

family @ linkages newsletter

The recent election has changed the political landscape of our country. One thing that has not changed is The Arc's and Michigan Family Voices passion to promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, to actively support their inclusion in the community across their lifetimes, and assure that every individual and family of a child or youth with a disability or special health care need receives family and person centered care. One of the hallmarks of The Arc's success as an advocate for the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities is that we are willing to roll up our sleeves and work with policymakers. It's time to get started educating and advocating to this new group of leaders about the needs, issues and concerns of people with disabilities of any policy proposals they put on the table in the weeks and months to come. And it's time to get organized like never before so that we are ready and able to mobilize and take action when we need to.



Michigan Family Voices will be expanding our statewide leadership network. The network is comprised of individual and family leaders from across the state that impact and effect positive policy change. We work to inform, build relationships with and/or work in partnership with decision-makers at all levels.

If you are an individual or family of a child or youth with disabilities and/or special health care needs and would like to become involved in Michigan Family Voices Leadership Network please contact (517) 292-7851 ext. 472 or email [lisacookgordon@michiganfamilyvoices.org](mailto:lisacookgordon@michiganfamilyvoices.org)



**Michigan Developmental  
Disabilities Council**

## **ACTION ALERTS**

### **Restraint and Seclusion**

Over the course of the past year, many legislators and advocates have worked towards the passage of a package of bills that will place increased regulations on the use of seclusion and restraint practices in our school system. The 10 bill package, HB5409 - HB5418, was voted out of the House Education Committee on September 22, 2016 and is currently in the full house for consideration. It was passed out of committee largely on a 13-4 vote.

At the drafting of this article, there are only 11 scheduled session days left for the house and 14 for the senate. This limited time frame could create substantial hurdles to overcome to have this legislation moved by year's end and presented to the governor for his signature.

### **Vulnerable Road User**

There have been two Vulnerable Roadway User bills introduced this session; one in the house (HB5002) and one in the senate (SB1029). The house version is in the Committee on Transportation and the senate version was placed in the Judiciary Committee. The Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously passed SB1029 out of committee on October 18, 2016 and is currently before the full senate for consideration.

Much like the Seclusion and Restraint bill package, there is a very limited amount of time left this session to pass SB1029 out of both chambers and have it presented to the governor for his signature. Both Vulnerable Roadway User and the Seclusion and Restraint legislation will add significant protections for people with disabilities.

Advocates will need to actively engage with legislators in order to increase the likelihood of these bills making it through the legislative process. We will need individuals and families to help us in the effort by contacting their state representatives and senators encouraging them to support these bills and move them along for passage before years end.

Contact information for state representatives: <http://house.michigan.gov/> and state senators <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/default.html>

If you have questions or need further information contact **Brett Williams** at [WilliamsB18@michigan.gov](mailto:WilliamsB18@michigan.gov) or 517-284-7289

## MiABLE Accounts



November 1, 2016, Michigan becomes the fifth state in the country to launch a disability savings program, which is the most substantial reform for people with disabilities since the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The MiABLE (Michigan Achieving a Better Life Experience) program allows individuals with disabilities and their families to save for the future without fear of losing any disability benefits. This is a life-changing opportunity that will help Michiganders with disabilities live self-determined independent lives.

Program highlights: <https://youtu.be/ffpk1Fhnhsw>

- **MiABLE accounts allow for savings up to \$100,000 without losing other financial disability benefits.**
- Funds are not taxed upon withdrawal if used for a qualified disability expense.
- Qualified expenses include: education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology, health, financial management services, legal fees or funeral/burial expenses.
- There may only be one individual per ABL account, but anyone can contribute into it.
- Disability onset and diagnosis must occur prior to age 26.

If you have a disability or know a friend or family member who does, please help spread the word about this program. The MiABLE program will help build more than savings, it builds opportunity.

To learn more about the program or to sign up for an account visit [www.miable.org](http://www.miable.org) or <https://youtu.be/ffpk1Fhnhsw>



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## ADVOCACY/LEADERSHIP INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITY



We are seeking individuals and families of children and youth with special health care needs interested in serving on committees, work groups and or providing feedback on the following issues/topics:

1. Policy and Legislation-An individual or family that has input regarding: foster care, health care financing, mental health services, transportation, restraint and seclusion, and transition to adulthood.
2. Medicaid-A Medicaid recipient receiving services that is experiencing barriers in the system related: health care or mental health services.
3. Children's Special Health Care Services-A parent or caregiver of a child with a genetic condition, cleft palate, diabetes, severe asthma, cerebral palsy, or hearing impairment.

**Visit:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Z3NSXQP>

**Or Call**

**(800) 292-7851 ext. 472**

**If you are interested in serving**

# ADVOCACY/LEADERSHIP TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

**COMING TO SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN APRIL 2017!**

**Leaders in Policy Advocacy (LIPA)**  
<http://www.arcmi.org/new/lipa.htm>

is a leadership development program for adults with developmental disabilities and parents of minor children with developmental disabilities. The project trains and supports participants to become leaders in the disability rights movement. It is funded by the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council and administered by The Arc Michigan.

Topics include:

- Disability History
- Inclusive Education
- Assistive Technology & Social Media
- Self-determination and Alternatives to Guardianship
- Person Centered Planning
- Access to Housing & Employment
- Benefits and Systems of Support
- Systems Change



Participation in LIPA requires a significant time commitment. Six (6) weekend sessions begin on Fridays at 12:30 pm and end for the day at 9 pm. The class resumes at 8:30 am on Saturdays and concludes at 3:00 pm.

There is no cost to participate in the training. Participants will be asked to share a hotel room with another class member if lodging is needed. Meals will be provided, including to caregivers, and participants will be reimbursed for mileage to and from the training sessions. No child care will be provided on site; however, assistance with the cost of child care may be available.

To apply, go to <http://www.arcmi.org/new/lipa.htm>, where you can complete an application form online or download and print one to fill out and mail in. Please contact Project Coordinator Salli Christenson if you have questions or need help in applying. She can be reached at 1-800-292-7851, ext. 130, or [salli.c@arcmi.org](mailto:salli.c@arcmi.org)



## **Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy Workshops**

January 19, 2017  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Macomb ISD Room 103 A/B  
4401 Garfield Road  
Clinton Township, MI 48038

## **The Power of Telling Your Story**

December 7 2016  
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm  
Macomb ISD Room 206  
44001 Garfield Road  
Clinton Township, MI 48038

Register at: <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/upcoming-events/eventregistration/>

We have additional events scheduled! Check our website:  
<http://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/upcoming-events/>

Be sure to view our selection of free On Demand Webinars available for viewing at home [www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/webinar](http://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/webinar)

## **COLLABORATIVE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Understanding Your Medicaid & Mental Health Rights**

December 12, 2016

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan

2956 Ashmun Street

Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49785

<http://svy.mk/2f440f3>

### **Health Care Advocacy for Children & Youth with Special Needs**

December 13, 2016

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Power Hope Grace Church

6495 W Warren Avenue

Detroit, MI 48210

<http://svy.mk/2fn0EXH>

### **Who Should Attend Collaborative Learning Opportunities?**

Individuals and family members of young children, teen and young adults with special needs/disabilities (including: youth guardians; adoptive, biological, foster and step-parents, domestic parents who co-parent, grandparents, siblings, aunts/uncles, nieces/nephews, cousins, neighbors, religious leaders, and others who person defines as a family member), organizations and service providers of families of young children, teen, young adults, and individuals with disabilities

We encourage individuals and families to invite people who provide support and services to you and your family. Providers are encouraged to invite individuals and families you support and serve. Forming partnerships between people served and those providing services is crucial in building collaboration and partnering in decision-making at all levels with individuals and families of children and youth with special needs/disabilities.

### **For More Information about Collaborative Learning Opportunities contact:**

Michigan Family Voices at (800) 292-7851 extension 427 or  
[info@michiganfamilyvoices.org](mailto:info@michiganfamilyvoices.org)

Visit the Michigan Family Voices Website for most updated advocacy, leadership, and learning opportunities at: <http://michiganfamilyvoices.org>



<http://on.fb.me/1UgikhK>



<http://bit.ly/1JmU9ZDkhK>