: Movies and popcorn at the center

9/30/2021: Bingo at the center



PLEASE NOTE THAT EVENTS AND TIMES MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO COVID-19, WEATHER CONDITIONS, SPEAKER CANCELLATIONS, OR OTHER ISSUES OUT OF OUR CONTROL.

Please bring lunch or lunch money to events

Join us for our 10th annual summer camp
Dates: July 19th-23rd & 26th -27th, 2021
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Location: REACH Fort Worth Office,
1000 Macon St., Suite 200 Fort Worth, 76102

Contact Jenna at 817-870-9082 to get registered for summer camp.

Every Wednesday except 7/14/21 is Adjustment to Disability 10am-12pm

For more information on the Adjustment to Disability weekly training sessions that are being held via teleconference, please contact Jenna Reinke at the Fort Worth center @ 817-870-9082 or via email at jreinke@reachcils.org.

For more information on Support Group Activities and the schedule above, contact Lytte Greer at the Fort Worth office @ 817-870-9082 or via email at lgreer@reachcils.org.

Meet the New REACH Employees

Jenna Reinke

My name is Jenna Reinke and I am the new independent living specialist for the **REACH of Fort Worth** office. Before coming to REACH, I was a youth director for 9 years and, before that, a 4th-grade teacher. As the Independent Living Specialist, I oversee the durable medical equipment program that includes the incontinent supply program and helps provide medical equipment to those in need. I also lead the youth transition program. After brainstorming and talking to local Independent School Districts, I hope to launch a mentor program that works with local college students and matches them as mentors with young adults who have disabilities. I also hope to restart meetings of our youth support group after our summer camp session. I also help guide the Adjustment to Disability group that meets weekly. And lastly, I assist with case management. I am so thankful for this opportunity, and I can truly say I love my job!

Preston Kolb

Hello REACH Family! My name is Preston Kolb, and I am the new Community Living & Youth Transition Specialist at the **REACH of Plano** office. I plan on using my past experiences as a former student who was enrolled in special education and my college education to develop a strong program that offers full accessibility and equity to all youth with disabilities. I am gearing up for my first youth summer program entitled: L.E.A.D (Leadership, Education, and Advancement for People with Disabilities). The goal of this program is to connect youth with their identities and build the skills and confidence needed for future employment and education pursuits. I believe in my abilities to connect, promote, and advocate for the disabled community and hope to bring a sense of togetherness and independence to all that I help along the way. I look forward to growing with REACH, and I am thankful to have been given an opportunity to be a part of this team.

Jerra Capuria

I just wanted to take a moment to introduce myself; I am Jerra Capuria. I became a part of the **REACH of Denton** team on 4/19/21 as the Office Manager. I applied to REACH because I have always had a helping heart and soul, wanting to make a difference in the world as little as it may be. I stepped out in faith. I left behind the hustle, bustle, and stress of the corporate world to find myself in what I call a family here. Since coming on board here, I have met consumers and lost consumers. I have cried tears of joy that consumers are so blessed that we helped them and then tears of sadness when I lost a consumer last week. Overall, God knew where I would be most useful, and that is here helping others as I have always had the heart to do so and make a difference in the lives of others and advocate for those who cannot do it for themselves. To stand up for what is right for the people with different imperfections that are just as beautiful as the rest of the humans that were created. As the office manager, I have many roles. I have my caseload, as I coordinate the durable medical equipment project. I also am in charge of keeping our website updated, run monthly reports, send out letters, answer the phones, set appointments, provide outstanding and caring customer service not only to our consumers, but to other team members as well. A motto I refer to is everyone is a consumer, so everyone should be treated as such, you name it, I can do it. I reach out to and give presentations in order to spread the wonderful news about our services and ignite a light in someone's tunnel that has burned out.

Communication

Communication skills are important for everyone - they are how we give and receive information and share our ideas and opinions with those around us. Being able to communicate effectively is an essential part of success in relationships, at school, in public, and on the job.

Communication comes in many forms:

- verbal (sounds, language, and tone of voice)
- auditory (listening and hearing)
- non-verbal (facial expressions, body language, and posture)
- written (journals, emails, blogs, and text messages)
- visual (signs, symbols, and pictures)

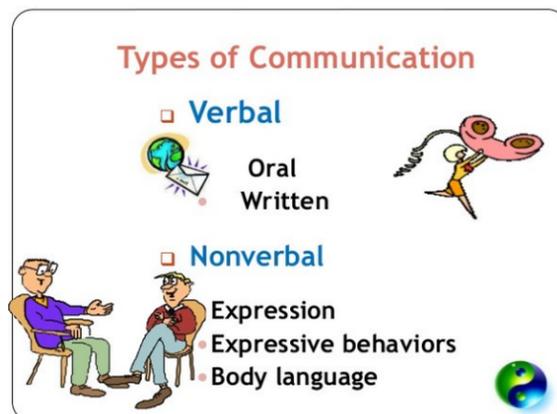
Obviously, talking is the most common form of communication. But good conversation is an art. Many young people haven't learned how to have a good conversation. It's like playing catch. I throw out a topic for you to catch. You grab it and toss it back to me. You don't hold on to it or throw it behind you somewhere. Practice, and you will see what I mean.

Have any of you ever gotten caught rolling your eyes at a teacher, parent, co-worker, or supervisor? Whether you rolled your eyes on purpose or didn't even realize you did it, how do you think your action was interpreted? I'm bored, and you are really annoying, yeah right, I'm so not interested in what you are saying or doing.

There are all types of communication. Believe it or not, the type that uses no words is the kind that is the most important. When it comes to communication, often people remember what they SEE more than they read or hear. This is referred to as body language, which includes facial expressions, eye behavior, gestures, posture, and more. Body language can express your emotions, feelings, and attitudes. It can even contradict what you say verbally! Have you ever heard someone say, actions speak louder than words? What does that mean?

There are seven types of non-verbal signals and cues we often use to communicate.

- 1. Facial Expressions:** The human face is extremely expressive, able to convey countless emotions without saying a word.
- 2. Body Movements and Posture.** The way you move and carry yourself communicates a lot of information to the world. This type of non-verbal communication includes your posture, bearing, stance, and subtle movements.
- 3. Gestures:** We wave, point, plead, and often use our hands when we are arguing or speaking in an animated way. However, the meaning of gestures can be very different in other cultures so it's important to be careful to not offend anyone when you use hand or other motions.
- 4. Eye Contact:** Since vision is the strongest sense for most people, eye contact is an especially important type of non-verbal communication. The way you look at someone can communicate many things, including interest, affection, hostility, or attraction. Eye contact is also important in maintaining the flow of conversation and for assessing another person's response.
- 5. Touch:** We communicate a great deal through touch. Think about the messages given by the following: a firm handshake, a timid tap on the shoulder, a warm bear hug, a reassuring pat on the back, a patronizing pat on the head, or a controlling grip on your arm.
- 6. Space:** Have you ever felt uncomfortable during a conversation because the other person was standing too close and invading your space? We all have a need for physical space, although that need differs depending on the culture, situation, and closeness of the relationship. You can use physical space to communicate many different non-verbal messages, including signals of intimacy, aggression, dominance, or affection.
- 7. Voice:** We communicate with our voices, even when we are not using words. Non-verbal speech sounds such as tone, pitch, volume, inflection, rhythm, and rate are important communication elements. When we speak, other people "read" our voices in addition to listening to our words.



Call us if you need any accommodations such as a sign language interpreter, Braille materials, etc.

July 2021 NO Virtual Adjustment to Disability & Independence & Beyond Group Training (1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

August 2021 August 2nd - Virtual Adjustment to Disability & Independence & Beyond Group Training (1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

September 2021 September 6th - Virtual Adjustment to Disability & Independence & Beyond Group Training (1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

Adjustment to Disability Independence & Beyond Group Training

Meets the 1st Monday of Each Month
from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Sessions are Free and Facilitated by a
Licensed Professional Counselor**

This training group gives the participants an opportunity to discuss and receive guidance on issues related to living with a disability. By attending the once-a-month sessions, the participants gain insights through group interaction and develop supportive relationships with other people with disabilities. The participants are also given tips and techniques to assist them in living productively and independently in the community.

TOPICS DISCUSSED IN GROUP MAY INCLUDE

- Assertiveness • Relaxation Techniques
- Daily Living Issues • Relationships
- Grief/Pain Management
- Community Resources
- Self-Esteem

For more information and service, please call Brenda Yanez @214-630-4796 or via byanez@reachcils.org.



940-383-1062

Call us if you need any accommodations such as a sign language interpreter, Braille materials, etc.

For Durable Medical Equipment Loan please reach out to Jerra at 940-383-1062 to set up an appointment to come in.

For Youth Transition Questions or Summer Camp Dates please reach out to Shawnett at 940-383-1062 for more information.

For Vision Equipment/Devices please reach out to Sarah at 940-383-1062 to set up an appointment.



All face-to-face meetings will be by appointment only. Don't forget to wear your mask when coming to the REACH of Denton center. Meetings may be online or via teleconference due to COVID-19 concerns. Call the center to get final details. Please preregister for all offered activities.

Summer is finally here and it is already hot. Here at REACH we want you to have a wonderful summer, but we also want you to be safe in the heat. Here are a few tips to stay cool all summer.

1. Stay Cool (Stay inside if you can)
2. Stay Hydrated (Drink plenty of water)
3. Stay Protected (Use lots of Sunscreen)
4. Watch for Signs of Heat Stress (Heavy sweating, paleness, weakness, dizziness, headache nausea or vomiting. Seek medical attention if you have any of these symptoms.)



Plans are underway to save money by e-mailing this newsletter to interested readers rather than continuing to send it via U.S. mail. If you'd like to get the newsletter via e-mail, please send Sarah Stepp your e-mail address. You can reach Sarah at ssstepp@reachcils.org. Thank You!

Deadlines for Future REACHing Out Newsletters

September 12, 2021: October - December 2021 Edition

FYI

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus.

`CO` stands for corona,

`VI` stands for virus,

`D` stands for disease.

COVID should be capitalized since it is an acronym (an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of other words & pronounced as a word, e.g. COVID-19).

The REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living are members of the Texas Association of Centers for Independent Living, the National Council on Independent Living, and the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities.

Self-Esteem

For each question, choose one of the following answers. The number next to the answer represents how many points that answer is worth

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Rarely
- 3 – Sometimes
- 4 – Usually
- 5 – Always

1. You express your opinions openly.
2. You have no fear of being rejected by other people.
3. When you have to make a major decision that affects mostly you (such as deciding whether to go to college or get a job), you may consult with other people, but the final decision is your own.

4. You forgive yourself for your mistakes.
5. You believe you deserve the best life has to offer.
6. You accept yourself for being the way you are.
7. You can express your feelings, both positive and negative.
8. You set aside some time just for yourself.
9. You ask for help when you need it.
10. You will return a defective item to a store.
11. You don't worry about what others think of you.
12. If you are dissatisfied with an important part of your life, you will take steps to make a change.
13. You are comfortable making eye contact with other people.
14. When criticized, you listen but don't take it personally.

Scoring:

0 – 18: Time to Change

You question every decision you make and are crippled by a lack of self-respect. Your self-esteem is dangerously low, and you MUST make improving your self-esteem a #1 priority.

19–36: Signs of Trouble

You believe other people are worth more than you are. Your self-esteem is shaky at best and needs work.

37-54: Middle of the Road

You have days when you think you're doing ok, and days when you question everything you do. Work on believing in yourself a little more, and everything will fall into place.

55-72: On the Right Track

Your faith in yourself is on the right track but can use improvement. Practice recognizing each small accomplishment, and your self-esteem will start to soar.

73-90: Solid Self-Esteem

No one has to tell you that you're ok! You have a healthy sense of self-respect and rarely, if ever, question your decisions. You learn from your mistakes instead of dwelling on them. Keep up the good work!

Your self-esteem is **your appraisal, your evaluation, and your feelings** about yourself. **Your opinion** of the person who you have been living with since you were born: Yourself. Just like we form positive or negative opinions of other people, we do the same about ourselves. If our focus is primarily on our strengths and abilities, we develop a good view of ourselves. On the other hand, if we focus on our weaknesses and limitations, we feel bad about ourselves. Healthy self-esteem is based on:

- Confidence in our ability to think and to cope with the basic challenges of life
- the belief that we have the right to be happy,
- the feeling of being worthy and entitled to assert our needs and wants and to enjoy the results of our hard work.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



972-398-1111

Call us if you need any accommodations such as a sign language interpreter, Braille materials, etc.

For Individual independent living skills training, call Julie Espinoza at 972-398-1111 to set up either virtual or in person sessions. To receive updates via email, send your email address to jespinoza@reachcils.org for notification of group events or special resources/alerts. This is the best way to find out about Plano's Fall activities!

This summer was busy and we want to thank all the consumers who helped the Collin County community by attending the **peer counseling training** sessions, serving on the planning committees for both the **Olmstead** and **ADA celebrations**. We especially appreciate the concerted effort to have our voices heard regarding the **TX voting suppression bills SB7 and HB6**.

A special thanks to **lyft** ride services for reaching out to offer our consumers Free round trip rides to get a COVID-19 vaccine or a coronavirus test, or visit a doctor if you need treatment for the coronavirus.



The CDC, in partnership with the Administration for Community Living at the U. S. Department of Health & Human Services and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, established the **Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL)** hotline call center to help individuals with disabilities and older adults find vaccine locations in their communities and make appointments when needed. The DIAL call center can also refer individuals to state and/or local programs for additional needed/requested supportive services. You can reach the DIAL call center by emailing DIAL@n4a.org or calling 1-888-677-1199

Want to help with the **REV UP** Voter registration drive? Call Julie Espinoza to sign up to serve as a REV UP regional representative! 972-398-1111.

ENDURANCE

How many of you have written this life goal: *"By 30 years of age, I want to be a complete failure?"* Within the next ten years, what are some areas of life in which you'd like to have succeeded: career, relationship, income, living arrangement?

If *relationships* are important to you, you'd like to have a successful dating career and eventually a successful family.

If *money* is important to you, you'd prefer to have more money than less as you get older. You'd like to be a financial success.

If *freedom* is important to you, you would want to have your place decorated just the way you like.

If *enjoying life* is important to you, you'd prefer to have a job you look forward to going to in the morning rather than one you dread. You want a successful career.

But many people are flunking out in life. Now I'm not saying that I'm THE great example of success, but I've lived long enough to see that a lot of people give up on life when the pathway gets rugged. Many fail simply because they fail to endure through the hard times. You see, whether you're talking about the successful people in business, acting, music, or relationships, the great misconception is that they were just incredibly talented from the start and got there by merrily skipping from one success to another. So how do some people endure great obstacles?

Learn from Life's Hard Knocks.

Anyone who has seen the Star Wars series or the Indiana Jones trilogy knows the incredible excitement that producer George Lucas can pack into a movie. But it's doubtful that Lucas would have made anything at all out of his life had he not first given up his old dreams. You see, during his teen years, a lot of people considered him a loser who was going nowhere in life. He never applied himself in school and dreamed only about racing cars. But his dreams all ended just a few days before his graduation. While driving home from the library in his Fiat, he prepared for a left turn by glancing in his rearview mirror. But as he started the turn, he heard the sound of another car, a blowing horn, and the impact of a speeding Chevy crunching into the driver side of his car. It should have killed him. The little Fiat turned four or five complete flips before it wrapped around a solid oak tree. The impact was so great that it moved the entire tree a couple of feet over, leaving a huge hole in its former position.

But miraculously, George survived. Get this: during the Fiat's third flip, his regulation racing seat belt snapped, throwing him out of the open-top and onto the ground. He was close to death, but recovered slowly through two weeks in the hospital and months of physical therapy. His Fiat didn't survive, ending up in the junkyard.

After the accident, George was a changed person. He decided there must be some reason he survived and set his mind to get his act together and make something out of his life. George left his racing dreams behind and decided to go to college. There, he developed an interest in literature and writing. And instead of driving racecars, he began filming them. Today, he's glad for his decision to let his old life and his old dreams die so that he could go in a new direction. You see, without giving up his old life, he would have never found his niche in the film industry, and no one would have ever seen Star Wars.

For many people, the car wreck would have been nothing more than a tragedy. But for Lucas, it was a wake-up call. You see, some students see only the grief in their heartaches, whether it be the breakup of their family, their failure in a sport or a class, or a breakup with a boyfriend. Successful people like Lucas have these problems too. But the difference between them and people who lose in life is that those who succeed learn from their tragedies and setbacks. They become better. Listen, you can become either "bitter" or "better" from tragedies. And the only difference between these two words is the letter 'I'. You have the choice whether to grow or wither from your tragedies!



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We work with DARS, MDCP, CLASS, CBA, MHMR, DADS
And many other funding agencies.



Rates for Advertising in the REACH Newsletter

Below are the prices for placing an advertisement in the *REACHing Out* newsletter. The newsletter is published quarterly in January, April, July and October. The newsletter is sent/distributed to 2,300+ readers living primarily in Tarrant, Dallas, Denton & Collin Counties and is available online at www.reachcils.org.

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL AD SIZES:	ONE TIME ADS	YEAR ADS
___ Business Card (2" x 3.5")	\$ 25.00	\$ 90.00
___ 1/8 Page (4.25" x 2.75")	50.00	190.00
___ 1/4 Page (4.25" x 5.5")	65.00	250.00
___ 1/2 Page (8.5" x 5.5")	100.00	375.00
___ Full Page (8.5" x 11")	200.00	775.00

If you have any questions, please call Sarah Stepp, newsletter editor,
at REACH of Denton 940-383-1062

or contact her by email at sstepp@reachcils.org.

These advertising rates may change without prior notice.

Enjoy a word search puzzle!!

SUMMER FUN

Word Search Puzzle



W A T E R P A R K V A C A T I O N
 F R I E N D S W S T Z G H N A I G
 T S A Z Q P A B Q C N P N M D C S
 E W O N C H I I Y I A S U R X E N
 B I C Y C L E C P C R Y O Z M C F
 O M P W I Z J M N E F J A A P R R
 U M E I F M A T L I U I G M O E I
 T I H G A C O K X C C B S N P A S
 D N N J X O N P S M B K E H S M B
 O G W V F I I P X D R T R A I X E
 O O U E R R O C O O K O U T C N E
 R A R P T L F U W S S C V Q L H G
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 F B B M Y P M V T D G I S W O R V



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| BAREFOOT | FISHING | PICNIC |
| BASEBALL | FLIP FLOPS | POPSICLE |
| BEACH | FRIENDS | ROAD TRIP |
| BICYCLE | FRISBEE | SPRINKLERS |
| CAMPING | GAMES | SUNSHINE |
| COOKOUT | ICE CREAM | SWIMMING |
| FAIRGROUND | LEMONADE | VACATION |
| FIREWORKS | OUTDOORS | WATER PARK |

Strengthening the Mind & Body



The GYM that promotes exercise and education, utilizing specialized equipment.

**1361 W. Eules Blvd. #101, Eules, TX 76040
www.neurofitnessfoundation.org**

Words to Live By!

“I choose not to place ‘DIS’ in my ability.”



The REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living are Fragrance Free facilities! Please do not wear scented products when visiting the centers or participating in any of our services or activities. Thank you!



Helping remove barriers and include everyone

CARING to HELP

Honor your loved ones with a gift to the REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living. Donations in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, wedding, Christmas, Valentine's Day, etc. will help REACH continue its work in providing an array of independent living services to North Texans with disabilities.

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____

In Memory or Honor of (Name): _____

Check one: Memorial Birthday Anniversary Wedding or

Other (Explain) _____

Send acknowledgement to (Name, Address, City, State & Zip Code):

From (Your Name, Address, City, State & Zip Code):

Make checks payable to REACH, Inc. and mail with this form to 1000 Macon Street, Suite 200, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4527. THANK YOU FOR YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

The contents of this newsletter were developed, in part, under grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). The contents of this newsletter do not, however, necessarily represent the policies of HHS or HHSC and you should not assume endorsement by either the federal or state government.

REACH receives a majority of its funding to operate the centers from grants from HHS and HHSC in Fiscal Year 2021. REACH of Denton receives 100% of its funding (\$250,112) from HHS; REACH of Fort Worth receives 100% of its funding (\$262,280) from HHSC; REACH of Dallas receives 100% of its funding (\$482,447) from HHS; and REACH of Plano receives 100% of its funding (\$262,279) from HHSC.

JUST A REMINDER

REACH generates additional funds to enhance its mission by participating in the Tom Thumb, Kroger and Amazon Smile donor programs. Each company allows its customers to register so that donations go to a nonprofit organization that the customer supports. Then every time a purchase is made by the customer, the nonprofit receives credit for the total amount of the purchase. The Tom Thumb, Kroger and Amazon companies then periodically issue a donation check or make an automatic bank deposit to REACH for a percentage of the total of our supporters' purchases.

If you and/or your family and friends shop at or online at any or all of these companies and would like to make sure that REACH is able to continue providing services to North Texans with disabilities, please call any of the REACH offices for more information on how to enroll in these no cost to you donor programs. Thank you.



From the Director's Desk



2020 Service Highlights

As we all know, last year was scary and difficult, but I am pleased to let you know that REACH staff did an exemplary job maintaining contact with all of our consumers at each of our centers. Employees provided resource information, conducted numerous virtual webinars on various important topics, and offered peer support to keep spirits up. They handled 7,028 requests for information and referral assistance, assisted 762 consumers work on achieving their independent living goals, supported 27 nursing home residents transition back into community living and 7 consumers find a job, installed 66 ramps and 151 grab bars at the homes of eligible consumers living in Tarrant County, loaned 120 consumers assistive technology/equipment such as manual wheelchairs, had 38 consumers participate in Adjustment to Disability training sessions, and offered advocacy assistance that helped 386 consumers address the issues and/or barriers they encountered.

Upcoming 2021 Happening

Abilities Expo visits Dallas this year on December 3-5 at Dallas Market Center, 2200 Stemmons Freeway. The event will showcase the latest products, tech, and game-changing opportunities. Guests can attend informative workshops on issues that matter to individuals with disabilities and then try their hand at a host of different adaptive sports, dancing, and fun. **Abilities Expo** is free, so join REACH and all the other exhibitors by registering to attend at www.abilities.com/dallas.

AbleGamers

The Able Gamers website states that many individuals with disabilities are at a heightened risk of social isolation. The charity believes that video games can be the perfect gateway to community participation, lifelong friendships, and unforgettable shared experiences. That is why it is crucial to ensure these experiences are developed with accessibility as a priority and inclusion as the goal. For over a decade and a half, AbleGamers has been pushing the inclusive efforts of the gaming industry forward by training and consulting studios while connecting them directly with players who can share their personal experiences. The charity has created the largest impaneled group of people with disabilities globally through its Player Panel program, which is a collection of hundreds of players with disabilities who advise the gaming industry.

Texas Rent Relief Program

Since COVID-19 has affected Texans across the state, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs has emergency funds available to help Texas renters pay rent and utility bills (including past due rent and utilities). Call 1-833-989-7368 Monday through Saturday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM CDT for more information and/or to apply for assistance. Help is available in multiple languages.

Ride@50+ Program

Get where you need to go, easily. The Ride@50+ Program is an end-to-end solution for local transportation options in the Dallas, Texas area. Find, book and securely pay for a ride in a taxi, rideshare, paratransit and more. Visit aarp.org/rideTX or call 1-866-636-4396. AARP membership is not required.

Have a pleasant summer, Charlotte Stewart