

ACCESS TO INDEPENDENCE

# APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER

## Program Highlight

Getting a driver's license is one of the most significant milestones in a person's life. It means freedom, independence, adventure, and responsibility. The goal is to make getting a Driver's license a fun experience while learning the road rules of defensive driving skills!

With the help of our Driving Simulator Rig, with 3 monitors a Beginner Driver Education Curriculum BDE (aimed to help students become the best drivers possible), and road rules (a guide to help students pass the driving test theory exam and road test), consumers will have a fun experience to obtaining their driver's license and open the door to independence, adventure, and responsibility.

Call us today!  
619-704-2430



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# APRIL IS AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

This is a time to acknowledge the challenges and celebrate the differences of those affected by autism. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental condition that affects how a person communicates, interacts with others and perceives the world around them. April's observance calls for acceptance and inclusion of persons with ASD.

Acceptance empowers people with autism to embrace their uniqueness, which boosts their self-esteem and helps reduce the stigma associated with this condition. Learn more about ASD.

- Approximately one in 36 children in the U.S. is diagnosed with ASD; ASD is four times more likely in boys than girls.
- About 50% of individuals with ASD have average or above-average intelligence, but only 21% of adults with autism are employed full-time.
- Many people with ASD have sensory sensitivities, such as being sensitive to loud noises or certain textures.
- Many individuals with autism have made significant contributions to art, entertainment, science, business and other fields.

## EMBRACING NEURODIVERSITY

Everyone's brain is different and develops in a unique way. Neurodiversity acknowledges and values these differences. No one should face stigma because they have conditions such as autism, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or learning disorders.

Consider these tips to help neurodiverse individuals feel supported:

- Encourage them to make use of their individual strengths in areas such as memory, mathematical skills, visual/spatial awareness or attention to detail.
- Recognize that people who are neurodivergent may feel misunderstood or left out. Be willing to listen to them and respect their choices.
- Make environmental adjustments (physical or sensory) so they have the tools to succeed.
- Communicate in ways that they prefer. Use instant messaging, texting or email with someone uncomfortable with telephonic or face-to-face conversation.





## **LEADING THE CHARGE – COLLABORATING FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICES 2024**

Moises and Ryan were in attendance at the 2024 Leading The Charge - Collaborating for Effective Services conference in San Diego. The conference featured a presentation by Dr. Saia, who explored the contextualization of disability, including its definition, societal understanding, and perception. Dr. Saia delved into the historical evolution of disability rights, culture, and identity, stressing the importance of altering perspectives and responses toward disability. The session aimed to highlight the impact of these changes on individuals, inclusive practices, and community access.

# Pregnant or been pregnant in the last year?



**Medi-Cal**

## **Pregnant or been pregnant in the last year?**

New rules give Medi-Cal members full coverage for one year after pregnancy. Care covers all medically necessary care. This includes doctor visits, prescriptions, mental health services, and more. Report your pregnancy through BenefitsCal or to your local Medi-Cal office.

# WE'RE HIRING

Are you ready to be part of something extraordinary? We are thrilled to announce that our wonderful organization is expanding, and we are on the lookout for passionate individuals to join our dynamic team!

## **Now Hiring:**

1. **Long-Term Services and Supports Coordinator (Location: Hawaii)**
2. **Information and Assistance Coordinator (Location: Hawaii)**
3. **Community Organizing Coordinator (Locations: El Centro and San Diego)**

**Why Join Us?** At Access to Independence, we take pride in fostering a positive and collaborative work environment. Our team is not just colleagues; we are a family that supports and uplifts one another. By joining us, you'll become an integral part of an organization dedicated to making a meaningful impact on the lives of those we serve.

## **Benefits:**

- Competitive salary
- Comprehensive health and wellness benefits
- Opportunities for professional development
- A supportive and inclusive workplace culture
- The chance to contribute to impactful programs and initiatives

**How to Apply:** Ready to take the next step in your career? You can apply for these exciting opportunities in two simple ways:

- Visit our Indeed job postings.
- Email your resume to [jobs@accesstoindependence.org](mailto:jobs@accesstoindependence.org).

Don't miss the chance to be part of our incredible journey! We encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds to apply. Help us continue making a difference in the communities we serve.

If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to reach out to us at [accessmedia@accesstoindependence.org](mailto:accessmedia@accesstoindependence.org)

Join us in shaping a brighter future! We look forward to welcoming new members to our fantastic team.



## 5 REASONS YOU SHOULD TRY AUTO PAY

In the age of digital convenience, managing finances has become simpler and more efficient. One such convenience is Auto Pay – a service that automatically deducts payments from your account on predetermined dates. While some may still prefer manual payments, there are compelling reasons why signing up for Auto Pay for your energy bill is a smart choice.

### 1. Never Miss a Payment

Life can be hectic, and with our busy schedules, it's easy to forget bill due dates. With Auto Pay, you eliminate the risk of missing payments. Auto Pay ensures that your payments are made on time, every time.

### 2. Save Time and Effort

Manually paying bills can be time-consuming. Auto Pay streamlines this process by automating payments, freeing up your time. Once set up, you can enjoy peace of mind knowing that your bills are being taken care of automatically.

### 3. Hassle-free Way to Manage Your Budget

Auto Pay can help you stick to your budget. By automatically scheduling payments, you can ensure that essential bills are paid promptly, avoiding the temptation to overspend or delay payments.

### 4. Secure and Reliable

Concerns about security are natural. Many utilities, like SDG&E, have strong security measures to safeguard your information. With encrypted transactions and authentication protocols, Auto Pay is more secure than mailing a check which can get lost or stolen.

### 5. Allows Flexibility

You have the flexibility to monitor your transactions and make changes as needed. You can modify or cancel Auto Pay at any time for your energy bill, online with SDG&E's My Account or on their app. Download SDG&E's app on The App Store or Google Play.

Learn more at [sdge.com/Auto-Pay](https://sdge.com/Auto-Pay) or enroll in Auto Pay now in My Account. Log in or create an account at [sdge.com/MyAccount](https://sdge.com/MyAccount) Consider also enrolling in paperless billing to reduce clutter and lower your environmental impact. Get details at [sdge.com/paperless](https://sdge.com/paperless).

**San Diego Gas & Electric**

## **Access to Independence is seeking your input!**

**If you are between the ages of 14-24 and have a disability or you are a parent of a child with a disability, we want to hear from you! Your feedback will help us improve our Youth Program to benefit our community in a meaningful way. For San Diego residents, visit:**

**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YouthandParentYouthSurvey2022TYR57K6> to complete a brief survey.**

**For Hawaii residents, visit:**

**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HawaiiYouthSurvey2022CQDL5NK>**

## **Access to Independence is Hiring!**

**Open positions: Independent Living Assistive Technology Coordinator Mission Valley, Program Manager Mission Valley, and Transition & Diversion Escondido Branch.**

**To apply, send your resume to [jobs@accesstoindpendence.org](mailto:jobs@accesstoindpendence.org)**

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