



The DD Community Update

January 2010

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The Michigan
Developmental Disabilities
Council

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2010 Census—Be Counted!

The 2010 Census: A Snapshot

What: The Census is a count of everyone in the United States.

Who: Everyone in the United States must be counted (citizens and noncitizens).

Why: The U.S. Constitution requires a national census once every 10 years for the purpose of reapportioning the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition, census data play a part in guiding funding for essential community services and other important programs.

When: Households will receive a census form in March 2010 either by U.S. mail or by hand delivery.

Benefits of Census Data for People with Disabilities:

Census data directly affects how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to state, local, and tribal governments. Census data help guide local planning decisions, including where to provide additional social services, establish senior and child-care centers, build new roads, hospitals or schools, or determine locations for job training centers. That means census data can directly affect the quality of life for people with disabilities by impacting:

- Planning and construction of facilities for people with disabilities
- Transportation services and needs
- Community-based health care initiatives and programs.

Make sure you are counted this year! The 2010 Census form is one of the shortest census forms in history. With only 10 questions, the form takes about 10 minutes to complete. **It's also safe:** By law, the Census Bureau cannot share your answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement agencies. All Census Bureau employees take an oath of non-disclosure and are sworn for life to protect the confidentiality of the data they collect. Stay tuned for more Census information, and visit <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/>.

Gearing Up for the Legislative Day

February 9, 2010 is the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council's 11th Annual Legislative Day. If you are attending, here are some suggestions for preparing for the event.

- If your RICC hasn't already invited your state senator and representative, do it now! If your legislator hasn't confirmed, follow up and let them know you will be in Lansing and would like to meet with them. Formal invitations have been sent, but it doesn't hurt to call or email. Registration deadline is January 22, 2010.
- Talking points: Pick the topics from the talking points you'd like to discuss with your legislator and practice, practice, practice!
- Think about ways you can keep on-going contact with your legislator to follow up on the issues you discussed at the event. Examples: invite legislators to RICC meetings, send letters/emails, volunteer to work for your legislator, or schedule a meeting with your legislator in Lansing or your home district.

Dinner & a Movie with the RICCs

February 8, the night before the Legislative Day, Connections for Community Leadership is hosting a "Dinner and a Movie" with the RICCs. The dinner will be at the Nuthouse Grill in downtown Lansing from 5 pm–6:30 pm. Those interested can meet in the Radisson hotel's main lobby at 5 pm at 111 N. Grand Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933. Individuals and RICCs are responsible for paying for their dinner.

After the dinner there will be a movie showing in the Radisson Hotel Regency 1 room from 7 pm–9 pm. Come watch *Offense Taken* and another clip portraying disability in the media. Popcorn, soda, and water will be available at no cost. This is a fun night designed for RICC members who will be staying at the Radisson the night before the Legislative Day to meet and spend time with fellow RICCS and others.

For more information, contact Theresa Squires at 1-800-760-4600 ext. 326 or tsquires@prosynergy.org.

Tax Season and the Earned Income Tax Credit

The time has come to start thinking about your 2009 taxes. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable federal tax credit that helps working people achieve economic stability and security. This tax year the EITC is double what it was in 2008. This means that hard working families can receive more money using this credit. In order to qualify for the EITC, you must meet the following rules set by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS):

- Have a valid Social Security number
- Have earned income from your job, working for yourself, or another source
- Filing status cannot be married
- Be a U.S. citizen or resident alien all year
- Cannot be the qualifying child of another person
- Cannot file form 2555 or 2555-EZ (related to foreign income)
- Can only have a limited amount of invested income

Workers with low income who do not have a child may be able to claim the EITC as well. If you do not have a qualifying child, you must be age 25 but under 65 at the end of the year, live in the United States for more than half the year, and do not qualify as a dependent of another person.

In order to claim the Michigan EITC you must complete and file a federal 1040 and be eligible to claim the federal EITC even if you are not required to file a federal or Michigan return. For more information on how to fill out your MI-1040 form to receive this credit, visit www.michigan.gov/incometax.

If you use tax preparation software to prepare your tax return, the software will assist you with determining or claiming the EITC. ICAN! Efile is a free electronic tax filing service that allows eligible tax payers to complete and e-file their federal and state tax returns on their own and for free. Visit www.michiganeic.org/icaneic for more information. Visit the IRS website for more information on the EITC:

<http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96406,00.html>

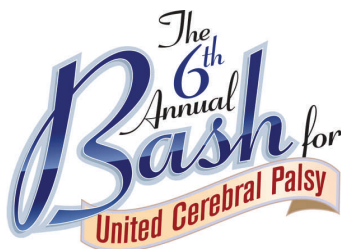
Keyboard Wizard

For a limited time, you can download a free copy of the Keyboard Wizard Software. This software was developed with the input and assistance of the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living staff for use by people with disabilities. If someone you know has physical difficulty with typing, try Keyboard Wizard. This software helps you determine whether a change in settings will benefit you and makes the changes so you don't have to.

[Click here](#) to download a free introductory copy of Keyboard Wizard, and try it for yourself. Keyboard Wizard walks you through several steps: Type a sentence, view recommendations, try the recommended settings for yourself, and choose which settings you want to use. The entire process takes about 5 minutes. This is a full version of the program available free for a short time for you to use and evaluate. For more information, contact Glen Ashlock at 734-971-0277 Ext. 33 or glen@aacil.org. The full link for the download is: www.shareit.com/demoreg.html?productid=300361924&backlink=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.kpronline.com. Copy and paste the address into your browser.

UCP Michigan's 6th Annual Bash for Cerebral Palsy

Tickets are on sale now for the 6th Annual Bash for Cerebral Palsy hosted by United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan. The event will be held at the Walnut Hills Country Club, 2874 East Lake Lansing Road, East Lansing, Michigan on Saturday, February 20 from 7 pm—11 pm. Tickets are \$30 in advance, or \$35 at the door. You can call 800-828-2714 to order tickets, or visit the UCP Michigan website at www.ucp.org/ucp_local.cfm/87. This year there will be a silent auction with items available to bid on that include: a 2 night stay at the Grand Hotel Mackinac Island; dinner for two at the Kellogg Center State Room; two tickets to an event of your choice at the Wharton Center; and more.



Federal Seclusion and Restraint Bills Introduced

On Wednesday, December 9, 2009, The Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act, HR 4247, was introduced by Representative George Miller, Chair of the Education and Labor Committee, and Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers. Senator Christopher Dodd introduced companion legislation in the Senate on the same day.

Although there are minor differences, both bills would prevent and reduce harmful restraint and seclusion in schools. This federal legislation was introduced just a week after Representative Deb Kennedy unveiled her plan for the end of seclusion and restraint in Michigan. This is a big step in the right direction considering only a handful of states have made an effort to restrict or regulate seclusion and restraint in schools.

Since the results of a May 2009 Government Accountability Office report were released, Tennessee and Nevada have passed new laws on seclusion and restraint practices, but while Tennessee's law bans prone restraint, Nevada's doesn't. Legislation has been introduced in Maine, Michigan, Vermont and Wisconsin, but the Maine bill was defeated. Maryland has issued regulations outlining how the practices may be used. Many states still have no regulations in place. If the federal legislation is passed there will be a standard for all states to follow.

(www.lifewithoutlimits.org, www.usatoday.com)

Did You Know?

According to the 2000 Census, there were approximately 1,711,231 people with a disability age 5 years and up living in Michigan, about 17% of the estimated population. Information on disability was first collected in the 1830 census and the questions have evolved over the decades.

www.census.gov



Healthcare Reform

On December 24, 2009 the Senate passed their healthcare reform bill, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. President Obama has pledged to work with Congress to resolve the differences between the Senate and House bills. The goal is to secure final passage of a bill in the House and Senate before the President's State of the Union address in late January or early February.

The major differences between the House and Senate bills include financing, the structure of the new insurance exchanges, effective dates, and abortion. The Senate bill also does not include a public option, which is a high priority for House liberals.

The disability community is working to have the provisions included which are the most beneficial for people with disabilities. Many disability-related provisions differ. These provisions include: Medicaid coverage, treatment of health disparities, training of medical professionals, the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) Act, the Medicaid Community First Choice Option, and several other improvements to Medicaid home and community based services.

The Capitol Insider, www.lifewithoutlimits.org

Oakland University Student Wins Lawsuit

According to a federal court order, Oakland University violated the federal Rehabilitation Act by refusing to allow Micah Fialka-Feldman to live in a campus dorm and now must make a room available for him.

Micah attends a program called OPTIONS at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan. This program allows students with cognitive impairments to take classes and participate in extra-curricular activities. Micah pays a fee to attend that's equal to the cost of tuition. However, the university alleged that he did not qualify for housing because he is not part of a degree-seeking program.

After a 2 year battle, Micah won his case. U.S. District Judge Patrick J. Duggan said the university's assumption that Micah would be incapable of following housing rules "appears to be grounded on prejudice, stereotypes, and/or unfounded fear." Micah began living on Oakland University's campus on January 11, 2010.

Emergency Preparedness—Winter Storms

Winter storms can be dangerous. It is important to be prepared in case you are caught outside driving, or snowed in. During a winter storm:

- Listen to your radio, television, or NOAA weather radio for weather reports and emergency information.
- Eat regularly and drink ample foods, but avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- Conserve fuel, if necessary, by keeping your home cooler than normal. Temporarily close off heat to some rooms and avoid opening doors and windows.
- If the pipes freeze, remove any insulation or layers of newspapers and wrap pipes in rags. Completely open all faucets and pour hot water over the pipes, starting where they were most exposed to the cold.
- Maintain ventilation when using kerosene heaters to avoid build-up of toxic fumes.

If you are outdoors:

- If you must shovel snow, avoid overexertion. This can bring on a heart attack.
- Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from extremely cold air.
- Keep dry—change wet clothing frequently to prevent loss of body heat.
- Watch for signs of frostbite that include loss of feeling or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the tip of the nose. If symptoms are present, get medical help immediately.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia. These include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion. If symptoms of hypothermia are detected, get the victim to a warm location and remove wet clothing. Put the person in dry clothing and wrap their entire body in a blanket. Warm the center of the body first. Give them warm, non-alcoholic or non-caffeinated beverages if they are conscious. Seek medical help as soon as possible.

(www.fema.gov)

Upcoming Events

January 27

Medicaid Dental Advocacy Training

Community Living Services, Detroit, MI (RSVP by January 20)

February 18

Detroit 360 Family Support Group Meeting, 10 am

Contact: Claudette Cameron
(313) 577-0382 or
aw9496@wayne.edu

February 9

Legislative Day

Radisson Hotel, Lansing

10 am-3:30 pm



February 20-22

DD Council Peer Mentor Training

Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center
East Lansing, MI

February 2010 Council Meeting Schedule

Council Meeting: Legislative Day, February 9, 10 am—3:30 pm

Public Policy Committee: February 9, 10 am—3:30 pm

Diversity Committee: February 8, 1 pm—3 pm

Education Workgroup: February 16, 3:30 pm—5 pm

RICC Teleconference: February 25, 1 pm—3 pm

Health Issues Work Group: February 16, 1 pm—3 pm

Family Support Work Group: February 17, 10 am—12 pm

Housing Work Group: February 11, 1 pm—3 pm

Transportation Work Group: February 11, 10 am—12 pm

