

# Disability and Abuse Newsfeed

Week of January 19 to January 25, 2018

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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 sometimes, Miscellaneous.*

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

## Type:

Sexual Assault: 28, 38 (NPR)

Physical Abuse: 3, 62

Financial abuse: 2, 5, 8

Murder: 2, 16, 28

Neglected: 1

Related to special education: 2, 19,

**WINNER of most egregious award:** 4: Significantly reduced sentence of convicted abuser; 13: War against people with disabilities by President.

**WINNER of “good job” award:** 38 – NPR report on sexual assault of adults with developmental disabilities by investigative reporter Joe Shapiro.

**WHO DUN IT** (listed by article number):

Family: 1

Carer: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8

Stranger: 28, 62

Special education employee: 2

Group home counselor: 2

Men: 1. 3. 4. 28

Women: 2. 5, 6,7, 8, 62

**Good News:** 14: Family Caregivers Act may improve support; 38: NPR report on sexual assault of adults with developmental disabilities; 39: Article informs on research of causes of child torture cases.

**Bad News:** 20: Louisiana proposed budget cuts eliminate all mental health and day care for elderly individuals and those with developmental disabilities; 21: MAS-State officials overlook practices that allow abuse reporting; 22: reduced funding for support of people with disabilities; 39: Turpin family abuse case involves children with developmental disabilities; 52: Homes for those with mental illness, when visited, were so substandard that health official who oversees them resigns.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Visit our website at [www.disabilityandabuse.org](http://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>

## ABUSE & NEGLECT

1. "Father accused of neglecting disabled daughter appears in court." An Augusta man arrested on a charge of neglect of a disabled adult made his first court appearance Monday in Richmond County Magistrate Court. William J. Simmons, 55, was arrested Jan. 11 after sheriff's officers and a city code inspector found him and his disabled 23-year-old daughter living in a Carroll Road home in such a deplorable condition it was condemned. --- chronicle.augusta.com, January 22 (Georgia) <https://is.gd/vBQwPo>
2. "Worker accused of stealing from mentally disabled clients at group home." An administrative assistant for a Macon company caring for mentally handicapped adults is accused of stealing from them. Quartinus Plesette Graham, 32, of Sandersville was arrested Tuesday on charges of exploiting disabled people at Helping Out People Environments, or HOPE, according to an arrest warrant. --- macon.com, January 19 (Georgia) <https://is.gd/2oTzNk>
3. "Lee Co. caregiver accused of assaulting adult patient." A Lee County man has been indicted for physically assaulting a patient in his care. Jason Brennan, 34, was indicted on Friday on one count of knowingly abusing or neglecting an adult, a Class C felony. Brennan could spend 5 to 10 years in prison if he is convicted. --- wkyt.com, January 25 (Kentucky) <https://is.gd/x7qaJQ>
4. "Parents of Norton group home assault victims slam sentence." Parents of developmentally delayed men are ripping the judge for the minimal jail sentence she gave a former staff worker at the Judge Rotenberg Center group home in Norton who pleaded guilty to assaulting their children. --- thesunchronicle.com, January 22 (New York) <https://is.gd/p0ST23>
5. "Akron woman accused of stealing from woman with developmental disabilities." An Akron woman has been charged with fifth-degree theft from the disabled after being accused of misappropriating funds from the

bank account of a woman with developmental disabilities. --- ohio.com, January 25 (Ohio) <https://is.gd/71U86T>

6. "Fourth arrest made in case of former reverend found dead and bound to bed." A fourth family member has been charged in connection with the death of a grandfather who was found dead and bound to his bed with zip ties and rags, according to SLED. --- wistv.com, January 22 (South Carolina) <https://is.gd/FXCBN1>
7. "Another caregiver at Morristown group home charged with neglect." Three weeks ago, the owner of the home was charged with neglect because there was no heat, Now, a caregiver is accused of not calling for help when a resident was assaulted. --- wbir.com, January 25 (Tennessee) <https://is.gd/e70ZhC>
8. "Group home employee facing charges after stealing debit card, money from resident with Down syndrome." A Racine woman is now facing charges after stealing a debit/card from a group home resident with Down syndrome. --- cbs58.com, January 18 (Wisconsin) <https://is.gd/X4fEWP>

## **GUARDIANSHIP**

9. "Bill aims to re-write state guardianship law." A bill being proposed at the Roundhouse aims to protect the state's citizens placed under court-ordered guardianship. --- kob.com, January 18 (New Mexico) <https://is.gd/GnclrF>
10. "Akron attorneys team with Community Legal Aid, Akron Children's Hospital for Guardianship Project." Local attorneys have partnered with a non-profit law firm to provide pro-bono guardianship assistance to families of children with special needs. Buckingham, Doolittle and Burroughs, LLC and Community Legal Aid will guide clients through the process of transitioning their children with disabilities to adulthood and becoming

their legal guardians. --- cleveland.com, January 19 (Ohio)  
<https://is.gd/HA3g2D>

## LAWS & LEGISLATION

11. “What Medicaid's Work Requirement Means for Seniors, People with Disabilities, And Their Caregivers.” The Trump Administration announced last week that it will allow states to require Medicaid recipients to work, take job training, or do community service to stay eligible for the program, which provides both medical and long-term care services for people with low incomes. --- forbes.com, January 19 <https://is.gd/jehrrK>
12. “That's just the life of a warrior': how disability activists are playing the long game under trump.” For two or possibly three days this last summer, the entirety of American political culture was shaped by the activism of the disability rights movement. --- psmag.com, January 22 <https://is.gd/tFjz5E>
13. “For People with Disabilities, Trump’s First Year has Threatened Nearly Every Facet of Life.” Donald Trump promised voters that he would be unlike his predecessors. And his first year in office has made that clear: It has been marked by incessant and unprecedented assaults on the rights of people from historically marginalized communities, including people with disabilities. --- rewire. News, January 19 <https://is.gd/dn26mv>
14. “Trump Signs ‘RAISE Family Caregivers Act’ to Assist Family Caregivers.” On Monday, Trump signed the bipartisan Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act. The new law gives the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services 18 months to come up with a plan that supports those who take care of a family member with an illness, disability or “functional limitation.” --- themighty.com, January 25 <https://is.gd/OHR7kS>

15. "Family of autistic teen police mistook for drug user seeks \$5 million from Buckeye." The family of a teen with autism who was injured after a Buckeye police officer mistook him for a drug user last year seeks \$5 million, according to a notice of claim filed with the city this month. --- azcentral.com, January 24 (Arizona) <https://is.gd/sJBGa1>
16. "Parents sue school district for tragic death of their special needs son: No chair restraints?" The parents of an 8-year-old special-needs child are suing the Hacienda La Puente Unified School District, stemming from his 2017 death less than a week after he fell out of his chair in class. --- mynews1a.com, January 19 (California) <https://is.gd/6O84ar>
17. "State Seeks Contempt Order Against LSAT Maker Over Disability Accommodations." The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing's battle over the test maker's compliance with a 2014 consent decree is heating up. --- law.com, January 19 (California) <https://is.gd/szulpc>
18. "Delaware Push for Intellectually Disabled Assisted Suicide." Assisted suicide/euthanasia advocates want a very broad and easy latitude to have death by overdose or lethal jab. --- nationalreview.com, January 22 (Delaware) <https://is.gd/3YSjJT>
19. "Deaf students file suit against community college system." Two deaf students have filed a complaint against the technical college system for not being provided interpreters or other assistance. --- theadvertiser.com, January 19 (Louisiana) <https://is.gd/CPI6BE>
20. "Proposed Louisiana health care cuts eliminate mental health, substance abuse, adult day care services." Very few vulnerable adult populations in Louisiana -- including those who are elderly, developmentally disabled, mentally ill or drug addicts -- wouldn't be affected by the health care cuts Gov. John Bel Edwards included in his state spending proposal Monday --- nola.com, January 22 (Louisiana) <https://is.gd/JhmdPn>

21. "State officials defend group home policies." State officials are defending the oversight of group homes for the developmentally disabled amid allegations of mistreatment and abuse, including an incident last year at a Peabody group home when a 29-year-old man with Down syndrome nearly died. --- newburyportnews.com, January 18 (Massachusetts) <https://is.gd/gKsl1C>
22. "Lawmakers Question State Health Department on Developmental Disability Program Cuts." In order to balance the state budget last year, Governor Steve Bullock and lawmakers signed off on \$49 million in cuts to the state health department. The department's response includes eliminating two-and-half-million worth of contracts to non-profits that serve people with developmental disabilities. --- mtpur.org, January 22 (Montana) <https://is.gd/LyGy91>
23. "Local mom: NH student restraint law 'does not work'." A local mother provided emotional testimony Tuesday before the New Hampshire House's Education Committee in the hopes it would convince legislators to add new protections to a law that governs the physical restraint of students in schools. --- fosters.com, January 24 (New Hampshire) <https://is.gd/Abwres>
24. "Woods Services files defamation suit against New York disability rights group." Woods Services Inc. on Wednesday sued Disability Rights New York, alleging that the advocacy group's October critical report on Woods's services for children and adults with developmental disabilities was "rife with unfounded accusations, misleading accusations, and outright falsehoods." --- Philly.com, January 24 (New York) <https://is.gd/r1TRWI>
25. "Disability Rights Pennsylvania Lawsuit Claims State Fails To Provide Adequate Child Welfare Services To Children With Mental Health Conditions." On December 22, 2017, Disability Rights Pennsylvania (DRPA) filed a federal class-action lawsuit against the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) that alleged that the state child welfare system fails to provide adequate child welfare services to children with mental health conditions. --- openminds.com, January 21 (Pennsylvania)

<https://is.gd/WdaHvZ>

26. "Terminology changed in House Bill 1077." Greetings from Pierre. This week, I will cover a few of the bills that I am bringing this session as well as an update on the Appropriation budget process. --- argusleader.com, January 22 (South Dakota) <https://is.gd/sIXvBS>
27. "Elizabeth Lewis, Texas Perspectives: TEA's special-ed failure only tip of iceberg." Findings just released by the U.S. Department of Education officially confirm that the Texas Education Agency failed to comply with federal law for more than a decade by excluding an unknown number of students with disabilities from receiving special education services. --- wacotrib.com, January 18 (Texas) <https://is.gd/7kCTKb>
28. "Dallas Man Convicted of Murder in Teen's 2015 Death." A Dallas man has been convicted of murder in the death of a teenager who went missing in 2015 after she had stopped to return a rented DVD while on her way to church. --- usnews.com, January 20 (Texas) <https://is.gd/bDtVut>
29. "Special Ed Shell Game in Texas. Who's to Blame? Follow the Money." You know that old saw about following the money? An intriguing spat followed hard on the heels of the U.S. Department of Education's recent announcement that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) had improperly denied special education services to tens of thousands of students. --- the74million.org, January 23 (Texas) <https://is.gd/TK8NrR>
30. "Abbott seeks feedback on proposed \$84m special ed fix as funding questions linger." Gov. Greg Abbott, who asked state education officials to quickly draft a plan to ensure children with special needs get a proper education, wants parents and special interest groups to weigh in. --- houstonchronicle.com, January 19 (Texas) <https://is.gd/HeU5Fn>
31. "Utah Bill Would Ban Abortions Based on Down Syndrome." A Utah lawmaker wants to bar doctors from performing abortions sought because of a diagnosis of Down syndrome in the fetus even though legislative

lawyers warn that there's a high probability that a court will find the law unconstitutional. --- usnews.com, January 22 (Utah) <https://is.gd/ZZHQWn>

32. "Education Board Defers to Lawmakers in Conflict Over Special Ed. In Private Schools." The State Board of Education on Wednesday voted to suspend its rulemaking around how approved independent schools admit students with disabilities. --- digital.vpr.net, January 18 (Vermont) <https://is.gd/G46Ngx>

33. "Bill Aims to Reduce Barriers to Employment for Persons with Disabilities." A bill spurred by a nationwide push to get more people with disabilities employed recently received a public hearing in both houses of the Wisconsin legislature. --- wxpr.org, January 19 (Wisconsin) <https://is.gd/fBOZh3>

## STUDIES & STATISTICS

34. "Genes contribute to biological motion perception and its covariation with autistic traits." Humans can readily perceive and recognize the movements of a living creature, based solely on a few point-lights tracking the motion of the major joints. --- eurekalert.org, January 22 <https://is.gd/eJ46Om>

35. "Study Finds Spanked Children Are More Likely to Have Developmental Delays." Do you spank your child to discipline them, or were you spanked as a child yourself? It may be a controversial subject to talk about, but an increasing amount of evidence suggests that it's unwise and dangerous. --- iflscience.com, January 23 <https://is.gd/4mIRER>

36. "Children with autism may benefit from being bilingual." In the first study of its kind, scientists show that bilingual children with autism spectrum disorders can switch mental gears more easily than those who can only speak one language. --- medicalnewstoday.com, January 23

<https://is.gd/tPy1xX>

37. “How Cannabis and CBD Offer Hope in Future Treatments of Autism.” It’s a lot easier to treat a disorder that has a known cause than one that doesn’t. Unfortunately, there is no one cause for autism, which makes it difficult to engineer targeted medications. --- leafly.com, January 25

<https://is.gd/ncQfFa>

## IMPROVED SUPPORTS

38. “In Their Own Words: People with Intellectual Disabilities Talk About Rape.” Somebody with an intellectual disability by definition has difficulty learning, reasoning or problem-solving. But many often think deeply about the things that affect them — and the things that isolate them, like sexual assault. --- wemu.org, January 20 <https://is.gd/IGiv0i>

39. “The Psychology of Child Torture.” David Allen Turpin, 57, and Louise Anna Turpin, 49, from Perris, California, face charges psychologytoday.com of torture and child endangerment after holding their 13 children captive. --- psychologytoday.com, January 18 <https://is.gd/rtWx5N>

40. “Preparing for a life after death: A guide for parents of adult children with special needs.” More than 40 million Americans had a disability in 2016, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. For some, physical and cognitive impairments can hinder their ability to make decisions, live independently and provide for themselves financially. --- usatoday.com, January 22

<https://is.gd/T1Q9dp>

41. “Government Watchdog Warns of Group Home Dangers.” Injuries, serious medical conditions and even deaths of those with developmental disabilities living in group homes often are not looked into and go unreported, federal investigators say. --- disabilityscoop.com, January 18

<https://is.gd/fJihKe>

42. "Human traffickers prey on vulnerable children, investigators say."  
Detectives who investigate human trafficking cases have a straightforward message for parents - keep up with what's going on in your children's lives. --- fayobserver.com, January 23 (Arkansas) <https://is.gd/5DRrH7>
43. "Training held to better police, deaf community interaction." A Delaware police department has instituted a new training tool to better serve the deaf community. --- heraldcourier.com, January 18 (Delaware) <https://is.gd/m03MKI>
44. "Sebastian community comes together to build a unique playground for special children." As any parent can attest, there never seems to be enough hours in the day. This truth is exacerbated when you have a child with special needs. In addition to the usual demands of parenthood, dedicated therapies take center stage and the stress level can soar dangerously high. - -- tcpalm.com, January 19 (Florida) <https://is.gd/NEZUD9>
45. "New Orlando facility lets people with developmental disabilities live independently." People with developmental disabilities are living decades longer than they used to. Studies show this is the first generation of its kind expected to outlive their parents. --- mynews13.com, January 18 (Florida) <https://is.gd/SJTYo2>
46. "Thronateeska event will cater to kids, adults with developmental disabilities." Saturday, an Albany health service group will kick off a new push to gain inclusion for kids and adults with developmental disabilities. --- walb.com, January 19 (Georgia) <https://is.gd/Lp2R8v>
47. "The Second City expands comedy classes for teens with autism." Chicago's renowned sketch comedy club The Second City has expanded its class offerings for people with autism to include teenagers in the city's suburbs. - -- abcnews.go.com, January 19 (Illinois) <https://is.gd/umozvQ>

48. "Indiana mom demands Netflix remove special after comedian uses R-word." An Indiana mother is taking on a nationally-known comedian after she says he used hate speech in his latest Netflix special. --- fox59.com, January 22 (Indiana) <https://is.gd/GZ842M>
49. "DHS director trying to ease 'heartburn' of social workers." The head of the Iowa Department of Human Services says he's making changes at the agency in reaction to the starvation deaths of two teens who'd been adopted out of foster care, but Jerry Foxhoven is warning legislators the "bureaucracy" can't be realigned overnight. --- radioiowa.com, January 18 (Iowa) <https://is.gd/YAdtF1>
50. "Wesley Hamilton earns international WeWork award, surprise \$18K prize." When he arrived in New York City this week to accept one of four WeWork Community Giver awards, Wesley Hamilton was shaking with pain, he said. "My body was hurting so bad, I knew something great was going to happen," said Hamilton, a Kansas City adaptive athlete and founder of the nonprofit Disabled But Not Really Foundation. --- startlandnews.com, January 20 (Missouri) <https://is.gd/1hLx6X>
51. "Special-needs transportation focus of conference." No aspect of New Jersey life is more relevant than transportation, and with new Gov. Phil Murphy indicating that improvements to the state's transportation offerings are a priority, this month's Transportation Innovations to Build Healthier Communities Conference and its emphasis on special-needs populations takes on an especially meaningful edge. --- mycentraljersey.com, January 21 (New Jersey) <https://is.gd/qDRCmO>
52. "Nevada health official ousted over squalid homes for mentally ill." A state official has resigned from a department handling care for severely mentally ill people in Nevada after an audit found squalid conditions at taxpayer-funded homes under a program that she oversaw. --- mynews4.com, January 22 (Nevada) <https://is.gd/KOCWOW>

53. "Wheelchair-Accessible Taxi Dispatch Program Expanding Citywide." An accessible taxi dispatch program is expanding citywide, giving those with disabilities greater access to wheelchair-accessible taxis. --- n ewyork.cbslocal.com, January 24 (New York) <https://is.gd/uDDleZ>
54. "Lens on Learning; A Social Documentary of Developmental Disabilities" at Way Public Library." An art exhibition is shining some light on what some may call an underrated topic. "Lens on Learning; A Social Documentary of Developmental Disabilities" displays a photography project created by BGSU students who captured the lives of developmentally disabled individuals served by the WCBDD (Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities) who live, work and contribute to the community. --- toledocitypaper.com, January 18 (Ohio) <https://is.gd/Wo7Yke>
55. "Brodheadsville autism center in jeopardy." For nearly 200 people, the Pennsylvania Autism Action Center has been an invaluable resource in aiding families and individuals impacted by autism. --- poconorecord.com, January 20 (Pennsylvania) <https://is.gd/bkj99u>
56. "Vanderbilt "makeathon" creates new inventions for people with special needs." Born with one finger on each hand, 11-year-old Zion Redington has adapted to writing with a pen clasped between both hands - but it's slow and can be "exhausting," he said. --- tennessean.com, January 21 (Tennessee) <https://is.gd/evDHSP>
57. "Marchers rally for women's rights in Nashville, protest against President Trump's policies." More than 15,000 men and women turned out Saturday for the second act of the Woman's March in Nashville— partly a demonstration in support of women's rights and partly a protest against President Donald Trump's handling of a number of social issues. --- tennessean.com, January 20 (Tennessee) <https://is.gd/TeOfqO>
58. "Texas Special Education Fix Calls for More Staff, Training." State leaders are taking steps to improve the state's special education program. The U.S. Department of Education found the state illegally denied services to

students with disabilities for years. --- spectrumlocalnews.com, January 20 (Texas) <https://is.gd/E9biJE>

59. "Brain Injury Support Group helps East Texans recover, thrive." The last thing Eddie Napps, of Longview, remembers before suffering a double brain aneurysm last May was mowing the lawn and walking into the house. He fell on the floor and his memory does not pick back up until after hospitalized two months. --- tylerpaper.com, January 19 (Texas) <https://is.gd/9UcB2W>

60. "Dream job a slam dunk for man with Down syndrome." John Walter has always had a love for sports and wanted to work at a sports arena. Through his hard work and determination, John landed his dream job at Menominee Nation Arena in Oshkosh at the age of 20. --- wbay.com, January 20 (Wisconsin) <https://is.gd/2gn4XZ>

## INTERNATIONAL

61. "Australian uni sets up career hub for autistic, PTSD students." Its new Neurodiversity Hub aims to provide employment opportunities students with autism, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other neurodiverse needs, a demographic group who usually face hurdles in getting jobs. --- studyinternational.com, January 19 (Australia) <https://is.gd/Dqisrp>

62. "Disabled Australian teen tortured by girl gang." A disabled Australian teen has been tortured by a girl gang in a sickening assault police describe as the worst they've ever seen. The 17-year-old has been left permanently disfigured by the attack, which was filmed by one of the girls. --- newshub.co.nz, January 19 (Australia) <https://is.gd/TyApw4>

63. "Alberta to review program that helps people with developmental disabilities." Alberta has launched a review of a program that helps people with developmental disabilities. The government says it wants to improve the system and will seek input from people receiving assistance, their families and staff. --- canadianinquirer.net, January 20 (Canada) <https://is.gd/5fJ147>
64. "Increasing number of adolescents receive a psychiatric or neurodevelopmental diagnosis." According to a national register study comparing Finnish birth cohorts from 1987 and 1997, an increasing number of adolescents receive a psychiatric or neurodevelopmental diagnosis. The number of diagnosed adolescents increased especially for girls in the younger cohort. The results of the study were published in The Lancet Psychiatry. --- medicalxpress.com, January 19 (Finland) <https://is.gd/udcRuO>
65. "Government to provide jobs to those with learning disabilities." The Department of Personnel and Training has framed rules for reserving, advertising and occupying government vacancies across all the groups. --- moneycontrol.com, January 25 (India) <https://is.gd/lOafCj>
66. "The Eighth Amendment and disability." Sir, – We read with dismay William Binchy's suggestion that if abortion is legalised in line with the recommendations of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Eighth Amendment, legislation will be abused to prevent the birth of children with disabilities ("Oireachtas committee has opened the door to abortion for disability", Opinion & Analysis, January 6th). More recently, Fianna Fáil's Justice spokesman made a similar claim. There is no evidence to support their position. --- irishtimes.com, January 24 (Ireland) <https://is.gd/re8Npb>
67. "Does a New Japanese Robotic Wheelchair Offer "Answers to Problems Disabled People Don't Have"?" I love technology. I suppose I am what we might call in in Japan a 'gijutsu otaku,' a person with an excessive love of technology. --- globalvoices.org, January 22 (Japan) <https://is.gd/kU8Ui8>

68. "Alut: Number of Children on Autistic Spectrum Has Tripled Over Past Decade." The number of children on the autistic spectrum has tripled over the past decade and Israel is unprepared to deal with this growing population group, The Israeli Society for Autistic Children (ALUT) said on Monday. --- jpost.com, January 22 (Jerusalem) <https://is.gd/vLmnAV>
69. "Kids left to trash school property: Hipkins says restraint balance 'not quite right'." Some children are being left to trash classrooms because teachers are unsure of their right to restrain students following a law change. Principals are calling for an urgent review of new rules – and Education Minister Chris Hipkins has told the Weekend Herald he is open to that, saying "the balance is not quite right". --- nzherald.co.nz, January 20 (New Zealand) <https://is.gd/4gvWdV>
70. "Abilities of handicapped people highlighted." Programme on abilities of handicapped people an inspiring interactive session was organised by National Council of Social Welfare titled "All For Accessibility— An interactive session to highlight the abilities of the people with disabilities and their right to access physical spaces and opportunities" was organised here. --- pakobserver.net, January 25 (Pakistan) <https://is.gd/MAB7VI>
71. "Church of England set to lobby Government over rising Down's Syndrome abortions." The Church of England is set to lobby the Government over a rising number of Down's Syndrome abortions. Church leaders raised concerns that a growing number of parents who discover their child will be born with the condition are choosing to terminate the pregnancy, a pattern which could see it wiped out completely. --- telegraph.co.uk, January 19 (UK) <https://is.gd/hxkLOa>
72. "People with hidden disabilities could enjoy new freedom with blue badge changes." The proposals, which would herald the most significant changes since the blue badge was introduced in 1970, would help remove barriers to travel for people with conditions such as dementia and autism, allowing them better access to work, shops and amenities. --- louthleader.co.uk,

January 20 (UK) <https://is.gd/2FNJxB>

73. "Parents fury as councillors refuse 'desperately needed' new school for Bristol's autistic children to protect three trees." Parents of autistic children have been left furious that councillors rejected a plan to build a desperately-needed new school – because they wanted to protect three trees instead. --- bristolpost.co.uk, January 18 (UK) <https://is.gd/mQ1V0m>

74. "Law Society urges end to enforced medical treatment of vulnerable people." Treatment without consent for up to six months of people sectioned under Mental Health Act may breach human rights --- theguardian.com, January 21 (UK) <https://is.gd/H3RCYZ>

## MISCELLANEOUS

75. "Please Stand By' misses the mark in portrayal of autistic woman." "Please Stand By," directed by Ben Lewin and adapted by Michael Golamco from his one-act play of the same name, stars Dakota Fanning as Wendy, an autistic Bay Area woman on an epic journey to deliver her 462-page "Star Trek" spec script to Paramount Studios in Los Angeles and submit it for a fan contest. --- latimes.com, January 25 <https://is.gd/cfN90m>

76. "Families of Children with Down Syndrome Get Solidarity Tattoos." Dozens of families who have children with Down syndrome packed the Royal Peacock tattoo parlor in Midtown Sacramento to get inked with a symbol of solidarity on Tuesday. --- fox40.com, January 25 <https://is.gd/UVmu08>