

# Family Update



Bi-monthly Newsletter of the Region III Family Support Council

## Realizing Her Goals and Dreams with Hard Work, Planning, and Support

*By Karen McDowell, Family to Family Coordinator*

The road to independence isn't easy for any young adult, which makes Ashley McClay's story especially impressive. Ashley knew that she wanted to have a job, learn to drive, and live on her own, but how she was going to reach her goals was unclear. Determination, willingness to learn, and an incredibly strong work ethic are the backbone of Ashley's continuing success story.

Ashley, now 24, transitioned from school to community-based services provided by Lakes Region Community Services when she turned 21. Amie Harvey, Ashley's Resource Coordinator, could immediately see that Ashley's strengths would serve her well in her quest for independence.

"Ashley is very organized and responsible. Whenever she gets paperwork regarding her benefits or something I need to know about or help her with, she always gives me a copy. Everything is always in order."

To help Ashley land her first paying job, Job Developer Connie Whitcher and Harvey worked with her to identify what she would be good at.

"I like to cook and make meals. Connie told me Beiderman's Deli in Plymouth was going to be offering a 15-week internship program. So we set up the interview and I got it!" recalls Ashley.

"Ashley worked extremely hard, loved what she was doing, loved Patty Beiderman, and liked many of her co-workers," said Whitcher. "Patty worked with Ashley every step of the way, teaching, explaining, and mentoring for 15 weeks. In the end, Patty didn't let her get away. She hired her! Ashley is more confident, has new relationships in her life, and has a great job that she loves. It has been a win-win situation for everyone involved."

As time has gone on, her duties and responsibilities at the deli have increased.

"I started out doing a few cleaning jobs, then deli prep. Now I get to help with catering and do all of the prep before the lunch rush."

Beiderman says the growth she has seen in Ashley since the day she started her internship has been nothing short of remarkable.

"In the beginning she was very timid about talking to her co-workers as far as reaching out to ask for help or an explanation if I gave her a task that wasn't completely clear to her," said Beiderman. "Now, she fits right in. She's not afraid to vocalize what she needs and she's able to branch out and do a lot of different things. Ashley's

*- continued on page 2*



*Ashley prepares for the day with deli owner Scott Beiderman.*



Ashley (second from left) with the team at Beiderman's Deli in Plymouth.

---

Realizing Her Goals and Dreams -  
continued from page 1

confidence has really increased. She's an integral part of the business. She's taking on new responsibilities and her role is evolving.”

Ashley is beating the odds. Just 36.2 percent of adults in New Hampshire's developmental services system are employed. The employment rate for adults without disabilities in New Hampshire is about 79.5 percent.

The internship at Beiderman's wasn't Ashley's only effort to earn money and build her resume. She started out by working part-time at the Ashland Beach Snack Shack for the past two summers. The business is operated by Lakes Region Community Services, with support from the Family Support Council, and provides part-time employment to individuals the agency serves. Ashley enjoyed her time at the Snack Shack. She learned about working with food and she was always happy to put in extra hours when there was a need. It was a great opportunity for Ashley to learn some basic job skills, gain confidence, and experience the satisfaction of earning a paycheck. She enjoyed the job so much after her first season, she wrote a thank you letter asking if she could work there again the following summer.

Ashley has also had a job delivering the *Penny Saver* and volunteered at Spere Memorial Hospital and Plymouth Elementary School.

### **Driven to Succeed!**

Ashley knows that one big key to her ongoing independence and employability is being able to depend on herself to get where she needs to go. So, starting in high school, she began working towards the goal of obtaining a driver's license.

“I didn't want to rely on others as much,” said Ashley. “I wanted to see my friends and my nieces and nephews

whenever I wanted.” But earning her license wasn't easy. Ashley took a standard driver's education class in high school, but the instruction was not delivered in a way that made it easy for her to understand and retain the information. She didn't give up though. After Ashley turned 21, she started working with Harvey to identify her goals and figure out how to achieve them. She enrolled in the LRN2DRIVE program (a driver's education program specifically designed for people with disabilities) with the help of a grant from the Family Support Council. After completing LRN2DRIVE, she passed both the written and road tests and earned her driver's license. Reaching that milestone has further reinforced her self-esteem.

“Ashley's confidence over the past year has just been phenomenal,” said Harvey.

Being able to drive has been great for Ashley, and she is often able to borrow her mother's car. But Ashley wants more independence, freedom, and choices, so she's working towards getting her own car some day. Lakes Region Community Services is helping her create a PASS plan to save for a car. A PASS plan allows an individual with a disability to set aside funds to attain a goal that will increase his or her employability, without losing his or her benefits. This is just one goal Ashley has for the future. She would like to increase her work hours, and she and her fiancé are planning to get married soon.

In three short years, Ashley has gone from being unemployed and living with her mother to having a job, living in her own apartment, and getting a driver's license. Ashley is very proud of how far she has come and excited about her prospects for the future. She is happy that the supports and services she needed were available to help her create a plan, navigate her options, and achieve her goals.

“I just needed a chance,” said Ashley. “Where would I be if I didn't have that chance?” ■

---

### **Family Support Council**

Susan Gunther, Chair - 293-7371  
Joel Fisher, Vice-Chair and State Delegate  
Valerie Lemay, Secretary  
Debra Nugent, State Delegate  
Irene Chapman ■ Denise Colby ■ Angela Currier  
Elliot “Spike” Davis ■ Ginger Donaldson  
Patricia Gray ■ Lynn Hilbrunner ■ Cheryl Larose  
Linda Wallace ■ Nancy Ward



Bon appetit! Dinner tasted as good as it looked. Tom Arnold was the featured chef at the first cooking club class.

## It's Cooking Time!

By Susan Michaelis Gunther and Jen Reera

Heat the oven; boil the water; blend the ingredients; stir the sauce. If you are an adult interested in improving your culinary skills, our new cooking club may be perfect. Chef Tom Arnold, a graduate of Lakes Region Community College's culinary arts program, recently showed an eager group the steps for cooking an Alfredo sauce from scratch. Afterwards, following Tom's instructions, we prepared chicken fettuccini Alfredo. The aromas in the kitchen were mouthwatering. Eventually, twelve of us sat down to a delicious pasta dish accompanied by fresh salad and homemade garlic bread. Even better, there were leftovers for everyone to take home for a second meal!

Laura and Bethany were partners at the stove and, like partners Rhonda and Ian, measured and stirred the ingredients for the Alfredo sauce to the correct consistency. Laura commented, "I really like the idea of a cooking class. There is always something to learn. Making a sauce instead of using a jar sauce is tastier." Bethany said she "isn't much of a cook"—yet—but having enjoyed herself, she will return to the cooking club.

For adults living on their own, these cooking classes should be particularly helpful. As Rhonda remarked, "Because I cook mostly microwave meals for myself, I still want to learn more, especially how to put together healthy meals." Ian had lots of questions for Tom. At the end of the evening Ian said, "It was fun. I would go again."

The cooking club will carry on without Chef Tom, who we knew was moving. We hope to find another chef. In the meantime, the cooking club will continue to meet once a month under the able culinary guidance of Deb Nugent, Linda Wallace, Jen Reera, and Susan Gunther. To reserve your place at the stove and dining table in the Gilford Middle School home economics classroom call Social Activities Coordinator Jen Reera at 387-0261. ■

## What's going on?

### How to stay informed

Would you like to stay more up-to-date about social events, trainings, and other news and information important to LRCS families? *Family Update* is a great source of information. In addition to the newsletter, the Family Support Council and LRCS use other tools to communicate important information to families and individuals. These include:

**Facebook:** The Lakes Region Community Services Facebook page is updated frequently. It's a great place to find out about events and resources. If you do not use Facebook, it is very easy to create a profile. If this is something you would like assistance with, call Karen McDowell at 581-1544.

**E-mails:** The Family to Family Coordinator distributes an email newsletter generally 2-4 times a month. If you do not receive this and would like to, please send an email to [karenmc@lracs.org](mailto:karenmc@lracs.org) and ask to be added to the distribution list.

**Phone Updates:** The Family Support Council would like to build a list of phone numbers so families can be notified or reminded of upcoming social or educational events via recorded messages. If you would like to be included on this list, please call 581-1544 or send an email to [karenmc@lracs.org](mailto:karenmc@lracs.org) and provide the following information: name and date of birth of the individual receiving services from LRCS and a phone number. ■

# LRCS Autism Center Walkathon set for Sunday, May 18th

The 4th Annual Autism Center Walkathon will be held on Sunday, May 18, 10am-1pm, on the WOW Trail. This event has grown considerably in its relatively short history. One of the things that makes the Walkathon very special is its group of dedicated sponsors. Every small business sponsoring the Walkathon—Kara Financial, Syl Lapierre Masonry, Peanuts Auto, and Right Angle Construction—is connected to a child who has been enrolled in the Autism Center. In addition to sponsoring the event, these parents, relatives, and friends are also volunteers and fundraisers. "We are incredibly lucky to have such a wonderful group of parents and family members who believe in the mission of the Autism Center and have committed to giving back year after year," said LRCS Director of Development Joanne Piper Lang.

The Autism Center empowers parents to educate, encourage, support, and advocate for their child with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. In a natural, child-friendly environment, the Autism Center's team teaches parents strategies they can incorporate into their everyday family routines. The teaching model provides measurable goals and objectives. Staff work with each family to meet its specific needs.

Last year's event attracted more than 200 walkers and raised \$14,000 to help provide access to services for children and parents. The Walkathon begins and ends at Lakes Region Community Services in Downtown Laconia, the home of the Autism Center. Our Main Office is conveniently located at 719 North Main Street (across from the Laconia Clinic and adjacent to the entrance of the WOW Trail). Participants walk the length of the WOW Trail then turn around and return to LRCS. The route is approximately 3.2 miles.

The Region III Family Support Council is sponsoring lunch immediately following the Walkathon—grilling hotdogs and serving snacks and soft drinks. It's a great chance to unwind and socialize for a bit after completing the walk.

There is limited parking available on site, but ample parking is available on the street, in municipal lots and across from LRCS at the Laconia Clinic. Please join us and enjoy a brisk walk on a spring day for a great cause! For more information, visit the Lakes Region Community Services Facebook page or [lr.cs.org](http://lr.cs.org). You can also pick up a brochure and pledge sheet at the LRCS Main Office or the Plymouth Office at 583 Tenney Mountain Highway. ■



*The LRCS Family Resource Center is the site of the May 18, 4th Annual Autism Center Walkathon on the WOW Trail in Laconia.*



LAKES REGION  
**COMMUNITY  
SERVICES**

*Engage. Empower. Inspire.*

Lakes Region Community Services Office  
and Family Resource Center - 524-8811  
719 North Main Street, Laconia, NH

Chris Santaniello, Executive Director - LRCS  
581-1500

### **Family Support Services**

Laurie Vachon, Director of Family Support  
996-3976  
Karen McDowell, Family to Family Coordinator  
581-1544

# Legislative Update

## **Governor announces delay in implementing Step 2 of Medicaid managed care**

Governor Maggie Hassan announced on April 3, that Step 2 of Medicaid managed care will be delayed until a plan for stakeholder involvement is in place. The focus is now on Step 1 and Medicaid Expansion (read more on expansion below). Long-term care services, which include the community-based services for individuals with developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders and their families provided by LRCS, were scheduled to be rolled into Medicaid managed care on December 1, 2014.

Rather than setting a new start date for Step 2, the governor said the process would dictate implementation. She said the state will put real effort into designing Step 2 with families and examining the complexities of long term care. She said the Step 1 of Medicaid Managed Care (medical and acute care), which went live on Dec. 1, 2013, has been successful but still needs work. Visit [lrns.org](http://lrns.org) or the Community Support Network web site [csni.org](http://csni.org) for updates relative to Medicaid managed care.

## **Medicaid expansion compromise signed by Governor**

On Thursday, March 27, the governor signed into law a bipartisan Medicaid expansion compromise to expand healthcare coverage to 50,000 NH residents. The plan uses Medicaid funds to buy private health coverage for adults making less than 138 percent of the federal poverty limit. The federal government will pick up the full cost of the program until 2017. The state estimates that 12,000 adults could begin receiving coverage very soon under an existing program to subsidize employer-based coverage through the state's Medicaid managed care program starting July 1 or soon after.

## **Restraint and Seclusion Legislation**

Senate Bill 396 relative to child restraint and seclusion practices passed unanimously in the full NH Senate on Marcy 27. The bill will now move on to the House where there will be a hearing in the House Committee on Children and Family Law.

The hearing date had not been announced at press time. SB 396 would improve child protection and the rights of parents to information about their children. It does that *without* interfering with the ability of schools and treatment facilities to maintain order and keep children and staff safe. This bill is the result of extensive collaboration among child and disability advocates, treatment providers, and educators.

SB 396 would establish:

- For the first time, a statute establishing that parents must be promptly notified whenever their child is secluded
- The first set of basic health and safety requirements for when a child is secluded
- Stronger rules for when a parent is given information about when his or her child is physically restrained

---

## **Medicaid Care Management Conflict Resolution Hotline**

The NH Department of Health and Human Services encourages those with ongoing, unresolved conflicts with their Managed Care Organization to call the hotline number that appears below. Members of the Governor's Commission on Medicaid Care Management have also urged anyone with questions or concerns to contact them at Commissioner Don Shumway's email address:

[Don.shumway@crotchedmountain.org](mailto:Don.shumway@crotchedmountain.org)

**DHHS Medicaid Care Management Hotline:  
1-800-852-3344, ext. 4344**

*Choose the menu option for Medicaid care management*

---

## **Know Your Rights - Visit Disability Rights Center's web page on managed care grievances and appeals**

As a member of a Medicaid managed care plan, you have the right to file a grievance or an appeal if you are dissatisfied with your plan in any way. To find out more, visit the Disability Rights Center of New Hampshire's web site:

<http://www.drcnh.org/MMCappealsgrievances.html>

---

## Three Years Later: A Look at Self Directed Services

---

Just a few years ago, the Self Directed Service (SDS) option was introduced to individuals with developmental disabilities or acquired brain disorders. Since then, over 73 individuals have chosen this option that provides an opportunity for individuals and their families to design, direct, and manage the support and services that are meaningful to them. They can choose the support service that will meet specific needs and decide who will provide them. They have control over how their service dollars are spent and distributed, as long as it complies with Medicaid rules.

One of the first to choose this option was Karen and her son Kerry. She reports, "SDS is working well for us. There is a learning curve involved in understanding the policies and paperwork, but it has given us the freedom to schedule a care provider versus having Kerry attend a day program four or five days a week. Two of the advantages is it allows us to choose meaningful activities—in this case—music lessons and be involved in writing his service plan working towards personal goals. Kerry has a love for music and a passion for playing the guitar. SDS allows us to choose how activity fund money is distributed and music lessons are something that is meaningful for Kerry. He has taken lessons for three years and has made great strides. Last year, he performed in a recital, on the stage in front of an audience. We have seen so much growth."

Kerry participated in the LRN2DRIVE driver education training program. Karen said, "Kerry received his driver's license last year, and it has given him some independence and increased his confidence and pride."

When asked if she had any advice for those who are considering this option, Karen said, "Prior to making a commitment, attend the trainings and

gain an understanding of what your responsibilities will be. SDS is a great program, and I would recommend it to anyone who chooses to explore this option."

If you would like to learn more about SDS, contact Shannon Kelly, Director of Home-Based Services at 581-1502 or [shannonk@lrcs.org](mailto:shannonk@lrcs.org). ■

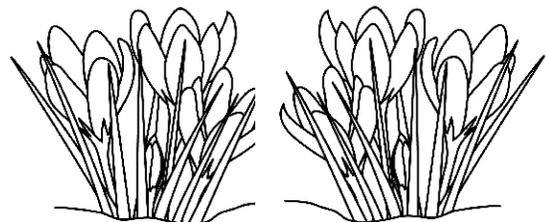
## ABLE NH

The next local ABLE NH (Advocates Building Lasting Equality in NH) meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, at 6 p.m., in the LRCS Main Office, 719 North Main St., Laconia.

ABLE NH advocates for the civil and human rights of all children and adults with disabilities and promotes full participation by improving systems of supports, connecting families, inspiring communities, and influencing public policy.

All are invited to learn about ABLE NH's mission, share stories about topics that matter to them (DD services, mental health services, school inclusion, Medicaid managed care, etc.). A small group met in March to discuss starting an ABLE chapter in the Lakes Region. That discussion will continue at the May 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

For more details and to RSVP, please contact Denise Colby at [dsc4eva@aol.com](mailto:dsc4eva@aol.com) or 657-4449.





Family Support Council member Denise Colby has recently completed the New Hampshire Leadership Series.

## Congratulations to our newest Leadership graduate!

Family Support Council member Denise Colby graduated from the NH Leadership Series on April 5. The seven-session series is held from September through April and provides parents with state-of-the-art information and strategies to effectively impact local and state organizations on issues related to individuals with disabilities.

For more information about the program, visit [nhleadership.org](http://nhleadership.org). ■

### Region III Towns Served

Alexandria/Alton/Ashland/Barnstead/Belmont  
Bridgewater/Bristol/Campton/Center Harbor  
Ellsworth/Gilford/Gilmanton/Groton/Hebron  
Holderness/Laconia/Meredith/New Hampton  
Plymouth/Rumney/Sanbornton  
Thornton/Tilton/Wentworth



To follow us on Facebook, find the Lakes Region Community Services Facebook page, look for our logo, and click "like."

More than 150 people attended the 3rd Annual Community Dance at the Common Man Inn in Plymouth on March 21.



Join us for our Spring Dance!  
Details to follow.



Family Support Services  
Lakes Region Community Services  
P.O. Box 509  
Laconia, New Hampshire 03247-0509

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Laconia, NH  
Permit #203

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## 2014 LRCS Fundraising and Community Events

4th Annual Autism Center Walkathon  
Sunday, May 18 at 10 a.m.

Walk on the WOW Trail followed by lunch  
Start and end at LRCS Main Office in Laconia

Miles for Smiles 5K  
(Fundraiser for Dental Care)  
Plymouth - Sept. 9 & Laconia - Sept. (TBA)

Lakes Region Uncorked 2014  
Tasting Event - Signature LRCS fundraiser  
Saturday, November 1 from 6 to 9 p.m.  
Laconia Country Club

For more information, contact  
Joanne Piper Lang at 581-1588, [joannel@lracs.org](mailto:joannel@lracs.org).

*Please plan to join us!*



## *More social activities for adults planned for spring...*

This spring the Family Support Council will sponsor events for adults including a Spring Dance, cooking club, and a movie night at Smitty's Cinema in Tilton on May 14th (for adults 18 and over). Stay tuned for dates to be announced.

For some events, limited transportation may be available to and from a central location in Laconia. To register for any of these events or get more information, call Karen McDowell at 581-1544 or email Social Activities Coordinator Jen Reera at [jreera@yahoo.com](mailto:jreera@yahoo.com).