Disability Rights Montana is our state’s protection and advocacy system (P&A) for people with disabilities. Every state must have a P&A in order to participate in the Medicaid program.

Congress created the P&A system after finding that many state institutions were dangerous places. The state is responsible for keeping people safe in its facilities. Each P&A is responsible for monitoring the state system and taking steps to improve safety.

The first P&A system Congress created was for people with developmental disabilities. The second was for people living with mental illness. Congress recognized that cognitive and mental disorders make people especially vulnerable.

Two recent sexual assaults in state institutions show how the P&A system works.

At the Montana State Hospital, one patient sexually assaulted another patient two years ago. The patient who committed the assault was a registered sex offender convicted of raping a 12-year-old girl. The patient victim had been sexually abused before and was admitted after a suicide attempt.

Before the assault, the sex offender had led a group of patients, including the victim, in a sexually explicit game that lasted from 11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. The group met in the open, in one of the common rooms. The rape occurred on the evening of the next day, in a men’s bathroom that was supposed to be locked.

Continued on page 2
Continued from Front Page

During the actual assault, another patient told staff that something bad was happening in one of the bathrooms. Staff ignored him. Later, the records of routine, hourly or half-hourly checks of patients on the night of the sex games were found to be missing.

The Hospital did an investigation and found that staff had acted “appropriately.” Disability Rights Montana found overwhelming evidence of neglect by the Hospital and submitted its report to state licensing and certification authorities. Those authorities agreed that the Hospital had violated state and federal standards of care.

The Hospital was ordered to develop a “plan of correction” that included a process for identifying sexual and violent offenders who are admitted to MSH, new patient monitoring procedures, a secure storage system for patient monitoring records, and other safety measures.

The victim later sued the Hospital. The state agreed to pay her $375,000.

At the Montana Developmental Center, on May 24, a staff person sexually assaulted a resident in an empty classroom. She promptly reported the assault. Then a male investigator questioned her privately. The investigator says that she changed her mind and said the assault never happened, so he immediately stopped the investigation.

The next day, the victim told her story again. MDC finally reopened the investigation a day and a half after the assault occurred. By then, important physical evidence of the assault was lost. Local police became involved and arrested the staff member.

DRM believes that MDC did not respond appropriately when the victim made her first report about the assault. We want to know what the investigator said to the victim that might have made her change her story. We want to know why the victim was not taken to a hospital immediately for an examination and care. We want to help the state identify changes in MDC procedures that will make sure this never happens again.
Advance Directives

Does Montana Need a Psychiatric Advance Directives Law?

We recently invited twenty people who live with mental illness or who work in the mental health system to talk about psychiatric advance directives. We wanted to see how a diverse group from across the state would answer the question, “Does Montana need a psychiatric advance directives law?” The answer was a unanimous “yes.” The group also agreed on almost every other advance directives issue we discussed.

Psychiatric advance directives are legal documents that contain instructions about how a patient wants to be treated during a medical crisis. Advance directives go into effect when the patient loses the capacity to make knowing, voluntary healthcare decisions.

More than half of the states have advance directives laws specifically for psychiatric care.

Montana has a general durable power of attorney law (DPOA) that allows any adult to name an agent to make future medical decisions. The person who creates the DPOA is called the principal. Montana’s law allows the principal to revoke the durable power of attorney at any time—even when the principal lacks capacity to give informed consent for medical care.

For years, clients have told us that they want to be able to create a binding directive. They do not want to be able to revoke the DPOA when they are in crisis.

Clients have also expressed a wish to be able to create an advance directive without appointing an agent. The directive would give medical providers consent to administer certain medications and provide other treatment, including hospitalization.

With the direction provided by the advance directives workgroup, we are developing an outline for an advance directives law for Montana. Please check our Web site for future developments and opportunities to comment.

School safety is a special concern for the parents of children with disabilities. Children with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse because of physical and communications barriers, as well as behaviors that frustrate their teachers.

Incidents of abuse reported to DRM include:

- In Great Falls, aides “disciplined” a child with developmental disabilities by holding his head under running water. The same aides reportedly forced him to eat his own vomit. A staff witness to some of the abuse later admitted being troubled by what she saw but did not report it. Two teacher’s aides have been arrested and prosecuted for child abuse; DRM is investigating.

- A special education director used the weight of her body to pin down a young girl with Down Syndrome in order to keep her from crawling out of the “time out” area in the resource room. The family has withdrawn the child from school and retained private counsel; DRM continues to investigate.

- A girl with cerebral palsy was routinely kept in a broom closet.

- A teenaged boy with autism, locked in a darkened bathroom, was so terrified that he severely injured himself. As a result of DRM’s intervention, the school hired a new special education director and paid damages to the boy.

Parents who learn that their children have been physically abused, restrained or inappropriately disciplined at school are sometimes shocked to learn that no one seems to be responsible for addressing their concerns. Each independent school district writes its own rules. State law does not provide for an independent investigation or require
a particular procedure, nor does any state agency have jurisdiction over abuse of children by school staff.

**In fact, we found that almost no one** had accurate information about who was responsible to investigate and respond to allegations of staff abuse.

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) investigates allegations that occur in residential settings, including home and foster care. Parents and schools who report school-based abuse to DPHHS are told that DPHHS has no jurisdiction to investigate in schools.

**Where abuse appears to qualify as corporal punishment**, law enforcement officials have authority to investigate. Defined as “knowingly and purposely inflicting physical pain on a pupil as a disciplinary measure,” corporal punishment inflicted by a school employee against a student is a misdemeanor criminal offense. Physical restraint of a child may also be a misdemeanor criminal offense if it is excessive.

**Individual school district responses to abuse allegations** vary widely. Parents are frequently frustrated by the apparent lack of response and lack of clear time lines and outcomes.

**If you know of a child with a disability who has been abused, please report to Disability Rights Montana at 1-800-245-4743**

To begin clearing up the confusion, we invited the Office of Public Instruction, DPHHS, school district representatives, law enforcement officials, the Department of Justice, the Montana School Boards Association and others to a roundtable discussion.

**The group has agreed** on the need to provide parents and schools with a clear course of action for investigation, intervention and follow up when abuse is alleged, and has discussed drafting and issuing a pamphlet with information.
AutoMARKs Not Marking
Voters Rights Violated

For some people with disabilities, the only private, completely independent way to cast a vote is on a special voting machine. The federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 says that every polling place in the nation has to provide at least one of these accessible voting machines for federal elections.

In 2006, all counties in Montana received accessible voting machines called AutoMARKs. In the 2006 primary election, for the first time in their lives, people with sight impairments and other disabilities marked paper ballots independently.

In January of 2008, Lewis and Clark County and the city of Helena did not provide AutoMARKs for a local election. We filed a Montana Human Rights Bureau discrimination complaint on behalf of Robert Maffit and Myrle Tompkins, alleging that this violated their rights as voters with sight impairments. The county soon settled their case. The city did not. Last November, a hearing examiner found the city liable for disability discrimination. A hearing was held in May to determine the damages to award the voters.

In our second case, we are representing Mark Boatman, a man with muscular dystrophy. He had to have another person fill out his ballot in the 2008 presidential election when his polling place in Missoula County failed to provide a functioning AutoMARK. An investigator found good cause to believe this was discriminatory and the case has been certified for hearing.
Equal Access to County Services
Disability Rights Montana Initiates Statewide Projects

People with disabilities have a right to equal access to all county programs and services. Both state and federal law say that the services must be provided in a non-discriminatory way. Disability Rights Montana is now conducting a statewide survey of county services to determine whether they are accessible.

Our first survey of county services, in 2000, focused on county courthouses. The current survey will measure the progress counties have made since then.

The federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as well as the Montana Human Rights Act and Governmental Code of Fair Practices, prohibit governmental entities from discriminating against people with disabilities in services or programs. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 similarly prohibits discrimination by a program or organization that receives federal funds.

The DRM surveys review the buildings where county services are provided. We look for ramps and elevators, accessible washrooms, and many other physical features that may improve access or create physical obstacles to people with disabilities. When we conduct our surveys, we review architectural issues in buildings where county services are provided as well as governmental policies for the provision of assistive technologies or devices, such as assistive listening systems, Braille materials and telecommunication devices (TDD). After each survey, staff provide their findings to county officials along with the references to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).

For our surveys of buildings where county services are provided, we use the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) which were developed by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, effective September 21, 2004. These guidelines can be found online at:

http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba(final.cfm)
Taser Therapy
Illegal Use in Institutions?

The Taser is a law enforcement weapon that shoots metal hooks into the skin and sends a brief electrical current into the body. The intent is to temporarily disable agitated people without injury. However, Tasers are very painful and are believed to have caused deaths in some cases.

Both MDC and MSH have allowed police officers to use Tasers to subdue patients. DRM believes this is dangerous, unnecessary and illegal.

Federal and state rules prohibit the use of weapons, including Tasers, in hospitals unless human life is in danger. Neither institution may use pain to change behavior. Staff at both facilities are supposedly trained in how to talk and respond to agitated people to calm them, or to use physical restraint without excessive force or weapons.

State and federal law require both facilities to use the minimum force necessary to control patients who risk physical harm to themselves or others.

Two years ago, Anaconda police officers arrested “P.J.”, a young man well-known to police and to the staff at MSH. The hospital admitted P.J. to a locked intensive treatment unit. Early that evening he became uncooperative and staff called for help.

Twenty to 30 staff gathered to make a “show of support.” P.J. continued pacing, yelling and making angry gestures. Staff did not try to restrain him, but called the police department.

Within thirty minutes, three armed officers arrived. P.J. continued to “posture in an aggressive manner.” He told staff and the police to “bring it on.” Police officers fired two Taser barbs, hitting P.J. in the shoulder and chest. Then they escorted the handcuffed P.J. to a seclusion room.
There, he reportedly continued to struggle. Officers fired a third set of electrodes into his body.

DRM formally complained to the state agency that makes sure the hospital is following federal rules, but the Certification Bureau found that the hospital’s handling of the incident was adequate.

Reports from the Anaconda-Deer Lodge Police Department and the county attorney took more than a year to obtain. These reports show that the use of the Taser violated the police department’s own use of force policy.

In the second Taser incident, a young man ran away from the Montana Developmental Center. At staff request, police officers detained him and returned him to MDC. He began struggling. He fell face down on the sidewalk with his hands cuffed behind him. One officer pinned him to the ground, and the other shot him with a Taser. Their report said the Taser was used for “pain compliance.” In other words, the police hurt him to make him obedient.

The incident was recorded on a digital video camera on a nearby building, but MDC says it has lost the recording. Neither MDC nor the police department have admitted that the use of force against the helpless and frightened resident was excessive or abusive.

DRM believes that neither patient was threatening human life, so the use of a Taser was illegal.

DRM believes that in each case, the patients’ civil rights were violated. DRM has reported both incidents to the federal Office of Civil Rights (OCR), which recently announced that it has a renewed interest in investigating and prosecuting violations of the civil rights of people with disabilities.
Money Talks...

The new administrative rules for the Montana Medicaid buy-in program will soon be final. People with disabilities who work and make too much money to qualify for Medicaid will soon be able to buy Medicaid coverage on a sliding fee scale. We asked the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services not to disqualify people just because they have too many resources, such as retirement accounts or savings. That limit would require people to stay in poverty to get the personal services provided by Medicaid that are not generally covered by private health insurance.

The Montana Budget and Policy Center reports that one of the two state agencies that was significantly underfunded by the 2009 Legislature was the Office of Public Defender. We agree. A minority of people with mental disabilities face criminal or civil commitment proceedings, but when they do, they need well-trained and experienced attorneys with meaningful access to investigators and other support staff. Right now, most public defenders have neither.

For more information about how Montana’s economy could affect funding for human services, visit the new Montana Budget and Policy Center web site at www.montanabudget.org. It provides an excellent analysis of Montana’s budget and ideas for how Montana can weather the recession without slashing services for people with disabilities and their families.

Do you know there is help to pay for your telephone hook-up and monthly charges? If you qualify, the Link-Up program can give you a discount on the hook-up fee. If you qualify, the Lifeline program can give you a discount on monthly telephone fees. If you live on or near tribal lands, you may get additional discounts.

For more information, please visit the Consumer section of www.MontanaLawHelp.org. If you can’t find the information you want, click on the LiveHelp button. Or call the Montana Legal Services Association HelpLine toll-free at 1-800-666-6899.
Got a Part-Time or Minimum Wage Job?  
Been Denied Vocational Rehabilitation Services?  Call us.

In the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Congress created a federally-funded vocational rehabilitation service for people with disabilities. These services are managed by state vocational rehabilitation programs, and they help people overcome barriers to employment that are caused by their disabilities.

Vocational rehabilitation services are intended to help people get jobs, keep jobs and advance in their careers. Eligible people can receive a variety of supports, including assistive technology, job placement assistance and even funding for education.

Recently, we have been hearing from some Montanans with qualifying disabilities who have been denied vocational rehabilitation services they are eligible for. The reason for the denial is that they already have part-time or minimum wage jobs. According to the Rehabilitation Act, this is an improper basis for denying eligibility.

If you have applied for vocational rehabilitation services in Montana and have been denied eligibility because you are employed, please contact us.

**Did You Know . . . . .**

You can receive your social security benefits by debit card and you don't need a bank account?

Payments are deposited directly onto the debit card, on time, every time. You can use the debit card to make purchases, pay bills or get cash at thousands of locations.

Debit cards are safe—there is no risk of lost or stolen checks. When reported promptly, your money is protected, even if your card is lost or stolen.

Debit cards are easy to use—money is automatically posted to your card account on your payment day each month. You won't have to wait for the mail to arrive. Debit cards are convenient—you can make purchases anywhere MasterCard® is accepted. Use your card to get cash at retail locations, banks and ATMs throughout the country.

There is no sign up fee, no monthly account fee. For more information, go to http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10073.html.
Psychiatric Service Animals
A Reasonable Accommodation

Service animals have been around for a long time, but increasingly, they are being used by people with psychiatric impairments. They can help control anxiety, fear, flashbacks, hallucinations, intrusive imagery, nightmares and muscle tension. They can even alert their handlers to impending seizures.

An animal can lead an agitated handler to a safe place, create a sense of security by staying with the handler, or touch the handler to help get through a dissociative episode.

Under both the Americans With Disabilities Act and the Montana Human Rights Act, service animals are a “reasonable accommodation” for people who live with mental illness.

In June of 2009, the Montana Supreme Court confirmed that psychiatric service animals are legally equal to other service animals. In McDonald vs. DEQ, the court found that an employer has a duty to provide a reasonable accommodation to a person with a mental illness who needs a service animal. As part of making the accommodation, the employer may have to make reasonable modifications to the workplace.

Ms. McDonald sued the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for discriminating against her because DEQ had ignored her repeated requests to put rugs or mats in hallways so her dog would not fall on the slippery floor tile. DEQ argued that its only duty was to allow the animal into the building. The court disagreed, saying that DEQ had a duty to modify the workplace so that the employee could perform her job with the assistance of a service animal.

The Court sent the case back to the district court, which found for Ms. McDonald. She has settled the case for $29,869.84 plus four years of interest at 10 percent, and compensation for her attorney fees of $129,508. Ms. McDonald was represented by Phil Hohenlohe, a former DRM staff attorney, and Beth Brenneman, current DRM staff attorney.

DRM’s perspective...

The Montana Supreme Court’s decision in the McDonald was common sense. To accommodate her service animal, Ms. McDonald’s employer only had to lay down some runners that would have made the slick, tiled hallways safer for everyone.
That approach differs radically from the federal Department of Transportation’s approach in its final rules regarding service animals. The rules went into effect a year ago.

The DOT rule discriminates against people with psychiatric disabilities. Under the rule, passengers with non-psychiatric disabilities can prove that an animal is a service animal by almost any means, including the passenger’s own statement.

But if the animal is a psychiatric service animal, the airline can refuse the animal unless the passenger provides current documentation (1) that the passenger has a mental or emotional disability recognized in the DSM IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition), and 2) that because of the mental disability, the passenger needs the support or psychiatric service animal as an accommodation for air travel. The documentation must be on the letterhead of a licensed mental health professional who is treating the passenger. The carrier can require that this information is provided at least 48 hours before the scheduled travel.

The new rule unnecessarily burdens people with psychiatric disabilities. And it may very well violate Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act.

DRM has signed on to a joint letter by the Psychiatric Service Dog Society of America. The letter requests a new rule-making process to eliminate the bias in the current rules.

Pschiatric Service Dog Tasks*

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<tr>
<th>Disorder</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Trainable Tasks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Depression</td>
<td>Memory loss</td>
<td>Remind to take medication on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive Compulsive</td>
<td>Repetitive behaviors</td>
<td>Interrup behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Panic</td>
<td>Fight or flight response</td>
<td>Lead handler to a safe place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Traumatic Stress</td>
<td>Nightmares</td>
<td>Turn-on lights and wake owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>Confusion or disorientation</td>
<td>Take owner home</td>
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*A more extensive list of tasks may be found at http://psychdog/tasks.html.*
Christina Avey, a United States military veteran and proud owner of Zeus, told us about the transforming experience of owning a service animal. This is her story:

**Zeus, my Labrador retriever,** affects every aspect of my life—my appearance, lifestyle, friends and also my outlook on the future.

**Zeus brings structure to my life,** and he provides balance and a feeling of contentment. Zeus has become a bridge to things that I’d long forgotten about. He connects me to life and to the things I was pushing away.

**I am getting engaged,** to a veteran like myself whom I have known since I was 19 years old. Can you believe that?

**I am a veteran** with a disability, but I am not blind or mobility-impaired, so people often wonder why Zeus is in the store with me. At times, I have been prohibited from bringing him into a building. But it is illegal to prohibit a service animal from public premises.

**Zeus is not a pet.** As a service animal, he is an extension of me. He is like a medical prescription.

**Why do I have Zeus?** It is an innocent question but a violation of my privacy. When you see an individual with a service animal, please think twice before you ask or touch the dog. Would you ask someone why they were in a wheelchair? Would you ask someone why they were taking medication?

**Mostly, though,** there is a lot of support for Zeus and me. I want to thank all of those who have been a great source support for us.

**I call these** service animals “Dogs of the Decade.” I hope that other vets can find the help they need, like I did.
Left in the Dust
Greyhound Bus Strands Wheelchair User

Traveling with a wheelchair isn’t easy. Our client knew the rules. She called Greyhound bus lines two days before her trip to ask for an accessible bus. She showed up early in the morning at the Butte depot on the day of departure. But the bus driver would not move the seats to accommodate her wheelchair. He drove away and left her to find another way to get to her home in Spokane.

Disability Rights Montana represented the wheelchair user. We filed a discrimination complaint on her behalf with the Montana Human Rights Bureau (HRB).

Greyhound argued that the driver tried to move the seats to accommodate the wheelchair, but there was simply too much debris in the tracks for them to move.

Our client said that the driver never attempted to move the seats. Her father witnessed the events that morning and offered to help the driver move the seats. The driver refused the offer.

In her report, the HRB investigator reasoned that even if the driver’s story was true, Greyhound was at fault. A Greyhound representative admitted that it was common for dirt and trash to collect under the seats. A regular maintenance procedure would ensure that the seats could be moved when necessary.

The HRB investigator found there was good cause to believe that Greyhound discriminated against our client on the basis of her disability.

After the HRB issued its finding, Greyhound agreed to pay the wheelchair user $15,000 in damages and attorney fees, provide disability training for the bus driver, train all drivers with routes in Montana about the accessibility features of the buses, and require drivers to test the accessible features of buses traveling through Montana at the beginning of the driver’s route.
Disability Rights Montana helps you now

Disability Rights Montana handles more than 200 disability-related service requests each month. When someone contacts us needing help, an advocate promptly responds. The majority of service requests are handled by our Core Services staff. Here is a sample of the calls Disability Rights Montana recently resolved:

• A person called to report that a new housing manager had created a lot of restrictive new rules for a low-income apartment building. We referred her to Montana Fair Housing and to the local Independent Living Center. Now an advocate is attending tenant meetings and helping residents with disabilities and senior citizens advocate for their rights.

• A therapist explained that she was trying to help her client obtain his driver’s license. Her client sometimes had disabling levels of anxiety. We suggested that her client ask for an accommodation. The client needed the therapist to be in the car during driving test to help manage his level of anxiety. The client took the exam with his therapist.

• A mother asked us if her landlord could charge additional rent for her son’s service animal. A pediatrician had prescribed a service animal to help control her son’s seizures, so the family had gotten a specially trained dog. We told mom that the landlord could not charge a fee for the service dog. We provided her with a copy of state and federal law, other service animal information, and a letter to give to her landlord explaining Montana law regarding service animals.

• A person with a mental illness said that she was being discriminated against at work. We determined that discrimination was not the problem. Instead, we helped her ask for an accommodation. She needed to take longer breaks during the work day. Her employer granted the accommodation.
• **Adult Protective Services (APS)** called us to request help for a person with an intellectual disability. The person had been diagnosed with precancerous cervical lesions. A surgical procedure called electrocautery could remove the lesions. If the lesions weren’t removed, they could become cancerous. Removing cancerous lesions requires much more extensive surgery. And of course the cancerous lesions could kill the patient. The patient at first agreed to electrocautery but then changed her mind right before the surgery. She consented and then changed her mind several times. APS wanted to know if the agency or the guardians could force her to undergo the surgery. People with intellectual disabilities have the same broad rights of self determination as everyone else, unless a judge’s order limits those rights. In the case of medical decisions, the legal question is whether the patient can make a knowledgeable and voluntary decision. We offered to help ensure that the patient was assigned a competent attorney who would speak for her if the state or the family decided to get a court order to force the patient to undergo surgery.

*This case was particularly difficult because it involved a person with a disability choosing to chance terminal illness over submitting to surgery.*

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**Services Provided**

Disability Rights Montana provides information and referral, individual advocacy, legal representation, outreach and training, and systems advocacy.

We have broad statutory powers to safeguard the rights of people with disabilities. Disabilities Rights Montana clients make their own decisions. We work to promote self-determination, personal autonomy, and self-advocacy.

We advise and present options to clients in order to assist them in making their own informed decisions.

If you need assistance, you can now submit your request online. Click on the “Request for Services” form on our Web site: [www.disabilityrightsmt.org](http://www.disabilityrightsmt.org). You can also call us toll-free at 1-800-245-4743 or visit us in Helena at 1022 Chestnut Street.
Advocating for adults and children who live with mental illness is an important part of the work that we do at DRM. We get advice about how to do that work from our PAIMI Advisory Council, which is named after one of our federal grants, Protection and Advocacy for Individual with Mental Illness. Now you can listen to their quarterly meetings on the Internet. For more information, go to www.disabilityrightsmt.org, and click on “About Us,” and then “PAIMI Advisory Council.” The next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2010.

Catch the PAIMI Advisory Council Meeting LIVE on the Web!

Upcoming Seminar
Two Great Topics!
Thursday, August 26

9:30 am - 12:00 pm
How Work Affects Your Social Security Benefits

1:00 - 3:00 pm
Disability Discrimination in Employment

$5 for Lunch-Scholarships Available

Disability Rights Montana
1022 Chestnut Street
Helena, Montana

Please RSVP to Lori Idland at 1-800-245-4743 or email lori@disabilityrightsmt.org
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<th>WHEN</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 10</td>
<td>Hilton Garden Inn Missoula</td>
<td>Brain Injury and Beyond: Effective Strategies for Challenging Situations</td>
<td>BIAMT (406) 541-6442 1-800-241-6442</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 12</td>
<td>Hilton Garden Inn Billings</td>
<td>Brain Injury and Beyond: Effective Strategies for Challenging Situations</td>
<td>BIAMT (406) 541-6442 1-800-241-6442</td>
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<td>August 12-13</td>
<td>Helena</td>
<td>Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities (MCDD) Training Meeting</td>
<td>MCDD (406) 443-4332 (866) 443-4332</td>
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<td>September 17</td>
<td>Disability Rights Montana office Helena</td>
<td>Disability Rights Montana PAIMI Advisory Council Meeting</td>
<td>Disability Rights MT (406) 449-2344 1-800-245-4743</td>
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<td>September 18-23</td>
<td>Washington DC</td>
<td>ADAPT Fall National Action</td>
<td>Bob Liston/Marsha Katz (406) 829-9495 <a href="mailto:adaptmt@aol.com">adaptmt@aol.com</a></td>
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<td>September 23-24</td>
<td>Polson</td>
<td>Statewide Independent Living Council Meeting</td>
<td>Julie Clay (406) 444-4175 1-877-296-1197</td>
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<td>September 23-26</td>
<td>Kansas City, Missouri</td>
<td>2010 SABE National Self Advocacy Conference</td>
<td>SABE KC 2010 1-800-558-8652 <a href="mailto:sabekc2010@gmail.com">sabekc2010@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>September 24</td>
<td>Disability Rights Montana office Helena</td>
<td>Disability Rights Montana Board of Directors Meeting</td>
<td>Disability Rights MT (406) 449-2344 1-800-245-4743</td>
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<td>September 26</td>
<td>Memorial Park Helena</td>
<td>NAMIWalk Fundraising Event</td>
<td>Matt Kuntz (406) 443-7871 <a href="mailto:matt@namimt.org">matt@namimt.org</a></td>
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<td>October 3-5</td>
<td>Red Lion Colonial Inn Helena</td>
<td>2010 Youth in Transition Conference</td>
<td>MY Transitions (406) 442-2576 <a href="mailto:mylfcarol@bresnan.net">mylfcarol@bresnan.net</a></td>
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<td>October 21-22</td>
<td>Helena</td>
<td>Montana Vocational Rehabilitation Council Meeting</td>
<td>Peggy Williams (406) 444-4184</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 27-29</td>
<td>Crowne Plaza Hotel Billings</td>
<td>Montana Conference on Mental Illness</td>
<td>Sandy Mihelish (406) 458-9738 <a href="mailto:2mihelishes@bresnan.net">2mihelishes@bresnan.net</a></td>
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</table>

If you have an event you would like to include in our Calendar of Events, please send your information to raylynn@disabilityrightsmt.org or call DRM at 1-800-245-4743.
Mission

Disability Rights Montana protects and advocates for the human, legal and civil rights of Montanans with disabilities while advancing dignity, equality and self-determination.

If you or someone you know would like to receive The Bridge in an alternative format, contact us at 1-800-245-4743.

Please contact us if your name or address is incorrect.

This newsletter was made possible by funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Administration on Developmental Disabilities; Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; and the U.S. Department of Education/Rehabilitation Services/Assistive Technology and U.S. Department of Social Security Administration.

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Web site
www.disabilityrightsmt.org