

LOS ANGELES SELF-ADVOCACY NEWS

By And For People With Developmental Disabilities

June, 2008

Issue 5

Every Self-Advocate Should Come to the Conference Celebrating 20 Years of Self-Advocacy!!



What is a Conference? A conference is a big meeting of people from all over Los Angeles, who are interested in the same things. Our conference is for people with developmental disabilities who want to learn more about their rights, and what services are available. Everyone meets together at first, and then we divide into small classes about topics we choose.

Where is a conference? Conferences can be held in huge places like convention centers, in medium places like hotels, or in smaller places like offices. Our conference will be at a hotel, the Sheraton Gateway Hotel, near Los Angeles Airport. The fun part of a hotel is it feels like a vacation. You can stay overnight at the hotel, have meals there, you go to the meetings and classes there, and you can enjoy the swimming pool, fitness center, bars and restaurants.

Why have a conference? People without disabilities go to conferences. Why can't we?!! It's a chance to learn. This year, there will be classes about Jobs, Relationships, Rights, Crime Prevention, Preparing for Emergencies, End-of-Life Plans, and Healthy Cooking. Every class is taught by people with disabilities. Our keynote speaker will be a representative from

Governor Schwarzenegger's office, and Joe Meadours who will talk about how self-advocacy has changed his life. It's a chance to meet other self-advocates. This is a great chance to make new friends and get to know self-advocacy leaders. It's a chance to have fun and celebrate. There will be self-advocacy awards, a "Dating Game", and a great dance with disc jockey.

What are we celebrating? Can you believe that 2008 is the 20th year since the Self-Advocacy Board began in Los Angeles?! Twenty years of self-advocacy groups. Twenty years of teaching people about their rights. Twenty years of helping people speak up. Twenty years of working to improve our lives. And this is our 10th conference.... planned completely by and for people with disabilities!

What should I do? We want every adult with a developmental disability (and staff) to celebrate with us!! We want you to come to our conference. It is for you! The last three pages of this newsletter have all the details and costs. Registration is due September 8, 2008. Ask your regional center service coordinator about helping to pay for you to go. (The conference is vendored.) Call 818-543-4631 for any questions. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Saying NO to Abuse!!

By Wesley Witherspoon

I am a self-advocate who resides in the Los Angeles area. In high school, I had a girlfriend who was mean to me. She would scream at me, make me feel bad, threaten to beat me up, etc. Abuse can occur to everyone. If you are being abused by someone, you have a right to say no to the abuse. If they keep on abusing you, you can leave them or call the police. You have a right not to be abused. It is part of the Lanterman Act, an agreement between the State of California and people with developmental disabilities. If someone is hurting you, you can tell a friend or someone you trust.

I have been to self-advocacy conferences and I have heard that many self-advocates are in relationships where someone hurts them when they don't want to be hurt.

Please tell someone to stop abusing you if you do not want it, or leave or tell someone. Do not tell the person or people who hurt you where you are going because they might hurt you again.



The Right to Dream

By Tom Fambro

What did you dream of becoming when you were a child? Did you want to be a dancer or doctor? Watching "Hop Along Cassidy" and "Roy Rogers" on television, children of my generation wanted to be cowboys and cowgirls. I, personally, wanted to be in the medical field. Shows like "Dr. Kildare," "Ben Casey," and "Medic" turned me on. Sad to say, I was discouraged from pursuing such goals because of my disability. Handicapped children could only hope to go to Goodwill or sell papers.

Today is a different story. Children with disabilities can be anything they want to be. They have the right to dream and make those dreams come true. By supporting AB 2424 (Beall), all children under this law will be encouraged to pursue their dreams regardless of disability. The ADA of the 90's will be the opportunities of the 2000's. College will be a reality.

Help make AB 2424 a law so all children will have the right to dream! Read more about AB 2424 on the next page.

Los Angeles Self-Advocacy News is published by the Self-Advocacy Board of Los Angeles County with help from Area Board 10.

Our officers are: President – Daniel Redmond; Vice-President – Colette Madore; Secretary – Carmen Redmond; Treasurer – Dennis O'Brien; Sergeant-at-Arms – Tom Fambro.

You are invited to send articles, stories, or letters by September 1 for our October issue. Send them to: Self-Advocacy Board, 411 N. Central Ave., Suite 620, Glendale, CA. 91203.

Phone: 818-543-4631. Email: sablac@earthlink.net
(We will do our best, but we cannot guarantee that we will have space to include all materials sent to us.)

What is AB 2424 (Beall) and "Employment First"?

As many of you know, a group of consumers concerned about working, met in Sacramento during 2006 and 2007. They came up with a list of recommendations to improve employment opportunities. Those recommendations were put into a report, often called "the SB 1270 report," because that was the Senate bill that requested ideas for change.

Some of those ideas have been put into a new bill, AB 2424, authored by Senator James Beall and are the first real steps to increasing our hopes for good jobs. It is also known as the "Employment First" bill. It requires:

- 1) At IPP meetings, you must be given information about integrated options, with a goal of work at above minimum wage.
- 2) Individuals between 16 and 22 years old will have transition planning as part of their IPP.
- 3) Better training for direct support professionals.
- 4) Establishment of a Consumer Advisory Committee at the State Council to further advance the Employment First policy.
- 5) Keeping track of how many people are working.

We will keep you informed of the progress of this bill.

**Next Self-Advocacy Board Meeting-
Everyone is welcome to join us!**

July 19, 2008

2:00 to 5:00 PM

Area Board 10 office

411 N. Central Ave., Suite 620

Glendale, CA. 91203

Questions? Call 424-228-5280 or

818-543-4631.

Self-Advocacy Group

Spotlight



In this issue, we are featuring the "Flying Eagles" self-advocacy group which is part of Exceptional Children's Foundation PAR Services' Culver City program. This group of 15 to 17 self-advocates has been together since approximately 2005, and meets the second Wednesday of every month at the program.

Their officers are President, Vice-President, and 2 people who share the job of Sargeant at Arms. President Leland Jacobs said, "The name 'Flying Eagles' just came to me. It means to me that we can soar; that we can go the extra mile."

At their meetings, they take attendance first, and then have discussions about all kinds of topics. They discuss politics, the budget, behavior issues, rights, their program, and the upcoming L.A. self-advocacy conference in September. They try to run their meetings using Robert's Rules of Order.

Leland, the President, used to be on the Department of Developmental Services' Consumer Advisory Committee. He says he learned a lot from that experience and tries to share it with the group.

Their facilitator is Sarah Taylor. For further information about the group, contact Sarah at 310-845-8098.

Learn About Diabetes

By Margaret Barcelo



What is the definition of Diabetes? It is a disease in which your body does not make enough insulin or cannot use normal amounts of insulin properly. Insulin is a hormone that regulates the amount of sugar in the blood. A high blood sugar level can cause problems in many parts of your body.

There are 2 different types of diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes usually occurs in children. It's usually called "juvenile onset diabetes mellitus" or "insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus." In this type, your pancreas does not make enough insulin and you have to take insulin injections for the rest of your life.

Type 2 diabetes, which is more common, usually occurs in people over 40 and it's called "adult onset diabetes mellitus" or "non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus." In Type 2, your pancreas is making insulin but your body does not use it properly. The high blood sugar level often can be controlled by following a diet or taking medication, although some patients must take insulin. Type 2 is particularly prevalent among the following people who are African American, American Indian, Latin, Asian and Pacific Islander.

Signs and Symptoms of Type 1 Diabetes: People with Type 1 diabetes usually develop symptoms over a short

period of time and the condition is often diagnosed in an emergency.

Signs and symptoms of Type 2 Diabetes:

Increased urination
Increased appetite
Fatigue
Blurred vision
Slow-healing infection
Impotence in men

Complications: Diabetes is associated with increased risk for a number of serious conditions, sometimes life-threatening: cardiovascular risk, kidney failure, blindness, amputations, infections, and leg ulcers

Risk Factors for Diabetes:

Having a parent or family member with diabetes; obesity; age greater than 45 years old; member of the following ethnic groups: African Americans, American Indians, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics; gestational diabetes or delivering a baby weighing more than 9 pounds; high blood pressure; high blood pressure with high blood levels of triglycerides (a type of fat molecule); high blood cholesterol level; and not getting enough exercise.

For more information on diabetes:

American Diabetes Association
1-800-342-2383
www.diabetes.org

National Diabetes Information
Clearinghouse
1-800-860-8747
Email: ndic@info.niddk.nih.gov