

# Disability and Abuse Newsfeed

Week of October 5, 2019 - October 11, 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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**DONATIONS:** We welcome (and depend upon) your donations to the Disability and Abuse Project of Spectrum Institute that support this work.

## Type:

### **Abuse and Neglect:**

Sexual Assault: 7, 13, 17, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 34, 59

Seclusion and Restraint: 3, 36, 23, 63

Physical Abuse: 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 21, 31

Emotional/Verbal Abuse: 4, 8, 11, 14

Financial abuse: 1, 31, 35

Murder: 15, 16, 18, 33, 35

Neglected: 8, 19, 33, 35

Related to special education: 4 (teacher), 5, 17, 22

***WINNER of most egregious award:*** 23: New Mexico school uses seclusion and restraint largely due to lack of training of staff.

**WINNER of “good job” award:** 52: “CMS Bringing Transparency to Nursing Home Abuse” - The CMS on Monday announced that it would make it easier for consumers to find out about [nursing homes that have violated rules](#) about abuse, neglect or exploitation. The agency's Nursing Home Compare website will add an icon next to nursing homes with reported violations starting on Oct. 23. The website provides detailed information about each Medicare- and Medicaid-certified nursing home in the U.S

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

Family: 18, 19

Caregiver: 8, 9, 11, 26, 31

Burglar: 7

Stranger: 1, 34

Special education employee: 4, 5, 17, 22

### LOCATION:

Nursing Home: 15, 16

Acute Care Hospital: 14

Psychiatric Hospital:

Group home: 32

School bus aide: 12

Adult school: 17

Taxi driver: 59

Priest: 27, 30

Men: 2, 6, 7, 8, 13, 17, 29, 21, 26, 28, 28, 29, 30, 32, 24, 59

Women: 1, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 18, 22, 35

Teams: 14

Intermediate Care Program:

Residential program: 2, 21

Assisted Living: 11

State hospital: 33

School Counselor: 22

**Good News:** 43: Study shows robots can help children with autism with emotions and behavior in class; 49: Fire captain began to create special kits to provide comfort to children with autism; 52: CMS to increase abuse vigilance in nursing homes.

**Bad News:** 24: Cracks in NY's Mental Health system leads to four murders by violent homeless man; 25: City task force seeks closure of group homes operated by a woman known to deliver inadequate service; 37: CA new law regarding conservatorship can strip an individuals' rights and give them to the state; 39: New report exposes dangers of assisted suicide laws for people with disabilities; 41: Sexual abuse inquiry on assaults against people with disabilities is blocked; 44: reports reveal DCFS employees have misled courts on child safety; 48: Increase in hate crimes against people with disabilities rise by 41% in last year.

## **ABUSE & NEGLECT**

1. "Newton Woman Sentenced to Eight Years in Prison for Elderly Abuse" - A Newton woman has been sentenced to serve eight years in state prison after pleading guilty to one count of financial exploitation of the elderly. Maciha LaQeish Lewis, 25, was charged with stealing more than \$25,000 from a retired educator. Dothan Eagle – October 9, 2019 – (Alabama) - <https://is.gd/lue2jZ>

2. "Arkansas Man Pleads Guilty to Abusing Disabled Patient" - A former employee of the Clark County Human Development Center in Arkadelphia has been sentenced to 120 days in jail after pleading guilty to felony abuse of a disabled patient at the center. Court records show 25-year-old Terance Logan entered the plea Tuesday, signing a statement saying he is "in fact, guilty." Logan had faced up to six years in prison before reaching the plea agreement. An affidavit filed in the case says surveillance video shows Logan striking the patient multiple times in the face, causing injuries to the patient's head and face and resulting in hospitalization. – WJTV- October 4, 2019 – (Arkansas) - <https://is.gd/KFrYPI>
  
3. "CNA Improperly Restrained Kaweah Delta Patient with Bedsheet, State Report Finds" - [The California Department of Public Health](#) found a certified nursing assistant tied a [Kaweah Delta Medical Center](#) patient to his bed with a bedsheet, later saying she was "stressed out" by her overnight workload. Both the CNA and the supervising nurse on duty resigned in lieu of being fired in the aftermath of the incident, Kaweah Delta CEO Gary Herbst said. "This incident is not a reflection of who we are," Herbst said. "Patient safety is our No. 1 concern." The hospital self-reported the incident, the CDPH did not fine the hospital and no criminal action was taken against the CNA. – Visalia Times Delta – October 4, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/XwVrRt>
  
4. Boy, 10, with Down's syndrome soils himself and suffers PTSD 'after being abused by sadistic school worker' - Hudson Peterson, 10, had been progressing well and achieving all expected milestones until he arrived in Debbie Woodward's class in 2016, aged seven. The youngster's parents Shannon and Scott Petersen say Woodward would lift Hudson by his wrists, scream at him, slap him and hit him, leaving the youngster with cuts and bruises. Hudson was so badly traumatized by the alleged abuse at Tony Tobin Elementary School in Temecula, California, his educational

development regressed. – Metro – October 10, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/xSnhaq>

5. “Mom Claims Five-Year-Old Autistic Son Returns from School with Two Black-Eyes” Crystal Rivas said her child Heath Rivas did not leave home with the bruises, but as much as she tries to find out if the bruises were from an accident or intentionally inflicted, she is left with more questions than answers. – NBC Palm Springs – October 4, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/5sbjKo>
  
6. “Ocklawaha Man Accused of Battering Disabled Man in Spat Over TV” - Anthony Thomas Varnum was charged with abuse of an elderly or disabled adult without great harm after the incident, which happened Sept. 26 at his residence on SE 62nd Place. The victim told a Marion County sheriff’s deputy that Varnum became agitated over something with the television in the living room, prompting the victim to get off the couch and unplug the TV. When he did, Varnum became irate and began punching him in the head and face, knocking him into a computer desk and ultimately to the ground, according to the sheriff’s office report. – Ocala- News – October 6, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/LhPGtn>
  
7. “Burglar in Florida Sexually Assaults Woman with Mental Disabilities, Deputies say” - Jimmie Jennings III, 43, was in the victim’s bedroom Sept. 28 when her “...sister was walking past the room and heard some unusual sounds like she might have been in pain, walked in and discovered what was going on,” said Bob Kealing with the Seminole County Sheriff’s Office. The woman has the mental capacity of a 9 to 11-year-old, doesn’t communicate clearly and can’t evaluate her own behavior, which means she cannot consent legally to intimate contact, an incident report says. – My Fox 8 – October 6, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/gnKGb8>

8. "Man, 56, Accused of Neglecting Woman at Ocala Motel" - William F. Baker was arrested Thursday on two counts of neglect of a disabled person and one count of possession of drug paraphernalia. When the 54-year-old woman was removed from a recliner by paramedics, there was feces "caked" on the chair and a large "amount of flies" were flying around the chair, according to an arrest report. The woman's adult diaper was saturated with fecal matter, urine and blood. She said she relies on Baker for assistance. She told the deputy Baker had punched her in the face at least twice, threatened her with a bat and that he curses her. The woman said the last time she took a shower was three days ago. – Ocala – October 5, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/eCo0jX>
  
9. "Caretaker Caught on Family Surveillance Hitting Client, Deputies Say" - According to the Volusia County Sheriff's Office, the alleged victim lives with her mother and has the mental capacity of a 2-year-old. The mother hired an in-home caretaker from a company so she could go to work. She said while she was watching what was happening in her Deltona home in real-time on her cellphone, footage showed Zhane Jackson, the caretaker, hitting her daughter. – WESH 2 – October 7, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/dcTZUe>
  
10. "ECSCO: Woman Charged with Abuse after Pushing Amputee out of Wheelchair" - Ashley Hacker, 28, was arrested Oct. 4 and charged with abuse of an elderly or disabled adult without great harm. She was booked into the Escambia County Jail with a \$3,000 bond and was released from custody Wednesday. – Pensacola News Journal – October 11, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/4lv2W1>
  
11. "Caretaker Arrested for Dementia Patient Abuse at Assisted Living Center" - According to Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, Edna Jeanty, 48, was arrested after it was reported by a co-worker they witnessed her abusing elderly patients with dementia because the patients would not cooperate

with her. In a sworn statement, the co-worker said they witnessed Jeanty wake up the patient with a warm basin of water, which startled the man awake. Jeanty then forcibly tried to place the patient in a wheelchair. – Wink News – October 11, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/z7My6x>

12. “School Bus Aide Accused of Striking Girl with Special Needs” - A change of plea hearing is scheduled for Monday for a woman accused of slapping a special needs student on a school bus. According to court documents, Francella Van Fossen, a Noblesville school bus aide, slapped a 10-year-old girl with disabilities on a school bus on May 3. Van Fossen is accused of striking the girl with an open right hand on the left side of her face, court documents said. Van Fossen, 78, faces a battery charge. She claimed the girl bit her arm and touched her face, the court documents said. – RTV6 The Indy Channel – October 10, 2019 – (Indiana) - <https://is.gd/FseRcQ>

13. “Lake Arthur Man Accused of Raping Mentally Disabled Man” - Edgar Wayne Lavergne, 63, is accused of having inappropriate contact with the victim on two occasions. The investigation began on Monday, Oct. 7 after deputies got a report of a sexual assault. The victim, a mentally disabled man, told deputies that he was involved in a sexual encounter with Lavergne. Lavergne is facing two counts of third-degree rape and is being held without bond. - 7 KPLC – October 9, 2019 – (Louisiana) - <https://is.gd/MwxuY6>

14. “Maine Hospital Displayed Confidential Medical Records of Disabled Patients” - Employees at a Maine hospital reportedly displayed the confidential medical records of disabled patients in 2016, creating a “wall of shame” that wasn’t removed for four months, according to the state’s Human Rights Commission. The records posted at St. Mary’s Regional Medical Center detailed the private body parts, bodily functions, and sexual activities of patients. The display also included “jokes” about the mentally

and physically disabled patients, according to the commission's report. – Daily Beast – October 3, 2019 – (Maine) - <https://is.gd/EIOnme>

15. "76-Year-Old Dies after Assault at Nursing Home in Haverhill" - Prosecutors say a 76-year-old man who was assaulted at a residential nursing facility in Massachusetts has died of his injuries. The office says police found the 76-year-old man suffering from injuries from a physical assault. He was transported to a local hospital, where he was pronounced dead. His name was not publicly released. The office says 83-year-old Jose Veguilla was arrested and taken to the hospital for an evaluation. He's expected to be arraigned Monday. – WBUR NEWS – October 6, 2019 – (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/CwNbmW>

16. "Nursing Home Where Patient Killed Has Checkered Past" - 5 Investigates reviewed about 500 pages of records involving Oxford Rehab and Healthcare in Haverhill, which was the scene of a horrible crime last weekend. An elderly resident was killed, and we've uncovered a trail of problems in this nursing home's past. According to state and federal reports obtained by 5 Investigates, the nursing home has a history of problems related to the abuse and care of patients, including patient-on-patient assaults. – WCVB – October 9, 2019 – (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/wJLjTG>

\*Same Story as above different angle

17. "New Bedford Man Charged with Sexual Assault of Disabled Student" - The Middleboro Police Department has charged an employee at the Chamberlain International School with raping and sexually assaulting an adult student who is cognitively disabled. Police have applied for and received an arrest warrant, charging 28-year-old Phillip Houtman of New Bedford with two counts of indecent assault and battery on a person with an intellectual disability, as well as charges of rape, assault to rape and

open and gross lewdness. – WBSM – (October 10, 2019 – (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/VnuvF7>

18. “No Murder Charge yet Against Clinton Township Woman Charged with Abusing Mother” - The criminal case against a Clinton Township woman accused of severely beating her mother is on hold as lawyers on both sides await the coroner’s report. Ann Marie Walsh, charged with first-degree vulnerable adult abuse, was briefly in 41-B District Court on Monday accompanied by her new attorney, Michael Steinberg. He told Judge Jacob Femminio Jr. that copies of police reports and other evidence “continues to flow in” but the medical examiner’s report of the beating victim, 85-year-old Barbara Walsh, is not yet available. – Macomb Daily – October 7, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/4W5DGK>

19. “Man Charged for Letting Grandmother Live in Bedbug-Ridden Home” - Anthony Allen Millard, Jr., 38, was arraigned Saturday, Oct. 5 in Genesee District Court on a single count of second-degree vulnerable adult abuse. Genesee County Sheriff Robert Pickell told reporters Tuesday morning that Millard moved into her home in 2016 as the sole caretaker. “When the investigators went out there along with adult protective services, they found that the bed was ridden with bed bugs,” said Pickell. “There were feces around (the home) and that the victim was extremely malnourished. At the time she was taken to the hospital she weighed 95 pounds.” Investigators also learned Millard allegedly had not taken his grandmother to a physician for more than one year or provided her with medication for months, Pickell said. – Michigan Live – October 8, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/pgV1Se>

20. “He's an Accused Killer and Mentally Ill — and Michigan Can't Find a Place for Him” - Darian Michael Smith-Blackmon spent six months in jail on a first-degree murder charge before he was ruled incompetent to stand trial. Despite a track record of assaults in adult foster care homes, he has not

been placed in a state psychiatric hospital. His case illustrates Michigan's struggle to care for its most difficult mentally ill residents while preventing them from harming others. – The Detroit News – October 10, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/FAkYUu>

21. “Residential Care Facility Worker Found Guilty of Simple Assault” - Attorney General Gordon J. MacDonald and Rye Police Chief Kevin Walsh announce that Hugh D. McIntyre, age 69, of Greenland, New Hampshire, was convicted of simple assault by a jury in Rockingham County Superior Court on Friday, October 4, 2019. Mr. McIntyre was alleged to have inappropriately touched an 86-year old woman with the intent of taking advantage of her age or physical disability while employed as a custodial staff member at a residential care facility in Rye, New Hampshire. – In Depth NH – October 7, 2019 – (New Hampshire) - <https://is.gd/IXGFDb>
  
22. “Former School Counselor had Sexual Contact with Student: Cops” - Ellen Terpening was arrested Tuesday following an investigation by the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office Special Victims Unit and the Bergen County Sheriff's Office, and charged with aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault and endangering the welfare of a child, Bergen County Prosecutor Mark Musella said in a press release. – Patch – October 9, 2019 – (New Jersey) - <https://is.gd/HkwNyA>
  
23. “Revealed: New Mexico Schools Secretly Restraining and Secluding Students” - Investigation finds that restraint – meant for extreme circumstances – is widely used to manage special education children. In most cases, teachers only use restraint and seclusion when they feel a student’s behavior is so dangerous that there is no other alternative. But amid staff shortages, inadequate training and a lack of clear guidance from Albuquerque Public [Schools](#) leadership, teachers sometimes use restraint and seclusion as a first response to moderate, non-threatening

misbehavior, according to both education and legal records. – The Guardian – October 9, 2019 – (New Mexico) - <https://is.gd/RqUCST>

24. “Deadly Gaps: Randy Santos’ Story Reveals Huge Cracks in New York’s Mental-Health System” - Before Randy Santos allegedly murdered four homeless men last weekend, he was spiraling downward. He’d become increasingly violent, was arrested multiple times, became homeless, abused drugs and refused his family’s pleas to seek medical help or check into rehab facilities. Meanwhile, one of Santos’s arrests almost certainly led to his booking into a city jail, where he should have undergone a physical evaluation within 24 hours of entry, and within 72 hours after that, a psychiatric examination, if warranted. That’s required under terms of a 2003 federal legal settlement, but the feds say the city is failing to fully comply with that requirement and failing to accurately diagnose dozens of seriously mentally ill inmates. – Daily News – October 10, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/i2ukHK>

25. “Youngstown Task Force Seeks Closure of 3 Group Homes” - The Youngstown Housing Task Force has filed complaints with city and state agencies seeking the license revocation and the closure of three group homes operated by Alfreda Atkins. The task force — a coalition of faith leaders and concerned citizens who seek safe, fair and quality housing in the city — has targeted properties its members consider are owned by bad landlords. – The Vindicator – October 9, 2019 – (Ohio) - <https://is.gd/jEiRgV>

26. “In-Home Caretaker Pleads Not Guilty to Raping Disabled Woman” - An in-home care employee pleaded not guilty to accusations of raping a mentally disabled woman. Anthony Hodges, 40, of the 700 block of Vance Street, was indicted by a Lucas County grand jury on Sept. 27 on two counts of rape, both first-degree felonies, on accusations he sexually assaulted a 38-year-old mentally disabled woman who requires 24-hour care. – The Blade – October 23, 2019 – (Ohio) - <https://is.gd/GDVgQ9>

27. "Former Pennsylvania Priest Escapes Sex Abuse Charges, Moves to Oregon, Preys on Disabled Young Man" - District Attorney's Office shows Roger Sinclair. After Sinclair was removed by the Diocese of Greensburg in Pennsylvania in 2002 for allegedly abusing a teenage boy decade earlier, he ended up in Oregon. In 2017, he was arrested for repeatedly molesting a young developmentally disabled man and is now imprisoned for a crime that the lead investigator in the Oregon case says should have never been allowed to happen. – Oregon Live – October 5, 2019 – (Oregon) - <https://is.gd/S6FTap>
28. "Dangerous, Violent and Manipulative' Pa. Man Can't Dodge Long Jail Term for Raping Mentally Disabled Woman" - A midstate man deemed by a judge to be "dangerous, violent and manipulative" can't escape his 18- to 36-year prison term for repeatedly raping a mentally disabled woman, a state appeals court has decided. Even though Santos Diaz insisted the penalty York County Judge Craig T. Trebilcock imposed is excessive, the Superior Court panel concluded it is justified. – Penn Live – October 8, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/hve1L1>
29. "Trial Starts for Man Charged with Sexual Assault of Wheelchair-Bound Child" - Spring Grove man accused of assaulting a wheelchair-bound child is headed to trial this week A jury was selected Monday at the Adams County Courthouse for the case involving Robert Earl Shultz II, 66. The case is scheduled for today and Wednesday before Adams County Court of Common Pleas Judge Shawn Wagner. Eight women and five men were chosen. – Gettysburg Times – October 8, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/kIW2h2>
30. "Pennsylvania's Child Sex Abuse Scandal Still is a Mess | John Baer" - AP's first example is former Pennsylvania priest Roger Sinclair, booted from the

Greensburg Diocese in 2002 for alleged abuse of a teen boy, arrested in Oregon in 2017 for repeatedly abusing a developmentally disabled young man. – Penn Live – October 10, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/ZLeZIF>

31. “Terminally Ill Woman Calls for Changes, After Her Former Caretaker Robbed and Assaulted Her” - Erie News Now did a quick court record search online, and found Christopher Mosco’s criminal history is extensive. How he was hired as a caretaker is unconscionable, so the victim is calling for changes. Christopher Mosco, 38, is still wanted by Erie police on charges including robbery, assault and theft. Erie Police say he attacked Donna Lilley inside her east 27th street home on September 30th, beating her and taking her purse which contained her pain medications; nearly 100 morphine pills and fentanyl patches, and cash. – Erie News Now – October 10, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/OXehDB>
  
32. “Man Sentenced to 50 Years in Prison for Sexual Assault of a Disabled Person” - Thomas Henry Boyd was an employee of a local adult group home for people with intellectual disabilities and was accused of committing aggravated sexual assault against one of the residents. After a four-day trial this week, a Randall county jury convicted Boyd of one count aggravated sexual assault of a disabled individual and sentenced him to 50 years in prison. As a result of his conviction, Boyd, will not be eligible for parole for 25 years and will be required to register as a sex offender for life. – KFDA 10 – October 11, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/GCgbAE>
  
33. “Disability Rights Group Sues San Antonio State Hospital Over Death of Patient” - What happened to Narciso Ricarte Jr.? The 53-year-old Von Ormy man was committed in December 2016 to mental hospitals after being found incompetent to stand trial in a child sex assault case. On June 8 of this year, Ricarte was found dead, face down in a courtyard at San Antonio State Hospital from what appears to be heart failure. But public records also show he collapsed while on a stroll and wasn’t checked on, possibly for

hours. When he was found, rigor mortis had set in, a police report said. – My San Antonio – October 7, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/vou2N8>

34. “PD: Teen Accused in ‘Brutal’ Sexual Assault of 88-Year-Old has Aggravated Robbery History” - When a Dallas police officer spotted suspect Kristopher Brown on the afternoon of October 9 at a gas station on Skillman Street, officials say he was filling up the gas tank of his latest victim and that the antique shotgun he’d taken from the woman was visible through the back window of her stolen Lexus. An arrest affidavit shows the victim awoke early Tuesday morning to find a man in her bedroom. Police say the man punched her in the face, giving her a black eye, then tied her to a chair and disabled her phones. – DFW -CBS – October 10, 2019 – (Texas) -

<https://is.gd/sLN4Nh>

35. “Montpelier Woman Admits Medicaid Fraud, Neglect of Vulnerable Adult” - Jennifer M. Cote, 44, pleaded guilty Wednesday in Washington County criminal court in Barre to felony counts of Medicaid fraud and neglect of a vulnerable adult. Cote will be sentenced on Jan. 1, where the state will argue for one to three years to serve and her attorney, Robert Sussman, will argue for a lesser sentence. The state agreed to drop a felony count of involuntary manslaughter and three additional felony counts of neglect of a vulnerable adult, per the plea agreement. Jeffrey A. Kittredge, 53, also of Montpelier, faces a felony count of involuntary manslaughter, three felony counts of neglect of a vulnerable adult and a felony count of Medicaid fraud. Kittredge’s case is still pending. Nolan said police were informed that Jeffrey A. Kittredge II, 20, died of septic shock from infected bed sores that hadn’t been cared for properly. He said the man’s skin had been “rotting away,” according to court records. – Times Argus – October 9, 2019 –

(Vermont) - <https://is.gd/yt7ea3>

36. “Parents Sue Fairfax Schools Over Alleged Isolation, Discrimination Against Students” - The lawsuit, filed Tuesday in federal court in the Eastern District

of Virginia, claims that FCPS violated federal law and its own policies by “illicit use of restraints and seclusion to silence, detain, segregate, and punish students with disabilities.” The Fairfax school system bars seclusion and restraint unless the practices are deemed necessary to protect the student or staff member. -WAMU – October 9, 2019 – (Virginia) - <https://is.gd/c9DaAM>

## **GUARDIANSHIP**

37. “California’s Controversial New Mental Health Law Catching Washington’s Attention” - As Washington struggles with prolific offenders, some leaders are eyeing California after the state passed a new law this week that could force some people off the streets and into housing or treatment programs. It's called conservatorship and it basically strips someone from being able to make their own decisions. The controversial new law has civil liberties implications by putting the state in charge of adults' lives. – Q13 Fox – October 4, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/jRJOj1>

38. “Judge Looks to Make Changes Guardianship Program Following Fierle Case” - WESH 2 Investigates has learned of changes aimed at keeping a closer eye on public and professional guardians. Guardians are those appointed by a court to handle the medical and financial affairs of incapacitated, mostly elderly, people. Donald Myers, the chief judge of the 9th Circuit, which includes Orange and Osceola counties, is making changes to the way guardian cases are handled to ensure vulnerable, mostly elderly people, are not victimized by their guardians. "Through the Rebecca Fierle story and incident, we have recognized that there are parts of the guardianship system that we just do not have the resources to address," Myers said. – WESH 2 – October 10, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/0aMLwi>

## **LAWS & LEGISLATION**

39. “New Report Highlights Dangers of Assisted Suicide Laws for the Disability Community” - In its most recent report, NCD found that most often disabled patients requested assisted suicide because of [unmet service and support needs](#), especially when insurers deny expensive medical treatment and care but pay for lethal drugs. This issue is compounded because people in the disability community are more likely to be [unemployed](#) and [qualify as low income](#), which means less access to financial resources for health care. – Yahoo. Com – Lifestyle – October 9, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/n7cZah>
40. “Appeals Court Blocks Ohio Down Syndrome Abortion Ban” - A U.S. appeals court [has blocked](#) a law in Ohio that prohibits women from having abortions because they would otherwise give birth to babies with Down syndrome. The 2-1 decision on Preterm-Cleveland, et al v. Lance Himes, issued Friday by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, upholds an injunction by the lower court blocking enforcement of the law. – Washington Examiner – October 11, 2019 – (Ohio) - <https://is.gd/fwxfRq>
41. “Government’s Silence Over Sex Abuse Inquiry Evidence” - A government department appears to be trying to cover up evidence that a former senior civil servant – later arrested over two unconnected rape allegations – may have helped block tougher laws on the sexual abuse of disabled people. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) promised five years ago that it would pass “all known documentation” about the possible actions of Brian McGinnis to the [Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse](#) (IICSA). – Disability News Service – October 10, 2019 – (United Kingdom) - <https://is.gd/IBCHHN>

## **STUDIES & STATISTICS**

42. “Analysis Pins Down Prevalence of Mental Health Conditions in Autism” - It gives us a more holistic picture of the increased rates across the board in

terms of major and common mental health conditions,” says lead investigator [Stephanie Ameis](#), associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Toronto in Canada. It also shows that the prevalence of three of the conditions — depression, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia — increases with age. – Spectrum – October 7, 2019 – (Canada) - <https://is.gd/6VAxvE>

43. “U of L Research on Robots and Autistic Children Expands” - One University of Louisville study has found that robots can help autistic children with their emotions and behavior in the classroom. A new study aims to take that research several steps further. Three U of L faculty – Dan Popa, Karla Welch and Greg Barnes – along with a researcher from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, have received a four year, \$1.2 million award from the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health to study robots’ impact on autistic kids. UofL is one of a handful of institutions to receive a joint NSF/NIH grant through a program called Smart and Connected Health. – U of L News – October 7, 2019 – (Kentucky) - <https://is.gd/JaLTgH>

44. In its five years of existence, the [ombudsman’s office](#) has shared 42 "Findings Reports" with the Department of Public Health and Human Services outlining problems that include Child and Family Service Division employees: Misleading court officials who in one case removed a child from the mother’s care and released the child to the father, who relapsed his substance abuse while the child was in his care. Meanwhile, the mother was given "arbitrary and unreasonable expectations" of steps needed to regain custody. – Independent Record – October 5, 2019 – (Montana) - <https://is.gd/m7orlX>

45. “Bugs, Mold and Unwashed Hands: Rampant Safety Violations in Nursing Home Kitchens Endanger Residents” - FairWarning’s investigation found that residents nationwide are at risk for foodborne illness from unsafe

kitchens, as detailed in inspection reports, federal data and interviews with residents and long-term care experts. Across the country, [230 foodborne outbreaks](#) were reported from 1998 to 2017 in long-term care settings, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The outbreaks resulted in 54 deaths and 532 hospitalizations and sickened 7,648 people — figures experts say are almost certainly an undercount. – Salon – October 6, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/YD2rT4>

46. “\$2.2 Million CDC Grant to Study C.O. Traumatic Brain Injury Program” - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has awarded the [Center on Brain Injury Research and Training](#) (CBIRT) a 4-year, \$2.2 million cooperative agreement to study a Central Oregon Return to School program for students with traumatic brain injuries. The study will compare health, academic and social outcomes of children and youth with brain injury who are served by the Central Oregon Regional TBI team model with comparison school districts in Washington and Ohio. The project is led by CBIRT Director Ann Glang and Deanne Unruh from the College of Education. – KTVZ – October 9, 2019 – (Oregon) - <https://is.gd/pRiTah>
  
47. “Researchers Investigate Why Certain Brains are More Vulnerable to Addiction” - In a report published Tuesday, researchers in neuroscience, addiction and behavioral health laid out the latest research into what makes individuals vulnerable to substance abuse and dependency, along with new discoveries that may hold the key for successful prevention and treatment for those addicted to opioids and other drugs. The authors noted that, although the use of psychoactive drugs has occurred in almost every society in human history, fatalities from the more recent wave of opioid use are unprecedented. More Americans are dying from overdoses than from car accidents. – USC News – October 8, 2019 – (South Carolina) - <https://is.gd/6TqCSQ>

48. "Violent Hate Crime Against Disabled has Risen by 41 Per Cent in the Last Year, Figures Suggest" - The Leonard Cheshire charity sent requests to all 43 police forces in England and Wales, and the full responses from 25 forces showed there were 5,015 offences of disability hate crime recorded by police in 2018-19 compared to 4,111 the previous year – a rise of 22 per cent. – Independent -October 9, 2019 – (United Kingdom) - <https://is.gd/5Hn4Wr>

### **IMPROVED SUPPORTS**

49. "Autism Diagnosis Sparks Fire Captain's Desire to Create Special Kits for Kids" - It started with a simple list on a whiteboard. A blanket, a stuffie, safety glasses, headphones and a fidget spinner are just some of the items that were jotted down by Clearview Fire Captain Marc den Bok. The firefighter was ignited with an idea to create what he calls comfort kits for children, including those who meet a special need in times of crisis. "Typically, we deal with physical trauma, but in this case, we are focusing on trauma-informed care," Capt. Den Bok explains. After a member of his family was diagnosed with Asperger's, Den Bok says he became educated about the needs that someone on the autism spectrum might require in times of trauma. – CTV News – October 9, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/XiCCuS>

50. "Non-Profit Works to Narrow the Workforce Gap Between Retail Industry and People with Disabilities" - In a report by Central Iowa Works, the three occupations most in need of workers in Central Iowa are in banking, the food industry, and retail. Disability Rights Iowa is focusing on the fashion retail industry Wednesday and they are collaborating with the DMACC Fashion Institute to both encourage those with disabilities to apply for jobs in the fashion and retail industry but also encourage designers to develop disability-friendly clothes that are both comfortable and fashionable. – WHO TV – October 9, 2019 – (Iowa) - <https://is.gd/q1KTxp>

51. “Quincy Mayor Proposes Learning Center for Students with Special Needs” - Quincy’s mayor wants to spend \$8.5 million to buy a three-story office building in Wollaston and convert it into a learning center for students with special needs who would otherwise be educated outside the district at the city’s expense. – Boston Globe – October 9, 2019 – (Massachusetts) - <https://is.gd/Nb5PpF>
52. “CMS Bringing Transparency to Nursing Home Abuse” - The CMS on Monday announced that it would make it easier for consumers to find out about [nursing homes that have violated rules](#) about abuse, neglect or exploitation. The agency's Nursing Home Compare website will add an icon next to nursing homes with reported violations starting on Oct. 23. The website provides detailed information about each Medicare- and Medicaid-certified nursing home in the U.S. – Modern Healthcare – October 7, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/A4gqqx>
53. “N.J. City Wants Its Blind and Deaf Residents to be Seen and Heard” - If you’re deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, the city of Newark is holding a town hall Saturday to address any quality of life concerns you have. In a video message to the public, Lavita Johnson, an assistant manager in the city’s office of people’s assembly, said the city wants you to share your quality of life concerns during the town hall, which will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Kipp Bold Academy, 229 18th Avenue. Those who attend will be able to access resources, like sign language interpreters and CART Services, the announcement said.- NJ.COM – October 4, 2019 – (New Jersey) - <https://is.gd/Qa3DW4>
54. “Beyond Our Boundaries Virtual Tours Inspires Students with Special Needs to Experience Travel Beyond the Classroom” - Having a younger brother with autism, Debra Shumard realized how challenging it can be to visualize,

spark interest in, and plan a day out for a person with special needs. Combining her knowledge of travel for people with special needs, and an understanding of the importance of community integration, she and her team at her company, Beyond Our Boundaries, developed "Learning Beyond the Classroom" to develop video tours and other products for special needs students. – CISION – October 7, 2019 – (Ohio) - <https://is.gd/DB3iUW>

55. "How the Healthcare Industry Needs to Better Accommodate People with Disabilities" - In February of this year, [distinguished disability rights activist and attorney Carrie Ann Lucas died shortly after her insurance company denied coverage of her necessary medication](#). Her medical conditions and disabilities worsened as a result, and she died at 47 years old. This lack of responsibility on the part of the insurance company led to this woman's inability to access medications that could have saved her life. - Greenville Business Magazine – October 10, 2019 – (South Carolina) - <https://is.gd/aTliiF>

## **INTERNATIONAL**

56. Brussels: Innovative Mental Health Support - A mobile team in Brussels, [Belgium](#) that supports people with psychosocial disabilities, or mental health conditions, in their own homes offers an innovative rights-based alternative to residential psychiatric care, Human Rights Watch said today in a new web [feature](#). The feature is the first part of a new series documenting good practices to ensure the rights of people with disabilities, which may serve as useful models for European and other governments in carrying out the provisions of the United Nations disability rights treaty. – Human Rights Watch – October 10, 2019 – (Belgium) - <https://is.gd/h1SGtZ>

57. "Seclusion Rooms Used More Than 700 Times in September: Report to Public School Board" - Seclusion rooms at Edmonton public schools were

used more than 700 times in September, according to a report to be presented to the school board this week. “It will continue to raise public concern about these rooms. I think there’s some positive steps that they’ve just taken that are worth acknowledging, and there are some things that are alarming,” said Trish Bowman, CEO of Inclusion Alberta, an organization that advocates on behalf of children and adults with developmental disabilities. – Edmonton Sun – October 6, 2019 – (Canada) - <https://is.gd/7pHq2u>

58. “‘Setting Kids Up for Failure’: Funding Disappears for Special-Needs Busing” - NDP Opposition Leader Rachel Notley and NDP education critic Sarah Hoffman sat down with all three parents in Calgary on Thursday, blaming the loss of special-needs busing on the [Calgary Board of Education’s cost reductions](#) and [funding uncertainties](#) forced by the lack of a budget from the UCP government. – Calgary Herald – October 11, 2019 – (Canada) - <https://is.gd/5LIK03>

59. “Wisbech Taxi Driver Sexually Abused Disabled Woman '30 Times' and Charged her for it” - An impotent taxi driver sexually assaulted a severely disabled woman "around 30 times" and took money from her each time during a sickening catalogue of abuse. James Reilly, from Church Drove, Wisbech, began a sexual relationship with his victim, a few years ago, after they met through his work. The incidents continued for around a year, by which time Reilly had abused his victim “around 30 times”. In a report read out to the court and Judge Stuart Bridge, forensic psychologist Jennifer Cutler noted the victim’s cognitive ability was “below that of 99.9% of individuals of her age,” coming to the conclusion that she “lacked the functional capacity to consent to sex”. – Cambridgeshire Live – October 10, 2019 – (England) - <https://is.gd/v7odil>

60. “Preyed on by Caregivers” - The recent incidents of sexual abuse of children with special needs by caregivers at resource centres highlight the

need for parent-inclusive sessions – New Indian Express - October 5, 2019 – (India) - <https://is.gd/sr2kSx>

61. “Mentally Retarded Girls Suffering in Jammu: Citizen’s Forum” - Chadha said that the girls not only need food and lodging, but proper medical care and daily personal hygiene and upkeep. “This is to be taken care of only by female attendants, Cook, Safaikaramcharis etc. Some years back, one of the girls was raped by someone from the Home. At that time also, the forum had taken up the issue with the then Government, but position is ultimately the same,” he said. Chadha further said that women of highly decent families of Jammu, members of Inner-wheel and Rotary Club have again come forward to take care of these children but are helpless without proper arrangements. – State Times – October 6, 2019 – (India) - <https://is.gd/KH83tY>

62. “Indian Parents Seek Mercy Killing for Ailing Child Because They Can't Afford Treatment Costs” - The couple stated in their petition that since her birth, Suhana is suffering from hypoglycemia. They said they have already spent Rs 12 lakh on her treatment at various hospitals in Madanpalli and Bengaluru, but her condition did not improve. Stating that they sold their property and jewellery for their daughter’s treatment, the couple said they were no longer in a position to bear the expenses and hence mercy killing be permitted. – Gulf News – October 10, 2019 – (Indiana) - <https://is.gd/bzcUwT>

63. “Autistic Teens ARE Being Wrongly Locked in Mental Health Hospitals, Health Chiefs Admit in Shock Review After it was Revealed that a 17-Year-Old Girl was Being Kept in Seclusion and Fed Through a Hatch” - Health chiefs have admitted that young people with autism and learning disabilities are being placed in ‘inappropriate’ mental health hospitals that worsen their condition. They also say parents are pushed aside from decisions on care when – because of a dearth of community facilities –

autistic teenagers are consigned to ‘environments’ that ‘do not meet their needs’. The shocking disclosures come in a review by Teresa Fenech, director of nursing (specialised commissioning) at [NHS](#) England, ordered by Health Secretary Matt Hancock after revelations emerged of a teenage girl being fed through a hatch in seclusion. – Daily Mail – October 5, 2019 – (United Kingdom) - <https://is.gd/07dmdq>

## MISCELLANEOUS

64. “Pittsburgh Diocese, Pa. AG's Office Spar Over Use of Trust Fund” - The office of state Attorney General Josh Shapiro is pressing its opposition to a bid by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh to draw money from a \$8 million-plus trust fund, dedicated to needy children, to pay compensation to adult victims of sexual abuse. State law does not “allow a charitable trust to be terminated to pay the potential legal obligations of the trustee for its alleged criminal activity in direct contravention to the terms of the trust,” said a legal brief filed Tuesday in Allegheny County Orphans’ Court by Gene Herne, senior deputy attorney general. – Pittsburgh Post-Gazette – October 7, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/ewrvGA>

65. “Pennhurst Asylum is Exploitation, not Entertainment | Opinion” - It happens every October. Instagram and Facebook posts about Pennhurst Asylum — the self-proclaimed [“most terrifying haunted attraction!” in Pennsylvania](#) — suddenly become unavoidable. We — two people who work with individuals who have developmental disabilities — become nauseous. Then, after seeing one too many posts from friends and former classmates having a good old time at Pennhurst, one of us feels compelled to publish a Facebook missive reminding folks that, before they fork over cash to the ghouls who run the former asylum (\$78 for “VIP front of the

line” tickets), they ought to consider what they’ll be supporting if they do. –  
The Philadelphia Inquirer – October 9, 2019 –(Pennsylvania) -  
<https://is.gd/5rvdOH>