

# SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2025



## Organization Spotlight: Wise

Wise, founded in 1985, is a private, not for profit organization dedicated to expanding and sustaining employment opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Wise has launched their **NEW online platform REACH**, Recreation Empowerment and Community Hub. Learn more about the platform below.



**REACH**  
Recreation Empowerment And Community Hub

FIND YOUR **FUN**. FIND YOUR **COMMUNITY**.

**W**e understand that meeting new people and discovering new activities can be hard sometimes. The REACH Hub helps you find and engage in recreational activities – the fun stuff – that brings you joy and excitement. This online platform allows you to connect with others through an online platform and then take action in real life.

This community hub was designed in partnership with and for people with disabilities, with the goal of creating a space of inclusion at its core. Join us to discover exciting activities, connect with like-minded people, and access

resources to fuel your passions.

### ***Here is what you will find inside the REACH Hub:***

- **Discussions:** an opportunity to chat with like-minded people!
- **Videos:** Get inspired by real stories
- **Toolkits:** Resources to fuel your passions
- **Events:** Join live online experiences

### **Why Join REACH?**

Join REACH to discover new exciting activities, connect with a supportive community, (*Cont.*)

(Cont.) and access resources to help fuel your passions! On the hub you will be able to share stories, share ideas, and celebrate wins with like-minded people! This is more than just an online platform – it is a launchpad for real-life experiences.

This online platform is free to join and available on Google Play and App story. To download the app on your mobile device scan the QR.



Visit <https://ideas-wise.mn.co/> to access the hub on your internet browser.

**Stay inspired, informed, and involved – all while helping build an inclusive space together.**

*This project was funded by the Dan Thompson Memorial Fund Grant.*

## Free and Low-Cost Summer Activities

**L**ooking for fun, accessible, and affordable activities to do this summer? Whether you are planning for yourself or a loved one, there are many great options right in your community! Here are a few ideas to help you get started planning your summer fun:

### Community Centers and YMCAs

Local community centers and YMCAs offer a wide range of inclusive activities like craft classes, yoga, cooking, arts, and more. These programs are often low cost and easy to join. Find your YMCA at <https://www.ymca.org/>

### Public Libraries

Libraries are more than just books! Many host free story times, game nights, classes, and more. They are also a great place to learn about other events happening in your community.

### Museums for All

If you receive SNAP (food assistance) benefits, you can access free or discounted admissions to more than 900 museums across the U.S. This includes children's museums and play centers as well! Just show your EBT card at participating locations. To learn more visit

<https://museums4all.org/>

### State Parks Disability Pass

The Washington State Parks and Recreation offers a Disability Pass for Washington residents who meet the Social Security administration definition of disability. This pass provides free access to state parks and reduced camping fees. Learn more at <https://parks.wa.gov/passes-permits/get-park-pass/disability-pass>

### National Parks Disability Pass

The National Parks offers an "Access Pass" which is available for free to US citizens or permanent residents with a permanent disability. This pass may be issued to a US citizen or permanent resident of any age that have been medically determined to have a permanent disability that severely limits one or more major life activities. The pass provides admittances to more than 2,000 recreation sites. Learn more at <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/accessibility/interagency-access-pass.htm>.

### Local Parks Department

City and county recreation programs (cont.)

(cont.) offers specialized opportunities as well as programs for children and adults of all abilities. Check out your local parks and recreation department for events and programs this summer!

### Farmers Markets

Many towns and cities host local farmers markets, which are usually free or low-cost to

attend. This is a great way to explore fresh food, local goods, and connect your community! Check your local downtown association to see if your city has a farmers market.

To learn more and check out information for updated programs visit <https://informingfamilies.org/summer-resources-for-families/>

## Summer Nutrition Program for Kids



SUN Bucks, also known as Summer EBT, is a program that assists families in buying food for their school-aged children during the summer months. Families will receive a one-time \$120 benefit per year for each eligible child to help buy groceries during the summer months.

### Who is eligible for SUN Bucks?

Most children automatically qualify for SUN Bucks if at any point since July 2024 they were Enrolled at a school that offers the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program AND individually approved for free or reduced-price meals at school OR, Age 8-18 and a member of a household that receives benefits from the TANF/SFA or SNAP/FAP.

If your child is automatically enrolled, you will receive notification in June 2025.

If your child is not automatically enrolled, you can submit a SUN Bucks application. Your child may still be eligible if they are enrolled at an NSLP or SBP participating school AND living in a household with income that meets NSLP Income Eligibility Guidelines to qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

**Online applications for SUN Bucks in 2025 are currently open through August 2025.** Want to learn more about the SUN Bucks program? Visit <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sunbucks> to learn more.

## Travel Training Programs in Washington



Using public transportation can be an important step towards greater independence and community involvement. Travel training programs help individuals with disabilities learn how to navigate local buses, trains, and other transit options safely and confidently. While travel training may vary from county to county, most transit agencies provide an assessment, training, and a trip plan. The assessments will often be beginning by meeting to learn the person's strengths and needs and then work to provide a personalized support to build the skills needed for independent travel.

To learn more and see which counties offer traveling training programs visit <https://informingfamilies.org/travel-training/>.



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## Summer Safety Resources

Summer is the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors with your loved ones, whether it is swimming, hiking, or just soaking up the sun. As you plan your activities, be sure to stay informed about summer safety. Knowing the signs of dehydration, practicing water safety, and staying cool in the heat are all important. Here are some helpful resources:

### DDA Caregiver Bulletins:

- **Dehydration:** <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/DDA/dda/documents/Dehydration.pdf>
- **Heat Safety:** <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/DDA/dda/documents/Heat%20Safety.pdf>
- **Water Safety:** <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/DDA/dda/documents/Water%20Safety%20Care%20Provider%20Bulletin.pdf>

### Washington State Department of Health Resources:

- **Water Safety for Lakes, Rivers, and Beaches:** <https://doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/water-recreation/lake-river-and-beach-safety>
- **Extreme Heat:** <https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/be-prepared-be-safe/severe-weather-and-natural-disasters/extreme-heat>



### *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 <https://www.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.