



Programs & Community Partnerships

Easterseals Massachusetts (ESMA) is a statewide, community-based organization that empowers people with disabilities to live full and independent lives. Our programs and services constantly respond to unmet needs to ensure that children and adults with disabilities have equal opportunities to live, learn, work, and play.

Adaptive Riding & Horsemanship Lessons | Bridgewater

ESMA's Equestrian Center at The Bridge Center offers adaptive riding lessons, horsemanship, and hippotherapy services to the greater community. Equine-assisted services help people of all ages, with all types of disabilities, as well as the military and veteran community.

Assistive Technology & AAC

Assistive Technology (AT) uses clinical expertise to help people with disabilities expand their independence by using devices to achieve greater access to education, employment, and their community. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) specifically focuses on providing devices and tools for individuals who have difficulty using speech for communication.

Assistive Technology Regional Centers (ATRC) | Boston & Worcester

MassMATCH Assistive Technology Regional Centers hosted by Easterseals are lending libraries of Assistive Technology (AT). Device demonstrations at two Center locations include equipment, software, and toys, from low-tech to high-tech solutions.

Assistive Technology Loans

MassAlternativeFinance.org improves the independence and quality of life of residents with disabilities through loan opportunities for acquiring assistive technology devices and services. Three loans with either zero or low interest rates are available. The program is in partnership with The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC).

College Navigator

This program provides individualized services to college students with disabilities based on their goals, strengths, and needs. Navigators assist students in identifying barriers, advocating for the student's needs, and accessing college services and resources to successfully reach graduation.

Job Development & Placement

ESMA's experienced employment specialists provide training and ongoing support so people with disabilities can increase their skills and secure competitive jobs. This comprehensive program offers individualized vocational rehabilitation and skills-based training.

Military & Veteran

ESMA's Military & Veteran programs strive to ensure that members of our military and Veteran community adjust back into our communities after their service. *MassVeteran.com* was created as a 24/7 resource for Veterans to find information on various benefits, connect to resources in Massachusetts, register for activities and events, and explore other ways to get involved.

Pappas Rehabilitation Hospital for Children

ESMA collaborates with Pappas Rehabilitation Hospital for Children (PRHC) to provide staffing solutions for recreational and programming needs. These programs focus on being inclusive and are interactive for children and young adults with disabilities.

Public Affairs

ESMA actively encourages state legislators to create and maintain programs that help people with disabilities gain greater independence. We focus on state initiatives to advance the issues important to residents with disabilities. Check our website for annual legislative priorities.

Recreation & Camp | Bridgewater & Statewide

ESMA is a proud provider of adaptive and accessible recreational programs for individuals with and without disabilities. A wide variety of programs are offered including Accessible Martial Arts, Camp, and Adaptive Swimming. **NEW!** The Bridge Center offers year-round recreational and skill-building activities to children, teens, and adults in a supportive and nurturing environment, accessible to all.

Rehabilitation & Applied Behavior Analysis

ESMA partners with schools, day habilitation programs, skilled nursing facilities, early intervention agencies, and various other community programs and provides services to help clients achieve greater levels of independence. Our Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Pathologists, and Board-Certified Behavior Analysts have expertise in a wide range of settings across the lifespan.

Student Service Aides

ESMA collaborates with public school systems and specialized programs to provide paraprofessional support to assist students with daily classroom activities while offering proven expertise in working with students of all abilities.

Transition & Pre-ETS

Transition services focus on assisting youth with disabilities to achieve personal growth and develop skills that will help them navigate educational, community, and career settings. Transition planning is a process that brings together a student and those individuals directly involved in helping the student prepare to enter a post-school environment.

Youth Leadership & Mentoring

Through funding by Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), the Youth Leadership Network (YLN) promotes self-advocacy and self-awareness for teens and young adults with disabilities ages 14 to 26. This is a state-wide initiative with meetings, events, and the dynamic use of social media to unite youth across the state. ESMA mentoring programs strive to bring people with disabilities together to connect and learn from one another.

We're Hiring!

If you want to work with dedicated individuals who help advance equity, inclusion, and access for people with disabilities, please check out our current job openings.



Worcester • Boston • Bridgewater
508.757.2756 • eastersealsma.org





RESIDENCE LIFE

EXCEL students living on campus:

- Live full time in BSU residence halls, alongside their peers.
- Have access to support from peer mentors and BSU resident assistants.
- Are fully immersed in BSU's college life, with the opportunity to become more involved in campus clubs, activities, events and organizations.
- Work on their independent living skills in a natural, safe environment.
- Must meet a separate set of criteria



Visit www.bridgew.edu/excel for additional criteria details about the Bridgewater State University **EXCEL** Partnership, **EXCEL** Certificate and the **EXCEL** Transition programs.

For **EXCEL** application guidance, contact:

E-mail: lturmer@bridgew.edu

P: 508.531.2109

F: 508.531.4109

WWW.BRIDGEW.EDU/EXCEL



EXTRAORDINARY EXPECTATIONS FOR
CAREER ■ EDUCATION ■ LIFE

EXCEL



“The EXCEL program is one of my favorite things about being a Bridgewater Bear. I am so proud to be part of a community that emphasizes the importance of students with disabilities wanting to have a college experience. The EXCEL program has changed my life.”

Ireland Stuart
Peer Mentor

“The value of inclusive higher education - it is this tremendous benefit that will produce better scholars and citizens in the student body at Bridgewater State University.”

Dr. Lisa Battaglini, Dean Emerita
College of Education and Health Sciences

EXPECTATIONS
CAREER
EDUCATION
LIFE

25 MINUTES
SOUTH OF BOSTON, MA



The **EXCEL** Program at Bridgewater State University (BSU) offers three options for individuals with learning differences to have a fully-inclusive college experience:

1. **EXCEL Partnership**
2. **EXCEL Certificate**
3. **EXCEL Transition**

Students in the **EXCEL** program share the same experiences as BSU undergraduate students in the areas of academics, socialization, career development, self-advocacy and independent living.

Eligible applicants must have a documented intellectual and/or developmental disability.

Please visit www.bridgew.edu/excel for additional criteria and application information.

BSU
EXCEL
PARTNERSHIP

- Dual enrollment program
- BSU partners with local high school districts
- Designed for students, ages 18-22, who are still receiving special education services through their school districts
- Program fee paid by partnering school district

BSU
EXCEL
CERTIFICATE

- Two-year BSU endorsed certificate program (non-credit bearing)
- Designed for students 18+ who completed their high school requirements, but were unable to obtain a high school diploma
- Eligible students are no longer enrolled in a school district
- Private pay program

BSU
EXCEL
TRANSITION

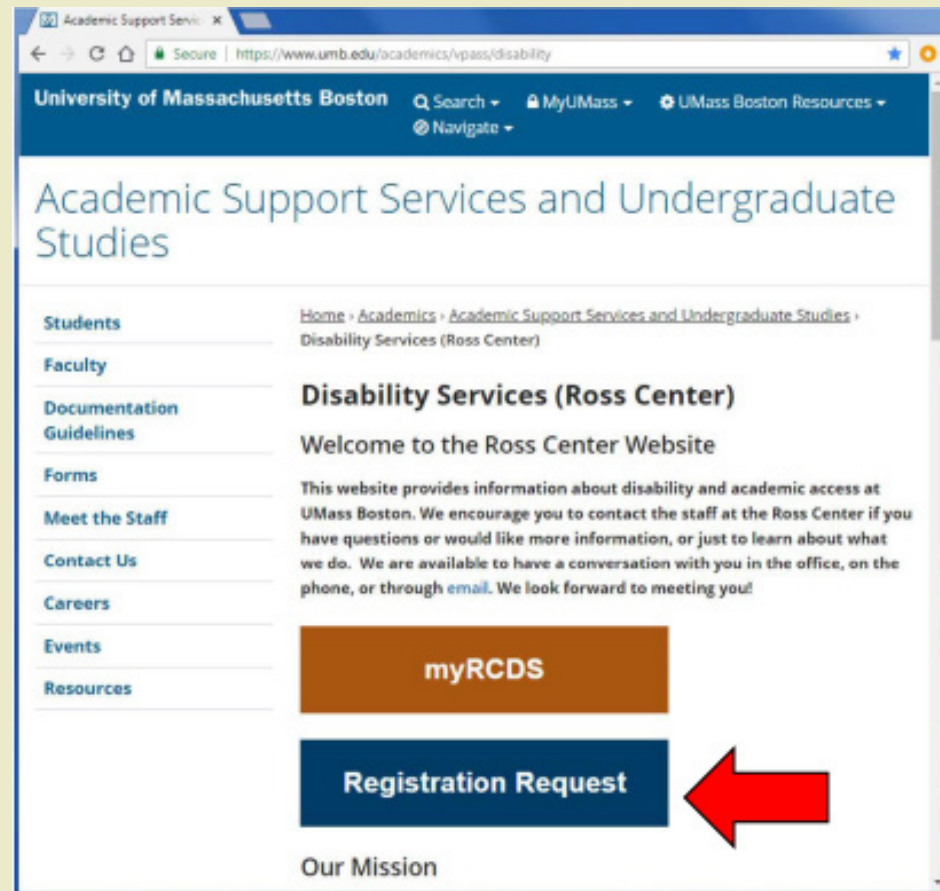
- A postsecondary program for students who need extra support to successfully transition from high school to college
- Designed for students 18+ who have earned a high school diploma
- Ultimate goal is to become a degree-seeking undergraduate student
- Private pay program

“The *EXCEL* program has opened me up to new people and experiences. I got a fresh start here at BSU and because I am included, I have become a more positive, independent and confident person.”

Gianni Mikelus
current EXCEL Partnership student

Step One:

Complete a [Registration Request](#) (use your UMass Boston email and password to access the application) to create a unique profile on [myRCDS](#).



Step Two:

Upload your documentation.
You must provide diagnostic information regarding your disability to help determine your accommodations. We ask students to provide the most current documentation of their disability, which should include some or all of these items:

- A letter from a treatment provider that identifies the diagnosis and current treatment plan
- A psychological or neuropsychological evaluation conducted by a licensed professional
- Completion of a Medical Provider form (link found under the “Forms” section on website)

Please note that IEPs and 504 plans alone are not adequate documentation. However, IEP or 504 plans can be a supportive part of your documentation and can be included.

Other treatment reports and evaluations related to the disability may help to assess the accommodation requirements. Documentation from online assessment sources may not be acceptable. The Ross Center reserves the right to request reassessment or additional updated documentation when questions arise regarding previous assessment or previous service provision.

Submit copies of documentation to the Ross Center via email (ross.center@umb.edu); fax to 617.287.7466; or in-person during business hours.

Step Three:

Attend a scheduled registration meeting.
During the meeting, you and a Ross Center staff person will review your documentation and discuss accommodations appropriate for you based on the documentation provided. We may also refer you to other programs or offices for services available at the university (for example, tutoring).

Step Four:

Access our database to activate your accommodations.
We will inform your professors of your accommodations via email.
You are always in control of your own information.
We only share information that they need and never tell them your diagnosis.
We will teach you how to use your accommodations, if necessary.

Please note: If you think you may need an accommodation during the semester, we strongly recommend that you request it at the start of the semester. While you may request an accommodation at any time during the semester, the Ross Center cannot guarantee that the accommodation will be implemented if the request is made too late in the semester. This is especially true if the accommodation requires negotiation with the instructor or preparation of materials in advance.

Ross Center for Disability Services



Our Mission

The Ross Center provides academic accommodations, resources, training in assistive technology, and information to ensure academic and housing access and inclusion for all students. We strive to create inclusive academic environments by advancing universal design throughout the university. We promote an understanding of disability informed by social, cultural, and political considerations. Besides providing connections to services in our office, we provide connections to services offered by other on- and off-campus organizations.

If you are a student at UMass Boston and have a disability, you may be eligible for accommodations available through the Ross Center.

We serve students with disabilities including

- Learning disabilities
- ADHD
- Mobility impairments
- Visual impairments
- Deaf and hard of hearing
- Mental health conditions
- Chronic medical conditions
- Autism Spectrum Disorders

Come see us and let’s talk!



Campus Center

We provide reasonable academic adjustments, services, equipment, etc. that remove barriers caused by disabilities and provide equal access to enable students to learn.

Examples:

Testing accommodations

Reduced distraction setting

Classroom accommodations

Frequent breaks, preferred seating

Alternative format materials

Audiobooks, braille

Physical/communication access

Wheelchair desks, sign language interpreters

Academic accommodations are determined on an individual basis and may vary based on course design. An interactive process between you (the student), Ross Center staff, and the course instructor specifies the details of the accommodation. **You need to request academic accommodations each semester.**

	High School	College
Laws involved	IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) – guarantees appropriate education to children with disabilities	ADAAA (Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act) – prohibits discrimination and lays out rules for accommodations
	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act – prohibits discrimination	
School’s responsibility to student	Success	Access
Who starts the process?	Teachers, administrators, or parents	Students
Parental involvement?	Heavy	Limited
Who gets information about the disability?	All teachers and administrators	Only disability services staff

CONTACT US

Email ross.center@umb.edu

Phone 617.287.7430

Fax 617.287.7466

Campus Center, UL Room 211
(across from Dunkin’ Donuts)

Drop-in hours and registration request: rosscenter.umb.edu





LOWERING BARRIERS

RAISING THE BAR



WHAT WE DO

At Inclusive Fitness, we help create healthy lifestyles for neurodivergent people, their families, and communities. We do this by lowering barriers – with highly trained and experienced coaches, adaptive programming and a beautiful, accessible and sensory friendly space – so that we can raise the bar on what our athletes can accomplish.

We offer small group and one-on-one training sessions at our custom-designed center in West Roxbury, on-site at day and residential programs, and online. Our programs are designed to make all of our athletes strong for a purpose: to build functional fitness and lifelong habits.

INCLUSIVE FITNESS

1665 VFW Parkway
West Roxbury, MA 02132
inclusivefitness.com
617-901-0081

WE HAVE A SIMPLE YET VITAL PURPOSE

To help neurodivergent people and their families become strong, confident, and independent across their lifetime.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

- *Presume competence.*
- *Meet athletes where they are.*
- *Focus on results that last!*

We aim to help many.

Through our partnership with the Doug Flutie, Jr., Foundation for Autism, we have helped support dozens of athletes through our scholarship fund. And we're just getting started!



Try our program for free!

Scan the QR code using your phone's camera app to book a tour and claim your free mini session or learn more about our programs, people, and place.



Our goal is to help make people stronger and healthier at every stage of their life.

Want Emotional, Mental Health, or Substance Use Help?



Free. Available 24/7. No insurance needed. Always there for you.



My Ombudsman

Need help with your MassHealth benefits? We're here for you.

What My Ombudsman Does

We help you when you need assistance getting a covered service or benefit from MassHealth.

How My Ombudsman Works



Information: We answer questions about your MassHealth benefits and explain your rights and responsibilities as a MassHealth member.



Solutions: We help explain denial letters, address problems accessing your health coverage and more.



Communication: We talk with you, your health care providers, and your MassHealth plan so that everyone understands what you need.

How to Contact Us



Helpline: 855-781-9898 (English, Español, and other languages)

Videophone: 339-224-6831 (for Deaf and Hard of Hearing)



info@myombudsman.org



myombudsman.org

Monday through Friday 9am to 4pm



FEEDING OPPORTUNITY & COMMUNITY

APPLY TODAY

**Text "APPLY" TO
978-519-7363**

**Root's 14 week Culinary Training Program for young adults
ages 16- 26. offers culinary training with a professional chef,
workforce readiness workshops, and one -on one job coaching.
All while earning a stipend!**

BUILDING COMMUNITY @ BAGLY!

IDENTITY MEETINGS
22 AND UNDER

BIPOC
Meeting

Trans/
Nonbinary
Meeting

Women's
Meeting

PROGRAMS 25 AND
UNDER

Disabilities
Meeting

Girls' Room

Narrative
Art Therapy

Peer Mental
Wellness

Short-Term
Therapy

Tea Time

MISC. PROGRAMS 22
AND UNDER

Arts Corner

HEARRT
Workshop

Host Homes
Living Skills



BAGLY.ORG/PROGRAMS



THE CLINIC @ BAGLY

**THE CLINIC @ BAGLY PROVIDES
FREE, COMPREHENSIVE STI AND
HIV SCREENINGS TO LGBTQ+
YOUTH 29 AND UNDER.**

To set up an appointment,
clients should email
testing@bagly.org or
call us at 617-227-TEST(8378)
(email preferred).

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- STI/HIV testing, linkage and referral
- PrEP enrollment
- Sexual Health Education, and more.



The Rainbow Support Group Guidebook for LGBTQ+ and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Written by LGBTQ+ self-advocate leaders
based on interviews with LGBTQ+ adults with
intellectual and developmental disabilities
from across the United States.

- Information about gender and sexuality
- Quotes and personal stories
- Advice on how to support us
- A statement of our human rights
- Tips for sex educators
- A letter to families and friends
- Resources and handouts



Available for free online
RainbowGuidebook.com

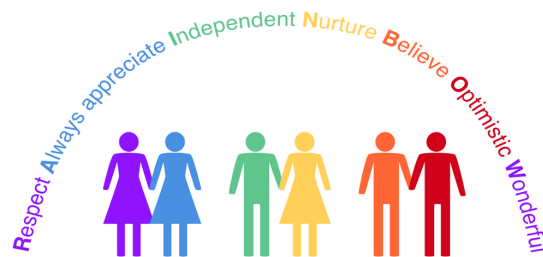
**Our Lives,
Our Choices,
Our Rights!**



#LGBTQ Virtual #LGBTQ Statewide Rainbow Group

This group is for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who identify with the LGBTQIA+ community, and allies and supporters.

Anyone can join! You do not need to be LGBTQIA+ to come to the meetings. People sign on from any state. The more the merrier!



Second Tuesday each month
5:30-7:30pm ET

We offer a social group that helps members interact with one another, to get to know each other and make friendships and relationships and other bonding activities.

Last Tuesday each month
5:30-7:30pm ET

We offer a topic meeting where we discuss topics that involve the LGBTQIA+ community, such as pronouns, gender identity, and orientation. We have handouts and visuals that we send out ahead of time.

Zoom ID: 841 2225 3807

www.WeAreMASS.org/rainbow
rainbow@WeAreMASS.org
Phone: 857-276-1348



Facilitator
Francesco Hladysz
He/Him/They

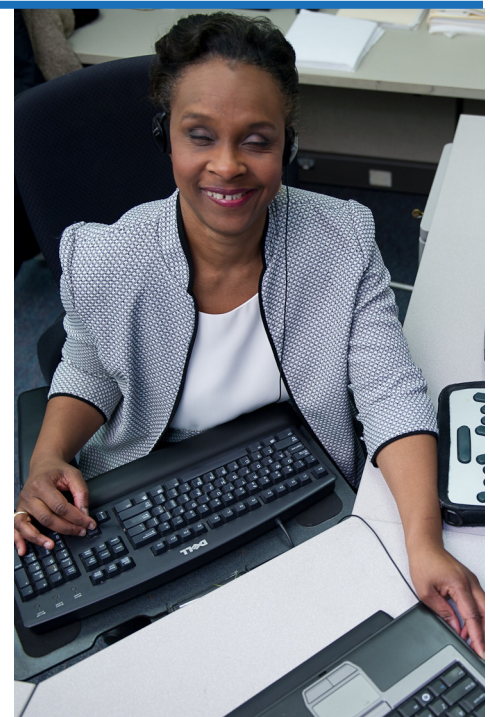


Advancing Disability Inclusion in the Workplace

Work Without Limits is a network of employers, educational institutions, employment service providers, and government agencies.

Through collaboration and partnership, our goal is to increase the employment of people with disabilities until it is equal to those without disabilities.

Work Without Limits programs and services are geared to meet the needs of businesses that actively recruit people with disabilities, individuals with disabilities who are seeking jobs, and the employment providers that serve them.



BUSINESS NETWORK

The Work Without Limits Business Network is a consortium of private and public sector employers committed to the inclusion of people with disabilities as employees, customers, and suppliers.

Work Without Limits offers members opportunities to share best practices and build confidence and success when including people with disabilities in their workplaces.

BENEFITS COUNSELING

Our Benefits Counseling service specializes in assisting individuals to understand how earned and unearned income affects eligibility for public benefits such as SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, SNAP, TANF, and Subsidized Housing. We provide two no-cost benefits counseling services:

- Our **Work Incentives Planning and Assistance** (WIPA) program provides benefits counseling services to Social Security beneficiaries who are working or actively seeking employment.
- Our **Employment Network** (EN) offers on-going benefits counseling to support Social Security beneficiaries who have a long-term employment goal (3-5 years) of being independent of Social Security disability benefits. Our EN also provides the administrative functions that allow community-based organizations and state agencies to access payments through the Social Security Ticket to Work program.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



TRAINING AND CONSULTING

Work Without Limits provides:

- **Disability Inclusion trainings** for employers to build their capacity to successfully include individuals with disabilities in their workplaces.
- **Public Benefits and Employment trainings** for employment service providers to address some of the biggest employment challenges that people with disabilities face.

HIRE THINKING

HIRE Thinking is the innovation component of Work Without Limits. Our team collaborates with state and national disability employment organizations, speaks at industry events, awards outstanding models of inclusion, and creates, participates in, and evaluates pilot programs that further Work Without Limits' mission.

SPONSORSHIPS

Promote your brand as a disability inclusion leader and contribute to impactful opportunities, events, and inclusive change for individuals with disabilities.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Work Without Limits forms partnerships with organizations that provide employment services to individuals with disabilities such as colleges and universities, state agencies, and community-based organizations.

JOBS BOARD

A virtual gateway for job seekers with disabilities and employers looking to hire. Thousands of candidates and job postings are updated on a daily basis.

RESOURCES

Work Without Limits offers resources including toolkits, videos, quick tips and fact sheets aimed at increasing knowledge, skills, and the application of best practices.

EVENTS

Work Without Limits offers educational and networking events for employers, service providers, and individuals with disabilities.

CONNECT WITH US!

Work Without Limits connects Business Network member companies to qualified candidates with disabilities and the organizations that support them through a private invitation-only LinkedIn group and career and networking events.

[Connect with us today!](#)

1-877-YES-WORK (937-9675)

[WorkWithoutLimits.org](https://www.WorkWithoutLimits.org)

Follow Us



forHealth™
CONSULTING at UMass Chan
Medical School

WorkWithoutLimits™
— PUTTING ABILITIES TO WORK —

Work Without Limits, an initiative of ForHealth Consulting at UMass Chan Medical School, is a network of engaged employers and innovative, collaborative partners whose shared mission is to increase the employment rate of people with disabilities. Our goal is for the employment rate of people with disabilities be equal to that of people without disabilities.

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AN ACT RELATIVE TO SUPPORTED DECISION-MAKING AGREEMENTS FOR CERTAIN ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

*Sen. Joan Lovely S.109
Rep. Michael Finn & Rep. Sean Garballey H.1485*

Supported decision-making (SDM) allows adults, including those with disabilities and elders, to maintain their rights, dignity, and independence by choosing one or more trusted supporters to provide assistance making decisions about their lives.

SDM enables individuals with disabilities or cognitive limitations who may require assistance to make their own decisions with support instead of having someone else, usually a guardian, make decisions for them. The arrangement is memorialized in a simple written agreement setting out the roles for the supporters (those who provide support) and the individual with the need for assistance (those who make the decisions). SDM has been gaining substantial momentum internationally, across the United States and, since 2014, through innovative pilot projects in Massachusetts.

THE NEED: Too many people are unnecessarily placed under restrictive guardianships when they would be able to make their own decisions if they received individualized assistance from people they trust, allowing them to retain their legal rights and dignity.

THE SOLUTION: Supported decision-making. 16 other states and DC already have laws that provide clear legal authority and processes for SDM agreements — Alaska, California Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin.

Respected **national organizations** and federal **agencies** have recommended and endorsed using supported decision-making as an alternative to guardianship, including: American Bar Association, National Guardianship Association, the Arc of the United States, the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Council on Disability.

This bill would establish the legal framework for SDM in Massachusetts. The bill would:

1. define SDM and establish roles for those involved
2. allow people with disabilities and elders to enter into a SDM agreement with people they trust, or “supporters”
3. establish required elements of an SDM agreement form
4. create protections against abuse of the model
5. require that courts first consider SDM before establishing a guardianship
6. establish training for people using the model (supporters and decision-makers)
7. ensure all youth turning 18 are made aware of the SDM option at Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meetings

Passing this bill would **save time and money in probate courts** by reducing the number of guardianship petitions for people who do not need them.

SDM does not replace guardianship. It is an additional and less restrictive option.

Supported Decision-Making: Stories of Success in Massachusetts



Cory lives in the Berkshires, where he works with the Advantage Employment Network and in other jobs. Cory is on the Autism Spectrum and at times experiences symptoms from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and anxiety.

When Cory was approaching 18, guardianship was the only option presented by his school. Cory did need help making decisions about his finances, health, and other issues, but his parents were unable to find any alternative to guardianship.

Cory lives in the Berkshires, where he works with the Advantage Employment Network and in other jobs. Cory is on the Autism Spectrum and, at times, experiences symptoms of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and anxiety.

When Cory was approaching 18, guardianship was the only option presented by his school. Cory did need help making decisions about his finances, health, and other issues, but his parents were unable to find any alternative to guardianship.

In January 2015, Cory and his family learned about the Supported Decision-Making Pilot Project run by the Center for Public Representation and Nonotuck Resource Associates and decided to try out this new model of support. Cory identified his supporters and which areas of his life he would need help with decisions. He filled out an SDM agreement reflecting his choices.

On November 17, 2015, a Probate Court judge granted Cory's petition to terminate his guardianship in favor of his SDM agreement. This is the **first time that a MA resident has had guardianship terminated in favor of an SDM Agreement.**

In Cory's own words:

- "[Ending the guardianship was] very special because I felt my own freedom for the first time."
- "Supported decision-making is really important to me. I love my family, and they will always be there to support me."
- "This is **my** journey now."



Amanda is a young woman who is an avid traveler from the Berkshires and who loves the New England Patriots and WWE. Amanda has Down syndrome and, at times, needs support and clarity in understanding issues before making decisions. Amanda decided to try SDM. Her mother and a long-time friend are among the supporters she chose. One of her supporters, Sandy, believes that SDM is a great option for Amanda, who "directs the course of her life and knows when she needs clarity in understanding decisions. [Supported decision-making] has given Amanda the continued opportunity to stay as independent as possible; this is what Amanda and her team both want."

Amanda says: "[Supported decision-making] is great for me because I get to make my own decisions with help from my team."



Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC)

FACT SHEET

- The Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC) is an independent agency funded by the federal government to work with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to better support people with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families.
- The MDDC's mission is to help people with developmental disabilities have opportunities to lead successful lives in their communities by supporting inclusive education, greater employment opportunities, and the right to make choices about where, with whom, and how they live.
- The Council works to improve the system of supports for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families by bringing together lawmakers with advocates to make sure people with developmental disabilities are included in public policy decisions.
- The Council supports partnerships with disability advocacy groups to address policy and social issues impacting people with developmental disabilities. Council members and staff actively participate on numerous statewide task forces and work groups serving people with developmental disabilities.
- The MDDC works with legislators and policymakers to serve as an impartial educational resource to inform public policy at both state and federal levels to better meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.
- The MDDC supports initiatives to help build the self-confidence, leadership and interpersonal skills that are needed for people with developmental disabilities to play active roles in the community.
- The Council provides peer-led training to people with developmental disabilities on self-advocacy, leadership, legislative advocacy, employment and more.
- The MDDC supports statewide and regional self-advocacy groups which offer opportunities to connect people with disabilities, engage in advocacy and expand their social networks.
- The MDDC co-sponsors the Barbara Wilensky Gopen Fellowship for individuals with developmental disabilities to learn about advocacy, public policy and leadership development. The Allen C. Crocker Family Fellowship offers a similar experience for family members. The Fellowships are a partnership of Mass. DD Network partners MDDC, Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston, E.K. Shriver Center at UMass Chan Medical School and the Disability Law Center.
- The MDDC addresses COVID-19 vaccine equity for the developmental disability community by working with underserved communities hardest hit by the pandemic, providing information and resources to stay safe, partnering with communities to hold mobile vaccine clinics, and working with individuals to set up appointments and get vaccinated.

Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council

2023-2024 Legislative Priorities



CHOICE

H.1485/S.109 - An Act relative to authorizing supported decision-making agreements for certain adults with disabilities. Creates a process by which certain adults with disabilities who need assistance with decisions may choose to make and communicate decisions. It is an **alternative to guardianship** and does not replace guardianship in any way. *Representative Mike Finn and Sean Garballey and Senator Joan Lovely*

WORKFORCE

H.171/S.83 – An Act relative to rates for workers providing supports and services for individuals with disabilities. This bill has to do with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and MassHealth **workforce rate increase**. This bill addresses the severe workforce shortage of direct support staff, program managers, and clinicians such as nurses. *Representatives Sean Garballey and Simon Cataldo and Senator Barry Finegold*

H.1192/S.748 – An Act to protect medically fragile children. Requires the state to **increase the budget** for **continuous skilled nursing** services in home care and mandates the office of Medicaid to **review the wage payment rates** established by home health agencies. *Representative Denise Garlick and Senator Cindy Friedman*

CONSUMER PROTECTION

H.378/S.152 – An Act expanding wheelchair warranty protections for consumers with disabilities. Expands Customized Wheelchair Lemon Law to **strengthen warranty protections** for consumers that use wheelchairs. *Representative Jim O’Day and Senator John Cronin*

HEALTH

H.1180/S.753 - An Act relative to preventing discrimination against persons with disabilities in the provision of health care. Prohibits hospitals, medical providers, or other public/private entities from withholding or de-prioritizing lifesaving care due to a person’s *perceived* quality of life stemming from a disability. *Representative Josh Cutler and Senator Adam Gomez*

H.213/S.123 – An act to increase the safety of individuals with disabilities relying on life-support equipment (Tommy’s Law). Bill requires **appropriate discharge plan review** with residential facility nursing staff and increasing accountability for medical equipment monitoring. *Representative Dave Rogers and Senator Patrick O’Connor*

HOUSING/WORKPLACE

S.1553 – An Act building a more accessible Massachusetts

This bill **addresses loopholes** that prevent buildings constructed prior to 1991, and all workplaces to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It accomplishes this by bringing such buildings under the purview of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board when newly built or when major renovations take place, ensuring more accessible housing units are available in our state and expanding employment access.

Senator Michael Moore

H.2291 – Act expanding the availability of adaptable housing for people with disabilities and seniors.

This bill **addresses loopholes** that prevent buildings constructed prior to 1991, and all workplaces to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It accomplishes this by bringing such buildings under the purview of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board when newly built or when major renovations take place, ensuring more accessible housing units are available in our state, and expanding employment access. *Representatives Michael Moran and Christine Barber*

H.1296/S.904 – An Act relative to accessory dwelling units. Bill is designed to encourage the creation of accessory dwelling units in the form of 2-bedroom affordable accessory apartments for people with disabilities and seniors.

Representative Christine Barber and Senator Bruce Tarr

EQUITABLE ACCESS

H.207/S.103 – Act relative to persons with developmental disabilities. Bill adopts the **federal definition** of developmental disabilities, which includes fetal alcohol syndrome. *Representative Jim O'Day and Senator Joan Lovely*

FAMILY

H.1601/S.1037 – An Act prohibiting discrimination against adults with disabilities in Family and Juvenile Court proceedings Parents should **not be denied the right to raise their children** solely based on their disability. This bill requires courts to use evidence, not assumptions, to determine if a parent's disability causes actual harm to a child. Courts will have to explain in writing if a parent's disability is a negative factor in custody and parenting time decisions and assess if the harm can be avoided with accommodations (like adaptive equipment or supportive services). *Representative Kay Khan and Senator Joan Lovely*



MDDC Training Team

Series Offerings



The Positive Me: Building Self-Esteem

The Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council is offering a Free online six-class series on learning and building self-esteem called “The Positive Me: Building Self-Esteem.” This series is taught using our peer-to-peer teaching model for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

Self-esteem impacts our decision-making process, our relationships, our emotional health, and our overall well-being. In the “The Positive Me” series participants will participate in a variety of interactive, engaging activities that promote a positive self-image. Self-esteem is important! Examples of content for the series include sharing activities to identify participants’ strengths, communication exercises, a “selfie” challenge to explore participants’ self-image, and advocacy training to empower participants to use their voices.

On-Line Employment Training

The MDDC Online Employment Series offered by the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC), is an interactive online 10 class training series that is taught by others with disabilities. This free employment series is designed for young adults with ID/DD. Participants will learn skills that will assist them in pursuing their individual goals toward competitive/integrated employment and independence.



For more information, please feel free to contact me:

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Quincy, MA 02171
Phone: 617-770-7676 ext. 118
Fax: 617-770-1987
www.mass.gov/mddc

For additional information, please contact: Lee Larriu
Tele: 617-770-7676 x118, email: Lee.Larriu@mass.gov

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 Find us on Facebook  @MA_DDC





Council Online Self Esteem Series Application

Name: _____

DOB: _____

Address: _____

Town/Zip Code: _____

Phone number/TTY: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Gender Neutral

1. Do you have someone who assists or supports you? Yes ☐ No ☐

Support Name: _____

Support phone #: _____ Email: _____

Note: We recommend that a support person accompany you for at least the first class to determine your needs for class participation

Please select all that apply:

- ☐ White
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other Not Listed

Contact Information

Application must be received by: **June 16, 2023** and is first come first serve.
It is mandatory for students to have their video on to participate in each class.

☐ Monday and Wednesday **10am - 11am**
July 17, 19, 24, 26, 31, August 02

OR

☐ Tuesday and Thursday **10am - 11am**
July 11, 13, 18, 20, 27, August 01

Schedule Options

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Photo/Video Release Form

(Optional)

I, (print name) _____ hereby give my permission to have my picture taken and/or video taken of me during my participation in this Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council event.

I authorize the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council, its assigns, and transferees to copyright, use and publish the same in print and/or electronically.

I agree that the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council may, at its sole discretion, use such photographs and/or videos of me with or without my name and for any lawful purpose, including for such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content.

I have read and understand the above: (Guardian signature space available)

Signature _____ Date _____
Participant

Signature _____ Date _____
Guardian

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