

Disability and Abuse Newsfeed

Week of October 19 to October 25 2019

Articles Compiled by Debra J. Stemmler

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

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

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

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

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

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

DONATIONS: We welcome (and depend upon) your donations to the Disability and Abuse Project of Spectrum Institute that support this work.

Type:

Abuse and Neglect:

Sexual Assault: 3, 6, 22, 23, 25, 28, 37, 40, 57, 63

Physical Abuse: 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 18, 24, 27, 31, 35, 38, 62

Emotional/Verbal: 5, 11, 24, 39, 64

Financial abuse: 27, 33, 41, 42, 42

Missing/dead: 29, 41

Murder: 7, 8, 16, 19, 22, 30

Neglected: 11, 12, 15, 17, 19, 34, 36

Seclusion: 66

Restraint: 58

Related to special education: 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 18, 23, 24, 37, 39

WINNER of most egregious awards: 19: Maine: "DHHS will Stop Paying Biddeford Company after *Group Home Resident Died in its Care.*" DHHS ended contracts with a company that ran 38 homes with one to two beds for adults with developmental disabilities and brain injuries after a client died in its care. Residential and Community Support Services failed to provide a resident with "critical" medication, and t didn't call for emergency services when the same client had a medical emergency. The resident died."; 35: "Teen Loses Cochlear Implant after Being Tased" - *A deaf teenager was tased* by a sheriff's deputy as he couldn't hear the officer's command to stop. When he fell, his cochlear implant was lost. The teen was released when they realized there had been a mistake. 42: I-Team Investigator Adam Walser found hospitals in Orlando, Miami, West Palm Beach, Naples and other Florida cities paying private attorneys to file hundreds of court petitions to put patients into *guardianship*.

WHO DUN IT (listed by article number):

Family: 1, 11, 12, 17, 22, 36

Stranger: 4, 16, 38, 63

Caregiver: 1, 3, 19, 28, 31, 33, 41, 57, 62, 64, 66

Special education employee: 4, 5, 9, 13, 14, 18, 23, 24, 37, 39

School bus aide: 13, 40

Fire Dept: 10

Law Enforcement: 7, 30, 35

LYFT: 10

LOCATION:

Nursing Home: 3, 41

Psychiatric Hospital: 66

Group home: 19, 31, 33

Day Program: 25

Prison: 34

Men: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 14, 16, 22, 23, 25, 27, 31, 35, 37, 40, 41, 57, 63

Women: 5, 11, 13, 18, 24, 27, 33, 36, 38, 39, 62, 46

Teams (people working in concert to do harm): 11, 12, 17, 19, 27, 39, 66

ABUSE & NEGLECT

1. "Man Charged after Leaving Elderly Mother on Floor for Four Days" - A Phoenix man was charged this week after leaving his elderly mother on her bedroom floor for four days. On Tuesday, the Maricopa County Attorney's Office charged Leland Jay Wedin Jr., 59, with vulnerable adult abuse after the death of his 85-year-old mother. Court records show that on January 9, Geraldine Wedin fell out of her bed at her home near 35th Avenue and Bell Road. After four days, her live-in son called family members to help him get Geraldine back into bed. – ABC 15 – October 24, 2019 – (Arizona) - <https://is.gd/PbXNSD>
2. "4-Year-Old Boy with Autism Who Likes to Wear Dresses Befriends Disneyland Characters" - Four-year-old Evan McLeod has autism — and the sunny disposition of a Disney character. Evan's mom, Eeka Rocha McLeod, knows how much [her son loves the magical characters of Disney](#). So the Orange, California, mother takes him to Disneyland every single week. Evan was adopted out of foster care and has experienced many complications. His birth mother was addicted to drugs and he was born prematurely, McLeod told CBS News. In addition to autism, Evan was diagnosed with microcephaly "and global developmental delays," McLeod said. – CBS News – October 21, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/X4gAvw>
3. "Webster House Fights \$20,000 Fine Over Sexual Abuse of Patient" - Webster House, a retirement community in Palo Alto, has been cited and fined \$20,000 by the California Department of Public Health after an elderly resident was allegedly sexually abused by a nursing assistant. In response, Webster House has filed a lawsuit, contesting the health department's citation. Jeremias Frago-Rodriguez, 63, who worked as a nursing assistant at Webster House, was arrested on June 13 by Palo Alto police after a Webster House employee reported to the police that a patient in her 70s said she had been sexually assaulted. – Palo Alto Daily Post – October 20, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/cfQ9QJ>

4. "19-Year-Old Gets 8 Years for Hate Crime Against Special-Needs Student" - A 19-year-old was sentenced to eight years in prison for beating a special-needs teenager after school earlier this year. Bryan Blancas of Long Beach admitted in court Monday that he assaulted the boy and that the assault was a hate crime and committed to benefit a criminal street gang, according to the Los Angeles County district attorney's office. – Los Angeles Times – October 22, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/NcUwT8>

5. "Trial Date Pushed Back for Lawsuit Against Temecula Valley Unified for Alleged Abuse of Special Needs Child" - Shannon and Scott Peterson sued Temecula Valley Unified School District on behalf of their young son in December 2017. The trial was slated to begin Oct. 16, but a judge reset jury selection to begin Nov. 14 at the earliest, according to court records. A civil complaint filed by the Petersons states they believe Woodard abused their son in at least two known instances March 9 and March 20, 2017, saying she "egregiously, illegally and/or aggressively used physical force, physical restraints, verbally chastised, yelled, screamed, pinched, dug her fingernails into (Hudson's) arm, dragged, hit and grabbed him so as to cause him severe emotional and physical damage including school anxiety, stress, red marks on his chest and arms, bruising, bleeding, scabbing, escalation and spikes in behaviors, school refusal (and) an extreme dislike for school and school personnel." – Valley News – October 23, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/fY6ses>

6. "Lyft is Fostering a Sexual Assault 'Epidemic,' Victims Say" - Sexual assaults are reportedly happening daily to Lyft passengers. Lawsuits involving at least 34 women allege the ride-hailing company isn't doing enough to stop them. Gutierrez, 23, relies on [ride-hailing services](#) to do her errands and get to work. That's because she's disabled and can't drive. When she was 12, she suffered a brain aneurysm, and more than a dozen surgeries followed. As a result, she lost feeling in her left leg and walks with a severe limp. She believes that's why the Lyft driver tried to sexually assault her. – CNET – October 24, 2019 – (California) - <https://is.gd/amE1Sc>

7. "Inmate Who Died after Restraint at New Haven Jail had Rigor Mortis by the Time He was Brought to the Hospital" - An emergency room medical report reveals that an inmate who lapsed into cardiac arrest after being pepper sprayed and placed in five-point restraints by correctional officers at a New Haven jail in March had rigor mortis in his jaw and upper body by the time he was brought to Yale-New Haven Hospital more than two hours later. The report, obtained by the The Courant, sheds light on the incident's troublesome timeline: Carl Robert Talbot, 30, a nonviolent offender from West Haven who struggled with serious mental illness all his life and had been jailed for breach of peace and trespassing, was first restrained after refusing to leave the jail's shower area at about 6:45 a.m. – Hartford Courant – October 21, 2019 – (Connecticut) - <https://is.gd/64QJpE>

8. “Why Would Someone Shoot Him?': The Killing of a Caregiver, and the Autistic Man he Cared for, has Left People Mourning in D.C. and Far Beyond” - He also came from Cameroon and says that for many people in the community, Fonge’s death has brought close what they thought they left far behind: “You come here and expect to have peace of mind. You come here and you expect to stay away from all the troubles back home.” – The Washington Post – October 19, 2019 – (D.C.) - <https://is.gd/62o9z5>

9. “Judge: Sarasota Schools Wrongly Put Student in Special Needs Program to Avoid State Testing” - The district falsified records and acted with “willful indifference” toward the education of a boy who was wrongly placed in a program for students with the most severe special needs, an administrative law judge rules. The ruling is a victory for special education advocates, who believed the district transferred DJ into the program to avoid the consequences of a low-scoring student taking state tests, which are used to determine school grades, teacher bonuses and district grades. – Herald Tribune – October 22, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/4BiROv>

10. “Police Investigating After Video Shows Florida Fire Chief Beating Autistic Man” - An entire volunteer fire department is now shut down after a report to police and video footage showed the department’s fire chief beating an autistic man while wearing boxing gloves as others look on. The outcome of the police investigation, including whether or not charges will be pressed, is ongoing. According to a report forward to The Mighty from the Hamilton County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO), HCSO was notified on Oct. 4 of a video showing an incident on Sept. 20 between Jennings Fire Chief Jalon Herring and a local Jennings, Florida, man, who is autistic. According to the [Suwannee Democrat](#), Herring is also a correctional officer with the Florida Department of Corrections. – Yahoo.com – October 21, 2019 –(Florida) - <https://is.gd/aenOgb>

11. “Charges Dropped against Mother in Wakulla Abuse Case” - Prosecutors are dropping charges against a woman accused in connection with the [abuse and neglect of her adopted daughters](#). Assistant State Attorney Brian Miller says he plans to dismiss the charges against Regina Ceska due to a lack of evidence. The sheriff’s office arrested Ceska, along with her husband Mirko, in July. It came after their two daughters escaped from the family’s home on Lonnie Raker Lane near Crawfordville. The women, adopted by the couple at age 11, say they had been physically and verbally abused for years, including beatings with metal rods, denial of food for days and regular sexual assault at the hands of Mirko Ceska. Regina Ceska was charged with neglect of a disabled adult and failure to report child abuse. But Miller says it’s not clear whether prosecutors would have been able to prove what abuse Mrs. Ceska knew about in the home. Additionally, he says a doctor’s evaluation of Ceska’s daughters found, although the young women show deficits, they are not disabled under the statutory definition. – WCTV – October 21, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/9nZE90>

12. "Police Found 3 Children Living with 245 Animals. Among Them: Rats, Sugar Gliders and a Hedgehog" - Police in Edgewater, Fla., performed a wellness check on three minors on Sunday and discovered the children were living in squalor along with 245 animals. Melissa Hamilton, 49; Gregg Nelson, 57; and Susan Nelson, 43, are facing charges of three counts of child abuse and 66 counts of animal cruelty, according to police. – The Washington Post – October 21, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/70bQlv>
13. "Special Needs School Bus Aide Charged with Striking Child, Knocking Out 2 Teeth" - When the child refused to move from the bus steps, she allegedly grabbed him and dragged him to a seat, prosecutors said. She allegedly struck him multiple times in the face, prosecutors said. A former Burlington Central School District bus aide has been charged with striking a young child and knocking out two teeth in the northwest suburbs. Jean M. Micklevitz, 63, is charged with a felony count of aggravated battery to a child, the Kane County state's attorney's office said in a statement. – Chicago Sun Times – October 24, 2019 – (Illinois) - <https://is.gd/Pfs0gy>
14. "Special Education Staffer Charged with Using Excessive Force on Students" - Nicholas Izquierdo, 30, of Waukegan, was a paraprofessional for Special Education District of Lake County (SEDOL). He is facing six counts of reckless conduct after allegations surfaced he used excessive force on students while working at Gages Lake School, according to a statement from the Lake County Sheriff's office. – WGN 9 – October 25, 2019 – (Illinois) - <https://is.gd/FD3yCX>
15. "Ex-Jail Inmate with Disabilities Files Federal Lawsuit" - A former jail inmate with disabilities has filed a lawsuit against the Marion County Sheriff's Office, their medical provider Correct Care Solutions, and Indianapolis Metro Police, alleging he was denied proper medical care. Keith Crumley is diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder, intermittent explosive disorder, and an intellectual disability, according to the federal lawsuit filed on October 8. – RTV6 – October 23, 2019 – (Indiana) - <https://is.gd/VOVPzR>
16. "22-Year-Old Pleads Not Guilty to Brutally Beating Mentally Ill Man to Death in Old Town Alley" - Deputy Conflict Counsel Meagan O'Connell entered the plea on behalf of Connor O'Neal Whited, charged with killing 55-year-old Brett Alan Keiling, who recently moved to Eureka from Indiana. Whited is charged with murder with use of a deadly weapon, in this case a club. – Lost Coast Outpost – October 23, 2019 – (Indiana) - <https://is.gd/kdDTMh>
17. "Family Members Sentenced After Autistic Woman Locked in Backyard Cage, Allegedly Forced to Eat Cremation Ashes" - Raylaine Knope, 43, and her daughter, Bridget Lambert, 22, were sentenced Thursday, October 17, 2019, for their roles in a crime in which a 22-year-old Autistic woman was housed in a cage built out of chicken wire and tarp without electricity or running water and subjected to various forms of abuse between Aug. 13, 2015, and June 30, 2016 in Amite, Louisiana. Also charged in the scheme were Raylaine's husband, Terry J. Knope II, and

their children, Jody Lambert and Taylor Knope. – WAFB – October 19, 2019 – (Louisiana) - <https://is.gd/lfNx2t>

18. “Teacher Arrested, Accused of Abusing Autistic Students” -A Monroe special education teacher has been arrested and accused of using corporal punishment on two autistic students. Melissa Lacombe is facing two counts of felony cruelty to juveniles. Court documents state Lacombe was involved in two separate incidents at Madison James Foster Elementary School on October 3rd. – Fox 8 – October 17, 2019 – (Louisiana) - <https://is.gd/tlP9HV>

19. “DHHS will Stop Paying Biddeford Company after Group Home Resident Died in its Care” - The state’s Department of Health and Human Services has ended its MaineCare contracts with a Biddeford company that ran 38 homes with one to two beds for adults with developmental disabilities and brain injuries after a client died in its care. The department says Residential and Community Support Services, whose group homes were located throughout much of southern Maine, failed to provide a resident with “critical” medication, and it didn’t call for emergency services when the same client had a medical emergency. The resident died in late August. DHHS said in a news release that it cannot release the client’s name for privacy reasons. – Bangor Daily News – October 21, 2019 – (Maine) - <https://is.gd/dSOY8E>

20. “Teen with Severe Autism had Arms Bound When Found in Icy Pool, Lived in ‘Deplorable’ Conditions, Records Say” - The teen whose drowning led to a manslaughter charge against his father suffered severe autism, lived in “deplorable” conditions in the basement and had his arms bound when he was found face down in the family pool, court records show. The father, Timothy Koets, 50, is facing multiple charges. – Michigan Live – October 24, 2019 – (Michigan) - <https://is.gd/sWazKe>

21. “Minnesota Health Regulators Often Fail to Respond Rapidly to Nursing Home Abuse Complaints” - Minnesota health regulators failed to meet federally mandated deadlines to investigate the most serious nursing home complaints in six out of every 10 cases — even after pressure from the Legislature and elder-care advocates prompted state health officials to conduct a massive overhaul of its complaint investigation unit. Data released Tuesday by a federal watchdog agency shows the Minnesota Department of Health still missed deadlines for 150 cases in 2018 that alleged that patients were either at immediate risk for further harm or had been seriously harmed. – Star Tribune – October 23, 2019 – (Minnesota) - <https://is.gd/dKnQgU>

22. “Father Accused of Killing Disabled Son Christian Ferguson Charged with Unrelated Child Sex Crimes” - The St. Louis-area man accused of killing his disabled 9-year-old son in 2003 will stay in jail without bail after being charged with additional charges unrelated to his son's death. A bail

hearing was held Wednesday for 46-year-old Dawan Ferguson. He was [charged](#) Oct. 3 with killing his son, Christian Ferguson, who vanished in 2003 and has never been found. Thursday, Ferguson was charged with two counts of rape, two counts of sodomy and second-degree child molestation. – KMOV 4 – October 24, 2019 – (Missouri) - <https://is.gd/5zprxO>

23. “Former Mayor, Substitute Teacher Charged with Sexually Assaulting Woman” - George Caccavaro, 78, turned himself in to police Monday and is free on bail. According to court documents, Caccavaro had been working as a substitute teacher and paraprofessional in the Claremont School District for two years until February, when witnesses reported seeing him inappropriately touching a disabled adult taking part in a program through the school. – WMUR – October 22, 2019 – (New Hampshire) - <https://is.gd/6wx0A2>

24. “Teacher Accused of Putting Handicapped Student in Trash Can” - An Iredell County teacher has been arrested and charged with two counts of assaulting a handicapped person after students at Cloverleaf Elementary said she picked them up and put into trash cans at the school, according to the Iredell County Sheriff's Office. Robin Lorrain Johnson, 51, of Statesville was arrested Oct. 17 and charged with two counts of misdemeanor assault on a handicapped person, which are considered misdemeanors, ICSO said. – Patch – October 21, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/8f1y7W>

25. “Second Nonprofit Mentioned in Lawsuit Filed on Behalf of Alleged Sexual Assault Victim” - A second nonprofit organization in the Piedmont Triad has been mentioned in a lawsuit filed on behalf of an alleged sexual assault victim with Down syndrome. John Caldwell Jr. of High Point is accused of assaulting a 17-year-old boy with Down syndrome at Industries for the Blind Solutions Winston-Salem in 2017. The civil lawsuit filed on behalf of the boy alleges IFB Solutions Winston-Salem knew of the alleged abuse and did not tell the boy's parents or the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School District. The lawsuit also claims that Caldwell engaged in “sexually deviant” behavior at IFB Solutions Winston-Salem before allegedly abusing the boy with Down syndrome. – WXII 12 – October 25, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/116oFP>

26. “Who's the 'Threat' in NM Public Schools?” - In well-meaning attempts to prevent gun violence and keep students safe, districts around the country have implemented threat assessment procedures that can stigmatize whole groups of students, most notably kids with disabilities. That's precisely what's occurring in Albuquerque, where these assessments have become commonplace — and where Jamari's evaluation could remain on his school records for years to come. – Las Cruces Sun News – October 19, 2019 – (New Mexico) - <https://is.gd/0d8ZLC>

27. “Three Beat Up Man, Steal His Wheelchair Police Say” - Thomas Beaver, 35, was arrested Friday, Oct. 18 for the robbery while Michelle Harper, 36, and Travis Kaskaske, 38, were arrested

Sunday, Oct. 13. A witness told police she saw Kaskaske and Harper approach the victim, Moses Dutton, 70, and assault him until he fell from his wheelchair. Police spoke with Harper and Kaskaske who said they didn't take the wheelchair but Dutton had given the chair to a friend who was with them. – OKC Fox – October 21, 2019 – (Oklahoma) - <https://is.gd/SCCKhP>

28. “9 People at DHS Saw Tip about Possible Mannford Nursing Home Abuse, Police Say” - Police in Mannford say they've learned nine people saw an email tip about possible abuse at a nursing home. We first broke this story last month when we told you about a selfie police said a caretaker took with a naked elderly man at Cimarron Pointe Care Center. Police Chief Lucky Miller says a search warrant for the DHS email server doesn't reveal what day or time those people saw the email, but we know the initial email was sent to the hotline in May. – News On 6 – October 21, 2019 – (Oklahoma) - <https://is.gd/PTTFNJ>

29. “Body Found in Midwest City Pond Identified as Missing 25-Year-Old Man with Asperger's Syndrome” - The body that was found over the weekend in a pond near a Midwest City neighborhood has been identified as a 25-year-old man with Asperger's syndrome who had been reported missing earlier this month, police officials said. Police initially only said the body was that of a white male, possibly in his 20s. On Tuesday, police said the man was identified as Philip Manzi. – KOCO News – October 23, 2019 – (Oklahoma) - <https://is.gd/LGkjEM>

30. “Oklahoma County Agrees to \$12.5 Million Settlement Over Death of Inmate Left in Restraint Chair for 2 Days” - Officials in Garfield County in Oklahoma announced a \$12.5 million settlement over the death of an inmate left in a restraint chair for two days at the county jail, according to published reports. Anthony Huff was arrested for public intoxication on June 4, 2016. He was held at the Garfield County Jail, where investigators said he was placed in a restraint chair on June 6 and found unresponsive on June 8. He was declared dead later that day. – Fox News – October 22, 2019 – (Oklahoma) - <https://is.gd/TPdAaY>

31. “Man to Stand Trial for Alleged Incident Involving Disabled Teen at Care Home” - A man will stand trial for allegedly jumping on a teen while working as a caregiver at a facility for physically and developmentally disabled people. Tyler Smith was in court Friday for a preliminary hearing at the Beaver County Courthouse. He is accused of jumping on top of a sleeping 13-year-old and injuring the teen's head and neck while working at the McGuire Memorial Home in New Brighton. – WPXI 11 – October 25, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/mYgn8q>

32. “Agencies for Handicapped Sue Over State Regs Forcing Community Participation” - A Greensburg sheltered workshop that serves more than 100 intellectually challenged adults is suing the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services to overturn regulations that would force their handicapped clients out into the community at least a quarter of the time. The

Westmoreland County Blind Association joined the Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association United Cerebral Palsy of Central Pennsylvania (UCP), Associated Production Services Inc., and two families in the lawsuit. – Tribune Live – October 25, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/pkskOB>

33. “Former Group Home Manager Ordered to Pay \$26K+ to Union Co. Agency” - A woman who took thousands of dollars from disabled residents living in a group home she managed has been ordered to pay up. Rhonda Keisler, 53, pleaded guilty to four counts of exploitation of a vulnerable adult and two counts of breach of trust in July. Keisler received a four-year prison sentence, suspended upon the service of one year and three years of probation. – WSPA – October 22, 2019 – (South Carolina) - <https://is.gd/PVig4x>

34. “SC Inmates with Mental Illness Abused by Staff, Psychiatrist Tells Lawmakers” - Crawford testified Wednesday to the various abuses she had documented since her return to the women’s prison, including punishing patients who are experiencing a mental health crisis and using solitary-like conditions with incarcerated women with developmental disabilities or mental illnesses. Crawford testified that women at Camille Graham, which is located in Columbia, were being deprived of proper feminine hygiene products and mattresses when they reported suicidal thoughts or were experiencing a psychotic break. She added that some were placed in a crisis cell by themselves, and guards were ordered not to speak to them. – The State – October 24, 2019 – (South Carolina) - <https://is.gd/F9XVo1>

35. “Teen Loses Cochlear Implant after Being Tased” - A deaf teenager tased by a sheriff’s deputy because he couldn’t hear the officer’s command to stop. To make matter’s worse, when he fell, his expensive cochlear implant was lost. The teen was released when they realized there had been a mistake. – WATE – October 23, 2019 – (Tennessee) - <https://is.gd/aDwMgz>

36. “Police: Abilene Mom Goes to Bar, Leaves Blind, Autistic Child Home Alone” - Abilene police say a mother left her blind and autistic child home alone -- in feces covered room -- while she was at a bar. Cassandra Lima, 31, was arrested Tuesday and charged with abandoning/jeopardizing a child. – KTXS – October 22, 2019 – (Texas) - <https://is.gd/u05syz>

37. “Former Utah Deaf School Aide Charged with Multiple Counts of Child Rape” - Prosecutors filed 10 felony charges Wednesday against Tyler Agustin Jex, a former teaching aide for deaf children in Utah, alleging he raped and sexually assaulted multiple students. – The Salt Lake Tribune – October 24, 2019 – (Utah) - <https://is.gd/dBDsAC>

38. "Pendleton Woman Shot by Officers Near Burbank Pleads Guilty to 11 Felony Crimes" - A Pendleton woman who was shot by officers near Burbank after leading them on a high-speed chase in a stolen car faces up to 70 years in prison, prosecutors say. Amanda Warren, 38, was arrested for a string of felony crimes she committed throughout Walla Walla County over the summer. The next day, Warren snuck into an 88-year-old man's College Place home and tricked him into thinking she was there to clean. She reportedly told him to hand over his cell phone to call his caretaker, then brutally attacked him, leaving him seriously injured. – Yak Tri News – October 21, 2019 – (Washington) - <https://is.gd/CeiLlk>
39. "3 Women Appear in W.Va. Court in Connection to Disturbing Comments on Secret Recordings" - Former Berkeley County Schools special education teacher Christina Lester and former aides June Yurish and Kristin Douty were all in Berkeley County Circuit Court after their August arrest on a misdemeanor charge in connection to a secret classroom recording that [a student's mother claims revealed disturbing comments by instructors to students in a special education classroom](https://is.gd/fvXUDf). – WJLA – October 21, 2019 – (West Virginia) - <https://is.gd/fvXUDf>
40. "Madison Transport Driver Charged after Sexual Assault of Developmentally Disabled Victim" - 53-year-old Dwain L. Sykes appeared in Dane County Circuit Court Thursday morning. According to the criminal complaint, on Sept. 25, a Madison Police officer was dispatched to the YWCA Empowerment Center on South Park Street after an employee reported one of their drivers had been touching females inappropriately, and the driver was fired. Court documents state an intellectually-disabled woman said Sykes inappropriately touched her during transport. Surveillance video inside the vehicle supported her claim. – NBC 15 – October 24, 2019 – (Wisconsin) - <https://is.gd/bEQwDv>
41. "Worland Man Charged With 15 Counts of Theft" - The charges that have been filed against Randall Kent Schneider, born in 1963, are as follows: felony charges of one count of intentional exploitation of a vulnerable adult, intentional neglect of a vulnerable adult and nine counts of theft over \$1,000. He has also been charged with misdemeanors of reckless exploitation of a vulnerable adult, reckless neglect of a vulnerable adult and six counts of theft under \$1,000. According to an affidavit of probable cause, Investigator Kent Lombard was informed in July 2018 by Rachel E. Wade, an employee of the Wyoming Retirement Center (WRC) in Basin, that one of the residents in the facility had been the victim of financial exploitation. – Wyoming Daily – October 24, 2019 – (Wyoming) - <https://is.gd/DrNoWF>

GUARDIANSHIP

42. "Tampa Bay Area Hospitals Seeking to Strip Away Patients' Rights, I-Team Investigation Finds" - I-Team Investigator Adam Walser found hospitals in Orlando, Miami, West Palm Beach, Naples and other Florida cities paying private attorneys to file hundreds of court petitions to put

patients into guardianship. – ABC Action News – October 22, 2019 – (Florida) - <https://is.gd/5vWYQX>

43. “Louis and Katherine Kealoha in Federal Court, Expected to Plead Guilty” - The Kealohas are accused of defrauding banks, stealing money from family members and also stealing thousands of dollars from a trust fund of two children they had guardianship over. The Kealohas were scheduled to begin their bank fraud trial in January. But if they do in plead guilty -- which is expected -- and the judge approves the deal, they would avoid that trial. – KITV – October 22, 2019 – (Honolulu) - <https://is.gd/Q7Qlkn>

LAWS & LEGISLATION

44. “This Constitutional Change Would Make It Easier for Mainers with Disabilities to Help Questions Get to the Ballot” - A Mainer with a disability preventing them from signing a petition for themselves has not been able to help referendum questions get to the ballot in the past, but a constitutional amendment voters will decide on in November would change that. Mainers will decide Nov. 5 whether alternative signatures can be used to sign a citizens’ initiative or people’s veto petition. People with physical disabilities are already allowed to use alternative signatures on forms to register to vote, change political parties, or help candidates get on the ballot by signing nomination petitions or contributing under the Maine Clean Election Act. – Maine Public – October 20, 2019 – (Maine) - <https://is.gd/RGH6J5>
45. “Maine Gov. Mills Signs Executive Order to Prevent Elder Abuse” - [Maine](#) Gov. Janet Mills signed an executive order Wednesday to combat elder abuse in the state by establishing a partnership among government agencies to focus on the issue. The Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership, which will include officials from the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation as well as aging and advocacy organizations, will develop strategies to respond to elder abuse in both the public and private sectors, according to a [press release](#). – US News – October 24, 2019 – (Maine) - <https://is.gd/KcPEIB>
46. “Comerford to File Bill for Special Ed. Study, Awareness” - Now, the legislator representing that area, state Sen. Jo Comerford, D-Northampton, said she has already finished a bill and plans to file it imminently, that would require a state study of special education in each school district. In Massachusetts, the state’s education funding formula uses an assumed percentage to calculate how much a school district gets from the state for special education — state law says 15% of students are special education students, and they typically need about a quarter of a teacher’s time to be educated. However, it is also mandated that special education is fully funded. – Daily Hampshire Gazette – October 21, 2019 – (Massachusetts) - <https://www.gazettenet.com/Comerford-SPED-29536870>

47. “Lawyers Want Nevada to Ban Executions of Mentally Ill” - The American Bar Association wants the Nevada Supreme Court to rule that people suffering from severe mental illness should be ineligible for the death penalty. The national group of lawyers and legal scholars made the argument in joining an appeal challenging the death sentence of a man it says was mentally ill when he was convicted of the 1998 hatchet slaying of a campus police officer. – The Eureka Sentinel – October 21, 2019 – (Nevada) - <https://is.gd/C1YOpj>
48. “Gillibrand Bill Aims to Improve Hiring at 'Shocking Number' of Nursing Homes with Problems” - Sen. Kirsten E. Gillibrand on Tuesday proposed a new federal law to improve hiring practices at places where many seniors spend their last days. She cited a Senate report detailing widespread problems at nursing homes nationwide and also Buffalo News stories that revealed dangerous conditions for residents at several local facilities. The federal government publishes a National Practitioner Data Bank that many medical facilities can use to screen potential employees, but long-term care facilities are currently not allowed to access it. To change that, Gillibrand's bill would expand access to that data bank so that Medicare- and Medicaid-certified skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospice programs and pharmacies could use it. – The Buffalo News – October 22, 2019 – (New York) - <https://is.gd/6AF4Yz>

STUDIES & STATISTICS

49. “The Challenge of a Graying America” - The [Administration On Aging \(AOA\)](#) lists physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, financial abuse, emotional abuse, abandonment and self-neglect as forms of elder abuse. Older, frail, those dependent of other are the most vulnerable, and this dark side exposes that all too often elder abuse is perpetrated by relatives, friends or other trusted caregivers. – The Hill – October 19, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/nUYG3V>
50. “The Truth of Disability Employment That no one Talks about” - According to [data obtained by the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the employment-population ratio for people with disabilities was 19.1% in 2018, compared to 65.9% for people without disabilities. Although the lower rate among people with disabilities reflects, in part, the age profile of the population — older people are less likely to be employed — across all age groups, people with disabilities were much less likely to be employed than their non-disabled peers. – Forbes – October 24, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/yermfk>
51. “Skew in Neuron Numbers May Explain Sensory Sensitivity in Autism” - Loss of certain neurons on one side of the brain may explain why some autistic people are hypersensitive to touch, based on data from two mouse models of autism. Researchers presented the unpublished

findings today at the [2019 Society for Neuroscience annual meeting](#) in Chicago, Illinois. – Spectrum – October 20, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/Ps9Ym0>

IMPROVED SUPPORTS

52. “Atlanta's Fox Theatre Improves Services for Deaf, Hard of Hearing” - Federal prosecutors say Atlanta's Fox Theatre is improving the quality and availability of services for people who are deaf and hard of hearing. The U.S. attorney's office in Atlanta said in a news release Thursday that it had entered into an agreement with the Fox to resolve complaints about violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The agreement says the Fox has expanded the auxiliary aids and services for people who are hard of hearing to include closed captioning. The Fox also plans to evaluate the effectiveness of these aids and services and to explore innovative ways to ensure effective communication for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. – 11 Alive – October 20, 2019 – (Georgia) - <https://is.gd/w6kAE9>

53. “New Medicare. Gov Feature Shows Nursing Homes with History of Abuse” - Pinpointing abuse with a red hand. That’s the new feature Medicare.gov launched on Wednesday. It shows which nursing homes have a history of abuse. There are 43 different nursing homes in our viewing area. Eight of them have below-average ratings and two of them have been cited for abuse. Those are marked with an icon showing a red circle surrounding a hand in the “stop” position. Medicare.gov provides all the information you need to know about the nursing homes and why they have these poor ratings. – Wink News – October 23, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/OUafID>

54. “Ministry Focuses on Inclusion of Those with Special Needs” - SPICE, created as a parish program at St. Catharine's on the East Side 20 years ago, raises awareness and money for people with special needs in the more than a dozen parishes in the Columbus Diocese it now serves, Ryan said. Money raised for the program is used to help individual families or help parishes buy adaptive equipment or offer specialized resources. He estimates the program has raised more than \$1.5 million at St. Catharine's alone. – WVLT 8 – October 20, 2019 – (Ohio) - <https://is.gd/UE3lib>

55. “Preliminary Settlement Reached in Class-Action Suit Filed by Developmental Disabilities Advocates” - A three-year legal battle between the state and advocates for Ohioans with developmental disabilities took a big step toward conclusion Friday with a federal judge in Columbus granting preliminary approval of a [settlement agreement](#). Disability Rights Ohio filed the class-action lawsuit in 2016, saying the state was violating the federal Americans with Disabilities Act by operating a services system that makes it difficult or impossible for thousands of people to get the support they need to live and work in their communities instead of institutions. – The Columbus Dispatch – October 18, 2019 – (Ohio) - <https://is.gd/KxWchR>

56. “People with Disabilities are Increasing Their Ranks in Elected Office. But They’re Still Underrepresented.” - Nine years into State Sen. Christine Tartaglione’s political career, she was involved in a boating accident that left her with a spinal injury. Ever since the 2003 accident, as Pennsylvania’s only state senator in a wheelchair, she has advocated for people with disabilities and marked Disability Awareness month every October. – The Philadelphia Inquirer – October 20, 2019 – (Pennsylvania) - <https://is.gd/9NXDR1>

INTERNATIONAL

57. “Care Worker, 59, Rapes Grandmother-of-Eight after Wheeling her Disabled Husband out of the Room” - Simon Prodanovich, 59, from Springvale, Melbourne, had been in the aged-care business for a little over a year when he was hired by the daughters of the 83-year-old victim to care for her ailing husband, according to the [Daily Mail](#). On January 12, he entered the couple's Mount Waverley home and gave the victim's husband a sponge bath before turning his attention to the grandmother and offered to massage her legs. – Meaww – October 21, 2019 – (Australia) - <https://is.gd/0ok1DJ>
58. “Complaints on Aged Care Restraints Double” - The number of complaints around the use of chemical or physical restraints in aged care has more than doubled in 12 months. Human Rights Watch recently called for a ban on the use of chemical restraints to control the behaviour of residents with dementia. The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner Janet Anderson told a Senate estimates committee on Wednesday there had been 122 such complaints made to the commission in 2018-19, up from 48 in 2017-18. – 7 News – October 23, 2019 – (Australia) - <https://is.gd/37LgyX>
59. “Watch: Alberta Announces New Seclusion Room Guidelines” - “Teachers and school officials need to have tools available to them to ensure that students and school staff have a safe learning and work environment,” said Education Minister Adriana LaGrange as she announced new provincial standards and guidelines for the use of seclusion rooms, physical restraint and time-out, during a press conference in Edmonton Wednesday. – Edmonton Journal – October 24, 2019 – (Canada) - <https://is.gd/M204sL>
60. “Parents of Children with Special Educational Needs Attempting Suicide as Schools Lock Them Out, Report Suggests” - MPs heard “countless examples” of schools off-rolling, excluding and discouraging parents from sending children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to their schools – which has left some pupils waiting years for an appropriate school place. The government’s reforms are repeatedly failing young people with SEND as families have

been “thrown into crisis” and have been forced to “wade through a treacle of bureaucracy” in a system full of conflict and “despair”, the damning report concluded. – Independent – October 23, 2019 – (England) - <https://is.gd/pS4HVS>

61. “Violent Attacks Against Disabled People on the Rise in Northern Ireland” - Violent attacks against disabled people are on the rise in Northern Ireland. New figures obtained through a freedom of information request to the [PSNI](#) by charity Leonard Cheshire show a 25% jump in reports of violence against the person crimes on very vulnerable people. total of 53 disabled people told police they suffered hate crimes last year, with 40 personally assaulted and four of whom were targeted online. While reports have risen 10% on the previous year, the figures could be just the tip of the iceberg. – Belfast Live – October 19, 2019 – (Ireland) - <https://is.gd/DwS3zM>

62. “Caretaker Indicted for Abusing Elderly Woman” - The prosecution indicted Svatlena Lokianok, a Ukranian citizen that worked as a caretaker at a nursing home in Tel Aviv, for abuse and assault of a helpless person for acts against her 81-year-old patient, according to Ynet. According to the indictment, she beat the patient when she tried to move from a wheelchair to a bed and broke her nose and caused other injuries. – “The Jerusalem Post” – October 24, 2019 – (Israel) - <https://is.gd/gEvMvN>

63. “Disabled Isiolo Woman Delivers Healthy Baby after Rape Ordeal” - A young woman living with multiple disabilities was March this year raped at their home in Meru County after an unknown man broke into a room where she had been locked up by her grandmother whom she has been living with for the past 13 years. The 18-year-old woman, both mentally challenged and physically handicapped cannot talk, walk, eat by herself or hold anything with her hands and has to be attended to all the time. – Daily Nation – October 22, 2019 – (Kenya) - <https://is.gd/RLUmYb>

64. “Glasgow Care Worker Who Threatened to ‘Drown The B****’ in Vile Abuse of Vulnerable Patient Struck Off” - Annamaria McPadden, 37, was removed from the Scottish Social Services Council care register after a hearing earlier this month. As well as the drowning threat, McPadden said she wished the ropes on the hoist being used to lift the patient into a bath would snap/She also swore at the vulnerable resident and subjected her to vile abuse, calling her "fat" and "stinking". The Scottish Sun – October 22, 2019 – (Scotland) - <https://is.gd/VFYb2g>

65. “New Technology Helps the Deaf Enjoy Music” - There is new technology out of the UK that will help deaf people enjoy music. Twin sisters Heroda and Hermon Berhane enjoy dancing to music even though they can’t hear it. Heroda says, “I feel as though the deaf community think, ‘Oh what’s the point of even going to a night club?’ if they can’t hear the music.” The deaf fashion

bloggers can now feel the beat thanks to high-tech threads called the Sound Shirt. It's made by a company called CuteCircuit and uses special microphones and smart fabrics to provide touch sensation. – Central Illinois Proud – October 20, 2019 – (United Kingdom) - <https://is.gd/TtOOLe>

66. “St Andrew's Healthcare: Girl Locked in Psychiatric Unit 'Cell' to Receive Damages” - Bethany, 18, was locked in a St Andrew's Healthcare seclusion room in Northampton for almost two years. Her father Jeremy, from Birmingham, launched legal action to get her moved. St Andrew's, Walsall Council and clinical commissioning group and NHS England have apologised to the family. – BBC – October 23, 2019 – (Wales) - <https://is.gd/MROUBE>

MISCELLANEOUS

67. “My Family are Holocaust Survivors. I'm Terrified for my Disabled Jewish Son's Future in the US.” - Eighty years after my father's family searched for safe harbor, I find myself scouting the same thing for my son. Am I being prudent in trying to find safety for Noah, or am I mired in some kind of irrational panic, something heightened by what America has become in recent years? – Forward – October 21, 2019 – (National) - <https://is.gd/79OWBD>
68. “Autistic Middle School Student Tackles Stigma and Directs High School Band” - Caleb has been a star in the eyes of many since the school year started and he's made a name for himself. The band director at Whiteville High School, Ian Semanovich, said Caleb is one of the most enthusiastic students he's seen and he picks up on the music pretty fast. – WECT 6 – October 27, 2019 – (North Carolina) - <https://is.gd/qXDukQ>