



Informing Families
Today and Tomorrow

Summer 2022 Newsletter



Summer has been a long time coming this year, but there are signs that the weather is slowly improving. As the sun shines brighter, I find myself to be more optimistic about our current challenges and future changes. Before the end of the summer, the DD Council will be welcoming a new Executive Director. This will provide opportunities for new ideas to emerge. Growing and improving the Informing Families project is largely dependent on you. We need to know what you find valuable about this project. More importantly, we

need to know what is challenging and what is missing. We need to know what is important to you. If you have the opportunity, please let us know your thoughts and suggestions. This is the starting point for making meaningful changes to this valuable resource.

Brian Dahl
Interim Director, WA State DD Council



Relief from the Summer Heat

The summer months come with backyard BBQs, outdoor recreation, and fun in the sun! But summer months means summer heat. In Washington state, the temperature can reach up to the triple digits. DDA clients living in an in-home setting may be able to access a portable air conditioning unit through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). There is a limit of one AC unit per household.

For those clients who live in areas that are histori-

cally known to be impacted by smoke from wildfires may be eligible for air purifiers.

It is recommended to submit your request as soon as possible! When the weather gets hot, air conditioning is in high demand. If you are approved for an AC unit, your unit will be delivered to your home but does not include installation.

To learn more about the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) visit https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growing-the-economy/energy/low-income-home-energy-assistance/?utm_campaign=liheappluscooling&utm_medium=organic&utm_source=medium

To learn about where to apply visit <https://for-tress.wa.gov/com/liheapublic/map.aspx>



Summer in Washington is one of the best times of the year! With the beautiful weather and sunny days, outdoor enthusiasts are excited to spend time on the trails, beaches, and parks. Unfortunately, the majority and array of spots are designed for able-bodied individuals. Those who use a wheelchair or other assistive devices like walkers, canes, and crutches can have difficulty finding accessible trails to accommodate their needs.

Even though a trail may not be designated as ADA-accessible (though having that label as ADA does help identify), it does not mean that it won't be a trail for an individual who uses assistive devices. When looking for a trail, find one that

Summer Safety for Individuals

Heat safety, water safety, and more...

Summer is here and in full swing! For many this means days spent outside at the beach, going for walks, or swimming in the pool. Good preparation and education on good safety tips for individuals with developmental disabilities can help avoid health risks like dehydration, sunburns, and more.

Dehydration

Individuals who rely on care from others such as a guardian or caregiver may not be able to recognize when they need fluids. It is important to learn the signs of dehydration which can include fainting, headaches, fatigue, and more. To learn more on the signs of dehydration and ways to prevent visit <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/DDA/dda/documents/Dehydration.pdf>

includes a minimal slope, barrier free access (no gates), trails at least 30 inches wide, free of tripping hazard or stairs, and an accessible parking lot.

Check out these websites for local resources in Washington state for outdoor resources.

<https://rollingwashington.org/>
<https://disabledhikers.com/category/trail-guides/>
<https://www.wta.org/go-outside/seasonal-hikes/summer-destinations/ada-accessible-hikes>

What are the benefits of hiking?

Washington has nearly 700 different trails designed for hiking throughout the state, which include 3 national parks. While hiking is a way to relax, spend time with family/friends, and get in exercise it has many other benefits. Hiking has been known to lower risk of heart disease, improve blood pressure, and decrease symptoms of anxiety/depression. Hiking can also be an excellent opportunity to build relationships with friends and families around you.

Heat Safety

Summer heat opens pools, beaches, and longer days. But it does come with the danger of heat related illnesses including heat stroke, sunburn, and more. People with disabilities and/or people who take certain medications can interfere with the body's ability to interfere with body heat. To learn more about risk, prevention, and treatment visit <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/DDA/dda/documents/Heat%20Safety.pdf>

Water Safety

Water activities are many peoples favorite summertime activities. But being aware of mobility challenges can increase risk of water related injuries. Education can be an important tool to keep you and your loved ones safe. To learn more visit <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/DDA/dda/documents/Water%20Safety%20Care%20Provider%20Bulletin.pdf>

Supports for Individuals and Families Across Washington State



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Who We Are...

By Krista Perleberg

InformingFamilies.org is a resource provided by the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council, in partnership with the Developmental Disabilities Administration.

We offer trusted news and information to individuals and families that empowers them to be active participants in planning and building a network of support and opportunities.

Our advisory committee is composed of family members and representatives of DDA and other agencies and our Coordinators, often family members, themselves. They ensure that the issues we follow are relevant to the needs and interests of individuals and families—not just today, but into tomorrow, by offering tools and tips on planning for the future.

Coordinators around Washington state are available to provide information, tools, and resources, share and collect stories from individuals and families and in turn share with

our partners, and explain tools to help create meaningful lives for anyone impacted or concerned by developmental disabilities. Coordinators can also provide free information at your community events or through 1:1 chats, whatever your need may be. Informing Families is growing, reaching out to more and more families through social media, e-news, videos, and a large library of original content. To find a coordinator in your area, please make your request through our website at <https://informingfamilies.org/contact-us/>



Summer Meals for Kids

The summer meal program picks up when the school meal programs end. The program provides free meals and snacks to kids and teens under the age of 18 throughout the summer. All kids are welcome. No proof of income, address, or citizenship is ever required

If you have a question about Summer Meals, call the Family Food Hotline at 1-888-436-6392.

Find Sites Near You:

<http://www.parenthelp123.org/resources/summer-meals-program/>



**Need help
now?**

Call Help Me Grow
WA Hotline
1-800-322-2588

Free Resource Toolkit

If you are looking for more support than you currently have, check out the Informing Families free Resource Toolkit to help you identify state and local resources, support for family members, and ideas to connect with your community.

<https://informingfamilies.org/nps-toolkit/>

State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Developmental Disabilities Administration
P.O. Box 45310
Olympia, WA 98504-5310

Summer Activities Resources

Museums for All

For those receiving food assistance (SNAP benefits) can gain free or reduced admission to more than 900 museums throughout the United States simply by presenting their SNAP EBT.

<https://museums4all.org/>

Orca Cards

The Orca Card pass offers a convenient, more affordable way to get anywhere participating transit agencies can take you in the Puget Sound area.

<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/transportation/metro/fares-orca/orca-cards/lift.aspx>

Park/Discover Pass

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission offers the Disability pass to all Washington State residents who meet disability definition used by the Social Security Administration. To learn more visit the link below.

<https://www.parks.wa.gov/1207/Disability-Pass>

Farmers Markets

Farmer's Markets are great activities that allow you to engage with your local community. Visit the link below to find your local farmers market.

<https://wafarmersmarkets.org/washingtonfarmersmarketdirectory/>



DDA News and Information

**Get instant updates from the
Developmental Disabilities**

Administration:

- News and Announcements
- Provider Information
- Resources
- Training and Events!

How to Sign Up:

- Text "DDA" to 468311
- Visit dshs.wa.gov/dda and then scroll down the home page and click on the GovDelivery envelope and sign up link for news and information.