

INDEPENDENCE CENTER NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2024

VACIL Position on Assisted Suicide

Our concerns focus on social justice and disability justice. The Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL) opposes Senate Bill 280 and House Bill 858.

The National Council on Disability (NCD) reported “that the evidence indicated that the interests of the few people who would benefit from assisted suicide were heavily outweighed by the probability that any law, procedures, and standards that can be imposed to regulate physician-assisted suicide will be misapplied to unnecessarily end the lives of people with disabilities.” The NCD report and related information can be viewed at <https://ncd.gov/publications/2019/ncd-letter-hhs-3-bioethics-reports>.

Not Dead Yet, a national disability rights group that opposes legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia as deadly forms of discrimination, has information on their website at <https://notdeadyet.org/>.

The Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) has done significant legal work about legalizing assisted suicide: “The disability community’s opposition is based on the dangers to people with disabilities and the devaluation of disabled peoples’ lives that result from assisted suicide.” <https://dredf.org/public-policy/assisted-suicide/>.

Misunderstandings and attitudes about disability result in inadequate care and diminished expectations. Some people with disabilities are made to feel that their lives are a burden. Or that they make others feel uncomfortable with certain functions that must be performed to sustain life.

Most of us have heard someone say, “I could never live like that.” Do they say that because they do not believe it is dignified to live with a disability? Or because they believe they would not be supported by others? People say all sorts of misguided things due to ignorance or bias. However, once a person actually experiences a severe disability and very importantly receives the needed supports, their outlook on disability often changes and they experience disability differently than they may have initially expected.

A recent report from the first state (Oregon) to allow medical assisted suicide states: “As in previous years, the three most frequently reported end-of-life concerns were decreasing ability to participate in activities that made life enjoyable (89%), loss of autonomy (86%), and loss of dignity (62%).”

Assisted suicide will diminish already scarce supports, increase the potential for coercion, and end the lives of people simply because they have a disability.

Our focus must remain on improving, not ending, the lives of people with disabilities.

FEBRUARY 2024

Endeppendence Center, Inc. Events

Held at ECI, 6300 E. Virginia Beach Blvd, Norfolk

- 10th SAT Youth Independent Living Skills Training 1:30pm – 3:30pm**
Having Healthy Relationships
- 14th WED Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) 2:00pm – 3:30pm**
Agenda is to collect feedback from IL Day and the December Participant Holiday Party.
- 21st WED Independent Living Skills Training: Preventative Healthcare 2:00pm – 3:30pm**
Learn more about preventative healthcare services, such as immunization, getting your blood pressure checked, cholesterol, diabetic screenings, and routine oral health. Get information on where you can get these services and how important they can be to maintain overall health.
- 28th WED Independent Living Skills Training: What's Bugging You? 2:00pm – 3:30pm**
This month's installment of the "What's Bugging You" series will include discussion as to the topic, goals, length, presentation, and format of our upcoming episode

Community Events & News

Transportation tickets are NOT provided to attend community events.

- 2nd FRI Silent Dinner 5:00pm – 8:00pm**
Lynnhaven Mall (701 Lynnhaven Parkway, Virginia Beach)
Southside Silent Dinner is a silent, social, family-friendly event for the deaf community, CODA (Child of Deaf Adult), ASL beginners and students, and others interested in ASL.
- 10th SAT ASL Hangout 6:00pm – 9:00pm**
The Veil Brewing (2314 Colonial Ave, Norfolk)
The ASL Hangout goal is to bring deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing people together to socialize and expand the ASL/deaf community. All users of sign language, any level, are welcome!
- 17TH SAT TOUCH Group: Confidence is the Way 11:00am – 1:00pm**
ECI (6300 E. Virginia Beach Blvd., Norfolk)
How confident are you? Join us to discuss how you may become confident in your everyday living. Your confidence starts with yourself, so lets talk about it. Your disability is important to us.
- 20TH TUE Participant-Led Event 12noon – 2:30pm**
Chili's Grill and Bar (4085 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach)
This event is organized by participants.

February 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><i>*These events are not organized by ECI. Bus and paratransit tickets will not be provided by ECI.</i></p>				1	2 Silent Dinner* @ Lynnhaven Mall 5:00pm – 8:00pm	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Youth ILS Having Healthy Relationships @ ECI 1:30pm – 3:00pm ASL Hangout* @ The Veil Brewing 6:00pm – 9:00pm
11	12	13	14 Consumer Advisory Committee @ ECI 2:00pm – 3:30pm	15	16	17 TOUCH Group* @ ECI 11:00am – 1:00pm
18	19 <i>ECI CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF PRESIDENT'S DAY</i>	20 Participant-Led Event* @ Chili's, Virginia Beach 12noon – 2:30pm	21 ILS Training: Preventative Healthcare @ ECI 2:00pm – 3:30pm	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 ILS Training: What's Bugging You? @ ECI 2:00pm – 3:30pm	29		



Disability Advocacy & Services

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Check the ECI website:
www.endependence.org
or call
(757) 461-8007, option 4

Accommodations

To request accommodations
for ECI activities:
(757) 351-1586 voice
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Social Media

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