

# Disability and Abuse Newsfeed

Week of September 28 to October 4, 2019

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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 *Miscellaneous*.

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

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Please send comments or questions to: [nora@disability-abuse.com](mailto:nora@disability-abuse.com) or [baladerian@gmail.com](mailto:baladerian@gmail.com)

**DONATIONS:** We welcome your donations to the Disability and Abuse Project of Spectrum Institute, if you would like to contribute to supporting this work.

**Type:**

**Abuse and Neglect:**

Sexual Assault: 6, 17, 18, 23, 31, 53, 54, 57

Physical Abuse: 2, 5, 6, 7,9, 14, 20, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30, 32, 55, 59

Financial abuse: 9, 11, 12, 13, 19, 22, 58

Murder: 1, 4, 8, 33

Abandoned: 16

Neglected: 3, 28, 34

Restrained: 26

Seclusion (Kept Enclosed): 7

Related to special education: 7, 18, 21, 29 (Teacher, Teaching Assistant)

***WINNER of most egregious award:*** 17: Residential treatment for abused children sexually assaulted them; 29: Three teen boys take photos of a younger male student with disabilities using the restroom, then share the photo with other students; 36: Patients with mental illness kept for years after their recovery.

**WINNER of “good job” award:**

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

Family: 1, 4, 8, 11, 33

Caregiver: 3,4,5, 14, 29, 28, 30, 32, 34, 58

Stranger: 9, 25, 55, 57

Bus driver: 16, 21

County Manager: 22

Neighbor/Family friend: 59

Employer: 23

Law Enforcement: 10, 27, 34

Bank Manager: 12

Priest: 31

## LOCATION:

Nursing Home: 3, 6, 14, 15, 24, 30, 32      Group Home: 20

Residential Care: 2, 5, 13, 17, 19      Child Care Hospital: 26

Men: 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59

Women: 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 30, 33

Teams: 19, 20, 25, 27

**Good News:** 39: Federal lawsuit filed against Governor, DHHR for violation of rights for more than six thousand children in their custody; 41: Autism Cares act signed into law to provide support across the lifespan; 48: Girl Scout troop embraces members with autism and other disabilities.

**Bad News:** 35: ALERT: man convicted of sexual assault of a teen boy has been released and is moving to Yakima; 36: Patients with mental illness kept in custody are not allowed to leave long after they have recovered; 56: Nigeria passes laws to protect people with disabilities, but without implementation plans or action.

## ABUSE & NEGLECT

1. "Pascua Yaqui Child Dies after Father Tried to Exorcise Demon from Him" - According to court documents, Pascua Yaqui first responders received a report of a child burn near the 7559 South Yoem Bo Oh. When emergency crews arrived at the scene, the child's father, Pablo Martinez told the responding police officers that "his son was demonic and had a demon inside of him". The father reportedly told the officers that "he poured hot water down" the 6-year-old's throat to reportedly help "cast out the demon". Martinez's wife and the child's adopted mother, Romelia Martinez told the officers that the child "had been acting demonic." The 6-year-old was later determined to be a student of Lynn/Urquides Elementary School. School officials said the child had special needs. – KVOA – September 30, 2019 – (Arizona) - <https://is.gd/zO6SPp>

2. "Hope Man Sentenced for Abuse of Developmentally Disabled Adult" - Terance Logan of Hope plead guilty this week to one count of abuse of adults and was sentenced to 120 days in the county jail, five years of probation and a \$1,000 fine plus court costs. Logan, a residential care technician who worked at the Human Development Center in Arkadelphia, was also ordered to complete an anger management program. Video evidence showed Logan hitting a patient with intellectual disabilities multiple times in the face. The victim was knocked to the floor and sustained multiple injuries including a cut to his chin, scalp hematoma and damage to his nose. – Magnolia Reporter – October 4, 2019 – (Arkansas) - <https://is.gd/qfkpJT>
  
3. "Former Employee Says Aurora Nursing Home is Neglecting Residents" - Miaya Ramirez only worked for University Heights Rehab & Care a few months but what she saw will stay with her much longer. "Patients being neglected, not getting showers, not getting fed properly, being left in their room, unsanitary conditions, being left in soiled briefs," Ramirez explained to Denver7. The week after she started working, Ramirez says the Director of Nursing asked her to lie on a state report about being understaffed. – The Denver Channel – October 2, 2019 – (Colorado) - <https://is.gd/csIIOC>
  
4. "Woman, 87, Says She Killed Disabled Grandson Because No One Could Take Care of Him: Cops" - An elderly Florida woman told police she intentionally gave her disabled grandson a fatal overdose because she feared no one could take care of him after she's gone, authorities said. Lillian Parks, an 87-year-old Bradenton resident, is in protective medical custody and is expected to face criminal charges when she's released, police said at a news conference on Tuesday. She's accused of giving Joel Parks, 30, a fatal dose of an undisclosed drug sometime over the weekend. The victim's sister discovered his body at the grandmother's apartment on

Sunday and called 911, Police Capt. Brian Thiers told reporters. – Daily News – September 25, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/yGKDZb>

5. “Woman Indicted on Multiple Counts of Elder Abuse” - Grand jurors returned a nine-count indictment against Cora Mildred Mason, of the 100 block of Merry Drive, during court proceedings in Baldwin County Superior Court on Tuesday, according to records filed in the office of Baldwin County Superior Court Clerk Mitch Longino. She was charged with nine counts of exploitation and intimidation of a disabled adult, elder person or resident. The charges against the defendant, a former employee with Primecare Home Care Services, stem from incidents involving an 87-year-old local woman, according to an initial incident report filed by Baldwin County Sheriff’s Office Deputy Jeffrie Veal. – Union- Recorder – September 30, 2019 – (Georgia) - <https://is.gd/ehVPnP>
  
6. “Augusta Woman, 22, Arrested after Allegedly Grabbing Patient at Local Nursing Home” - According to an incident report, deputies were called to the Golden Living Center on the 3600 block of J. Dewey Gray Circle on Sept. 26th. They were called for a suspicious situation. After speaking with the Director of Nursing Services, deputies learned that a fellow employee had seen Jatoria Audrey Johnson, 22, grab a male patient, 69, by the genitals and twisted them. The director had spoken to the patient after it happened and said it was false, but when the deputy asked the patient he admitted Johnson had grabbed him. – WRDW – October 1, 2019 – (Georgia) - <https://is.gd/sIVgQI>
  
7. “Lawsuit Claims Boy was Subjected to Punishments, Isolation, Abuse by Teachers at School Because of Physical Disability” - Zacharion Townsend, 8, loves Legos. His father, Anthony Townsend, says it is a way to help his son develop his fine motor skills, with which he struggles. Attorney Jon Erickson claimed the gym teacher “grabbed (Zacharion) by the neck, which was a battery – a criminal offense – dragged him out of the bathroom into the

hallway when his pants were halfway done in front of the other children. “He was abused. He was isolated,” Erickson continued. He was subjected to this abusive behavior because he has a disability.” – CBS Chicago – September 30, 2019 – (Illinois) - <https://is.gd/hIK65B>

8. “Man Convicted in Mother’s Death Accused in Similar Neglect Case” - Genesee County Sheriff Robert J. Pickell held a news conference Monday, Sept. 30 to address a fourth degree vulnerable adult abuse charge against Christopher Mukdsi, 60, of Flint. A man who pleaded guilty to manslaughter after the death of his elderly mother 10 years ago has been charged in a new case of alleged vulnerable adult abuse for the neglect of his 73-year-old cousin with dementia. – M Live – September 30, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/lwKm76>
  
9. “Teens Rob Man in Wheelchair in Brazen Daytime LRT Platform Attack” - A new video has surfaced showing two teens robbing and assaulting a man in a wheelchair at a light rail transit platform near the Minnesota Capitol. The attack happened about 4:30 on Sunday afternoon Aug. 25 on a transit platform near Rice Street, but was just revealed in a [report](#) on Friday by WCCO. The video shows two suspects who were reported to be 14 years old approaching the man, accosting him before knocking him over and apparently stealing his cell phone. The teens can be seen fleeing from the robbery on green [Nice Ride](#) rental bikes. – Alpha News MN – September 29, 2019 – (Minnesota) - <https://is.gd/3qB6OZ>
  
10. “Jackson County Attorney Says Suing Deputy can ‘Dish it’ But ‘Can’t Take it’” - Tommy Schuette, a lieutenant and former SWAT commander who’s been placed on long-term medical leave from the Jackson County Sheriff’s Office, is suing the county and Sheriff Steven Rand in federal court on claims of civil rights violations. The lawsuit claims Rand relentlessly mocked Schuette for his hearing impairment while Schuette actively worked for the sheriff’s office. It also claims the county failed to uphold its duty to protect Schuette

from a hostile work environment and retaliated when Schuette reported the sheriff's behavior, which included regularly making bigoted, sexist and racist statements. – M Live – October 2, 2019 – (Mississippi) - <https://is.gd/yfsn8j>

11. "Gering Woman Found Guilty of Abusing a Vulnerable Person" - According to court documents, Crystal Lessert's trial lasted one day with the jury unanimously finding her guilty. The supporting affidavit details Lessert managed her grandmother's finances and had not paid her nursing home fees since April of 2018. Officers totaled 18 transactions alone from various places in California in which Lessert alleged she mistakenly used the wrong card while taking a trip with her kids. – KSNB – NBC Nebraska- September 30, 2019 – (Nebraska) - <https://is.gd/0eokv8>
  
12. "Ex-Bank Manager to Plead Guilty to Stealing \$98K from Disabled Customer" - Britt K. Landsperger, 47, of Stratham, is scheduled to appear in Rockingham Superior Court for a plea and sentencing hearing Nov. 1. Landsperger was indicted on seven counts of theft by unauthorized taking and a misdemeanor for stealing funds from the victim's accounts and depositing the funds in her own account during the time period of 2014-2018. The charges allege she took advantage of the 68-year-old customer who relied on bank employees to assist with her finances. – Seacoast Online – October 1, 2019 – (New Hampshire) - <https://is.gd/siMC64>
  
13. "Maine Woman Charged with Defrauding Disabled Client in Portsmouth" - According to Portsmouth police, Amy Cresta, 45, of South Berwick, Maine, is charged with three counts of fraudulent use of a credit card, forgery and identity fraud. Cresta, who was hired as an in-home caregiver for the disabled female client in July, used the patient's credit card without permission at Portsmouth businesses, police said. – Union Leader – October 2, 2019 – (New Hampshire) - <https://is.gd/PWq8G8>

14. "86-Year-Old Woman Assaulted at Nursing Home, Son Claims" - Authorities are currently investigating how an 86-year-old nursing home patient in New Jersey got severe bruises and injuries to her face. Her son claims she was assaulted at the facility. Benny Gomez posted photos of his mother's injuries to Facebook, a post that has been shared over 9,000 times. The photos show his elderly mother's face covered in bruises. Gomez says she suffered double fractures to her face and a broken nose. – Fox 13 – September 28, 2019 – (New Jersey) - <https://is.gd/xFiIMs>
  
15. "More Elder Abuse Claims Against NJ Nursing Home" - CBS2's Ali Bauman has the latest on the growing number of disturbing claims against a New Jersey nursing home. Westfield Center a NJ nursing home owned by Genesis Healthcare. Home denies all allegations of abuse. – CBS – September 28, 2019 – (New Jersey)- <https://is.gd/aGh0Ms>
  
16. "Outrage After Father and Autistic Son Kicked Off Bus in Rockland County" - Rockland County officials are demanding the firing of a bus driver who left a father and his autistic son stranded. "They got halfway over the Tappan Zee Bridge and he got sick and threw up," [Jessica Minogue told CBS2](#). She said his father offered to help clean up the mess, but the driver refused, got angry and ordered them off the bus in White Plains. "He was sobbing, sobbing, begging his father to get back on that bus because he didn't understand," Minogue said. "It wasn't handled properly. He was put in danger, his father wasn't familiar with the area." – WCBS880 – October 1, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/wvq5Pp>
  
17. "Former Resident of Timothy Hill Children's Ranch in Riverhead Files Abuse Lawsuit" - The [suit](#) alleges that Andres Alex Ramos, now 36, was repeatedly sexually assaulted in 1995 when he was 12 years old at the Timothy Hill Children's Ranch — and that ranch officials said the abuse was "punishment

from God for being homosexual." The lawsuit filed last week in State Supreme Court in Suffolk County asks for unspecified damages from the ranch, which manages a residential group home for children ages 10-17 who have struggled with issues of abuse, neglect, homelessness and addiction using "Christ-centered values." – Newsday – September 27, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/XXO5bj>

18. "Special Education Paraprofessional Sexually Assaulted 9-Year-Old Student in School: Cops" - Special education paraprofessional Kevin Lemon, 28, allegedly sexually abused the student in the basement and a staircase at PS 59 in Bedford-Stuyvesant on at least three occasions in June, prosecutors said in Brooklyn criminal court. The victim, who is not a special-needs student, suffered the abuse through the end of the school year in June, officials said. Woolworth said there were "many issues" in the case, and the girl "does have some issues." - New York Post – September 28, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/XcanCO>

19. "Peterson Deal in Works" - Peterson was indicted in September 2018 on 28 charges including conspiracy to obtain controlled substances by fraud, obtaining controlled substance by fraud, conspiracy to commit financial exploitation of an elderly/vulnerable adult, financial exploitation, 11 counts of financial exploitation (A only), theft over \$2,500 (A only), 4 counts of identity theft, 6 counts of money laundering and tampering with evidence. Peterson reportedly obtained possession of residents'-controlled substance medication by misrepresenting that the medication would be destroyed. – Herald-Citizen – October 1, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/vgi015>

20. "Disabled Bronx Women Get \$6M in State-Run Group Home 'Abuse' Settlement" - Three residents claimed in a Manhattan federal court suit that while they lived at the "sadistic group home" known as Union Avenue IRA — but called the "Bronx Zoo" by abusive staff — they were punched in the face, spit on, smashed into walls and subjected to other unfathomable

violence by employees while higher-ups at the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities turned a blind eye. – New York Post – September 30, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/pzCDMQ>

21. “It's Not OK:’ Wake County Mother Frustrated after School Bus Skips Over Special Needs Son” - Her son Xavier Horton has autism. He's in third grade and just celebrated his tenth birthday earlier this month. Horton says he has been left behind by the Wake County School System and the district school bus just stopped showing up. She has been shouldering the responsibility of getting him to and from Southeast Raleigh Elementary School. Her bosses have been working with her, but she is not sure how much longer she can keep it all up. – ABC 11 – September 28, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/kXme5X>

22. “County Delays Medic Billing Crackdown after Activists Say ‘People Will Die’” - The overdue bills scheduled to go to the tax collector’s office Friday will be delayed until county staff present alternative proposals, County Manager Dena Diorio confirmed Wednesday. “People will die from this,” activist Stephy Hamrick told the Observer before the Tuesday meeting. Hamrick said the change will directly hurt people with disabilities, seniors and poor people. – The Charlotte Observer – October 2, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/2jT5CQ>

23. “‘John has Gotten Another one’: Man Speaks out after Unknowingly Bringing Teen's Alleged Sexual Abuse to Light” - Winston-Salem police said they received a report about the allegations in August of 2018 involving 52-year-old John Dorsey Caldwell, Jr. of High Point. Court documents state that investigators found there “is probably cause to believe that [between August 28, 2017 and November 2, 2017],[in Forsyth County],[Caldwell Jr.] unlawfully and willfully did for the purpose of sexual arousal and sexual gratification engage in sexual contact, touched his penis [and buttock], with another person, who had a mental disability and the defendant knew and

should reasonably have known that the other person had a mental disability.” – WXII- October 2, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/t5PeMN>

24. “4th Suspect Arrested in Mannford Nursing Home Abuse Case” - The fourth and final suspect in a Mannford nursing home elder abuse case is in custody. Mannford Police officers arrested Richard Keeling, Jr. Monday evening on an abuse by caretaker complaint. Investigators say he poured cold water on an elderly woman at the Cimarron Pointe Care Center until she screamed. Investigators also say he slapped a man on the groin. Three other suspects are already in jail. – News On 6 – October 1, 2019 – (Oklahoma) - <https://is.gd/pLjtjB>

25. “Special Needs Man, Mocked, Slapped, Shot At” - Police are looking for three men who they say mocked, slapped and shot at a disabled man as he washed one of their cars in Germantown. – NBC Philadelphia – September 28, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/L7JvXY>

26. “Family Takes Battle Over Use of Restraints on Son to SD Supreme Court” - In their 2014 lawsuit, Ben’s parents, Neil and Debbie Graff, claimed that workers at CCHS held their son face down 137 times, sometimes for more than one hour at a time, over the course of six months in 2010. They say certain evidence not allowed in their trial could have made a difference in the outcome of their case. Doctors say the excessive use of prone restraints, sometimes lasting for hours, left Ben Graff with physical and mental injuries. In court in May of 2018, CCHS, now LifeScape, said the use of prone restraints on Ben was necessary because he was a danger to himself and others. CCHS/LifeScape banned prone restraints after Ben left the facility. – Keloland – October 1, 2019 – (South Dakota) - <https://is.gd/dWtzEy>

27. "He Covered a Camera While Fellow Officers Beat a Mentally Ill Inmate, now an Ex-TDOC Officer Faces Years in Prison" - Carl Spurlin, Jr., 42, admitted he covered the surveillance camera — first with his hands and then with wet paper towels — as his fellow officers struck the inmate "like a piñata," Dunavant's office said. Spurlin pleaded guilty to concealing and failing to report a felony, a charge that carries a maximum sentence of three years. He is the third Tennessee Department of Corrections employee to plead guilty in connection to the assault. – Jackson Sun – October 2, 2019 – (Tennessee) - <https://is.gd/71rPVG>
28. "Man Arrested, Accused in Extreme Case of Elderly Abuse" - Steven McDougle, 61, is facing serious charges after arriving with the victim at Methodist University Hospital Tuesday. According to the police affidavit, the victim had extensive facial injuries, widespread infection, and the victim's cast on her right leg was permanently attached to her skin. The police officer also wrote in the affidavit that the victims' socks appeared to have been on for such a long time that when they removed them skin would come off. Police said McDougle identified himself as the victim's caregiver. – WMC Action News 5 – October 3, 2019 – (Tennessee) - <https://is.gd/uaaE40>
29. "3 Teens Face Felony Charges over Picture of Boy with Special Needs Using Restroom at Irving School" - Three teenagers are facing criminal charges over an inappropriate picture of an 11-year-old boy with special needs, Irving police say. A 13-year-old boy took a picture of the 11-year-old Friday while he was using a restroom at Lady Bird Johnson Middle School, then shared the photo with two other 13-year-olds, police said. – The Dallas Morning News – October 1, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/zknWYx>
30. Texas Nursing Assistant Fired After Hidden Camera Footage Shows her Abusing 93-Year-Old Woman - Ethel Teno from Tomball, Texas, roughly 30 miles north of Houston, had been staying in the Grace Care Northpointe Center when she informed her daughter Mary Teno of the allegations,

which in turn prompted Mary to plant a hidden camera in her mother's room. "She just snatched her around and continued to hit her over and over again while my mom just screamed for help." One of the more distressing instances of abuse caught on film showed the nursing assistant seemingly stuffing some form of "mess" in Ethel Teno's mouth. – Newsweek – October 4, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/k5nij9>

31. "One Boy: How a Vermonter Rose Above Priest Abuse" - Gilman, now 62, has since moved forward in a motorized wheelchair he steers with the muscle movement he retains in his left bicep and shoulder. Equally skilled with a computer, he has followed news of separate investigations by [Vermont law enforcement](#) and [church leaders](#) into the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington's half-century history of clergy abusing children. – VT Digger – September 29, 2019 – (Vermont) - <https://is.gd/QhA1CD>
  
32. "Registered Nurse Charged with Abuse and Obtaining a Regulated Drug by Deceit" - Attorney General TJ Donovan announced today that Dermot Hanna, 59, of Rutland, Vermont, was arraigned on September 30, 2019, on two counts of Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult and two counts of Obtaining a Regulated Drug by Deceit in Vermont Criminal Court, Rutland Division. Judge David Fenster presided. According to papers filed with the Court, Mr. Hanna was employed as a Registered Nurse at Mountain View Nursing Home when he diverted controlled substances from an 85-year-old patient in his care. In addition, Mr. Hanna gave the same patient Haldol and Seroquel, which the patient was not prescribed. His actions could have reasonably caused the patient unnecessary pain and unnecessary suffering. – Vermont Biz – October 1, 2019 – (Vermont) - <https://is.gd/6tMr8S>
  
33. "Roanoke County Woman Faces Charges in Mother's Death" - A Roanoke County woman has been charged with felony homicide and abuse or neglect in the death of her 95-year-old mother. Beverly June Baker, 70, is scheduled for trial in February. She's currently listed as being held at the

Western Virginia Regional Jail. – The Roanoke Times – October 1, 2019 – (Virginia) - <https://is.gd/P6XjtJ>

34. “Lawsuit: Mentally Ill U.S. Prisoner Kept in Solitary Lost His Ability to Speak” - A U.S. prisoner with a long history of mental illness was allegedly held in solitary confinement for so long that he lost his ability to speak. A new lawsuit reported by The Guardian alleges that Tyquine Lee, 26, spent more than 600 days in solitary confinement at the Red Onion state prison in Virginia. During that time, he spent at least 22 hours a day in a concrete cell. The lawsuit states that Lee lost a significant amount of weight and can no longer recognize his mother or remember his own name. – Daily Beast – September 4, 2019 – (Virginia) - <https://is.gd/XxTLvj>

35. “Man who Sexually Abused Disabled Tri-Cities Teen Moves to Yakima”- A man who was arrested for sexually abusing a developmentally disabled teenage boy for months is out of prison and living in Yakima. The Yakima County Sheriff's Office says 57-year-old Concepcion Suarez has moved to the 1400 block of S. 22nd Ave. in Yakima. He was released from jail this week. – Yak Tri News – October 3, 2019 – (Washington) - <https://is.gd/vWgKTm>

36. “Advocates: People Held at Mental Hospitals Unnecessarily” - Disability rights advocates in West Virginia say patients who are sent to state-run psychiatric hospitals after being found not guilty of a crime by reason of mental illness are being held for years after they are well. The Register-Herald reports the problem was discovered after Sharpe Hospital in Weston lost permission to accept Medicare and Medicaid over failures to document proper care in treatment plans. – The Morning Call – September 28, 2019 – (West Virginia) - <https://is.gd/gPVrQz>

## **GUARDIANSHIP**

37. "Governor Signs Conservatorship Bill to Address State's Growing Homeless Population" - What we're seeing is people who have not had access to regular medical, mental health or substance abuse care or treatment," Kammermann told FOX40. It's the portion of the homeless population in the most extreme need of help and there is an idea to help that Gov. Gavin Newsom made into law Wednesday. Some say the idea itself is extreme. It's called conservatorship. State Senator Scott Wiener, D-San Francisco, wrote the law. – Fox 40 – October 2, 2019 – (California)- <https://is.gd/tLpDpl>
38. "Clinton Township Guardianship Company Disputes Attorney General's Intervention in Probate Case" - Caring Hearts Inc., represented by attorney Edward Nahhat, earlier this month filed a response to Attorney General Dana Nessel's request to intervene in a review of the case involving wards Robert Mitchell and Barbara Delbridge, who were under the guardianship of Caring Hearts Inc. Nessel questions Judge Kathryn George's appointment of Caring Hearts, its expenditures and its decision to hire Executive Care to perform care-taking services for the couple who were living in Utica. Both companies are owned by Catherine Kirk, whose husband, Robert, is a partner in a law firm that represented Caring Hearts. – Macomb Daily – September 30, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/iFKCXR>
39. "Foster Children Sue State, Allege Rights were Violated" - A federal lawsuit has been filed against Gov. Jim Justice and the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, alleging the government has violated the federal and constitutional rights of the more than 6,000 children in the state's custody. Many of the statistics and issues cited in the lawsuit are issues the DHHR has been open about, including high rates of institutionalism for older children, high rates of out-of-state placements, overloaded caseworkers, lack of adequate foster families and a lack of services for children with severe emotional and behavioral issues. – Charleston Gazette – Mail – October 1, 2019 – (West Virginia) - <https://is.gd/we8liR>

## **LAWS & LEGISLATION**

40. “Autism Act Clears Senate” - The U.S. Senate unanimously approved the Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education and Support, or Autism CARES, Act, on Thursday. The measure, H.R. 1058, ensures funding for research, prevalence tracking, screening, professional training and other government activities related to autism. It renews an existing federal law that originated in 2006 for another five years. – Disability Scoop – September 20, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/7j9DA7>
41. “President Trump Signs Autism CARES Act to Expand Support for Autistic Individuals” - On Monday, [President Donald Trump signed](#) the Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education and Support (CARES) Act of 2019 into law, which will provide support to people on the spectrum [across the lifespan](#). The Autism CARES Act ([H.R. 1058](#)) is a reauthorization of an earlier bill that provided support for autistic people, the Combating Autism Act of 2006. The original bill, which uses outdated language and thinking to imply autism is something to be “cured,” was set to expire at the end of September and many families would have been cut off from the support they received through the legislation. – Yahoo.com – October 1, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/tZOC55>
42. “New York Sex-Abuse Law Brings Forth Hundreds of New Cases” - One woman alleged that an elementary-school teacher repeatedly put his hand up her skirt while hidden behind a chalkboard, sometimes hitting her with a plastic bat. A man accused a social-service worker tasked with driving him to court of abusing him in a car. Another man claimed that while he was hospitalized at age 7, staffers sodomized him with a broomstick. – The Wall Street Journal – September 29, 2019 – (New York)- <https://is.gd/Wp8OXd>

## **STUDIES & STATISTICS**

43. "Can Marijuana Help Treat Autism Symptoms? A New Study Aims to Find Out" - A [new clinical trial](#) at Montefiore Medical Center in New York will examine the effect of a cannabis compound called cannabidivarin, known as CBDV, on irritability and repetitive behaviors in children with autism spectrum disorder. CBDV is a non-psychoactive chemical compound and does not cause a "high." – CNN Health – September 29, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/fl5xY2>
44. "New Research may Shed Light on Combat Concussion-Dementia Link" - A Virginia university has launched a massive research study to better understand the relationship between [concussions and future neurological conditions](#) such as dementia and Parkinson's disease in military personnel. The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs have awarded Virginia Commonwealth University \$50 million to explore the long-term impacts of [combat concussion](#). – Military Times – October 1, 2019 – (Virginia) - <https://is.gd/VWkHUP>

## **IMPROVED SUPPORTS**

45. "Disability Advocates Raise Awareness of Jobs for the Visually Impaired" - David Steinmetz with Arizona Industries for The Blind says employment opportunities for visually impaired Arizonans are greatly improving thanks to technology. "Forty-five percent of hiring managers believe that there are no jobs within their organization that someone who is blind can do," Steinmetz said. "There's a lot of free technology — so it's not necessarily a cost barrier, which a lot of people I think believe. "Access to printed information, having technology to be able to capture information quickly and provide it in a format that you need to do your job," are typical challenges visually impaired employees face, Steinmetz said. – KJZZ – September 29, 2019 – (Arizona) - <https://is.gd/Cxghjl>

46. “The Autism City: Disability Services Arrive at the Crossroads” - In California, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) oversees a vast network of community-based services for over 333,000 youth and adults with developmental disabilities. Other states have similar sprawling networks—nearly all rooted in disability inclusion theories of the reformers of the 1960s and early 1970s. Today, these networks are being buffeted on all sides: soaring caseload numbers and budgets; frustration by service providers with high client-to-staff ratios and rapid turnover of personnel; and ongoing fear of clients and family members that options will be reduced at any time. – Forbes – October 1, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/fmFlnS>

47. “LA City Officials Pressuring Newsom to Declare State of Emergency Amid Homeless Crisis” - Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and City Councilman Joe Buscaino drafted a proposal last week urging Newsom to declare the state of emergency, which could divert state and federal money generally reserved for natural disasters like earthquakes and wildfires into projects to [combat homelessness](#). The move would also suspend or streamline some of the legal red tape that has stalled affordable housing and shelter projects. – Fox News – October 1, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/V4Fo4p>

48. “In Focus: Girl Scout Troop Embraces Autistic, Disabled Members” - Sisterhood is especially important to the parents of girls in Troop 438. Shines started this troop after seeing her granddaughter’s problems socializing and making friends at school. Kasidee Lewis, her granddaughter, has autism, which can make social nuances confusing. “She couldn’t make friends, and she couldn’t keep friends if she made them,” Shines said. So, she set out to find Kasidee a group of sisters. Besides just helping Kasidee, Shines wanted her troop to be a place for girls with all kinds of disabilities and those without. While there are girls without diagnosed disabilities in the troop, it is the only troop in the area that is specifically for girls with

disabilities. – Panama City News Herald – September 27, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/i7bd0S>

49. “Defending Visually-Impaired Pedestrians in Chicago with Disability Rights Advocates” - Earlier this week, Proskauer—along with [Disability Rights Advocates](#) (DRA), a nationwide nonprofit disability rights legal center—filed a putative class action against the City of Chicago on behalf of the American Council of the Blind of Metropolitan Chicago (ACBMC) and three individual plaintiffs with vision-related disabilities. The suit challenges the City’s systemic failure to provide accessible crosswalk signals for people who have significant vision impairments—a failure which violates both Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act. – JDSUPRA- September 27, 2019 – (Illinois) - <https://is.gd/LWdeyC>

50. “Caregiver Offers Individuals with IDD Diagnoses, High Medical Needs Community Group Home Living” - The most vulnerable Texas adults – those who have [IDD diagnoses](#) plus [high medical needs](#) and living in [State Supported Living Centers](#) (SSLC) or people with IDD conditions living in nursing homes, now have new access to [long term care settings](#), according to Amanda Corrigan, Caregiver, Inc.'s President for Texas Operations. [Caregiver, Inc.](#) is a Fort Worth-based company that provides intermediate, home and community care services to Texans who qualify as developmentally or intellectually disabled or are impacted by related conditions. – P & T Community – September 30, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/0hZ6KQ>

## **INTERNATIONAL**

51. “New Report Shows Over Half of Children in Cameroon Face Abuse” - A new report on child abuse in Cameroon shows that over 50 percent of Cameroon’s children have suffered various forms of abuse, with children

with disabilities suffering proportionally far worse. The study was carried over a three-year period by the Cameroon Baptist Hospital Services in partnership with the Netherlands-based Liliane Foundation, using a variety of methods including focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. – CRUX – September 30, 2019 – (Cameroon) - <https://is.gd/YaRMU4>

52. “Disability Rights Organization ‘Distressed’ about Medically Assisted Death at Chilliwack General Hospital” - The Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) and Nichols’ family says he had a disability and a mental illness. CACL said Nichols was in a moment of crisis, yet just four days before the procedure, the family were notified that he would die by lethal injection. A CACL spokesperson said the association was “distressed” to have learned of the death, and claim that the case points to how doctors are able to interpret Canada’s medical assistance in dying (MAiD) law “more broadly than ever intended.” – The Chilliwack Progress – September 30, 2019 – (Canada) - <https://is.gd/ti1S8Z>

53. “Sexual Exploitation of Developmentally Disabled Muskoka Victim Nets Pen Time” - A judge has ordered five years of penitentiary time for a Muskoka man found guilty of sexually exploiting a person with a disability. Dustin Martin was convicted by a jury of three offenses in the Superior Court of Justice; sexual assault, sexual exploitation, and sexual exploitation of a person with a disability. Judge Boswell passed sentence in a Barrie courtroom on Sept. 27, despite a bid for adjournment by the defence to allow for Martin to seek diagnosis for possible sleep apnea. – Muskoka Region – October 4, 2019 – (Canada) - <https://is.gd/OvilMA>

54. “New Evidence Added to Tariq Ramadan Rape Case” - The French authorities have expanded an investigation against Tariq Ramadan, the Islamic scholar already charged in France with raping two women, to include evidence from two more alleged victims, judicial sources said on Sunday. Mr. Ramadan, a Swiss national, 57, has already been charged in

France with raping a disabled woman in 2009 and a feminist activist in 2012. He denies the charges. – The National – September 29, 2019 – (France) - <https://is.gd/NIDfx7>

55. “Dublin Bouncer Claims ‘Self-Defense’ after Hospitalizing Disabled Party-Goer” - Thomas Kirby (33) a self-employed unlicensed bouncer stood accused at Dublin Circuit Criminal Court today of causing Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) to Mr. Leo Walsh (21) of Salthill Galway. Mr. Walsh a student at DCU was attending the twenty-first birthday party of a friend being held at Smith’s bar and music venue Wexford Street. CCTV footage was shown to the court in which it was alleged that Kirby can be seen punching Walsh causing him to fall over from his wheelchair. – Meanwhile in Ireland – September 30, 2019 – (Ireland) - <https://is.gd/GtaFU6>

56. “Nigeria’s culture of creating laws without implementation hurting PWDs” In contrast, it is already nine months since the Nigerian government signed the 2018 Disability Bill into law, having lingered on the floor of the National Assembly for more than 18 years. But there are still no signs the bill would be implemented anytime soon and many PWDs in Nigeria are neglected to lead painful lives in harsh conditions. – Vanguard – September 28, 2019- (Nigeria) - <https://is.gd/kER8sJ>

57. “Barcelona Cinema Manager Sentenced to 24 Years for Sexual Abuse” - Lluís Gros received his sentence in front of Barcelona magistrates this morning for the crimes of sexual abuse, prostitution and corruption of minors. His first encounter was of a 17-year-old who was taken back to the man’s home with a prostitute to take part in sexual activities. Another was a partially disabled boy who participated in sexual acts for an increase in pay. – Euro Weekly – October 2, 2019 – (Spain) - <https://is.gd/XYuaCF>

58. “Carer Jailed Over Theft of £13,000 from Men with Down's Syndrome” - Victor Brooks, 64, of Longfield, withdrew of £13,000 from the accounts of two men with Down's syndrome who he was supposed to be caring for. He also applied for a credit and store cards in their names. Brooks admitted two counts of fraud by abuse of position, two counts of fraud by false representation and two counts of theft. – ITV – September 28, 2019 – (United Kingdom) - <https://is.gd/gSyiSH>

59. “Man Pushed OAP Neighbor out of Wheelchair and Emptied Commode over her” - A row between neighbours ended when a man pushed his injured and elderly friend out of her wheelchair and emptied the contents of her commode over her, a court heard. Neighbours alerted police after hearing the pair shouting, and officers found 74-year-old Yvonne Marratt lying on the floor soaked in urine. At Llandudno magistrates’ court Tony Sewell, 58, pleaded guilty to common assault and was fined £200. He was also ordered to pay Mrs. Marratt £200 in compensation, as well as £85 costs and a £32 surcharge. – North Wales Live – October 1, 2019 – (United Kingdom) - <https://is.gd/Fwk1Ux>

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

60. “A kindergartner doesn’t know boundaries. It’s because of his autism, his mom says” - She says the teacher told her that Nathan, Putnam’s 5-year-old, was in need of a conversation about boundaries. He had hugged a child that day. When Nathan got home, Putnam told him that he couldn’t hug other children because the teacher didn’t allow it. Every explanation she gave to him, she said, was met with a “why.” Another call came the next day, after Nathan had allegedly kissed another child on the cheek. The teacher told Putnam that Nathan’s behavior was unacceptable, according to Putnam. They planned to meet to go over Nathan’s individualized education program. – The Washington Post – September 29, 2019 – (Tennessee) - <https://is.gd/iEhyNu>

61. "Is it Ethical for Deaf Parents to Choose to Have Deaf Children?" There is a growing body of literature to support the right of deaf parents to use pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) to select for deaf children. Jacqueline Mae Wallis, a philosopher at the University of Bristol (UK), contends in the journal [Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy](#) that this is morally permissible. "Selection for deafness, with deafness understood as mere-difference and valued for its cultural identity, need not necessitate impermissible moral harms," she writes. – Bio Edge – September 29, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/1xwYpr>