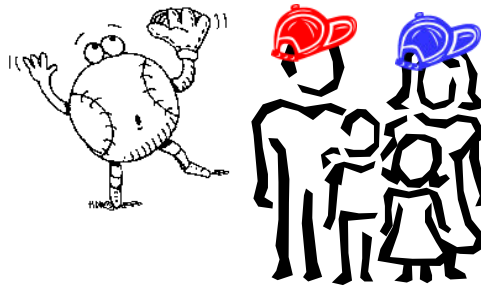


May/June
2022

Lehigh & Northampton OBSERVER



*The Arc of Lehigh and
Northampton Counties.*

Telephone:

610-849-8076

www.arcoflehighnorthampton.org

Published six times a year to inform persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families and the community about intellectual disability services in Lehigh and Northampton Counties.

Important reminder for FD/FSS participants The current fiscal year ends June 30, 2022. If you or a family member receives a Family Driven/Family Support Services (FD/FSS) allocation, there are deadlines to submit vouchers/invoices to Easter Seals.

Northampton County FSS participant vouchers: 4:30 PM Friday, July 15.

Lehigh County FSS participant invoices: 4:30 PM Friday, July 15.

Only vouchers/invoices for services or purchases made within the last 6 months can be reimbursed. You can mail or personally deliver invoices to Easter Seals, 1501 Lehigh Street, Allentown, PA 18103.

Post Mark cannot be used to document cooperation with the deadlines.

Dear Families, Friends and Colleagues:

Summer is coming and so is the state budget for 2022-2023. As stated in the [2022-23 Budget in Brief](#), this year's budget proposes to move 732 individuals with an intellectual disability and/or autism from the emergency waitlist into the Community Living waiver and 100 individuals into the Consolidated Waiver.

The budget also includes a proposal that the Department of Human Services (DHS) invest in increased provider rates and program enhancements that will allow individuals to live safely in their community. In response to the pandemic-related staffing shortages and opportunities provided by these federal funds, DHS refreshed rates for providers of developmental disabilities services, including a built-in minimum hourly wage assumption of \$15 an hour for a worker with a high school diploma.

The budget proposal includes a \$1.55 billion increase in basic education and a \$200 million increase in Special Education Funding.

A copy of the Governor's proposed budget, along with a summary of the budget is available to download by visiting www.budget.state.pa.us.

As always, the budget goes through changes between now and when it is finally approved. The best way to determine how next year's budget might affect you, your family, and people you support, is to stay informed and to let your state representatives know what is important.

Bob Madelon

Inside this issue:

Lehigh County FD/FSS	2
Northampton County FD/FSS	3
Celebration Awards	4
School District Updates	5
Zoom Workshops	6
Everyday Lives Conference	7
Things to do	8—9
News to use	10—11

If you or someone in your family participates in the Lehigh County Family Driven/Family Support (FD/FSS) program, you will receive information for the upcoming fiscal year soon. The new fiscal year starts July 1, 2022 and goes through June 30, 2023.

Fiscal Year End Deadline

- The deadline for Lehigh County FD/FSS invoices from January 1 through June 30, 2022 is July 15. Invoices must be delivered to Easter Seals by 4:30 PM. Call Easter Seals at 610-289-0114 if you have questions about office hours, bad weather or holiday closures.
- Allocations for each participant will be renewed through the ISP process. Participants will receive confirmation and the new year's guidelines in the mail and through email.
- Invoices submitted more than 180 days after the service or purchase cannot be paid.

Important Features

- 1) Participants have access to their entire allocation throughout next fiscal year.
- 2) Occasionally participant's families ask who is eligible to provide Family Aide and Respite service. Here are basic requirements:
 - Family Aide and Respite services cannot be provided by anyone living at the same address as the FD/FSS participant.
 - Family Aide and Respite services can be provided by family members.
 - Family Aide service can be provided by someone age 14 or over as long as they do not live with the participant.
 - Respite service can be provided by someone age 18 or over as long as they do not live with the participant.
2. Funds left over from one fiscal year do not carry over to the next year.
3. Receipts for items purchased must accompany all invoices, except for family aide and respite services. A contact person or the FD/FSS participant must sign every invoice.
4. Respite and family aide providers are paid directly by Easter Seals. The IRS considers all income related to providing family aide or respite service reportable income.
 - ➔ Providers of family aide and respite service must sign each invoice and provide a social security number.
 - ➔ Activity logs must accompany invoices for respite and family aide services.
 - ➔ If a family aide or respite provider earns more than \$600 in the calendar year, Easter Seals will send them a 1099 form showing earnings for income tax.
 - ➔ If a provider earns less than \$600 in a calendar year, they are responsible to report the income.
- 8) Request for Innovative Service: If you need services beyond normal limits of the FD/FSS program (like family aide service more than 4 times in a month), you will need an approved request for innovative service.
 - ➔ Contact your Support Coordinator to begin the process for innovative service requests.
 - ➔ Requests for innovative services must be reviewed and approved before you make a purchase or use a service.
 - ➔ There is no guarantee requests for innovative services will be approved. Each request is reviewed individually and may be approved or denied, based on the regulations.
- 9) Appeals: Lehigh County Intellectual Disabilities Program developed a process to make an appeal when a request or invoice is denied. You can access the appeals process through your supports coordinator.

Please contact Bob Madden, Lehigh County FD/FSS Coordinator if you have questions or concerns about the program. Phone: 610-849-8076 (ext. 317) or email: bmadden@arcoflehighnorthampton.org

If you or someone you support participates in the Northampton County Family Driven/Family Support (FD/FSS) program, please take note of the following information.

Program Enrollment

The new fiscal year starts July 1, 2022. Participants are enrolled in Northampton County's FD/FSS program through their Supports Coordinator. FD/FSS funding is written into each participant's ISP.

Important Features

- A contact person or the FD/FSS participant must sign every voucher.
- Any unused funds from Fiscal Year 21-22 do not carry over to the 22-23 fiscal year.
- Eligible services include: Recreation, Respite, Family Aide, Family Education, and Camp.
- **Request for Innovative Service:** To use services beyond normal limits of the FD/FSS program, you will need an approved request for innovative service. Contact your Support Coordinator to begin the process for requests for innovative service.
- Requests for innovative services must be reviewed and approved before you make a purchase or use a service.
- There is no guarantee requests for innovative services will be approved. Each request is reviewed individually and may be approved or denied, based on the regulations.

FD/FSS program limitations

- FD/FSS funds may not be utilized to purchase gift cards of any type.
- People who live at the same address as the individual receiving supports cannot be paid to provide respite or family aide services.
- Easter Seals cannot pay vouchers received more than 180 days (6 months) past the date of purchase or service.
- Receipts for allowable items purchased must accompany all vouchers, except for family aide and respite services. Activity logs must accompany vouchers for respite and family aide services.
- Respite and family aide caregivers are paid directly by Easter Seals. Caregivers must sign and provide their Social Security Number on each voucher for those services.

Deadlines

- The deadline to submit vouchers from January 1 through June 30, 2022 is July 13, 2022. Vouchers must be delivered to Easter Seals by 4:30 PM.
- **Individuals may request transferring funds to the second half of the fiscal year (1/1/2023-6/30/2023).**
- Requests to move first half-year funds to the second half need to be made to Supports Coordinators by November 15, 2022 for carryover consideration.
- The deadline to submit vouchers from July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 is January 13, 2023.
- To observe deadlines, vouchers must be received by the Easter Seals office during normal business hours Monday – Friday 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM—except holidays or other office closures. Call Easter Seals office at 610-289-0114 if you have questions about office hours, bad weather or holiday closures.
- Invoices are accepted into Easter Seals based on the date they arrive in the office. Families can mail vouchers; a postmark will not be used to determine cooperation with deadlines.

Contact the FD/FSS program participant's Support Coordinator for questions, assistance with invoices or to make a Request for Innovative Service.

Every March, the Celebration Awards Committee stages an event to honor accomplishments and progress for individuals with developmental disabilities. This year's event was March 23th broadcast via the Zoom platform.

Even though we could not have the traditional luncheon, we had close to 70 people attend the event. The Zoom included an inspiring keynote by Zac Hicks, Board Member for The Arc of PA. A great big THANK YOU to Zac, our Master of Ceremonies, Will Zimpfer, the honorees and people who love & support them.

The Celebration Awards Committee would like to congratulate honorees from Northampton and Lehigh Counties.

Nomination		County
Tyler Brown	Education Achievement	Northampton County
Megan Bickel	Employment Achievement	Northampton County
Barbie Halpin	Exemplary Citizenship	Northampton County
Jiaire Graf	Personal Achievement	Northampton County
Patrick Werkheiser	Self-Advocacy Achievement	Northampton County
Darren Nierer	Transition Achievement	Northampton County
Kaylie Lawson	Education Achievement	Lehigh County
Barry Hausman	Employment Achievement	Lehigh County
Michael Lewis	Exemplary Citizenship	Lehigh County
Kimberly Lagala	Personal Achievement	Lehigh County
Gregory Jackson	Self-Advocacy Achievement	Lehigh County
Elaine Rittoper	Transition Achievement	Lehigh County



School Districts across Lehigh and Northampton Counties continue updating information on safe ways to provide education to students. This is a developing situation that needs regular monitoring.

Please find a listing and links to public schools in Lehigh and Northampton Counties below. School district links contain information on school district safety plans and other important topics.

LEHIGH COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

[Allentown School District](http://www.allentownsd.org); www.allentownsd.org

[Bethlehem Area School District](http://www.basdschools.org); www.basdschools.org

[Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21](http://www.cliu.org); www.cliu.org

[Catasauqua School District](http://www.cattysd.org); www.cattysd.org

[East Penn School District](http://www.eastpennsd.org); www.eastpennsd.org

[Northern Lehigh School District](http://www.nlsd.org); www.nlsd.org

[Northwestern Lehigh School District](http://www.nwlehighsd.org);
www.nwlehighsd.org

[Parkland School District](http://www.parklandsd.org); www.parklandsd.org

[Salisbury School District](http://www.salisburysd.org); www.salisburysd.org

[Southern Lehigh School District](http://www.slsd.org); www.slsd.org

[Whitehall-Coplay School District](http://www.whitehallcoplay.org); www.whitehallcoplay.org

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

[Bangor Area School District](http://www.bangor.k12.pa.us);
www.bangor.k12.pa.us

[Bethlehem Area School District](http://www.basdschools.org); www.basdschools.org

[Catasauqua Area School District](http://www.cattysd.org); www.cattysd.org

[Colonial Intermediate Unit 20](http://www.ciu20.org); www.ciu20.org

[Easton Area School District](http://www.eastonsd.org); www.eastonsd.org

[Nazareth Area School District](http://www.nazarethasd.k12.pa.us); www.nazarethasd.k12.pa.us

[Northampton Area School District](http://www.nasdschools.org); www.nasdschools.org

[Northern Lehigh School District](http://www.nlsd.org); www.nlsd.org

[Pen Argyl School District](http://www.penargylschooldistrict.org); www.penargylschooldistrict.org

[Saucon Valley School District](http://www.svpanthers.org);
www.svpanthers.org

[Wilson Area School District](http://www.wilsonarea.org);

Right to Education Task Force groups are active in Lehigh and Northampton County. Meetings and workshops are held on the Zoom platform for the foreseeable future.

[Carbon Lehigh IU Local Taskforce 21](#) (Lehigh County)

Follow the zoom link for each session you wish to attend: www.zoom.us/join. The Meeting ID for each workshop is 537 838 6005. Meeting passcode is CLIU21.

5/18/22, 10 AM—Noon; Universal Design for Learning

Email: localtaskforce21@gmail.com

Chairperson: Amanda Robbins,
mandaphd1@gmail.com.

Visit www.cliu.org for more information.

Follow on Facebook: www.facebook.com/localtaskforce21

[Right To Education Task Force 20](#) (Northampton County)

Visit the Right to education web page at www.ciu20.org. Find the Local Task Force 20 link under the [Families](#) menu for links to join Task force meetings.

05/02/22, 10 AM

Contact information: Phone: 610-515-6449,
Email: LTF20@ciu20.org

Chairperson: Leslie McKelvey,
leslie.mckelvey@yahoo.com

Vice chairperson: Kim Wismer,
kimwismer1@gmail.com

Visit ciu20.edlioschool.com for more information.



The PA Family Network was created under the leadership of Vision for Equality and is supported by the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) as part of Pennsylvania's Community of Practice: Supporting Families Throughout the Lifespan. The mission of the Pennsylvania Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) is to support Pennsylvanians with developmental disabilities to achieve greater independence, choice and opportunity in their lives.

As part of the PA Family Network's ongoing work, a series of free zoom workshops is available.

PhilaZoom Technology Training—How to use Technology Sessions

Sign up series of 16 live internet-based training seminars and coaching for people with disabilities, families and supporters to learn how to use technology and the Internet. Learn to use Zoom, video conferencing, Facebook, email, web browsers, Google search, Smartphone, and Tablets. These sessions will run weekly at the same time, through the same links.

Each 2 hour session starts at 11 AM, every other Tuesday starting May 3, 2020. Register by visiting The PA Family Network website, www.visionforequality.org/pa-family-network and click the news & events link, or call 267-702-1601.

Trauma Informed Care Project's Wellness Series

Our lives as caregivers can be very stressful but there are simple wellness practices we can implement to release stress on our mind and body. Every Tuesday from 7—7:30 PA family Network hosts a zoom session to address various topics. Visit <https://bit.ly/phillywellnessseries> to register

Visit www.visionforequality.org/pa-family-network for a calendar of workshops and zoom links to join a free session. Feel free to email the network PAFamilyNetwork@visionforequality.org or call 1-844-PAFAMILY (1-844-723-2645) if you have questions

In order to continue helping people with important information, The Arc of Lehigh and Northampton County's Advocacy Department developed an on-going series of virtual workshops, using the Zoom Platform.



Check The Arc website at www.arcoflehighboroughamton.org and the events section of The Arc's Facebook page for more training announcements and other information!

Questions can be sent to Kodi Berry. Email: kberry@arcoflehighboroughamton.org or phone: 610-849-8076 ext. 325.

Zoom Workshops Coming Soon

Date: June 9, 10 AM

Title: Understanding Medicaid for Dual Diagnosis and Intellectual disabilities

Presenter: Magellan Health

Date: June 21, 10 AM

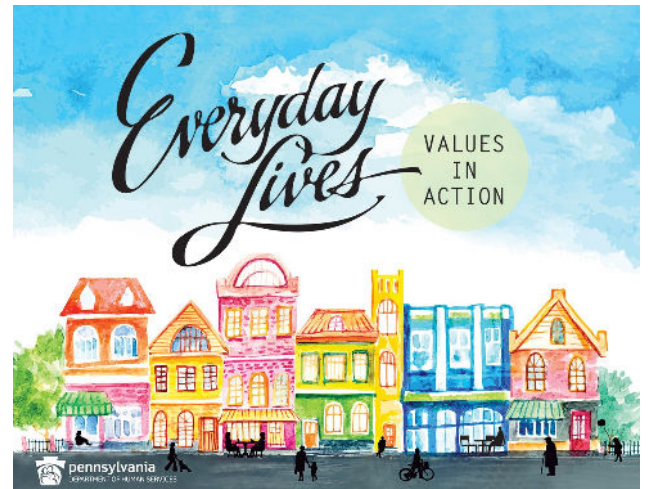
Title: Understanding Medicaid for Dual Diagnosis and Intellectual disabilities

Presenter: Magellan Health

To register for an Arc sponsored Zoom workshop, visit the Arc website: www.arcoflehighboroughamton.org. Open the events tab, find your workshop and click the "register here" link to register for your workshop.

The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Office of Developmental Programs, invites you to Save the Date and participate in the statewide Everyday Lives Conference. This year's conference will be virtual and include the collaboration, education, and innovation to celebrate the everyday lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism.

This year's Everyday Lives Conference merges the Everyday Lives Conference with the Community of Practice Regional Collaborative Conference, the Technology Summit, and the Dual Diagnosis Conference.



When will the conference be held?

The conference will be held over a period of five weeks:

- ➔ Tuesday, May 17: Communication and Connection
- ➔ Tuesday, May 24, and Wednesday, May 25: Community of Practice for Supporting Families Regional Collaborative Summit
- ➔ Wednesday, June 1: Assistive Technology
- ➔ Wednesday, June 8, and Thursday, June 9: Dual Diagnosis
- ➔ Thursday, June 16: Employment

Who should attend?

Individuals with disabilities, families, professionals, clinicians, students, and caregivers participate in the Everyday Lives Conference. The conference will also include an exhibit hall for featuring ODP training partners. More than 1,200 attendees are expected.

What topics will be on the conference agenda?

Engage with dozens of professionals, experts and pioneers in workshops, breakout sessions, panels and keynote sessions. Topics include racial equity, employment and self-advocacy, and much more!

How do I get more information and register?

Please visit www.everydaylives.org for announcements, the agenda and link to register.





Camp Achieve 2022

Sunday August 14th – Friday, August 19th, 2022

Camp Green Lane, 249 Camp Green Lane Rd, Green Lane, PA 18054

Camp Achieve is a week-long sleepaway camp specifically designed for children living with epilepsy. Every August, we welcome kids to experience the magic of Camp Achieve while a safe, supportive, inclusive environment is ensured by 24/7 medical supervision.

Join us for a week jam-packed with fun, traditional summer camp activities such as swimming, canoeing, archery, arts & crafts, a talent show, and so much more! The best part? Campers meet other kids and counselors who understand the challenges of living with epilepsy, build lasting friendships, and grow!

Questions? please contact Ellen Baca, Lehigh Valley Resource Coordinator, Epilepsy Foundation Eastern Pennsylvania, (610) 737-0613

To register, Visit www.efepa.org. Find Camp Achieve listed under the Programs and Services tab.

The Arc of the United States

Virtual Program Library for People with Disabilities is now Live!

Looking for online activities that someone with disabilities in your life can use to keep busy as the weather cools down? We're excited to share our new [Virtual Program Library](http://www.virtualprogramlibrary.thearc.org), a free hub full of on-demand activities that can be done from home by people with disabilities, their families, and service providers.

On this site, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their caregivers can find and share on-demand activities that they can use whenever it is convenient for them in the comfort of their own homes. Service providers can also find and share resources that they can use to facilitate or deliver live, remote programming for people with IDD.

Topics include arts, community and life skills, health and wellness, virtual clubs, and more.

Visit the hub to check out the resources we have so far and share it with your networks so it can continue to grow into a robust resource for people with disabilities and their supporters!

Visit: www.programlibrary.thearc.org for information and to view resources.



Horseback Riding

As with any group activity planned this summer, horseback riding may be affected by conditions and limitations necessary to address the COVID-19 Pandemic. Please contact individual farms to ask about program status and safety precautions.

Equi-librium

Located in Nazareth, PA

With a professional staff & trusted team of horses, this beautiful facility offers several different riding & carriage driving programs to help individuals with special needs reach their highest potential through horse-related activities. Equi-librium regularly offers Hippotherapy sessions depending on the schedule and availability of the therapists.

Half day summer camp sessions are inclusive—siblings & friends can come, too. Schedule includes riding, horsemanship activities, arts & crafts and refreshments. Camp is broken up by the camper's age.

For more information, please visit www.equi-librium.org or call 610-365-2266.

Horses & Horizons

Located in New Ringold, PA

Group & private therapeutic riding for children & adults with disabilities. For group lessons (8-week sessions) riders must be physically able to help groom & saddle the horse. Private lessons are for riders who are unable physically or emotionally to participate in horse preparation. The entire lesson is spent on the horse.

Call 570-386-5679 or visit www.horsesandhorizons.org for more information.

Iron Gate Farm

Located in Bangor, PA

Classes in jumping & dressage. Principles of dressage applied to all disciplines. Equine assisted therapy offered on a private basis, starting at age 2.

Therapeutic riding students take the reins & learn how to ride. Opportunities to ride with typically developing peers. FSS funding accepted. Iron Gate is available for summer camp & birthday parties.

For more information, please visit their web site: www.horsebackridinglessonsinebangorpa.com or call 610-762-8295.

Manito Equestrian Center

Located in Allentown, PA

Year-round equestrian facility located on a scenic 60-acre preserved farm in Allentown. All levels of riding sessions and therapeutic riding offered. This center is also the site for Manito Life Center, a nonprofit corporation dedicated to helping at-risk children through equine assisted & holistic therapies.

For more information please call 610-433-3707, email: aliciapramik@gmail.com or visit www.manitocenters.com for more information.

Outsmarting Poison Ivy and Other Poisonous Plants

Spending more time outdoors, now that Spring is here? Help you and your loved ones avoid the “not so great outdoors”

First comes the itching, then a red rash, and then blisters. These symptoms of poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac can emerge any time from a few hours to several days after exposure to the plant oil found in the sap of these poisonous plants. The culprit: the urushiol oil. Here are some tips to avoid it.

Recognizing Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, and Poison Sumac

- ➔ **Poison Ivy:** Found throughout the United States except Alaska, Hawaii, and parts of the West Coast. Can grow as a vine or small shrub trailing along the ground or climbing on low plants, trees and poles. Each leaf has three glossy leaflets, with smooth or toothed edges. Leaves are reddish in spring, green in summer, and yellow, orange, or red in fall. May have greenish-white flowers and whitish-yellow berries.
- ➔ **Poison Oak:** Grows as a low shrub in the Eastern and Southern United States, and in tall clumps or long vines on the Pacific Coast. Fuzzy green leaves in clusters of three are lobed or deeply toothed with rounded tips. May have yellow-white berries.
- ➔ **Poison Sumac:** Grows as a tall shrub or small tree in bogs or swamps in the Northeast, Midwest, and parts of the Southeast. Each leaf has clusters of seven to 13 smooth-edged leaflets. Leaves are orange in spring, green in summer, and yellow, orange, or red in fall. May have yellow-greenish flowers and whitish-green fruits hang in loose clusters.



Poison Plant Rashes Aren't Contagious

Poison ivy and other poison plant rashes can't be spread from person to person. But it is possible to pick up the rash from plant oil that may have stuck to clothing, pets, garden tools, and other items that have come in contact with these plants. The plant oil lingers (sometimes for years) on virtually any surface until it's washed off with water or rubbing alcohol.

The rash will occur only where the plant oil has touched the skin, so a person with poison ivy can't spread it on the body by scratching. It may seem like the rash is spreading if it appears over time instead of all at once. But this is either because the plant oil is absorbed at different rates on different parts of the body or because of repeated exposure to contaminated objects or plant oil trapped under the fingernails. Even if blisters break, the fluid in the blisters is not plant oil and cannot further spread the rash.

Tips for Prevention

Learn what [poison ivy, oak, and sumac plants look like](#) so you can avoid them ([watch our video](#)[External Link](#) [Disclaimer](#)).

- ➔ Wash your garden tools and gloves regularly. If you think you may be working around poison ivy, wear long sleeves, long pants tucked into boots, and impermeable gloves.

- ➔ Wash your pet if it may have brushed up against poison ivy, oak, or sumac. Use pet shampoo and water while wearing rubber gloves, such as dishwashing gloves. Most pets are not sensitive to poison ivy, but the oil can stick to their fur and cause a reaction in someone who pets them.
- ➔ Wash your skin in soap and cool water as soon as possible if you come in contact with a poisonous plant. The sooner you cleanse the skin, the greater the chance that you can remove the plant oil or help prevent further spread.

Tips for Treatment

Don't scratch the blisters. Bacteria from under your fingernails can get into them and cause an infection. The rash, blisters, and itch normally disappear in several weeks without any treatment.

You can relieve the itch by:

- ➔ Using wet compresses or soaking in cool water.
- ➔ Applying over-the-counter (OTC) topical corticosteroid preparations or taking prescription oral corticosteroids.
- ➔ Applying topical OTC skin protectants, such as zinc acetate, zinc carbonate, zinc oxide, and calamine dry the oozing and weeping of poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac. Protectants such as baking soda or colloidal oatmeal relieve minor irritation and itching. Aluminum acetate is an astringent that relieves rash.



See a doctor if:

- ➔ You have a temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
- ➔ There is pus, soft yellow scabs, or tenderness on the rash.
- ➔ The itching gets worse or keeps you awake at night.
- ➔ The rash spreads to your eyes, mouth, genital area, or covers more than one-fourth of your skin area.
- ➔ The rash is not improving within a few weeks.
- ➔ The rash is widespread and severe.
- ➔ You have difficulty breathing.

For the original article and a link to the video visit: www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/outsmarting-poison-ivy-and-other-poisonous-plants

Downloaded 4/06/2022. www.fda.gov.



- Why doesn't Cinderella play soccer? Because she always runs away from the ball.
- Why do chicken coops only have two doors? Because if they had four, they would be chicken sedans.
- When I was young, if we went to a nice restaurant and they asked if we have reservation, my dad would say: "Yes, but we'll eat here anyway." (true story)
- Why can't you trust an atom? They make up everything.

Lehigh & Northampton OBSERVER

Published six times a year for persons receiving services from the Intellectual Disabilities Departments in Lehigh and Northampton Counties.

Bob Madden, Editor
610-849-8076 (ext. 317)

bmadden@arcoflehighnorthampton.org

Funded by Lehigh & Northampton Counties' MH/ID Departments under contract with The Arc of Lehigh and Northampton Counties, Inc.

Thank you for choosing to receive the Bi-County Newsletter by email.

Feel free to forward this to other people who may find the information useful.

We can always add people to the newsletter distribution list. Contact Bob Madden to be included in the newsletter.



Phone: 610-849-8076 (ext. 317).

E-mail: bmadden@arcoflehighnorthampton.org