



Coalition of Texans With Disabilities

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER, AUGUST 1988

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DEFINITION OF HANDICAPPED

Sunset Advisory Commission adopts Federal definition

The Texas Human Rights Commission (THRC) was created in 1983 to administer state law prohibiting employment discrimination. The THRC is undergoing sunset review, a process by which the Sunset Advisory Commission periodically evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of each state agency. During the sunset review of THRC, the sunset staff recommended that the definition of "handicapped" used by THRC be changed to conform with the Federal definition. According to that definition, a handicapped person is one who: a) has a physical or mental impairment substantially limiting one or more of the person's major life activities; b) has a record of such impairment; or c) is regarded as having such an impairment. This broad definition of handicap has been interpreted to include many mental and physical conditions without regard to severity. Attorneys for Texas employers spoke out against the third part of the definition, calling it "vague." Commissioner of THRC, Bill Hale, also made a point of stating that he would be satisfied with adoption of just the first two parts of the definition although (continued next page)

VIA TRANSIT PETITIONED

President of ACB calls for change in Via policy

Jerome Wright, President of the Alamo Council for the Blind, presented a petition with over 450 signatures to Via Transit Board earlier this summer. Wright was accompanied to the meeting by a number of consumer and agency supporters, as well as representatives of San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS). The petition called for Via to change its policy regarding visually impaired persons by allowing for consumer decision regarding eligibility for riding Via-Trans buses. The hope is that the Via Transit Board will adjust criteria and allow for more consumer involvement and decision making. Via Transit will be holding a public forum tentatively scheduled for October 27th, 6:30-8 pm, at the Ruble Center. For more information, contact Via Transit at 512/227-2020 or 227-5050.

DEFINITION continued...

he had previously stated that approximately 10% of the disability discrimination cases the commission covers fall under the third part. The Sunset Commission voted to adopt all three parts of the definition, thereby prohibiting discrimination on the basis of perceived handicap. The next step of the sunset review is for the staff to draft legislation which will include the recommended changes. While the first battle has been won, it is possible that the employers' attorneys will challenge this part of the definition when the sunset bill is introduced.

TRANSITION PLANNING

or is there life after school?

While exact statistics are not available, it appears that a majority of the students who exit special education are sitting at home or in other unproductive environments.

Transition planning is not a cure-all for this problem but it is a first step. Successful transition seems to be built on three components: (1) functional curriculum, (2) early transition planning by the student, parents/guardians and professionals, (3) availability of adult services. Each of the three is essential.

Planning for a smooth transition from school to community living needs to begin early, preferably by the age of 12 so that everyone is clear about the goal and has time to prepare for when the student leaves school. The student, parents/guardians, education professionals and adult service providers must all work together. This planning discussion should consider specific jobs of job training, living arrangements, transportation, personal/family relationships, recreation, health care, and other support services needed to facilitate independent living. The Transition Services Task Force believes transition planning should be considered when developing the IEP.

Early planning is essential because it allows the student, school, parents/guardians, (see next page)

TRANSITION continued...

and adult service providers time to anticipate and provide the necessary skills and experiences that lead to successful preparation for life after school.

While some school districts have established exemplary transition programs, and are to be commended, there is no requirement for transition planning. That leaves many students, educators, and adult service providers in other districts without the benefit of that planning. Many, many of the students who exit special education languish at home or in other environments, not working, not living as independently as they might because they did not receive the proper skills to attain employment and independence while still in school. This problem must be addressed on many fronts, but the place to start is in the schools with a rule that mandates transition planning. The Task Force will address this issue with the State Board of Education and appropriate avenues.

The Transition Services Task Force is authorized by CSSCR 123 and supported by funds provided by the Texas Rehabilitation Commission on behalf of the Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities and Advocacy, Inc. If you would like more information about the Transition Services Task Force, or for the Task Force newsletter, contact Mary Faithfull, Transition Services Task Force, 7800 Shoal Creek Blvd., Suite 171-E, Austin, Texas 78757, or call 512/454-1469.



An **Austin Grape Boycott Picketline** will be held every Thursday, Noon-1 pm, at the HEB in Hancock Mall (IH 35 and East 40th). Farm workers are asking us to join them in the grape boycott. Of the 20-30 pesticides being used on the grapes, 5 are known to cause cancer and birth defects. A 15 minute explanatory video, Wrath of Grapes, is available from CTD or the United Farm Workers (UFW). In Austin UFW can be reached at 512/474-5010. Other actions are gearing up around the state, contact the UFW representative in your area for details.

SAN ANTONIO

GERARDO PONCE	512/366-3075
WORK PHONE	512/224-6886
JAIME MARTINEZ	512/680-6519

DALLAS

SYLVANA ALONZO	214/331-2513
REG RUT	214/823-1139

EL PASO

VICTOR MUÑOZ	915/562-4747
MATT TAYLOR	915/592-4673

LUBBOCK AREA

STEVE MCINTYRE	806/293-2625
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HOUSTON

GENOVEVA DE LA ISLA	713/772-2771
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LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY

JUANITA VALDEZ COH	512/787-2233
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INSURANCE PROBLEMS

disabled individuals and families often face discrimination

Have you or anyone you know had trouble recently getting health and hospitalization insurance because you have a disability?

Advocacy, Inc., through a gift from the Justin Paul Foundation, has retained Carole Keeton Rylander, former member of the Texas State Board of Insurance, to conduct a study of the health and hospitalization (H&H) industry in Texas. We want to find out if families with a disabled family member have been denied H&H coverage on a discriminatory basis.

If you have recently applied for H&H insurance coverage, and if you were turned down for what you think might have been solely on the basis of a family member or yourself having a developmental disability, please contact Ms. Rylander at 512/499-3600 or write her at: Rylander Consulting Group, 2800 One American Center, 600 Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas 78701-3286.

The State Board of Insurance has agreed to help investigate this issue if we locate persons who would be willing to make a complaint. The complaints will be used to dramatize the magnitude of difficulties encountered by disabled individuals seeking insurance coverage. Ms. Rylander will assist anyone who would work with her in making such a complaint.

FYI

for your information for your information for your information

Business and Social Etiquette with Disabled People, by Dr. Chalda Maloff and Ms. Susan Wood, is a lighthearted and readable guide designed to familiarize nondisabled people with people who have physical impairments. The book is available from Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 2600 South First Street, Springfield, IL 62794-9265, 217/789-8980 for \$27.50.

A new brochure is available through the Texas Commission for the Blind called "How Bus Drivers Can Assist Blind Persons." The guide offers bus drivers suggestions on how to make bus travel easier and safer for visually impaired passengers. For copies contact Rolando Garza at 512/459-2612.

The Austin Mayor's Committee for Disabled Persons is now accepting applications from persons interested in serving on this committee. For additional information contact Betty Brown at 512/499-2210 or Gregory Snowden at 512/445-1030 (voice) or 445-0454 (TDD).

The Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities is conducting a Survey of Consumer Satisfaction with Developmental Disability Services. The Council intends to conduct 500 face-to-face interview statewide with people with disabilities or their families about their satisfaction with services they have (see next page)

FYI continued...

received. The consumer survey could be a very powerful tool for us as it will become part of recommendations to the governor and Texas Legislature for changes in the service delivery system. A volunteer participation form is enclosed in this newsletter.

UPCOMING EVENTS

upcoming events happenings conferences etc

United Cerebral Palsy Associations (UCPA) announces two upcoming conferences. The **Rehabilitation Engineering Conference** will be held September 14-16th in Columbus, Ohio. The **Family Support Institute** will be October 7-8th in New Orleans. For more information contact UCPA at 800/USA-5UCP (toll free).

El Paso Council of the Association for Children & Adults with Learning Disabilities (ACLD) is hosting this year's **Annual State Conference on Learning Disabilities**, November 10-12th, at the Westin Paso Del Norte. For more information call 915/591-8080.

San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) is planning a **San Antonio Candidates Forum** for Wednesday, October 26th at 5:30 pm at the Ruble Center in San Antonio. Federal and state legislators who are up for election in November as well as Bexar Co. commissioners will be invited. For more information call SAILS at 512/734-9971 (V/TDD).

WE THE PEOPLE...

ADVOCATES UNITE!

**The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities
11th Annual Convention
October 21-23, 1988**

at the



**THE WESTIN PASO DEL NORTE
El Paso**

- KEYNOTE SPEAKER JIM DIXON
- POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT RALLY
- OPTIONAL EXCURSION TO JUAREZ

FOR REGISTRATION INFORMATION CONTACT:

COALITION OF TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES

P.O. BOX 4709

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78765

(512) 443-8252 V/TDD



Join us at the corner of Texas and Old Mexico.



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Naomi Feil

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Gray Panthers
Austin Groups for the Elderly
University of Texas Institute
of Human Development
and Family Studies
Texas Health Care Association

Friday & Saturday
October 7 & 8, 1988

Joe C. Thompson Auditorium
University of Texas - East Campus
Austin, TX

Registration Fee \$40

AGENDA

Same Schedule for Both Days
8:30 - 9 am....Registration
9 - 10:30....Session I
10:30 - 10:45....Break
10:45 - 12 Noon....Session II
12 Noon - 1:30 pm....Lunch (On Your Own)
1:30 - 3 pm....Session III
3 - 3:15 pm....Break
3:15 - 4:30 pm....Session IV

Who should Attend?
Social Workers
Activity Coordinators
Nurses

Administrators
Others who live or work with
maloriented or disoriented
elderly persons
Public welcome

Rationale

Day One of this seminar is designed to assist health care workers and relatives of maloriented and disoriented elderly persons to restore dignity and to enhance empathy and trust in the relationship and acknowledgement of self-awareness of one's own aging through the understanding and application of specific validation techniques.

Day Two is designed to assist persons who wish to form Validation Groups and work with families, and teach these concepts to staff members.

Program Objectives

Upon completion of this workshop, participants should be able to:

1. define changes in old age as well as the physical, social and personality traits which tend to lead to those changes;
2. state the different stages of confusion and disorientation in older people and discuss helping skills appropriate to those stages;
3. list 10 specific ways to help maloriented and disoriented older people;
4. explain techniques used to implement Validation Therapy;
5. discuss successful aging, sevice-worker burnout prevention and how Validation Therapy can enhance the quality of life for older persons.



About Naomi ----

The dynamic **Naomi Feil** is a graduate of Columbia University, New York School of Social Work, as well as in film writing at the New School for Social Research, New York City, and The Herbert Bergliof School of Theatre. Her A.C.S.W. post graduate work is from the school of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. She is the executive director of VALIDATION TRAINING INSTITUTE, INC, script-writer, Films on Aging, Edward Feil Productions, Cleveland, Ohio. She is the creator of Validation Therapy where the interaction encourages the expression of empathy and trust rather than forcing the older person to accept reality.

Return to: Austin Gray Panthers, P. O. Box 49695, Austin, Texas 78756

REGISTRATION

YES, sign me up for the 2-Day Workshop, VALIDATION THERAPY with Naomi Feil

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ for _____ people.

Social Worker _____ Activity Coordinator _____ Administrator _____ Nurse _____
Other Long Term Care Professional _____ Family Caregiver _____ Other _____

NAME _____ PHONE () _____
FACILITY _____ POSITION _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____
SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

FOR FASTER SERVICE
CALL
512/458-3738

Registration fee includes both days for a total of 12 hours continuing education.
Late registration (5 days before seminar date) add \$5.
Refunds up to 2 weeks before seminar date, less \$5 processing fee.



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Dr. James D. Jones
Survey of Consumer Satisfaction with
Developmental Disability Services
Department of Sociology & Anthropology
East Texas State University
Commerce, TX 75428



Volunteer Survey Form

The Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities is seeking volunteers to participate in a survey of people with disabilities and their families. The survey is to help meet the requirements as set forth in the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (P.L. 100-146) in the preparation and submission of its Three-Year State Plan and a special 1990 report to Congress.

If you would like to participate, please send us your name, address, and telephone number(s). To help us in the sampling process, also please complete the questions below about the person with a disability. Individual rights to privacy and confidentiality will be protected.

_____ **Yes, please consider me and/or my family member(s) as volunteers in the consumer survey.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Zip _____

Telephone(s): Home () _____ Work () _____

Best time to call: _____

A representative of East Texas State University will contact you by telephone to schedule a personal interview at a time most convenient for you and/or your family member. The interview will take approximately 1 to 1-1/2 hours.

1. What is the age of the individual that has a developmental disability? _____ years old.
2. What type of disability(ies) does the person have? (check one that most closely describes the disability)
_____ a. Cognitive (mental retardation, autism, head injury, etc.)
_____ b. Physical (epilepsy, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, etc.)
_____ c. Behavioral/Emotional (mental illness, emotionally disturbed, etc.)

3. Group/Organizational Affiliation:

Please fold and send to the address on the reverse side of this page.

Thank you for your cooperation.