

Disability and Abuse Newsfeed

Week of November 16 to November 22, 2019

Articles Compiled by Debra J. Stemmler

Editing and Commentary by Nora J. Baladerian, Ph.D.,

Posted to Newsfeed Archive on our Website by Thomas F. Coleman

Articles are listed in alphabetical order by state within each category, so you can easily scan through the articles for those within your state or other states in which you have an interest. *International* articles are near the end. The categories are: *Abuse and Neglect, Guardianship, Laws & Legislation, Studies & Statistics, Improved Supports, International, and Miscellaneous.*

Check the categories below for a guide to types of abuse. The categories are indicated by type, and the number of the article.

PLEASE NOTE: Visit our website at www.disabilityandabuse.org While on the homepage, we invite you to “like” us at the bottom of the page, making it easier to keep up with our activities! Prior weekly newsfeeds are archived at: <http://disabilityandabuse.org/newsfeed/contents.htm>

Please send comments or questions to: nora@disability-abuse.com or baladerian@gmail.com

DONATIONS: We welcome your donations to the Disability and Abuse Project of Spectrum Institute to support this work.

Abuse and Neglect:

Sexual Assault: 3, 7, 14 (staff complicity), 16, 23, 24, 33, 36, 51, 56

Physical Abuse: 2, 4, 6, 10, 20, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 37, 53, 54

Emotional/Verbal Abuse: 29, 59

Financial abuse: 21, 32, 59

Kidnap: 34

Murder: 1, 6, 13, 17 // Attempted murder:4; Threatened: 18, 58

Neglected: 2, 3, 20, 27, 33

Neglected to death: 13

Seclusion (kept enclosed): 8

Related to ADA; 12: Uber driver refused to let blind passenger and her dog in the car; 19: 3 year-old with Down syndrome expelled due to inability to follow corporate rules for toileting.

WINNER of most egregious award: 5: Police shoot/kill man's service dog; 8: wrong use of seclusion rooms: 9: Special education director discontinues offensive meme; 34: Utah teacher has been charged with kidnapping autistic child.

WINNER of "good job" award: 46: Gov. Kay Ivey awarded \$2.1 million to the state Department of Human Resources to assist elderly and disabled adults who have been abused. "No one should ever have to be the victim of abuse, and those who have unfortunately suffered from abuse need ready access to professional assistance," Gov. Ivey said. "This grant will ensure assistance for victims of physical and mental abuse." The funds will help create safe surroundings for elderly and disabled adults either by providing in-home care and supervision to enable victims to remain in their homes after offenders have been removed or relocating the victims to nursing homes or assisted living facilities.

WHO DUN IT (listed by article number):

Family: 2, 6, 16, 17, 58

Caregiver: 1, 30, 37

Neighbor/Friend of Family: 36

Friend: 59

Stranger: 4, 53, 56

Special education employee: 19

Co-student: 10

Co-resident: 3

Law Enforcement: 5, 31

LOCATION:

Nursing Home:

Acute Care Hospital: 54

Assisted Living: 1, 33, 53

Adult Foster Home: 14

Psychiatric Hospital: 3, 26

Intermediate Care Program:

Home Health: 18

Work program: 51

Group home: 23, 26, 28, 32

Day Program: 19, 20, 37

Men: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 31, 36, 51, 53

Women: 1, 2, 6, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 30, 32, 58,

Teams: 1, 2, 10, 20, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 37, 54, 56, 59

Good News: 42: New bill to fund FASD rehabilitation; 43: Abortion ban for pregnancy of Down syndrome child passes PA Senate; 44: Voting made easier for voters with disabilities; 46: \$2.1 million to aid abuse victims and and elders with disabilities; 47: Second “signing Starbucks” opens in Malaysia.

Bad News: 15: Invasive and time consuming annual medical review leads to increased distress of families; 22: Blind individuals denied access to health care information; 27: Mental health abuse complaints ignored, deaths and abuse ignored; 28: Abuse of people with disabilities filmed by “teams” at treatment center; 45: audit of New York agencies fail to inform parents of abuse at State facilities; 55: Latimer still believes he had a right to kill his daughter who had cerebral palsy.

ABUSE & NEGLECT

1. “Assisted Living Facility's Managers Plead Guilty to Vulnerable Adult Abuse Charges” - Two managers from an assisted living facility in Chandler have pleaded guilty to vulnerable adult abuse charges. A man died in their care after spending two days in the facility with no working air conditioning in the heat of summer. His room was 100 degrees when emergency crews arrived. 56-year-old Lolita Somera was sentenced last week to three years’ probation, and 90 days in jail. After that she could be deported because she's in the country illegally. Her husband Joseph Somera is scheduled to be sentenced in December – KGUN 9 – November 15, 2019 – (Arizona) - <https://is.gd/7WFw3L>
2. “Surprise PD: Couple Arrested for Child Abuse, Accused of Zip Tying Adopted Kids and Withholding Food” - Couple was arrested on Tuesday for allegedly abusing two of their six adopted children while living in the West Valley. Court records show that the Arizona Department of Child Safety contacted Surprise police on November 8, saying Lee Steven Brady, 58, and his wife Tammie Lyn Brady, 49, had been accused of abusing their son and daughter while living in Surprise from 2016-2017. During interviews with investigators, the female victim, who suffers from spina bifida and requires the use of a wheelchair or leg braces, reported that Tammie would leave her outside often and make her go days without eating. – ABC 15 – November 20, 2019 – (Arizona) - <https://is.gd/PiVhQM>
3. “Sex Assault Suit Names Behavioral Health Site in Arkansas” - A psychiatric treatment center for children in Fordyce has been accused of negligence leading to youth-on-youth sexual assaults, according to a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Pine Bluff. A couple filed a lawsuit against Millcreek Behavioral Health of Fordyce, saying their 7-year-old daughter was digitally raped multiple times in August 2018 by her roommate while at the center. Attorney Jered Medlock filed the

lawsuit on the couple's behalf in March. – Arkansas Online – November 17, 2019 – (Arkansas) - <https://is.gd/GJvPba>

4. “Man Accused of Stabbing Person in Wheelchair, Trying to Set Him on Fire” - A Montrose man accused of stabbing and pouring gasoline over a wheelchair-using amputee said Monday he “blacked out” after breaking a two-year stretch of sobriety. William Fritz, 55, was ordered held on a \$100,000 bond, after prosecutors said he posed a danger to the community. Fritz was arrested Nov. 15 on suspicion of attempted second-degree murder (heat of passion) and first-degree assault. The latter allegation includes the accusation that he acted against an at-risk adult, thereby committing a class-2 felony. – Montrose Press – November 19, 2019 – (Colorado) - <https://is.gd/9MY7uW>

5. Police Responding to Man Having a Seizure, Shoot and Kill His Service Dog - Monday night, Larry Massey — likely warned by his service dog — pulled over to the side of the road before going into a seizure. When Massey would come to after losing consciousness, his service dog Butch would be dead — shot and killed by an Okeechobee police officer. The Mind Unleashed – November 13, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/enGtSB>

6. “Her Child Died Amid ‘Sadistic’ Abuse; She was Still Allowed to Work as a Nurse in Florida” - The girl’s adoptive mother forced her to stand for long periods of time, arms outstretched, as if being crucified. When Samayah could take no more and dropped her arms, her mother would beat her with a shoe. Samayah’s 7-year-old body had “shriveled” away from malnutrition, child welfare administrators were told, with her bones bulging from her body. When the youngster took a piece of bread, her mother burned her hands on the stove. And when Samayah was thirsty, her mother gave her bleach to drink. The Department of Children & Families verified a report that the little girl had been profoundly abused — and DCF alerted administrators of a

sister department, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, of its findings, because Emmanuel was licensed to operate a Miami group home for people with disabilities. – Miami Herald – November 18, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/KCMKHD>

7. “Man Arrested, Accused of Sexually Assaulting Intellectually Disabled Teen” - A 26-year-old Villa Rica man suspected of sexually assaulting an intellectually disabled teenager was arrested Monday, authorities said. Tahji Bridges is charged with one count each of aggravated sodomy and exploiting a disabled person, Villa Rica police said in a news release. It’s unclear how Bridges knew the alleged victim, who police said is in her late teens. – AJC – November 20, 2019 – (Georgia) - <https://is.gd/r0AYWH>

8. “Illinois State Board of Education Takes Emergency Action on “Seclusion Rooms” in Schools” - The Illinois State Board released a press release Wednesday that they are taking emergency action on the use of isolated seclusion in schools. This comes after a scathing report from the [Chicago Tribune and Pro Publica](#), which detailed how these seclusion rooms have been misused statewide. The intent of these seclusion rooms is to isolate children who could be a threat to themselves or others, but the report showed many schools are using what are often called “quiet rooms,” for many other reasons. – 25 News Week.Com – November 20, 2019 – (Illinois) - <https://is.gd/Ykqo2Z>

9. “Update: Noblesville Schools Special Education Director Removed Over Offensive Meme” - Mark Booth will no longer serve as Noblesville Schools' director of special education, the district announced Tuesday, Nov. 26. The district cited Booth's "recent sharing online of a 'meme' offensive to special education." Over the weekend, Booth shared a Facebook meme that shows a photo of Barack Obama with the text "2008 1st black president," and an image

of Trump with the text "2016 1st special needs president." – Indy Star – November 19, 2019 – (Indiana) - <https://is.gd/UnEYY4>

10. “Louisville High Schooler Charged in Beating of Autistic Teen” - An Iroquois High School student was arrested Friday after he reportedly attacked a teenage boy with autism on Thursday. [According to WAVE3 News, 18-year-old Damon Simmons faces charges of assault and criminal mischief.](#) An arrest warrant for Simmons states that he, along with three juveniles attacked the victim in a school bathroom, breaking the victim's jaw. The report adds that the victim was found by another student lying in a pool of blood. The victim reportedly had to have surgery to repair his damaged jaw. – WKYT - November 16, 2019 – (Kentucky) - <https://is.gd/9KT4cl>

11. “Kentucky High Schooler Pleads Not Guilty to Attack on Autistic Classmate” - An 18-year-old Kentucky high schooler has pleaded not guilty to second-degree assault and criminal mischief in an assault on a reportedly autistic classmate. News outlets report Damon Simmons is accused of attacking the Iroquois High student on Thursday with the help of three juvenile students. An arrest citation says surveillance video shows Simmons and the other students enter a bathroom at the Louisville school after the victim. Another student later found the victim lying in a pool of blood in the bathroom. – WTVQ- November 18, 2019 – (Kentucky) - <https://is.gd/KMLEe0>

12. “Maine Panel Finds Uber Discriminated Against Blind Falmouth Woman with Service Dog” - The Maine Human Rights Commission found on Monday that the ride-sharing company Uber discriminated against a blind woman when a driver refused to give her a ride because her service dog was with her. Sarchi said she had an Uber ride requested for her and her service dog, a standard poodle named Jeffrey, on Jan. 5, 2017 after a manicure in Portland. The driver refused to give Sarchi a ride after seeing her service animal, saying

“no dogs” when the vehicle’s door was opened. The driver then left and the company later charged Sarchi a \$5 cancellation fee for the ride, Sarchi said. She said she took a taxi to get home. – WGME 13 – November 19, 2019 – (Maine) - <https://is.gd/fJ0fmX>

13. “Parents Look for Answers After Autistic Son Chokes at School” - A Maryland couple whose autistic teenager died after choking on a latex glove say they have concerns about the way the public school system handles students with special needs. The Capital Gazette reports 17-year-old Bowen Levy died on Nov. 10, five days after he choked on a glove at Central Special School, which serves children with disabilities in Anne Arundel County. – Star Tribune – November 21, 2019 – (Maryland) - <https://is.gd/rhywtu>

14. “Parolee Accused of Sexually Assaulting Green Acres AFC Resident” - A man on parole for manslaughter and living on the grounds of an adult foster care facility was arrested after he was accused of molesting a developmentally disabled resident. Jay Jeffry Stewart, 62, was arrested Sept. 12 at Green Acres, 127 Potter Road, after a female resident, 63, who suffers from severe anxiety, speech impairment and has a cognitive disorder, told a family member she was assaulted. The woman was repeatedly assaulted over several months, Green Acres staff knew of the assaults and did not stop them, according to a Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs investigation report. – Traverse City Record Eagle – November 17, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/pGtMy5>

15. “High-Stakes Medicaid Assessments Upend Lives of Families with Disabilities” -Each year, tens of thousands of Minnesotans with disabilities and their families undergo this agonizing, high-stakes ritual, known as a comprehensive needs assessment. A stranger with a laptop comes to their home and asks hundreds of questions about the medical needs and care of their loved ones. State officials also promised that the high-tech assessments would bring objectivity and

rigor to a system that distributes more than \$3 billion to Minnesota families every year. Instead, records obtained by the Star Tribune show it has been a costly failure, one that families say has introduced turmoil and uncertainty into the lives of the people it was supposed to help. – Disability Scoop – November 20, 2019 – (Minnesota) - <https://is.gd/xtWMHQ>

16. “Troy, Mo. Man Caught Exposing Himself to Disabled 9-Year-Old Girl Pleads Guilty” - A 53-year-old man has pled guilty to multiple federal charges after being caught exposing himself in front of a young girl inside a Troy, Mo. home Friday. In September of 2017, the Troy Police Department arrived to the 100 block of Harris Street after receiving a 911 call about a sexual assault. Once they arrived, a man said he walked in on his brother-in-law, Stewart Wells, with his pants down and his penis erected near his 9-year-old daughter's face. Detectives said the girl is disabled. – KMOV 4 – November 19, 2019 – (Missouri) - <https://is.gd/N8HT4Y>

17. “Police: Mother Took Mentally Disabled Daughter from Nursing Home, Stabbed Her to Death” - An elderly woman who feared she was developing dementia removed her mentally disabled adult daughter from a nursing home, then fatally stabbed her in a suburban St. Louis hotel before attempting to kill herself, police and relatives say. Marjorie Theleman, 78, was charged Tuesday with first-degree murder and armed criminal action in the death of her 51-year-old daughter, Sharon Theleman, after police were summoned to a hotel in Fenton, Missouri, because the pair had not checked out. – PIX 11 – November 20, 2019 – (Missouri) - <https://is.gd/5bZ7fu>

18. “Carson City Arrests: Caretaker Jailed for Allegedly Threatening Client with Knife” - Antonio Mempin, listed as being from Carson City, was taken into custody in the 1400 block of Rolling Hills Drive. According to the arrest report, Carson City sheriff's deputies were called to a residence regarding threats with a knife that happened

Saturday, Nov. 16. Deputies met with the victim and his nurse who said on Saturday early morning, a caretaker, Antonio Mempin, came into the room with a knife. The victim said the man was upset, yelling at him and pointed the knife at his face saying that he was going to kill him, the arrest report states. – Carson Now – November 19- 2019 – (Nevada) - <https://is.gd/7vKvtR>

19. “Day Care Chain Settles Suit after Expelling Girl with Down Syndrome” - Spring Education Inc., formerly Nobel Learning Communities Inc., says it will be more understanding with children with disabilities who have development delays with potty training. The national for-profit day care and school settled a lawsuit brought by the U.S. Department of Justice after the Chesterbrook Academy in Moorestown, N.J. kicked out a 3-year-old girl with Down syndrome when she couldn’t conform to a corporate timeline on toilet training. – Disability Scoop – November 22, 2019 – (New Jersey) - <https://is.gd/3Xfd0F>

20. “NJ Adult Day Care: 5 Employees Indicted in Abuse of Disabled Clients” - According to the release, employees of the facility – Asia Lunn, 22, Kenitra Hicks, 34, Kieasha Morgan 24, Hugo Lorenzo, 25, all of New Brunswick, and Janella Allen, 31, of Elizabeth – were indicted on two counts of abandonment and neglect of a disabled person and two counts of endangering another person, for two separate victims, both third-degree crimes. Lunn also was indicted on a charge of third-degree aggravated assault. Their investigation determined that in May, two "severely disabled individuals" who attended the facility were physically abused allegedly by employees there. The indictment alleges the facility failed to act to protect the physical or mental health of the two disabled adult clients. – app.com – November 16, 2019 – (New Jersey) - <https://is.gd/8ncc5M>

21. “Laramie Woman Charged with Exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult” - The Laramie Police Department reports that a 33-year-old

Laramie woman has been charged with exploitation of a vulnerable adult. On September 26, 2019, a Laramie police officer took a report from the Department of Family Services of the possible financial abuse of a vulnerable adult. After a lengthy investigation, Stacey R. Cushatt was arrested and charged with Exploitation of a Vulnerable Adult on, November 16, 2019. Miss Cushatt posted a seventy-five hundred-dollar bond and has been released from the Albany County Detention Center. – Laramie Live – November 16, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/1H42v2>

22. “Life or Death Information’: Complaint Claims UNC Health Care Violated Patient Rights” -Potential credit damage from unpaid medical bills, disclosing private information to strangers, failing to receive complete follow-up instructions after health care visits — two blind residents in North Carolina claim these are just a few of the things they experienced after the UNC Health Care system repeatedly failed to provide them with medical information in formats they could access. – The Daily Tar Heel – November 20, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/EyTNWW>

23. “Stanly County Caregiver Charged with Sexually Abusing Woman with Disabilities” - Barbara Bunch faces four counts of sex acts by a caregiver. Detectives said she abused a young woman with disabilities inside a home in New London. The home is being run as a group home by Elite Care Services. Detectives said the abuse came to light after a group home trip to North Myrtle Beach in September. "In North Myrtle Beach, there was a witness that happened to walk into the room and believe that they saw the victim and Ms. Bunch in a compromising position," said Claiborne. – WSOC TV – November 19, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/wff7UY>

24. “I Think It's Disgusting,': Mother Wants Justice after Teacher Accused of Taking Advantage of Son” - A teacher, who taught students with special needs is accused of taking advantage of one of

her students on multiple occasions, left the Cleveland County Courthouse Thursday with a jacket over her face. The Cleveland County Sheriff's Office said Whitney Baker, 28, has been charged with three counts of indecent liberties with a student. According to deputies, one of the incidents happened at The Turning Point Academy where Baker worked as a special needs teacher. The other two incidents reportedly happened on social media, where deputies said she sent inappropriate messages to the student. – WSOCTV - November 21, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/ZkVBO2>

25. “Special Education Teacher Placed on Leave for Allegedly Hitting Student” - An Early Childhood Special Education teacher at Centennial Elementary has been put on administrative leave for allegedly hitting a student. An administrator at the school received a report of a negative interaction between a teacher and a student on November 12. Centennial Elementary administration and the Fargo Police Department are investigating the allegation. The teacher will remain on administrative leave until the investigation is complete. – KVRR – November 15, 2019 – (North Dakota) - <https://is.gd/r9XFrl>

26. “State Officials Say Bixby Group Home Shut Down After Several Problems Discovered” -We have learned new details about why a Bixby group home that helps teenage girls with mental health issues shut down. State officials said the group home had a "multitude" of errors before its closure. Now parents said the shutdown is part of a bigger issue about the lack of mental health resources in Oklahoma. The Bethesda Residential Treatment Center in Bixby served girls between the ages of 12 to 18 dealing with mental and behavioral health problems. But Blish said the bigger problem is the lack of mental health resources available in Oklahoma. She said many similar group homes would only admit youth with suicidal thoughts. – News On 6 – November 18, 2019 – (Oklahoma) - <https://is.gd/URwQJQ>

27. “Multnomah County Staff Mishandled Hundreds of Mental Health Abuse Complaints, Report Finds” - Multnomah County employees in charge of protecting adults with mental health issues failed to do so on multiple fronts, according to District Attorney Rod Underhill and county officials. Those determinations, both made public Tuesday, came in the midst of a wide-ranging review in the wake of findings that county staff knew about deaths and abuse at the main psychiatric facility in the county yet did nothing. It showed, among other things, that county workers completely dropped the ball in nearly 100 instances of reported abuse of people with mental illness by failing to investigate at all and failed to tell police of 136 reports of alleged criminal conduct. – The Oregonian – November 20, 2019 – (Oregon) - <https://is.gd/2OB2Tu>
28. “‘Obscene and Disturbing’: Lawsuits Filed Against McGuire Memorial, 2 Ex-Caretakers Accused of Filming Abuse” - A Beaver County care facility and two of its former caretakers are facing four lawsuits alleging the abuse and assault of four people with physical and mental disabilities. Lawyers filed the lawsuits Friday morning against McGuire Memorial in New Brighton and its former employees, Zachary Dinell and Tyler Smith. The alleged incidents happened between 2017 and 2018; however, the lawsuits say the victims’ families didn’t learn of them until “well after it occurred.” According to the lawsuits, one of the victims was just 13-year-old at the time of the alleged abuse. Also, the suits allege the abuse and assault “caused or contributed” to the deaths of two of the victims. – KDKA 2 CBS – November 22, 2019 – (Pittsburgh) - <https://is.gd/8fkCQm>
29. “Teacher Accused of Hurting, Insulting Autistic 5-Year-Old” - A Tennessee teacher is accused of scratching a nonverbal autistic child and insulting the appearance of the crying 5-year-old, saying it would make her cry too. News outlets report 45-year-old April Chandler was arrested Monday on a child abuse charge and released on bond. She has been suspended without pay pending the investigation by

Hendersonville police. – WVLT 8 – November 20, 2019 –
(Tennessee) - <https://is.gd/jwFTry>

30. “LPN Charged with Aggravated Child Abuse of Disabled Child”
- The Montgomery County Grand jury has indicted a licensed practitioner nurse accused of physically abusing a 6-year-old disabled girl. Lori Elaine Johnson, 62, was served a sealed indictment on Tuesday, November 20 and booked into the Montgomery County Jail charged with five counts of aggravated child abuse (victim under 8-years-old). The girl’s foster mother showed the detective surveillance of Johnson physically abusing her daughter on two separate occasions. – Clarksville Now – November 20, 2019 – (Tennessee) - <https://is.gd/RHWKrG>

31. “Feds: Ex-TDOC Officers Who Beat Mentally Ill Inmate and the Corporal Who Helped Cover it up Face Charges, Prison” - A fourth former Tennessee Department of Corrections officer pleaded guilty to involvement in the [February assault of a mentally ill inmate at a Tiptonville prison](#). Another former officer and a corporal allegedly involved in the assault face additional charges in a new indictment. Five officers at the Northwest County Correctional Complex entered the cell of a man on suicide watch and took turns repeatedly punching him "like a piñata" without cause, according to the office of U.S. Attorney D. Michael Dunavant. – Jackson Sun – November 21, 2019 – (Tennessee) - <https://is.gd/gyCV8M>

32. “Women Accused in String of Burglaries at Group Homes for Special-Needs Residents” - wo women were caught with several allegedly stolen items after San Antonio police saw them burglarize two group homes within 30 minutes, records show. Wylessa Faye Matthews and Bria Rose Roberson, both 24 years old, were booked at the Bexar County Jail Friday and each charged with burglary habitation. The duo, who told police they have previously worked at group homes, allegedly developed a technique to burglarize several

assisted-living facilities during recent months, according to an arrest affidavit. – KSAT – November 16, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/Flfp87>

33. “Assisted Living Home Denies Medina County Sheriff's Office's Claims of Neglect” - The Medina County Sheriff's Office said last month they were investigating a sexual assault allegation when they discovered something else. The Medina County Sheriff's Office told KENS 5 last month as they were investigating a sexual assault allegation, they discovered something else. Alongside Adult Protective Services, Medina County said they removed 11 of the home's residents due to signs of neglect. – KENS 5 – November 20, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/tkeesa>

34. “Utah Teacher Charged with Kidnapping an Autistic Student” - A Utah teacher has been charged with kidnapping after she allegedly took a 6-year-old autistic girl on a walk without the permission of the school or the child's mother. The 49-year-old suspect, a teacher at Fox Hollow Elementary School in West Jordan, was charged Monday in 3rd District Court with child kidnapping, a first-degree felony. – The Salt Lake Tribune – November 19, 2019 – (Utah) - <https://is.gd/1H42v2>

35. “Jordan School District Teacher Accused of Kidnapping Student with Autism Shares Her Side of the Story” - Standing on a porch in a neighborhood, Martz said she asked a family to use their phone to call the school—letting administrators know she was in a “bit of a pickle.” The two had been gone for 40 minutes. Court documents said another teacher found Martz walking with the little girl and gave them a ride back to school where the girl’s parents were waiting. “After talking with her parents, the girl wrapped her arms around me and gave me a hug,” said Martz. “She’s done so at least twice after school since.” – Fox 13 Now – November 21, 2019 – (Utah) - <https://is.gd/Mlqtch>

36. “Marion Man to Serve Prison Time for Aggravated Sexual Battery” - A Marion man charged with the rape of an intellectually disabled woman signed a plea agreement and was sentenced in Smyth County Circuit Court last Tuesday morning. Charles Claybourn Ballard, 66, of Marion, was indicted in September. The charge stemmed from a December 2017 complaint from a woman who told Marion police that she had been sexually assaulted by Ballard. Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney Jill Lawson said the victim had been a friend of Ballard’s girlfriend. According to court records the woman told investigating officers that Ballard had penetrated her during the assault. DNA evidence was collected, and the woman underwent a physical examination. – SWVA Today – November 14, 2019 – (Virginia) - <https://is.gd/5b7tGc>
37. “This is Abhorrent”: Parent Gives State Photo of Child Being Restrained, Demands Investigation into Spokane Childcare Facility” - We have confirmed that Washington State’s Department of Children, Youth and Families is investigating a north Spokane childcare facility, Trinity Catholic School and Educare. The investigation launched within 48 hours of a parent at the childcare facility sending us a picture showing one Trinity Educare’s employees with her legs across the back and neck of a child. The concerned parent, who requested we not reveal his identity, says he was told that they needed to do this because the child “refused to nap.” In his email to us, the parent described the practice as “abhorrent,” adding that “this must be brought to light.” – Fox 28 – November 21, 2019 – (Washington) - <https://is.gd/53DAzy>
38. “Search for Autistic Teen Missing in Wyoming Winter Weather is Now a Recovery Mission” - The exhaustive [10-day-long search for an autistic teen who walked out of his Wyoming home during a cold spell](#), wearing pajamas and no shoes, was changed Wednesday from a rescue effort to a recovery effort. Joseph Peterson, 16, walked out of his southeastern Natrona County home wearing a red hoodie and

pajama pants between 11 a.m. and noon Nov. 10, according to the Natrona County Sheriff's Office. He wasn't wearing shoes when he ventured into rough rural terrain during frigid temperatures. – NBC News – November 21, 2019 – (Wyoming) - <https://is.gd/AqBvXh>

GUARDIANSHIP

39. “Unguarded: A three-part series on how Richmond’s guardianship process leaves vulnerable people unprotected” - Guardianship, the legal process of taking away an adult’s rights to make life decisions, is intended to protect vulnerable people from neglect and abuse. In Richmond, VCU Health System and other health care providers have used the process to remove poor patients from hospital beds, sometimes against the wishes of family members, with the help of a local law firm. A year-long Richmond Times-Dispatch investigation has found that what happens to the patients after they’re discharged is left up to a system that fails to provide the one justification for the power it wields – protection. – Richmond Times Dispatch – November 30, 2019 – (Virginia) - <https://is.gd/lzN3GA>

40. “VCU Says Times-Dispatch Series on Guardianship Process is ‘Out-Of-Context’” - VCU Health System sent out a news release and email to employees Sunday on the recent Richmond Times-Dispatch series about the health system’s guardianship practice, saying the article lacks “context, balance, and journalistic ethics.” The Richmond Times-Dispatch released the first of a series of articles on guardianship — the legal process of removing an adult’s right to make life decisions — and said the university and other health providers used the process to disadvantage poor patients. – The Commonwealth Times – November 19, 2019 – (Virginia) - <https://is.gd/ZURELh>

LAWS & LEGISLATION

41. “United States: New Law Aimed at Assisting Low Income Renters Invokes Additional Restraints on California Landlords” - SB 329 amends Section 12927 of the [California Fair Employment and Housing Act \(“FEHA”\)](#) to expand the definition of a protected “source of income” to encompass federal, state, and local public assistance and housing subsidies. This is true even if such assistance or subsidy is paid directly to “a housing owner or landlord on behalf of a tenant.” The most significant addition under this amendment impacts recipients in the Housing Choice Voucher Program of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1978 (“Section 8 Voucher Program”), which an estimated 300,000 Californians currently receive. While over a dozen city and county governments in California have already enacted similar ordinances, the adoption of SB 329 would make funds derived from the Section 8 Voucher Program a protected source of income statewide. – Real Estate Land Use and Environmental Law – November 6, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/NgiS0x>

42. “Klobuchar, Murkowski Introduce Bill on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder” - Presidential candidate Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) and Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) introduced legislation today that would restore long lost federal dollars to help children affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol. The [Advancing FASD Research, Prevention and Services Act](#) would amend the Public Health Service Act to include \$42 million for research and services grants focused on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The funds would all be marked for fiscal 2021, with an open authorization for more money from 2022 to 2025. – Chronicle of Social Change – November 19, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/wzoK6O>

43. “Down Syndrome Abortion Ban Passes Pa. Senate; Gov. Wolf has Promised a Veto” - The Pennsylvania Senate has passed a bill that would ban abortions based solely on a pre-natal diagnosis of Down syndrome, setting up certain veto showdown with Gov. Tom Wolf. The Pennsylvania Senate passed a bill Wednesday that would

ban abortions based solely on a prenatal diagnosis of Down Syndrome, setting up a certain veto showdown with Gov. Tom Wolf. The Senate voted 27-22 to pass the bill, with Democratic Sen. Jim Brewster, D-Allegheny County, and Independent John Yudichak of Luzerne County, voting with 25 Republicans to pass the bill. – Penn Live – November 20, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/fKuOfM>

44. “Tony Evers Signs a Bill Making Voting Easier for Some People with Disabilities; Advocates Want More Changes” - Some Wisconsin voters have had a problem when they tried to vote in recent elections: They were told they must speak their name and address aloud. For voters with certain disabilities, that may not be something they can or want to do. Now they won't have to. Gov. Tony Evers signed a bill Friday that allows voters who cannot state their name and address to have an election official or person of their choice say it for them. The last state report on accessibility barriers, in 2015, found most audited polling places had problems. State law [requires](#) such a report every two years, but state officials failed to complete one in 2017 and they're late on the 2019 report. The [2015 report](#) found about 4,000 accessibility problems at 808 polling places. It said about 1,650 problems were severe enough to likely prevent some voters from entering and casting a private and independent ballot. – Milwaukee Journal Sentinel – November 25, 2019 – (Wisconsin) - <https://is.gd/Xmf2U>

STUDIES & STATISTICS

45. “Audit Finds NY State Agencies Failing to Properly Inform Parents of Incidents of Abuse at State-Run Facilities for Disabled” - Parents are being left in the dark when it comes to abuse and neglect at state-run facilities for the disabled, according to an audit released Monday by Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. Investigators with the comptroller's office found that facilities operated, licensed or certified by the state's Office for People with Developmental Disabilities repeatedly failed to properly notify parents and guardians about

incidents as required by a 2007 law. The agency is the second to be flagged this year by DiNapoli for failing to comply with Jonathan's Law, named for Jonathan Carey, a 13-year-old non-verbal autistic and developmentally disabled boy who died while in the care of a state facility. "The state must do everything it can to protect individuals with disabilities in their care," DiNapoli said. "Jonathan's Law was created to make sure incidents of abuse and neglect are properly addressed and families are told of what occurred. This law can't work if state agencies aren't fully complying with the law's requirements." – New York Daily News – November 18, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/McWyEO>

IMPROVED SUPPORTS

46. "Gov. Ivey Awards \$2.1 Million to Aid Elderly and Disabled Abuse Victims" - Gov. Kay Ivey has awarded \$2.1 million to the state Department of Human Resources to assist elderly and disabled adults who have been abused. The grant will enable the department's Adult Protective Services Division to provide several preventative options for victims who are suffering from abuse. "No one should ever have to be the victim of abuse, and those who have unfortunately suffered from abuse need ready access to professional assistance," Gov. Ivey said. "This grant will ensure assistance for those elderly and disabled adults who are victims of physical and mental abuse." The funds will help create safe surroundings for elderly and disabled adults either by providing in-home care and supervision to enable victims to remain in their homes after offenders have been removed or relocating the victims to nursing homes or assisted living facilities. Both measures are temporary until more permanent solutions are found. – Alabama Reporter – November 15, 2019 – (Alabama) - <https://is.gd/NPDCIQ>

47. "Starbucks Malaysia Leads the Way Again with the Opening of it's Second Signing Store in Penang" - he Seattle-based coffee chain has officially opened its doors to its [second 'Signing Store' in](#)

[Malaysia](#) located at the heart of Penang's historic Deaf community. Starbucks CEO Kevin Johnson broke the news about the major milestone earlier today on Twitter. This makes the outlet the fourth Starbucks sign-language store across the globe, as part of the brand's ongoing commitment to inclusion, accessibility, and diversity. – Mashable – November 19, 2019 – (Malaysia) - <https://is.gd/sqSafS>

48. “Kent County Nonprofit Helping People with Special Needs Get Jobs” - "It makes me feel happy", says Phillip Vineing who got help from [Beyond 26, a Wyoming nonprofit](#) that connects people with disabilities with jobs and volunteer opportunities. “We’re not government funded, we are a faith based organization and we have a simple process for taking in our job seeker applications and then turning around and finding them jobs in our community,” said Dirk Bakhuyzen, executive director of Beyond 26. – Fox 17 Online – November 18, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/wfUnhl>

49. “Flint Weighs School Closures as It Grapples with Special Ed Costs” - An attorney representing a group of Flint parents, who in 2016 filed a lawsuit against the Michigan Department of Education for its failure to comply with special education laws, said problems with meeting the needs of special education students persist years later and despite months of settlement talks, the case is headed for a trial in the spring. “We think the most recent development reinforces what we have said: Flint simply does not have the resources necessary to provide students with special needs the programs and resources they are entitled to under the law,” attorney Greg Little said. – The Detroit News – November 19, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/MUjVCJ>

50. “To Assess Care Crisis, Walz ‘Walks a Day’ in PCA’s Shoes” - Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz walked in a home health care worker’s shoes today in St. Paul. The governor helped 41-year-old Jay Spika, who has primary progressive multiple sclerosis, bathe, dress and depart his St. Paul home. Walz worked alongside one of Spika’s

home health aide, [SEIU Healthcare Minnesota](https://is.gd/FiOgTj) member Deb Howze.
– Union Advocate – November 22, 2019 – (Minnesota) -
<https://is.gd/FiOgTj>

INTERNATIONAL

51. Melbourne carer jailed for sexual assaults - A Melbourne disability carer sexually assaulted two intellectually disabled women in his care within an hour, telling one of them not to say anything or he would lose his job. Ranulfo Torrefranca, 63, was sentenced on Monday to a maximum six years and nine months behind bars after he pleaded guilty to multiple charges of sexual assault and sexual penetration of a person with cognitive impairment. The court heard Torrefranca, from Point Cook, had been a disability support worker at Gellibrand Support Services for about six months when he preyed on his victims in August 2018. He was still on probation when he molested and sexually assaulted his first victim, who can't walk without assistance, in an office. Within the same hour, he went on to sexually assault his second victim while assisting her to shower. – 9 News – November 18, 2019 – (Australia) - <https://is.gd/3Qulua>

52. “Insidious Practice of 'Chemical Restraint' Needs Stronger Action” - For years, Australia had no law or rules to stop the practice of controlling people’s behavior with drugs without a medical purpose, a practice known as chemical restraint. In January the government announced it would prepare a new regulation, purportedly to minimize the use of chemical restraint. But we challenged the regulation in May on the grounds that it did not protect older people’s human rights to informed consent, among other rights. In July, a parliamentary committee on human rights announced an inquiry into the regulation’s compliance with Australia’s international human rights obligations. – Human Rights Watch – November 19, 2019 – (Australia) - <https://is.gd/58psxU>

53. “‘Cowardly’ Thug Walks into Nursing Home and Batters Gran, 84, for no Reason” - A ‘cowardly’ thug beat an 84-year-old grandmother in a nursing home bedroom, leaving her with horrific injuries. The attacker broke in through the Patricia’s window and proceeded to bash her face, chest and arm. The woman was left bloodied and bruised after the ordeal at Huon Park retirement complex, in Sydney, Australia, on Saturday. Neighbors in the picturesque village were flabbergasted by the brutal assault, which left the victim and her family in a state of shock. – Mirror – November 20, 2019 – (Australia) - <https://is.gd/N9nI2j>
54. “Protesters Decry Bosnia’s ‘Systemic’ Abuse of Disabled Kids” - Around 1,000 people protested outside a government building in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo after an opposition lawmaker published shocking photos of special needs children tied to beds and radiators in a nearby government facility. The protest included scores of parents and relatives of children with disabilities, who vividly described a dysfunctional care system that condemns their kids to suffering. – Star Tribune – November 21, 2019 – (Bosnia) - <https://is.gd/DSI5UY>
55. “25 Years after Conviction, Robert Latimer Still Believes He was Right to Kill His Daughter” - Latimer, now 66, is still fighting for a pardon after killing Tracy in 1993. Robert Latimer is adamant that he made the right decision. The Saskatchewan farmer was convicted 25 years ago of killing his 12-year-old daughter, Tracy, who had severe disabilities. Latimer wants that conviction overturned. "The harm I caused by her death would have been less than the pain inflicted by her life," Latimer said on a recent grey-skied November afternoon. – CBC – November 17, 2019 – (Canada) - <https://is.gd/Vwld16>
56. “Disabled 12-Year-Old’s Second Abortion Prompts Police Inquiry” - A 12-year-old girl with a developmental disability had her second abortion this year after being repeatedly raped by men in her

village in rural Guangdong province, Sixth Tone's sister publication The Paper [reported](#) Sunday. The girl, surnamed Liu, lives in Xinyi — a county-level city of around 900,000 inhabitants as of the last national census — with her mother and father, who are also mentally disabled. Her 9-week-old fetus was aborted Saturday, but this wasn't the first time she had undergone the procedure. On March 18, Liu's family filed a police report after medical tests revealed that she was pregnant: She said at the time she had been raped by half a dozen men. Three days later, she had an abortion. — Sixth Tone — November 19, 2019 — (China) - <https://is.gd/rNSrSF>

57. “AIDS Pension Blues: Widows, Disabled, Single Women Excluded from List” - The Telangana government had brought AIDS patients under the purview of Aasara, the Social Security Pension scheme, but not all affected were benefitting from it. Widows, physically challenged, beedi workers, single women etc. who were found to have HIV virus and taking the ART (Anti-Retroviral Therapy) have not been included in the beneficiaries list simply for the reason that they were already covered under their respective categories. — The Hans India — November 20, 2019 — (India) - <https://is.gd/bA6q4Q>

58. “Sexual Abuse Allegations Before Mum Allegedly Tried to Murder Disabled Son” - A woman accused of trying to drown her disabled son blamed herself for the sexual abuse he allegedly endured while in care, a court has heard. The mother, who has interim name suppression, is on trial for her son's attempted murder at the High Court in Auckland. On Monday, Crown prosecutor Mark Williams told the court the woman intended to kill her son by [drowning him in the Manukau Harbour](#) on May 13 2018. The man was found alive the next morning on rocks at the end of Settler's Cove beach by a passerby. — Stuff — November 20, 2019 — (New Zealand) - <https://is.gd/yox9Yy>

59. “Evil Pair Preyed on Disabled Friend Who 'Shook with Fear' as They Ransacked His Home” - Two men have been jailed after robbing a man with learning difficulties. Jordan Atkinson, 21, of Newbegin in Hornsea, and Kaeden Jacquin, 18, of HMP Wetherby, told the man at his home in Hornsea to open the door or they would "make him bloody." Once inside, the pair ransacked the house looking for valuables. During the search, they went to the bedroom where there was a hammer. The court heard one of the men started swinging it around while their victim sat on the bed still shaking. – Hull Live – November 19, 2019 – (United Kingdom) - <https://is.gd/q5AvaZ>

MISCELLANEOUS

60. “How Foundations Can Lead on Disability-Inclusive Grantmaking” -Inclusion requires more than a commitment, as the Open Society Foundations learned from working to intentionally, systematically, and proactively support young and emerging disabled activists. The inclusion of disabled people in your organization is not about “helping” them come on board while leaving the organization unchanged. Yet, many obstacles still stand against disabled people’s full participation in civil society, not least lack of knowledge, stigma, and prejudice by the non-disabled majority population, an attitude sometimes referred to as “systemic ableism.” – Stanford Social Innovation Review – November 18, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/vy5YVG>
61. “Spotlight on Sexuality: Media Needs More Exploration, Accurate Representation” - Disability, entertainment and sexuality has been a convoluted relationship not typically explored in mainstream media. There are many societal misconceptions of people with disabilities being seen as non-normative, other or deviant, which has shaped how sexuality of people with disabilities is seen as problematic under the public gaze. Internationally famed multi-disciplinary performer Matt Fraser, most known for his role in

“American Horror Story,” has made it his mission to explore this dynamic and break down the negative misconceptions revolving disability and sexuality. “When you are disabled, the two things people think you can’t do are fight and have sex ... so I’ve got a black belt and I’m really good at shagging. The physical pleasures in life are really important to me,” he said in a recent interview. – The Daily Cardinal – November 21, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/F72v1y>

62. “Self-Neglect a Complex and Challenging Issue” - Authorities responsible for vulnerable adults are raising awareness of the issue of self-neglect. This is a behavioural condition that leads to a person not being able to look after their own basic needs, including not looking after their living environment, not seeking advice for medical issues, hoarding animals or items and the inability to maintain their own personal hygiene. Adults can be at risk of self-neglect due to a number of reasons; it could be a physical disability, an illness, their age or their mental health. They may find it difficult to protect themselves from abuse because of their care and support needs. – Times & Star – November 20, 2019 – (United Kingdom) - <https://is.gd/wtsEEj>

63. “Deaf Versus deaf: Social Identity Versus Hearing Deficiency” - “People assume that the only way for Deaf people to survive is to use hearing aids,” wrote UW-Madison student Tobin Zolkowski. “Deaf people do not want to cure their Deafness.” Zolkowski is one of [466 million deaf people](#) in the world, according to the World Health Organization. He identifies with the Deaf community, which he believes is often misunderstood. “Many people do not know the difference between ‘deaf’ and ‘Deaf,’” Zolkowski explained. “By ‘deaf,’ we mean an audiological deficiency. By ‘Deaf,’ we mean belonging to the Deaf community and active participation in Deaf culture.” Socially, being a Deaf student can have many barriers in regard to language and community. – The Daily Cardinal – November 21, 2019 – (Utah) - <https://is.gd/VbjdZA>