



# One Voice Brevard

1 June 2026



## Celebrating Every Mind: Lifelong Brain Wellness

by: Nicole Grabner, Director

Brain Awareness Month is an important opportunity to recognize the role brain health plays in learning, communication, behavior, and overall well-being, especially for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The brain is responsible for how we process information, regulate emotions, develop social connections, and interact with the world around us. For many individuals with disabilities, neurological differences are an important part of who they are, making awareness, research, and support especially meaningful.

Brain Awareness Month also highlights the importance of early intervention, therapies, mental health support, and access to services that help individuals reach their fullest potential. Supports such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral services, and sensory regulation strategies, and inclusive



educational environments all contribute to healthy development and improved quality of life. At the same time, families and caregivers play a critical role in supporting emotional wellness, reducing stress, and encouraging meaningful engagement in everyday activities.

Most importantly, this month reminds us that every brain is unique. Promoting understanding and acceptance helps create communities where individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are valued for their strengths, abilities, and contributions. By increasing awareness and advocating for accessible supports and inclusive opportunities, we can help ensure that every individual has the chance to thrive.

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# Water Safety

## Life-Saving Swim Lessons

by: Nicole Grabner



In May, we recognized Water Safety Month, an important time to raise awareness about drowning prevention, especially for children with autism and developmental disabilities. In Florida, where pools, lakes, retention ponds, and beaches are part of everyday life, water safety is not optional; it is lifesaving.

According to the Autism Society of Florida, drowning remains the leading cause of death for children with autism, and children with autism are significantly more likely to experience fatal or nonfatal drowning incidents than their neurotypical peers. Many children with autism are prone to wandering or elopement and are naturally drawn to water, creating a dangerous combination that families must constantly navigate. Florida continues to lead the nation in childhood drownings, with more than 100 child drowning deaths reported in 2024 alone.

This year, Florida lawmakers expanded the state's swimming lesson voucher program through HB 85, helping more young children access lifesaving swim instruction. The program provides vouchers for eligible Florida families to receive free swimming lessons and reflects growing recognition that early swim education saves lives.

For many families with disabilities, swim lessons are not simply extracurricular activities; they are critical safety interventions. Water competency, layered supervision, pool barriers, door alarms, and community awareness all play an important role in protecting vulnerable children.

While Water Safety Month is recognized in May, drowning prevention must remain a year-round priority. We encourage families, caregivers, schools, and community leaders to continue promoting water safety education and awareness so every child has the opportunity to stay safe, build confidence, and thrive in and around the water.

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# Summer Fun With Camp-2-Can



by Dr Joseph Werner, OTD, OT/L  
Director, Child and Family Services

The excitement is growing, and the summer fun of Camp-2-Can is about to start on June 8th at Child and Family Consultants in Melbourne, Florida. Every summer for the last 15 years, the Brevard Autism Coalition has provided a summer camp experience for children and adolescents with autism and other neurodiversity, that would otherwise not have the opportunity for an enjoyable and safe summer camp experience. Camp-2-Can is a six-week summer camp for youth ages 5 to 22 years staffed by experienced and enthusiastic counselors that return each year because they love working with the campers.

The specially designed Camp-2-Can is an opportunity for each participant to enjoy social and community activities with other youth to build skills and meaningful relationships with others their age. Camp-2-Can is and has been a haven for children and adolescents, and offers a range of activities and programs tailored to accommodate varying abilities and preferences. The camp focuses on a positive and inclusive atmosphere where campers can build social skills in recreational activities and explore their interests --the emphasis is always on fun. For most of the last 15 years Camp-2-Can has been the only summer day camp for children and adolescents with a range of autism disorders that is designed to provide a typical summer camp experience.

Camp-2-Can is once again full of fun activities such as bowling, water day, music, arts and crafts, movies, a field trip to Gleason Park in Indialantic, and Kona Ice. Child and Family Consultants will once again host the camp, and provide the fun and social camp experience our families and campers expect, while maintaining everyone's health and safety.

Camp-2-Can Dates: June 8 -12, 2026

June 15 – 19

June 22 – 26

No camp the week of June 29 - July 3

July 6 -10

July 13 – 17

July 20 – 24

Questions, comments, and camp registrations can be found at [BrevradAutismCoalition@Gmail.com](mailto:BrevradAutismCoalition@Gmail.com) and [www.brevardautismcoalition.com](http://www.brevardautismcoalition.com) or call Joseph at [321-768-6800](tel:321-768-6800).

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# More Dentists Are Not The Answer To Florida's Dental Access Crisis



by Ronald Elinoff, DDS, Jacksonville, Florida

(Reprinted with Permission from Floridians for Dental Access)

I have had the privilege of serving the public as a dentist since transitioning from active duty in the Navy in 1972. I have served as President of the Jacksonville Dental Society, a delegate to the Florida Dental Association, and an examiner in Gainesville for the dental exam, as well as a life member of the American College of Dentists, the International College of Dentists, the Florida Dental Association, and the American Dental Association.

When I started my practice in Jacksonville, the state was void of a dental school. We now have three, and yet a large portion of our population still suffers from a lack of access to high-quality dental care.

How is it that 66 of Florida's 67 counties, either in whole or in part, have designated dental health professional shortage areas (dental deserts)? How is it that hospital emergency departments are billing out one BILLION dollars annually for non-traumatic, preventable dental-related visits? Why is it that most school absences are dental-related?

The answer to the above questions is simple: lack of access to dental care. This lack of access often results in long wait times for dental appointments or traveling long distances in order to be seen. Those without reliable transportation often end up forgoing care and end up in hospital emergency departments when the pain becomes too great to bear. Even worse, emergency departments are not able to cure the underlying dental issues but rather temporarily treat symptoms with antibiotics and pain medication.

More dentists are not the answer, but authorizing dental therapists to practice in Florida is a key part of the solution.

Dental therapists are mid-level oral health care providers who work under licensed dentists in Florida as part of the dental team. They can provide the most needed basic care that many Floridians can't get: exams, fillings, and simple extractions.

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# Florida's Dental Care Access Crisis

(Continued)



Dental Therapists:

- Have 100 years of safe, high quality use in over 50 countries – nearly 20 years in the United States.
- Authorized in 14 states
- Pass the same clinical license exam as dentists for the procedures they perform.

Dental therapists graduate from an American Dental Association CODA-accredited dental therapy educational program and they even complete the EXACT SAME licensing exams as dentists for the procedures they perform.

According to a report by CareQuest Institute for Oral Health, more Florida children than any other state nationwide are utilizing hospital emergency departments for treating non-traumatic dental conditions and infections.

Floridians of all ages, however, are suffering from the lack of preventive dental care.

Another segment of our population that is neglected is our wonderful senior population residing in skilled nursing facilities. I am a past president of one of those facilities, River Garden. It is a 180-bed skilled nursing facility. For almost 40 years, I have volunteered one morning each month performing dental screenings. We have a dental hygienist who renders care to our residents one day a week. The majority of our residents are on Medicaid with no dental coverage at all. It would be a blessing to have a dental therapist who could perform routine services.

Our senior population deserves to be able to smile without covering their mouth because they are embarrassed of their teeth.

Dental issues are preventable and easily repairable if addressed early. By the way, it costs a lot less if treated early on and certainly saves lots of money to those who are funding the emergency department visits.

Florida's Dental Practice Act regulates all elements of the dental field, which poses challenges for providers to adapt to the evolving and diverse oral health needs of Floridians. In contrast to the medical field, where access has been broadened with the inclusion of physician assistants and nurse practitioners, the dental workforce in Florida has not been updated to allow mid-level providers to practice.

Please tell your State Senator and State Representative to pass dental therapy legislation. The public deserves better dental access.

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# Florida's Dental Care Access Crisis

(Continued)



## Dental Access: Myth vs Fact

### Myth:

Florida already has plenty of dentists

### Fact:

66 of Florida's 67 counties have Dental  
Health Professional Shortage areas

[floridiansfordentalaccess.org/myth-vs-facts/](http://floridiansfordentalaccess.org/myth-vs-facts/)

Do the math: Over 1,250 dentists would be needed RIGHT NOW just to close existing shortages. This number grows every day because Florida is one of the fastest growing states in the nation. Only about 330 dental students graduate per year from Florida dental schools.

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# Advocates Gather at Florida Voices for Health Summit to Discuss the Future of Health Care

by Nicole Grabner, Director, One Voice Brevard

Health care advocates, community leaders, providers, and policy experts from across the state gathered in Lake Mary in May for the 2026 Florida Voices for Health Summit, an annual conference focused on strengthening advocacy and improving health access for Floridians. This year's summit centered on the theme "Reclaiming Community in an Era of Change", highlighting the growing challenges facing Florida families amid shifting health care policies and funding discussions.

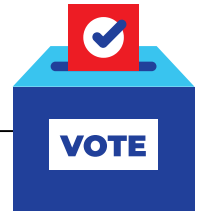
The two-day summit featured panel discussions, advocacy trainings, and opportunities for community storytelling focused on issues such as Medicaid access, disability supports, corporate influence in health care, behavioral health, and community-based care. Attendees included advocates from disability organizations, public health groups, health care providers, and grassroots community coalitions, all working toward more equitable and accessible health systems throughout Florida.

For many advocates, the summit served as an important reminder that personal stories continue to shape public policy. Florida Voices for Health emphasized the importance of civic engagement, education, and community organizing to ensure the voices of everyday Floridians are heard in legislative conversations surrounding Medicaid, disability services, and health care affordability. As discussions continue at both the state and federal levels regarding health care funding and access, advocates left the summit energized to continue fighting for policies that strengthen families and communities across Florida.

To see a recording of the summit and panels, please click here:

<https://www.fvhsummit.org/2026speakers>





# Your Voice, Your Vote

By: Nicole Grabner, Director, One Voice Brevard

The 2026 midterm elections are quickly approaching, and for Florida's disability community, this is an important opportunity to ensure our voices are heard. Decisions made by elected officials affect many of the issues that impact individuals with disabilities and their families every day, including education, healthcare, Medicaid, Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS), transportation, employment, housing, and accessibility. While presidential elections often receive the most attention, midterm elections frequently determine who will make critical policy and budget decisions at the local, state, and federal levels.

Brevard County voters will have the opportunity to participate in the Primary Election on **August 18, 2026**, followed by the General Election on **November 3, 2026**. Early voting, vote-by-mail, and Election Day voting options will be available. Voter registration deadlines, mail ballot request deadlines, candidate information, sample ballots, polling locations, and accessibility resources can all be found through the Brevard County Supervisor of Elections website:

<https://www.votebrevard.gov/>

Voters can also use the Voter Information Lookup tool to verify their registration, request or track a vote-by-mail ballot (it's important to note that if you had previously been registered for a mail-in ballot, you will need to **renew** that request for this election cycle), view sample ballots, and confirm their polling location. Every vote matters, and when the disability community participates, policymakers are more likely to hear and respond to the issues that affect our families.

One Voice Brevard will be offering educational Zoom meetings, a candidate engagement summer campaign (#MinuteMidterms), and a disability-focused candidate forum event (we will announce the date and location later).

Our first event will be with the Brevard County Elections, Tim Bobanic, on 29 June at 1:30 p.m. For those attending in-person, you will get an opportunity to ask questions and interact with a voting machine. See flyer below.

The flyer is titled "DISABILITY AND VOTING" and is dated "1:30 PM, 29 JUNE 2026". It features a blue circular icon with a white wheelchair symbol and three stars above it. To the right is a stylized American flag. Below the title, it states: "THIS EVENT WILL BE IN-PERSON AND STREAMED LIVE. TO REGISTER FOR THE EVENT (EITHER IN-PERSON OR ZOOM LINK), PLEASE EMAIL: INFO@ONEVOICEBREVARD.COM". On the right side, there is a circular portrait of Tim Bobanic, with a blue banner below it that says "SPEAKER TIM BOBANIC". At the bottom left, there is a logo for "ONE VOICE COALITION" with the tagline "EMPOWERING DISABILITY COMMUNITIES" and a silhouette of a diverse group of people. At the bottom center, the website "HTTPS://ONEVOICECOALITIONFLORIDA.ORG/" is listed. The flyer is decorated with stars and stripes at the top and bottom.

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# Minute Midterms: Small Chats, Big Impact

by: Nicole Grabner, Director, One Voice Brevard

## *Small Chats, Big Impact. Disabled Family Voices*

This summer, families, self-advocates, and community members are invited to participate in Minute Midterms, a statewide civic engagement campaign designed to elevate disability voices during the 2026 midterm election season.

Running from June 1st through July 31st, the campaign encourages participants to engage directly with candidates running for local, state, and federal office by conducting brief, disability-focused interviews lasting 60 seconds or less (two questions).

Families are encouraged to ask candidates questions about issues that matter most to the disability community, including education, healthcare, accessibility, employment, transportation, and Home and Community-Based Services.

The goal is simple: create meaningful conversations that help voters better understand where candidates stand on disability issues while ensuring elected officials hear directly from the families and individuals they serve.

Participants are invited to record and share their interviews on social media using the hashtags #MinuteMidterms, #MinuteMidterms\_DisabilityVotes, and #IncludeUsInTheMinute. (Be sure to also tag One Voice Brevard!)

Every conversation matters. A one-minute discussion may seem small, but when disability advocates across Florida raise their voices together, those conversations can have a lasting impact on public policy and community inclusion. Join us this summer as we remind candidates that disability issues are community issues and that every voice deserves a seat at the table.

\*To see example questions and for more information, check out our website:

<https://onevoicecoalitionflorida.org/advocacy>



# Family Care Council Updates

by Nicole Grabner



According to the Agency for Persons with Disabilities' latest pre-enrollment report, dated May 26, 2026, Brevard County has seen modest movement on the iBudget waiver waitlist, with the number of individuals in pre-enrollment decreasing from 534 in April to 514 in May. The Legislature reported that the current waitlist number is 16,285. The Legislature has allocated \$10 Million to help move more families off the waitlist.

Advocates in the meeting mentioned the need for educational opportunities for families to learn more about Medicaid, Social Security, and eligibility complexities. The Family Care Council will have a booth at the upcoming Family Cafe event in Orlando (12-14 June) for those with questions.

To register for the next Area 7 meeting, please click here:

<https://meet.goto.com/FCCFlorida/area-7-family-care-council-meeting>

To apply for services, please click the following link (the application is online):

<https://applynow.apd.myflorida.com/>

To see the newly launched “Roadmap to Family Resources,” click here:

<https://apd.myflorida.com/resources.htm>

To see APD’s newly launched Crisis Review Guide, click here:

<https://apd.myflorida.com/services/crisisguide.htm>

To register for the Family Cafe FREE Conference, click here:

<https://familycafe.net/annual-family-cafe/>

## Current pre-enrollment numbers:

Agency for Persons with Disabilities  
Pre-Enrollment Numbers by Priority Category and County  
As of 05/29/2026

County	Category 1: Crisis	Category 2: Transitions from Child Welfare	Category 3: Intensive Needs	Category 4: Caregiver Over Age 60	Category 5: Transition from School	Category 6: Age 21 and Older	Category 7: Under Age 21	Total
ALACHUA	0	0	2	0	0	46	78	126
BAKER	0	0	0	0	0	6	8	14
BAY	0	0	0	4	1	73	43	121
BRADFORD	0	0	0	0	0	11	11	22
BREVARD	0	0	2	11	0	299	202	514
BROWARD	0	0	0	5	1	665	856	1527

To see the full report published on 29 May:

<https://apd.myflorida.com/publications/reports/docs/Preenrollment%20Website%20Reporting%2020260529.pdf>



# Family Corner Celebrating Disability Dads!



As Father's Day approaches, we want to take a moment to recognize the fathers, grandfathers, stepfathers, and father figures who are helping raise and support loved ones with disabilities. Often, conversations about caregiving and advocacy focus on mothers, and while their contributions are invaluable, the dedication of disability dads deserves recognition as well.

Approximately 4.4 million parents in the United States live with a disability themselves, representing nearly 7% of all parents, while many other fathers are navigating the unique challenges of raising a child with a disability. Research shows that fathers of children with disabilities experience higher rates of psychological distress and poorer health outcomes than fathers of non-disabled children, and many are forced to reduce work hours or leave employment altogether to meet caregiving responsibilities.

Despite these challenges, dads continue to show up every day for their families. They attend IEP meetings, coordinate therapies, advocate for services, provide hands-on care, and celebrate every milestone—big and small. Whether they are working behind the scenes or leading the charge in advocacy efforts, fathers play a vital role in helping their children and loved ones thrive. This Father's Day, we celebrate their strength, resilience, and unwavering commitment. We asked a few what one thing they wished people knew about being a “disability dad”, and these are their answers...

“Traditional roles and expectations as a dad to ‘fix what’s broken’ and how they don’t feel safe. When the kids are young, the doctors always ask the mom questions, not the dads, and that’s hurtful. People shouldn’t make assumptions.”

-Tom

“Often, other people don’t understand the challenges and complexities that go along with having a child, or grandchild, with a disability, and how helpless it makes you feel as a parent or grandparent.”

-Jorge

“Being a dad with a son with a disability like autism still hurts me to my core, because as a father, I still feel that I should have done more. I’ve dreamed of seeing my son grow up to be the man I hoped he could be, but most of all the son who could sit down and talk to me. To see him, trapped in his thoughts and dealing with his frustrations, is one of my biggest torments, but he is still my son, my “Biggie,” and I will be there for him until my death. I’m a realist, so I know some things or most things might never change, but I can’t imagine how my son feels about all of this, despite his disability, he still doesn’t complain. Sometimes I sit by myself and cry, my tears represent my fears that society doesn’t seem to care, and I wonder how they would feel if the child were one of theirs? I have a saying, “No one cares until it’s one of theirs.” In my perfect world, everyone cares.”

-Bryant

# Family Corner Celebrating Disability Dads!



"Before becoming a dad, I, like many other men, dreamed of raising a son. Basketball, Taekwondo, and going to superhero movies flooded my dreams.

All that changed after the diagnosis and as a man, I had a new responsibility to ascend to.

Instead of coaching little league, I was thrust into therapy appointments, medical visits, changing diapers indefinitely, cleaning up constant destruction, all while trying to maintain my role as a husband and attempt not to lose the remaining sense of self that men are intrinsically bad at retaining these days.

Depression, anxiety, self-pity, fear and sorrow quickly replaced my formerly carefree jokester personality

Men in particular need a tribe and now any sense of that had vanished because of how isolated I became. Just me and my non-speaking son (who is awesome, my BFF). No more friends, less family gatherings, and for me, no more job

since I was physically best suited to dealing with many violent outbursts daily.

Gone for me was the idea of fatherhood which was guiding and teaching my son how to be a man. I do try to impart this anyways as I know it gets in there, but it is so disheartening not to see any fruits.

You have to learn how to be content with the time and interaction you do have. For us, it was wagon rides, park time, car rides, and more.

Also, you must become your child's cheerleader at therapies and let him know how proud of him you are when he does something he was "supposed" to do at 2 when he is 9. It may not be a home run in the traditional sense, but I've learned to see it as a grand slam and never looked back.

All that said, as a man in public with an unruly, screaming, biting child, you will become acutely aware of strangers judging you for not being a hard a\$\$ when your kid is having a tantrum in the store.

Even if no one says anything (they will), the looks, head shakes, and personal angst you feel not being able as a man to control the situation can bring on great shame us men usually don't experience.

Also, the first time you have to ditch a cart full of groceries and scoop up a kicking, flailing, and screaming child and rush to your car will probably get you followed by some wannabe hero who wants to make sure you aren't kidnapping your own kid.

Try and remember the world doesn't get this. They hear autism and think the Good Doctor, and wear shirts like "autistic AF" because they have been to celebrate neurodiversity while your hopes and dreams, marriage and life are barely hanging on by a thread.

Give them some grace, but yourself even more as you have been tasked with an unimaginable challenge that only the best of men can step up to."

-Shane



## Monthly Art Submission

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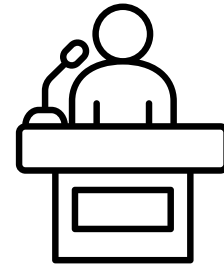
This month's submission is from Siena, who is 16. This piece uses watercolor and celebrates summer.

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# Bill Buzz

By: Nicole Grabner, Director, One Voice  
Brevard



After weeks of negotiations and a special legislative session, the Legislature has passed a budget of \$114.5 Billion state budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027. The budget has been sent to the Governor's desk, and he has the authority to sign it, veto specific line items, or allow it to become law.

You can check for updated information on either the Florida House or Florida Senate websites.

Some interesting items to note:

- \$4 million toward a machine-learning program that will help determine who is eligible for payments from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- \$10 million towards APD to continue to move people off the waitlist
- 1.3% rate increase for contracted Medicaid providers
- \$1.7 billion to Medicaid and KidCare programs
- \$1.3 billion into Community Action Treatment (CAT) Teams
- \$4.5 billion to Florida's School Voucher Program (476,000 students currently enrolled)

You can also check back on our website, <https://onevoicecoalitionflorida.org/advocacy>, for updated information.

## Father's Day

F	M	P	O	L	O	S	H	I	R	T	C	G	N
O	O	J	O	R	T	S	D	B	M	A	A	B	O
F	V	O	C	O	B	J	O	E	E	O	S	E	Z
D	I	M	T	V	J	C	U	G	N	I	N	V	K
R	E	G	B	B	Z	A	D	O	T	E	E	E	L
O	N	N	U	O	A	U	Z	N	O	M	A	X	Z
H	I	J	F	I	A	L	N	I	R	P	K	D	X
L	G	O	L	F	D	T	L	A	R	A	E	M	O
S	H	K	Z	F	F	E	P	B	Z	T	R	C	Y
X	T	E	X	R	J	Z	T	E	M	H	S	H	K
S	S	S	X	I	L	H	O	H	O	Y	Z	O	W
N	U	J	K	E	I	D	S	O	C	K	S	D	B
W	O	R	T	N	X	I	G	G	O	L	F	S	J
G	L	T	Z	D	J	T	P	I	Z	Z	A	I	M

MENTOR  
GUIDE  
FRIEND  
EMPATHY  
JOKES  
SNEAKERS  
SOCKS  
POLOSHIRT  
JORTS  
BEGONIA  
GOLF  
FOOTBALL  
PIZZA  
MOVIENIGHTS  
BOAT

\*To find who your State Legislators are, please see the Florida House and Florida Senate websites.

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# Bill Buzz, Part 2

By: Nicole Grabner, Director, One Voice  
Brevard

We still need help making phone calls, sending emails and sending letters to ask that the State of Florida, withdraw from it's lawsuit, Texas vs. Kennedy.

Governor Ron DeSantis Office of the Governor The Capitol 400 S. Monroe St. Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001	Attorney General James Uthmeier Office of the Attorney General PL-01, The Capitol Tallahassee, FL 32399-1050	
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I am writing to you today as a disability advocate to respectfully urge you to withdraw the State of Florida from participation in *Florida vs. Kennedy, Case No. 5:24-CV-00225*, particularly with regard to the claim seeking to set aside the Final Rule that protects the rights of people with disabilities to live and receive services in the least restrictive environment.

As Floridians, many of us rely on policies and protections that support the health, safety, and well-being of our communities, including individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, seniors, and other vulnerable populations. Continued involvement in this litigation raises significant concerns about potential impacts on critical services, supports, and protections that families across Florida depend on. Withdrawing from this lawsuit would reflect a commitment to protecting access to essential supports and ensuring that Floridians can continue to receive the care and services they need to live, work, and participate fully in their communities.

Thank you for your time and service to the people of Florida, and I urge you to stand with Florida families by withdrawing from this lawsuit.

Respectfully,

[Full Name]  
[City, Zip]  
[Phone Number]



\*To sign our Change.org petition, please click here:

<https://www.change.org/p/ask-the-state-of-florida-to-withdraw-from-504-lawsuit>

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# Bill Buzz, Part 3

By: Nicole Grabner, Director, One Voice  
Brevard

We could use some help sending calls and emails to your Congressional Representative as well as our two State Senators, Rick Scott and Ashley Moody, in opposition to H.R. 8736.

Dear **Congressman/woman/Senator [Name]**,

I am writing as a constituent and family member of an individual with a disability to express my opposition to the Restoration of Employment Choice for Adults with Disabilities Act (H.R. 8736).

While the bill is presented as expanding employment choice, I am concerned that it would weaken important protections designed to help young adults with disabilities pursue competitive, integrated employment. Specifically, the legislation would lower the age at which individuals can enter subminimum wage employment from 24 to 18, reducing opportunities for transition services, vocational rehabilitation, career counseling, and other supports intended to help individuals achieve meaningful employment in their communities.

For decades, disability advocates, self-advocates, families, employers, and policymakers have worked to increase access to competitive integrated employment and move away from outdated systems that segregate individuals with disabilities and pay wages below the federal minimum wage. Young adults with disabilities deserve the same opportunities to explore careers, develop skills, and earn fair wages as their peers.

As a family member, I want my loved one and all individuals with disabilities to be valued for their abilities and provided opportunities to reach their full potential.

We should invest in employment supports, job coaching, transportation, and workforce development programs that help individuals succeed in integrated settings, rather than expanding pathways to subminimum-wage employment. Florida has made significant investments in employment initiatives through the Agency for Persons with Disabilities and Vocational Rehabilitation, and I believe federal policy should reinforce these efforts rather than undermine them.

I respectfully urge you to **oppose H.R. 8736** and support policies that promote fair wages, community inclusion, and competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**[Name]**

**[City, State]**

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# OVCFL 2026 Legislative Platform



## ONE VOICE COALITION 2026 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM



### Health Care

- Protecting and Expanding Medicaid - Ensuring Floridians have access to quality, affordable health care.
- Standardize and update the legal definition of autism in the Florida Statutes.
- KidCare Rollout - ensure effective implementation of this benefit

Protect children with disabilities by ensuring the protection of OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs), OCR (Office of Civil Rights), and protecting IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.



### Education



### Collaboration

Bring collaboration and transparency to every aspect of policy affecting those with disabilities. It is imperative to ensure that our voices are heard when decisions are being made - Nothing about us without us!



[info@onevoicebrevard.com](mailto:info@onevoicebrevard.com)



[www.onevoicecoalitionflorida.org](http://www.onevoicecoalitionflorida.org)

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# Resources and Contact Information

- Brevard Autism Coalition; <https://brevardautismcoalition.com/>
- Angels Bridging Gaps; <https://angelsbridginggaps.org/>
- The Parker Foundation; <https://www.theparkerfoundation.com/>
- S.O.A.K.; <https://www.soakautism.com/>
- Down Syndrome Association of Brevard; <https://www.dsabrevard.org/>
- UCF CARD; <https://ucf-card.org/>
- Florida Developmental Disabilities Council; <https://www.fddc.org/>
- Project 10; <https://project10.info/>
- Vocational Rehabilitation; <https://www.rehabworks.org/contact/area3.html>
- FLAPSE; <https://apse.org/chapter/florida/>
- The Arc of Space Coast; <https://www.arcofsc.org/>
- Promise in Brevard; <https://promiseinbrevard.com/>
- Brevard Resource Center for Disability Solutions; <https://rcdsfl.org/>
- The Family Cafe; <https://familycafe.net>
- Family Liason Project; <https://familyliasonproject.com>
- Early Steps Space Coast; <https://spacecoastes.org>
- Family Care Council Area 7; <https://fccflorida.org/area-7-fcc.html>
- Bright Feats magazine
- Brevard C.A.R.E.S. Mobil Response Team 24/hour line (321) 213-0315
- Feeding Florida (food bank information) <https://www.feedingflorida.org/>
- Everything Brevard (resource website)  
<https://www.everythingbrevard.com/blog/guide-space-coast-food-pantries>




For more information or questions, please see our Facebook page.

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# Brevard County Delegation

**CONTACT US**  
**Brevard County Delegation**




Senator Debbie Mayfield  
District 19

📞 District Office (321) 409 - 2025  
Capital Office (850) 487 - 5019

✉️ [debbie.mayfield@flsenate.gov](mailto:debbie.mayfield@flsenate.gov)

🌐 <https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/S19>

📍 900 East Strawbridge Avenue  
Room 408  
Melbourne, FL 32901



Senator Tom Wright  
District 8

📞 District Office (386) 304 - 7630  
Capital Office (850) 487 - 5008

✉️ [tom.wright@flsenate.gov](mailto:tom.wright@flsenate.gov)

🌐 <https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/S8>

📍 4606 South Clyde Morris Boulevard  
Suite 2-J  
Port Orange, FL 32129

**CONTACT US**  
**Brevard County Delegation**



Rep. Chase Tramont  
District 30

📞 District Office (386) 278 - 1640  
Capital Office (850) 717 - 5030

✉️ [chase.tramont@flhouse.gov](mailto:chase.tramont@flhouse.gov)

🌐 <https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/detail.s.aspx?MemberId=4867&LegislativeTermId=91>

📍 Suite 201D  
5889 South Williamson Boulevard  
Port Orange, FL 32128-6110



Rep. Tyler Sirois  
District 31

📞 District Office (386) 304 - 7630  
Capital Office (850) 487 - 5008

✉️ [tyler.sirois@flhouse.gov](mailto:tyler.sirois@flhouse.gov)

🌐 <https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/detail.s.aspx?MemberId=4748&LegislativeTermId=91>

📍 Suite 206  
260 North Tropical Trail  
Merritt Island, FL 32953-4806

**CONTACT US**  
**Brevard County Delegation**



Rep. Brian Hodgers  
District 32

📞 District Office (321) 497 - 8200  
Capital Office (850) 717 - 5032

✉️ [brian.hodgers@flhouse.gov](mailto:brian.hodgers@flhouse.gov)

🌐 <https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/detail.s.aspx?MemberId=5064&LegislativeTermId=91>

📍 Building B #202  
2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way  
Viera, FL 32940-6605



Rep. Monique Miller  
District 33


📞 District Office (321) 497 - 8170  
Capital Office (850) 717 - 5033

✉️ [monique.miller@flhouse.gov](mailto:monique.miller@flhouse.gov)

🌐 <https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/custom/details.aspx?MemberId=4913&LegislativeTermId=91>

📍 Suite 5  
2539 Palm Bay Road Northeast  
Palm Bay, FL 32905-3534

**CONTACT US**  
**Brevard County Delegation**




Rep. Robert Brackett  
District 34

📞 District Office (772) 365 - 9230  
Capital Office (850) 717 - 5034


✉️ [robert.brackett@flhouse.gov](mailto:robert.brackett@flhouse.gov)

🌐 <https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/detail.s.aspx?MemberId=4870&LegislativeTermId=91>

📍 Suite B2-203  
1800 27th Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960-0310



Sign up for my E-Newsletter!



**NEED HELP WITH A FEDERAL AGENCY?**

For assistance with:

- Social Security
- The IRS
- Veterans Affairs
- Medicare
- Immigration/Passports

Call (321)-632-1776 or scan the QR code

**MIKE HARIDOPOLOS**  
PROTECT. INSURE. FULFILL.  
PROFESSIONAL DISTRICT



# June Events

## Alzheimer's and Brain Health Awareness Month

2026							JUNE						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
							1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				

- Community Playdate for children 5 and under, sponsored by Early Steps. Held every 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month. June's event is **Thursday, 26 June**, from 9 - 10:30 a.m. at the Children's Center, 5650 Washington Avenue, Titusville. RSVP required. See flyer for additional details.
- Down Syndrome Association of Brevard presents two Music Therapy classes. Class 1 is open to ages 11 and over on Wednesdays, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (closed group). Class 2 is open to ages 0-10 (open to siblings) on Thursdays, from 4:00 to 4:45 p.m. For more information, go to <https://dsabrevard.org/events/>
- Stars of Tomorrow Youth Performing Arts Group presents Disney's "Alice in Wonderland" at the Historic Cocoa Village Playhouse on **Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>** at 2 p.m. Attendance is free but registration is required. Contact Brevard Autism Coalition at 321k-768-6800. See flyer.
- Bazon Center presents a Webinar on "Housing Without Restrictions: A Key to Avoiding Homelessness and Institutionalization" on **Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup>**, at 1 p.m. ET. To register, [TinyURL.com/HousingFirst2026](https://TinyURL.com/HousingFirst2026). See Flyer for more info.
- Bright Path Education offers Home Education Co-Op for ages 5-12. Opened in January. See flyer for additional information.
- Art classes and workshops provided by Arts For All Studio, weekdays after school and evenings. Pre-registration is required. See flyer for additional details.
- The ARC of Florida presents an on-line forum about "Storytelling", with approaches that help self-advocates, families and professionals communicate understanding and real connections. **Wednesday June 3<sup>rd</sup>** starting at 12 noon. Registration required. See flyer.
- UCF CARD and PALS co-sponsor the monthly Brevard Community Connect, at the Field of Dreams, 3053 Fell Rd West, Melbourne. June's event will be **Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup>** from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. RSVP is required. Scan QR code on flyer.
- The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Cafe, **Friday, 12 June - Sunday, 14 June**, at the Hyatt Regency, Orlando. To register see flyer.
- PALS presents Summer Fun With AWA on Fridays in June: **June 5, June 12, June 19 and June 26**. Theme parks, escape rooms, museums and more! Registration is now open. See QR code on flyer.
- CARD presents Adults With ASD Forum via Zoom on the first Thursday of every month from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month from 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. June's events are on **June 4<sup>th</sup> and June 18<sup>th</sup>**. Registration required. See flyer..
- Join the NAMI Neurodivergent Support Group, on-line meeting held every 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month. June's meeting will be held on the **25<sup>th</sup> of June** at 11:00. Scan QR Code of flyer to register.
- CARD presents: See My Voice Art Mentorship Program. - 7-session mentorship program for artists with Autism. Dates are **Jun 1, 8, 12, 15, 19, 22 & 29 June** from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. at the Lake County Museum of Art, 213 Ruby Street, Tavares FL. See flyer for instructions.
- CARD presents "Preparing for Hurricanes" zoom, **Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>**, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.. Register through Eventbrite. See flyer for more info.
- Save the Date! Brevard Autism Coalition presents Camp 2 Can 2026. Camp dates are **June 8-12, June 15-19, June 22-26, July 6-10, July 13-17, and July 20-24**. See flyer for registration information.
- Save the Date: One Voice Helping Hands Conference, **Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup>**, Melbourne Auditorium, 625 Hibiscus Blvd, Melbourne. Watch this space for more information.
- Save the Date: The Parker Foundation presents Speak Through the Arts, Summer Session II beginning **Wednesday July 15<sup>th</sup>** from 5:30 - 7:00 pm at the Kiwi Racket and Fitness Club, 30 Tradewinds Drive, Indian Harbor Beach, FL. Registration through Eventbrite.
- Save the Date: Community Partnership for Kids presents the second annual Teddy Bear Picnic in the Park on **Saturday, October the 10<sup>th</sup>**. Watch this space for more information.



# Event Flyers



**Webinar** **CLPC** **BAZELON CENTER**  
Community Living Policy Center FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE

**Housing Without Restrictions:  
A Key to Avoiding Homelessness  
and Institutionalization**

June 11, 2026 at 1 PM ET Zoom CC  
Register: [TinyURL.com/HousingFirst2026](https://TinyURL.com/HousingFirst2026)

Sam Tsemberis Jennifer Mathis Domanique Howell  
Marcy Thompson Rachele Ellison Stacie Leap

**SEE MY VOICE**

**Art Mentorship Program**

Exclusive for CARD constituents [ages 15-30]

**7-session mentorship program for artists with Autism**

Only human-made art is accepted; no AI allowed.

**Dates:** June 1, 8, 12, 15, 19, 22, & 29  
**Time:** 2:30-4:30pm  
**Location:** Lake County Museum of Art  
213 Ruby Street, Tavares FL 32778

Artist: Nadia Bloom

Send 5 work samples to Gesa Barto at [Gesa.Barto@ucf.edu](mailto:Gesa.Barto@ucf.edu)

**LCMA** Lake County Museum of Art  
**UCF** Center for Autism and Related Disabilities **PALS**  
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA CENTER FOR AUTISM & RELATED DISABILITIES & THEIR SUPPORTING NONPROFIT PROVIDING AUTISM LINKS & SUPPORT

**NAMI** National Alliance on Mental Illness **Neurodivergent Support Group**

**SCAN ME!**

Every **FOURTH** Thursday of the month  
7-8:30 PM ET

The NAMI Neurodivergent Support Group is a **FREE**, peer-led group for any adult (18+) who identifies as neurodivergent or experiences the world in unique ways.

# Event Flyers

## BREVARD COMMUNITY CONNECT

Private Events for Neurodivergent Adults 18+ • The Last Friday of Every Month

### EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

**Social Connection**  
Engage in various fun and meaningful activities that **build connections** with like minded individuals.

**Skill Building Mini-Lessons**  
Each month comes with a different **theme** and focus for our group. Activities support social skill development.

**Groups for Various Needs**  
We **welcome everyone**. Groups will be thoughtfully organized based on support needs to create the best experience for participants. Separate groups will also be available for parents and caregivers.

*Show up as you are.  
Be understood.  
Grow & learn together.*

**Community shouldn't require you to mask who you are.**

**HUGE THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS:**

PALS  
 Center for Autism and Related Disabilities  
 MindshiftND.com/events  
 Autism Connection  
 Lotus  
 Diverse Coalition  
 Brevard County  
 Brevard Schools and Consultant LLC  
 Self Service

**Join our community!**  
Scan to fill out the interest form or visit our website for more information.  
MindshiftND.com/events

## Brevard Community Connect

# EVENT SCHEDULE

"SOCIAL GROUP FOR NEURODIVERGENT ADULTS"  
Ⓣ LAST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH

- 2/27 Connection & Shared Understanding
- 3/27 Advocating for yourself
- 4/24 Autism Awareness Month— Acceptance, Identity & Belonging
- 5/29 Social Energy & Boundaries
- 6/26 Showing Up in Your Own Way
- 7/31 Nurturing Connections
- 8/28 Community Growth
- 9/25 Navigating Difficulties Together
- 10/30 Halloween Bash
- 11/20 Friendsgiving
- 12/18 ALL Holiday Celebrations

*Sign up to keep updated on monthly event times and locations!*

MINDSHIFTND  
 DIVERSE COALITION  
 Autism Connection  
 PALS  
 Center for Autism and Related Disabilities  
 SELF SERVICE

## SAVE THE DATE

13TH ANNUAL

# Brevard Uncorked

## WINE GALA

AN EVENING OF FINE WINES, EXQUISITE DINNER, AND UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS

Diverse Coalition of Brevard

11.06.2026

6PM - 10PM

HOTEL MELBY  
MELBOURNE, FL

GOOD WINE. GREAT CAUSE. LASTING IMPACT.  
*Be there.*

## Autism Coalition of Brevard

# CAMP 2 CAN

## 2026

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
Registration opens on January 17, 2026

Summer day camp for individuals with Autism and related conditions

Register for one or more weeks. \$285 per week

ACTIVITIES	EVENT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building friendships</li> <li>• Learning and using social skills</li> <li>• Exploring nature</li> <li>• Sports and games</li> <li>• Learning various functional skills</li> <li>• Fieldtrips</li> <li>• Leisure activities</li> <li>• Arts and crafts</li> </ul>	June 8 - 12, 2026 June 15 - 19, 2026 June 22 - 26, 2026 July 6 - 10, 2026 July 13 - 17, 2026 July 20 - 24, 2026 *No camp during the week of June 29 - July 3

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
 BrevardAutismCoalition@gmail.com  
 www.brevardautismcoalition.com  
 facebook.com/BrevardAutismCoalition

# Event Flyers

*Speak Through*  
**arts**

**SUMMER SESSION II**  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 15TH 5:30PM - 7:00PM  
KIWI RACQUET AND FITNESS CLUB  
30 TRADEWINDS DRIVE  
INDIAN HARBOUR BEACH, FL 32937

FREE art clinic, all materials provided. Collaborative and individual projects with Buddy Ambassadors and team - Individual Art station, collaborative mosaic with Melissa!

Open to children, teens and young adults with ASD's and special needs and their siblings. Parent/caregiver must stay on site. Space is limited: Register through Eventbrite separately for each session; please cancel registration if you are unable to attend.

<https://artjuly.eventbrite.com>

the parker foundation  
for Autism and Child Development

BRIGHT PATH EDUCATION  
IS NOW OFFERING:  
**A HOME EDUCATION  
CO-OP**

A small group environment for  
students with disabilities &  
learning differences



**DETAILS:**

- Academic & Social supports
- Monday- Thursday 8:00-2:00pm
- Fun Friday option available for those interested
- Accepting Scholarships & Private pay options
- 6:1 ratio
- Led by certified teachers & behavior technicians
- OT & Speech Language services can be contracted through local collaborative agencies

**OPENING IN JANUARY**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
(321) 307-8240  
1240 Rockledge Blvd, Suite 6  
Rockledge, FL  
BrightPathEducation2025@gmail.com

**AGES 5-12**

**dsdb** DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF BREVARD

**Florida** MUSIC THERAPY

**MUSIC THERAPY**

*Class 1:*  
**MUSIC MEET UP AGES 11+**  
WED. 5-6PM (CLOSED GROUP)

*Class 2:*  
**LITTLE MELODIES AGES 0-10**  
THURS. 4-4:45PM (OPEN TO SIBS)

**Arts for All STUDIO**  
ART CLASSES & WORKSHOPS AT THE STUDIO  
STARTING in JANUARY

**Mondays**  
Afterschool Art 4:00-4:45pm  
Mixed Media Art Class for Kids ages 5 and Up  
Advanced After School Art 5:00-6:00pm  
Mixed Media Art Class for Kids ages 11 and Up

**Tuesdays**  
Meet the Masters 12:30-1:30pm  
Mixed Media Art Class with projects inspired by the masters and contemporary artists.

**Mixed Media Arts 1:30-2:30pm**  
Explore Different Mediums and increase skills to use them as an artist

**Wednesdays**  
Express Yourself (Teen Art Class) 7:00-8:30pm  
Teen art class for students to explore and improve art skills in various mediums

**Fridays**  
Able Artists Kids 9:30-10:15  
Multimedia exploratory art class for neurodivergent kids  
Able Artists Teens 10:15-11:00am  
Multimedia exploratory art class for neurodivergent Teens  
Graphic Design 11:30am-12noon  
Intro to Graphic Design taught by EFSC Professor in the Advanced Technologies Department  
Intro To Adobe for Design 12:30-2pm  
Software subscription required. Bring your own computer and learn intro level skills for Adobe Photoshop, Indesign and Illustrator. taught by EFSC Professor in the Advanced Technologies Department

More Details Coming Soon on our Website Calendar and Facebook Events  
Pre-registration is required \* Spaces are limited  
If you have any questions, feel free to call or text: Barbara Finneran at Arts for All Studio at 321- 749-9808.  
Or email us at [atsforallstudio@gmail.com](mailto:atsforallstudio@gmail.com)

**ART CLASSES & WORKSHOPS**

**Come Join the Creative Fun!**



Scan the QR below to go to our Calendar. Scroll to Research Note and Register for Workshop of Choice

# Event Flyers



**PALS**  
ADVENTURES WITH AUTISM  
SUMMER 2026

## MORE PALS FUN THIS SUMMER WITH AWA!

**FUN FRIDAYS**

- JUNE 5** International Drive
- JUNE 12** Disney Springs
- JUNE 19** Sea World
- JUNE 26** Universal Islands of Adventure

Theme parks, escape rooms, museums, and more!

**REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!**



## SAVE THE DATE

# STORYTELLING

### ADVOCACY MEETING

Wednesday, June 3 at 12 noon EST

Learn powerful yet simple approaches to **Storytelling** that help self-advocates, families, and professionals communicate in ways that create understanding and real connections. Join an engaging session filled with practical tools, compelling techniques, and ideas you can start using right away.

**Tom Hobbs**, known as "The Man in the Hat," is the Co-Founder of **Showing Our Strengths Publications** and **Journey Book Stories**, will discuss real-world advocacy tools to make communication easier.

The Arc



One Voice Helping Hands Conference

**Keynote Speaker**  
**Robert "Bob" Asztalos**  
Director, Agency for Person's with Disabilities

29 August 2026  
Melbourne Auditorium  
625 E. Hibiscus Blvd., Melbourne, FL

ONE VOICE COALITION  
EMPOWERING DISABILITY COMMUNITIES

Autism Coalition



SAVE the DATE

AUGUST 29, 2026  
MELBOURNE AUDITORIUM  
625 E. HIBISCUS BLVD. MELBOURNE

ONE VOICE COALITION  
EMPOWERING DISABILITY COMMUNITIES

Autism Coalition

# Event Flyers



**Center for Autism and Related Disabilities**  
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

## ADULTS WITH ASD FORUM

1st Thursday of Every Month  
3:00PM-4:00PM

3rd Thursday of Every Month  
7:00PM-8:00PM

January - June  
via ZOOM

This forum is designed as a safe space for adults with ASD to practice social skills.

To register scan the QR code or use this link:

Please contact your ASD Specialist for the registration password for this event.



**Center for Autism and Related Disabilities**  
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

## Preparing for Hurricanes

Tips for hunkering down with ASD during the storm

Wednesday, June 10th From 6:30 pm- 8:00 pm

Location - ZOOM

Hurricane Season is here. Join us to learn more how you can be prepared for the storms ahead.

<https://hp626.eventbrite.com>

Register Now through EventBrite



**Center for Autism and Related Disabilities**  
UCF

## Breathe and Be: A Mindfulness Skill Lab

1st Monday of Every Month: 6:30-7:30PM  
via Zoom

Monthly meeting to include a 30-minute didactic lesson followed by mindful practice for the month.

To register, scan the QR code or use this link:

<https://bnb22026.eventbrite.com>



# Event Flyers



**Become a Partner**

[APPLY NOW](#)

**Apply by: June 30, 2026**

Partners participate in advocacy skill workshops and leadership training by national experts.

**Benefits to Partners:**

- Proven**  
Learn strategies proven to effectively develop and change public policy & laws.
- Professional**  
Speakers are internationally recognized and personally interact with all participants.

[fddc.org/partners-in-policymaking](https://fddc.org/partners-in-policymaking)



**Stars of Tomorrow**  
Youth Performing Arts Group

Disney  
**Alice in Wonderland Jr.**  
Musik Theatre International (MTI)



Community Pathways for Kids

Save the Date

• 2ND ANNUAL •

**Teddy Bear Picnic**

Join us for an afternoon of community, connection, and family fun!

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup>**

More details coming soon!



**FLORIDA YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM**

We encourage you to apply for an engaging and transformative Forum.

July 7-11, 2026  
Florida State University - Tallahassee, Florida

Are you a student (ages 15-21) with a disability enrolled in a high school, college, or homeschool program?

Would you like to develop or improve your leadership and self-advocacy skills?

Wondering what it's like to transition to college, employment, and/or independent living?

Then the Florida Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is for you!

For more information and applications, please scan the QR code, visit <https://floridasilc.org/youth-committee/> or contact Sarah Goldman at [sarah@floridasilc.org](mailto:sarah@floridasilc.org)