

SOYLAND ACCESS TO INDEPENDENT LIVING



SAIL The Anchor



SUMMER 2022

How to Get Help from Social Security

by Brenda Ingle, Independent Living Advocate

The best way to contact Social Security for assistance is by going online, www.ssa.gov. However, SSA can be contacted at the national number of 1-800-772-1213 or the local Social Security office. For a quicker response, call during the morning hours of 8 – 10 a.m. or afternoon hours between 4 – 7 p.m. It is also best to call on Wednesday – Friday or later in the month.

As Covid restrictions are lifted, Social Security offices will begin getting back to normal services both in person and online. Social Security staff are heading back to their offices. In-person and walk-in appointments are more readily available. Please be advised that the Social Security offices are implementing a self-assessment checklist to be completed before anyone may enter, and all visitors are required to wear a mask. In the past, more people were found to visit the local offices on Mondays, the morning after a federal holiday and the first week of the month.

Social Security staff are asking those who utilize their online services and use the phone lines for their needs to please continue doing so. This will help those who have no online access be able to make in-person appointments. Before going to the Social Security office, have all paperwork, identification, and specific information available for the appointment. Being prepared will result in receiving services quickly.

Online resource: www.ssa.gov

INDEPENDENT LIVING SELF-CARE TIPS

by Rich Adams, Independent Living Advocate

Hints for eating with a visual impairment

When living with vision loss, it can be challenging to navigate a plate of food while eating. Contrast makes a big difference. When eating darker colored foods, use a white or very light-colored dish, and vice versa for light colored foods use a dark plate. Identifying the foods is much easier on dishes that have no pattern. A bumper, which lies around the edge of a plate, will help to keep foods on the plate and off the table. When eating peas, use the back of the fork to mash them first, so they do not roll off the plate or off the utensil as they are being lifted to the mouth. Use a bun, roll, or piece of bread to push food on to a spoon or fork. In the shaker, salt is heavier than pepper, and the holes in the saltshaker are bigger. When eating out, you could also request the meat and salad be cut small. Remember, if you need assistance, feel free to ask someone to assist you by explaining where each food item is located on the plate and or table.

Getting Ready for that Transition IEP

by Emily Dobson, Program Manager

Parents who have students in Special Education are familiar with the “annual review” of their child’s Individualized Education Program. When the student reaches age 14 ½ and enters the Transition stage, it is time to do some extra preparation. Each Transition IEP is a key component of your student’s successful future. What can parents, students and schools do to ensure that a Transition IEP is productive for everyone? Here are some tips parents can use when preparing for the Transition IEP:

- Talk together about the future. Does your student have ideas about how the future should look? Do they want to work? Attend college? Learn a trade? Is the goal realistic and likely to lead to success?
- Make an agenda of topics you and your student want addressed in the meeting. The agenda will help you be better organized, less likely to forget things and better able to work as a part of the team ensuring the Transition IEP leads to a successful future.
- Prepare your student to be a part of the IEP process. He or she will be asked about their ideas for the future at every meeting from now until graduation. If they are worried about speaking at the meeting, help them write down what they want to say and read their statement to the team. Their ideas will be on the table and this technique often gives the student the courage to speak up and join the discussion. It is also a good way to practice the self-advocacy skills they will need in adult life.
- What classes, work experience or other school programs will help your student reach his or her goal? Students who want postsecondary education may need to learn about course requirements and request those classes are added to their schedule while students seeking a job may need to learn about vocational training options.
- Look over your student’s grades, progress reports and any testing that has been done since the last meeting. Is progress being made? Is the course work aligned with the post-transition goals of the student? List any areas of concern.
- Note any social and other independent living skills the student may struggle with. Community organizations like SAIL can be invited to attend the Transition IEP and share their programs and services. Inform the student’s case manager of organizations you would like to have at the meeting.
- Consult these resources for more information: Illinois State Board of Education Parent Guide to Special Education (www.isbe.net/specialeducation), Family Matters Parent Training and Information Center (fmptic.org) and Pacer National Parent Center on Transition and Employment (PACER.org/Transition)



Seedlings Braille Books for Children

by Lori Smith, Executive Administrative Coordinator

According to the National Federation of the Blind, fewer than 10 percent of the 1.3 million people who are legally blind in the U.S. are braille readers – but one woman has made an incredible difference in their lives. Seedlings Braille Books for Children was founded by Debra Bonde in 1984. By starting the nonprofit, she ended up helping children, who are blind, all over the world.

Debra began transcribing popular children's books by printing them on a braille printer her father had made and selling them for just the cost of paper. Word spread among parents and teachers of children, who are blind, and demand grew for more of her books.

Seedlings gives half of their books away for free. These braille books are in school libraries to help with childhood literacy. A mother of a child, who is blind named Jared, was very thankful for Seedlings as he was growing up. Jared could check out books at the school library, just like his classmates. Since the books were affordable, it was possible for Jared to have a home library. Today, Jared is a software engineer who is married with two children. He reads the Seedlings picture books to them. "Without knowing how to read and write, skills impossible to learn just by listening to speech, I would have never been able to graduate with a telecommunications degree. Without the childhood literacy skills provide to me, I would not have a job in the modern workforce with the amount of reading and writing most employment requires." Seedlings has an [Adopt-a-Reader Program](#) which allows children with vision loss ages 0-21 in Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Ohio to receive 10 free braille books of their choice each calendar year. For more information, contact them at: seedlink4@ameritech.net or you may call them at 800-777-8552 at extension #307.

Source: goodnewsnetwork.org

Dwelling in the Possibilities

by Amy Corbin, Triple C Coordinator

The ECITPC, East Central Illinois Transition Planning Committee, hosted Bridget Brown, Self-Advocate and her mother, Nancy for a workshop on self-advocacy and person-centered planning. Bridget talked about teaching public speaking as a way to increase self-advocacy skills and how to build confidence in finding your voice. She gave an overview of what she has accomplished in her life due to having a family and a community that supported her and her abilities. She uses a person-centered plan as a tool to help in her success.

Nancy spoke about the person-centered plan. She encouraged parents to get the education they need to advocate and teach the child to also be active in their decision-making and life plan.

A copy of the PERSON-CENTERED LIFE PLANNING Booklet was distributed and discussed. Nancy also gave some tidbits of information and food for thought: Less is more; Asset Framing, Appreciative Inquiry, Future Search, and making the least dangerous assumption were among the topics. Communication is the most important piece of the plan; talk, plan and problem-solve.

The quote Nancy often uses is: "We never segregate the people we value."

Preparation of a Home Emergency Kit

by Betty Watkins, Rural Outreach Coordinator

There are basic steps a person can take to ensure they are prepared for an emergency at home, in a vehicle and at work. By putting together an emergency kit, ensures a family has the basic survival items that are necessary during an emergency. Since Spring of 2020, the CDC has recommended people include additional items in these kits to prevent the spread of coronavirus or other viruses and the flu.

Consider the following items for Home Emergency Kit preparedness:

- Masks, soap, towels, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, personal hygiene, etc.
- Prescription and non-prescription medications as needed
- Prescription eyeglasses and contact lens solution
- Important documents i.e., insurance policies, identification cards bank account records, etc.
- Complete change of clothing, sturdy shoes, and a blanket for each person
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels, plastic utensils, paper and pencil
- Pet food and water; if needed
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities
- Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes and diaper rash cream
- Water and shelf foods; can opener if needed – change out food every six months

Store all items in a sealable easy to care container in the event of an evacuation of the home.

www.Ready.illinois.gov

#GETBANKED

by Amy Corbin, Triple C Coordinator

In a presentation by Glenn Brewer from the FDIC, he highlighted a program called #GetBanked. The FDIC, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, is an independent agency that provides insurance protection for the nation's financial institutions. The #GetBanked program was created to raise awareness and provide resources to the 7.1 million individuals that do not have bank accounts.

Many people with disabilities do not have banking accounts and therefore their money is not insured or protected under the consumer financial laws. This program has many short educational videos on the FDIC website that give reasons to get a bank, how to locate a bank, the types of accounts that are available and options for online and in-person banking.

One of the top reasons for having a bank account is the direct deposit options that allow transfers of money from SSA, Social Security Administration, the IRS, Internal Revenue Service, and even employers to be electronically deposited in safe, insured accounts. Initial checking or debit accounts will help individuals control their money and can help build credit that may lead to other banking services such as loans and mortgages.

Other reasons for having a bank account are the security of your money being insured if the bank folds or closes, bill pay through automatic payments from the account, no check-cashing fees, the ability to see where your money goes, and no chance of your paper checks getting stolen or lost in the mail. Banks also offer some fraud protections on accounts.

For more information, visit the FDIC website at www.fdic.gov
Presentation and online resource www.irs.gov

SAIL IS A FRAGRANCE-FREE FACILITY

Not all disabilities can be easily observed. People who have a respiratory or breathing disability are unable to breathe when they encounter scents and fragrances in their environment. For that reason, SAIL is a FRAGRANCE-FREE facility.

SAIL reserves the right to require anyone coming into a SAIL office wearing cologne, perfume, scented soaps or lotions TO LEAVE. This policy serves to protect SAIL consumers, visitors, guests and staff.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!!



UPCOMING SAIL OFFICE CLOSINGS

The business hours at all SAIL offices are Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. During the months of July 2022 through September 2022, all SAIL offices will be closed on the following dates:

- **Monday, July 4, 2022 – Independence Day**
- **Monday, September 5, 2022 – Labor Day**

Additional closings occur in the Charleston and Shelbyville offices when staff are in the community providing consumer services, education activities and attending meetings. When staff is out, the phone system routes all calls directly to the main office in Decatur. SAIL has an employee dedicated to answer phone calls during normal business hours.

SAIL OFFICE HOURS 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. **SAIL WEBSITE** www.decatur sail.com

CONTACT INFORMATION

1-800-358-8080 (V/TTY/VP)

Decatur Office

2449 E. Federal Dr.
217-876-8888 (V/TTY/VP)
sail@decatur sail.com

Decatur, IL 62526
217-876-7245 (FAX)

Shelbyville Office

1604 W. Main St. Ste. 100
217-774-4322 (V/TTY)
sailsel@consolidated.net

Shelbyville, IL 62565
217-774-4368 (FAX)

Triple C Office

707 Windsor Rd. Suite B
217-345-7245 (V/TTY)
triplec@consolidated.net

Charleston, IL 61920
217-345-7226 (FAX)

Anyone in need of public safety or emergency services should call 911 for assistance.