

February 1, 2024



Empowering Independence

CENTER FOR LIVING & WORKING, INC.

WHAT'S UP?



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services

"Vital Signs": Health Care Access for Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Patients



Deaf YES! Center for Deaf Empowerment and Recovery hosted an online film premiere and panel discussion on January 11, 2024, from 6:00 to 7:30 PM EST.

The featured film, "**Vital Signs: Advocating for Deaf Healthcare Access**," was shown during the event. Darian Gambrell, the Executive Director of DEAF, Inc., moderated an insightful panel discussion following the premiere. Over 250 people were in attendance at the virtual premiere!

The team produced a film to train healthcare providers to effectively serve diverse Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing patients. The intervention was designed through a two-year collaboration with the Deaf community – community forums, focus groups, and an intervention development team inclusive of Deaf researchers, filmmakers, and laypeople.

Community Partners:

- Deaf YES! Center for Deaf Empowerment and Recovery
- DEAF, Inc.
- UMass Chan Medical School
- Brown University
- Center for Living & Working, Inc.
- Viability



Watch it here: <https://youtu.be/xr-mlkuTBa4?si=2qr8eh3F6RJYhnV>



History of Valentine Cards

In 1847 Worcester resident, **Esther Howland** received an English Valentine and was inspired to start making her own. She sold her cards through her father's stationery store.

Learn more here: <https://www.worcesterhistory.org/worcesters-history/worcesters->



Utility Shut Off Moratorium

Every year from November 15 to March 15, there is a utility shut off winter moratorium. From November 15 — March 15, gas and electric companies can't shut off your service because you can't pay...**BUT you need to be registered for the discount rate!**

This happens when you receive **Fuel Assistance** or when you apply for hardship separately.

Learn more about how you are protected from having your utilities shut off at:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/when-am-i-protected-from-having-my-utilities-shut-off>

Find out where you can apply for Fuel Assistance at: <https://www.toapply.org/MassLIHEAP>

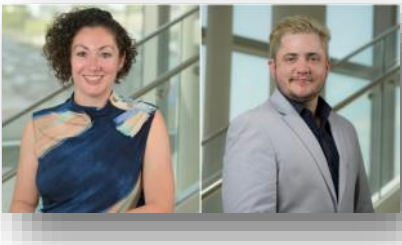
**APPLY FOR
FUEL ASSISTANCE
*Before April 30th!***



First Nationwide Therapy Clinical Trial for Deaf



A nationwide virtual clinical trial to test evidence-based therapy for Deaf people with trauma symptoms and alcohol use disorder is underway at UMass Chan Medical School.



The study will enroll 144 Deaf people over five years. According to Melissa L. Anderson, PhD, associate professor of psychiatry, it is the first evidence-based therapy clinical trial of its size in the Deaf community.



“The project will allow us to focus on treating Deaf people with co-morbid trauma and addiction and will also start to look at ways of replacing unsafe coping mechanisms with healthier ones,” Dr. Anderson said. “The goal is to run a fully powered, randomized control trial focused on therapy, which has never been done in the Deaf community before.”

ASL Translation:
youtu.be/6B4bXnQSCec

Read the full article here: https://www.umassmed.edu/news/news-archives/2024/01/first-nationwide-therapy-clinical-trial-for-deaf-people-with-trauma-addiction-launched-at-umass-chan/?utm_campaign=news_deafyfes_011924&utm_source=dio_linkedin&utm_medium=organic_social&utm_content=link

Black Deaf Culture Through the Lens of History

The month of February is Black History Month. If you are looking to share information with your d/D/HH child, the Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) has a page dedicated to **Black Deaf History Month** written by Benro T. Ogunyipe, Executive Director of the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission: <https://dcmp.org/learn/366-black-deaf-culture-through-the-lens-of-history>



Described and Captioned Media Program

The page contains information about National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA), Black ASL content in social media, Black Lives Matter, recent stories, accomplishments and recognitions, and history.

MCDHH News

MCDHH has changed the name of the Social Services Department to the **Community Services Division**, to better align with the MCDHH mission. Also, our Adult Case Managers now go by Service Navigators.

To get in touch with the Community Services Division, or to make a referral for our services, contact the team's new email address at MCDHH-CommServDiv@mass.gov.

For more information on this change, please view the vlog below!

VLOG: <https://youtu.be/f482SjSMgh8>

VLOG Transcript: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EC-xdvkagNbS6tTeASDDkoIb9jvRtvKwDgU4iR5a1gQ/edit?usp=sharing>



National Deaf Therapy: Now Accepting Medicare



National Deaf Therapy (NDT) is a group mental health practice. All NDT therapists are independent contractors.



Contact NDT to find out if your Medicare plan is accepted.

<https://nationaldeaftherapy.com/>

COVID-19 Update

The New COVID JN.1 Variant Symptoms to Watch For, According to Experts



Watch video here: <https://youtu.be/JSYRlxuuoXo?si=CFzNoeb1Fra-JWzD>

Read article here: <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/health/a46456120/jn1-covid-symptoms/>

Deaf and Indigenous Actress on 'Echo'

Alaqua Cox brings authentic deaf and indigenous representation in 'Echo'.

Maya Lopez is Marvel's first deaf and indigenous superhero. Introduced in the 2021 series "Hawkeye" on [Disney+](https://www.disneyplus.com/), Lopez was also Cox's first-ever acting role. In an interview with [Variety](https://www.variety.com/), Cox shared that she asked the cast and crew of "Echo" to take ASL classes prior to production.



Read full article and watch the video here: <https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Culture/alaqua-cox-brings-authentic-deaf-indigenous-representation-echo/story?id=106265497>

TELL CONGRESS TO SUPPORT THE AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM



- The ACP internet affordability program allows low-income households to get affordable high-speed internet.
- The FCC announced they are starting the process to shut it down this spring which means millions will be without affordable internet.
- **TAKE ACTION**: tell Congress they should fund this program!

Go to: members.ncil.org/action

Click on



Fill in:

Compose Your Message

- US Senators
- US Representative

Subject
Extend the Affordable Connectivity Program

Message Body
Please add your own story about this issue to personalize your message.

Having reliable access to the internet is vital for people with disabilities. As we have seen during the COVID 19 pandemic, internet access is crucial for many to stay connected in their communities, obtain healthcare.

Enter Your Info

Your Information

Prefix * First Name * Last Name *

Email *

Send me text alerts

Home Information

Street Address *

ZIP Code * Enter Zip for City and State

Send me email alerts
 Remember me

Send Message

NEED HELP?
Contact your Skills Trainer

Your Senator and Representative names will automatically fill in based on your address.



Watch a VLOG about the end of the ACP Program:
<https://youtu.be/qvFzyA5AzlU?si=cwCqJrzreorpfDE>





February 2024

More than just Valentine's Day!

2/16

NATIONAL CAREGIVERS DAY



- Celebrated the 3rd Friday in February
- Honors healthcare professionals that provide long-term and hospice care



NATIONAL LOVE YOUR PET DAY

2/20

- Most households in the U.S. have *at least* 1 pet.
- The U.S. has more cats than dogs, *but* more households have dogs than cats.
- Pets can be: birds, reptiles, fish, mice/rats, & *more!*
- Pets help relieve stress and lower blood pressure.



2/23

NATIONAL BANANA BREAD DAY



- It's actually a cake [*a sweet food made with a mixture of flour, eggs, fat, and sugar*]
- A row of bananas is called a 'hand' - a single banana is a 'finger.'



NATIONAL CLAM CHOWDER DAY

2/25

- A soup or stew with clams, potatoes & onions.
- Common kinds: New England [milk base], Rhode Island [clear broth] and Manhattan [tomato base].



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services



Worcester Parent Guide to Community Resources

[CLICK HERE FOR ENGLISH GUIDE](#)



Updated Therapists for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Directory

Click here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mRNQIKYYNjM4vYpRX7OECQkiW-PQlu62/view?usp=sharing>



MISSED A *WHAT'S UP* NEWSLETTER?

Past issues of newsletters are on our website!

VISIT: [HTTPS://WWW.CENTERLW.ORG/2022/07/WHATS-UP-NEWSLETTER/](https://www.CenterLW.org/2022/07/whats-up-newsletter/)

Questions? Contact your Skills Trainer

Joan Philip	DHILS Director	508-762-1165 (VP)
Denise Paro	Administrative Assistant	508-556-1600 (VP)
Ellen Perkins	DHILS Asst. Manager/Hard of Hearing Skills Trainer	508-502-7576 (Voice); 508-762-1354 (VP)
Deanna Emberley-Handricken	Deaf Skills Trainer (Part-time)	508-762-1021 (VP)
Rosemary Moreira	Deaf Skills Trainer (Full-time)	508-762-1166 (VP)
Jonathan Vanderschrick	Deaf Skills Trainer (Full-time)	508-762-1350 (VP)
Kim White	Staff Interpreter	508-755-1042 (Voice); 508-283-1036 (VP)

Contact Us!



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services

Center for Living & Working, Inc.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services Department

Videophone: 508-762-1164

Voice/TTY: 508-755-1003

www.CenterLW.org



CLW: <https://www.facebook.com/CenterForLivingAndWorking>

DHILS Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/469192334303776>