



MetroWest Center for Independent Living, Inc.



February

We hope you were able to get out and enjoy the brief respite from the cold. Unfortunately, it's back, and we're not sure that the MetroWest communities took advantage of the warm weather to reclaim the sidewalks.

We will continue to advocate for our 2014 legislative priorities. Our annual Independent Living Education Day at the State House is scheduled for Thursday, March 20. We hope to see you there. Download the [flyer](#) for more information.

from Paul W. Spooner,
Executive Director of MWCIL



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Calendar

IL Education Day
at the State House
Thursday, March 20

Donations

If you appreciate MWCIL and the support it provides you, please consider a gift of any amount. By showing your appreciation and giving back, MWCIL can provide more services for the community. We thank you! Go to [MWCIL Webpage](#) or click on the Donate button.

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IL Legislative Priorities for 2014

- Requesting \$750,000 increase to Line item:4120-0200 for IL Centers statewide
- Add \$500,000 into the MRC 4000 account for the Durable Medical Equipment ReUse Program
- Add resources for accessible housing by increasing DHCD Line Item 7004-9030, Alternative Housing Voucher Program, by \$1,550,000

Wheelchair Diaries

After being discouraged from studying abroad in Florence because it was described as inaccessible, Reid Davenport stayed home. In April of 2011, Reid and a cameraman, Mark Abramson, raised enough money to "explore accessibility in the Old World. . Five cities and 13 interviews later, Reid recounted his experiences in the documentary *Wheelchair Diaries: One Step Up.*" The film won Best Documentary Short at the Awareness Festival in L.A., and was recently shown in D.C. We haven't yet heard of Reid and the film coming to Boston. Let's hope he does *not* make a film about accessibility in Boston this winter! Regardless, we are hoping the *Wheelchair Diaries* is shown here soon - for more about the movie, visit [AAPD](#).

Congratulations!

We congratulate David Correia on his promotion to our new position of Advocacy Director. In this role as a systems advocate, Dave will focus on networking, collaboration, advocacy and education. He will work with legislators and others to promote the values and principles of Independent Living. Also, he will be available to speak to local organizations about the services that MWCIL provides. He will continue to file AAB complaints as needed.

We would like to thank David for his years of service and contributions as an Independent Living Coordinator!



Beacon Hill Resistant to Accessibility

The Boston Globe report "Beacon Hill resisting ramps, aids for the disabled" by David Abel talks about the battle between the Beacon Hill Architectural Commission and Mayor Walsh. Every other historic district in Boston has agreed to ramps and tactile strips except Beacon Hill. With the Beacon Hill Civic Association complaining about yellow tactile strips, it becomes clear that this privileged neighborhood thinks that they are above the law, and that

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About Us:

[MWCIL website](#)

(past issues are available at our website)

[Email](#)

Phone: 508-875-7853
280 Irving Street
Framingham, MA
01702

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"visual impact" is more important than accessibility and safety. Read the entire article in the [Boston Globe](#).

(For clarity - this is the Beacon Hill residents - not the State House!)

Heroin Overdose Epidemic

Federal, state and local officials recently gathered in Taunton (February 24) to address the rise of heroin overdoses locally and statewide.

Senatory Ed Markey attended the meeting, and is working on" federal legislation that would provide immunity from civil liability to people who administer naloxone to those who have overdosed on opiates." ([Boston Globe](#)).

State Senator Mark Pacheco (Taunton) said that "the Legislature, in concert with the Patrick administration, was working to fund increase treatment opportunities for citizens in the Commonwealth."

The MA Department of Public Health has composed an information sheet about Opioid Overdose - which is one of the leading causes of death in Massachusetts. Opioids include Heroin, Oxycodone, Morphine, Codeine and others. A medication known as NarCan can reverse an overdose, but at this time, is not available in all communities. Read more about NarCan on the [state website](#).

Winter Paralympics in Sochi

The 2014 Paralympics will be held in Sochi on March 7 - 16. NBC and NBCSN will air 50 hours of coverage. For more information on the U.S. teams, visit [Team USA/U.S. Paralympics](#). The [Sochi website](#) also has information.

The [BBC](#) has put together a good overview of the sports in the winter Paralympics. (Ok, I'm still a little unsure about whether curling is actually a sport, but it has crossed over to Paralympics... the broom did not.)

National Priorities from NCIL

The *National Council on Independent Living* has just released their Spring 2014 Legislative and Advocacy Priorities booklet. ([free download](#))



Introduction from Kelly Buckland,
NCIL Executive Director:

"This publication will introduce you to a sample of the many legislative issues NCIL is currently pursuing in order to secure full

inclusion and equality for people with disabilities in our great nation.

I would like to draw particular attention to issues surrounding Independent Living funding and the creation of an Independent Living Administration. Considering the substantial work left to be done in order to secure the civil and human rights of people with disabilities, NCIL is acutely aware that funding for Centers for Independent Living and Statewide Independent Living Councils is of the utmost importance to our Movement.

CILs and their statewide counterparts are the only organizations directly working to address the issues outlined in this publication. They use shoe-string budgets to successfully advocate for individuals with disabilities facing discrimination while fighting to win an even playing field and ensure the civil and human rights of all Americans."

The booklet explains national initiatives that need support including a new Independent Living Administration, Employment and Economic Equity, Voting Rights, Healthcare and Long Term Services and Supports, Civil Rights and the ADA, Transportation, Housing, Education, Assistive Technology and more.

Harvard Study links chemicals to neurodevelopmental disabilities

"Toxic chemicals may be responsible for a growing number of children with autism and other neurodevelopmental disabilities, researchers say.

In a [report](#) published online in the journal Lancet Neurology, researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health and the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai are warning of what they call a "silent pandemic" resulting from limited regulation of chemicals."

The study focused on the effects of the chemicals on children, and developing brains. Exposure from industrial sources was studied, as well as pesticide exposure. Also studied was exposure during pregnancy in common jobs such as nursing, chemistry, cleaners and beauticians. A wide variety of neurological tests and exposures were analyzed.

The report concludes with recommendations for an international clearinghouse on neurotoxicity with better screening of industrial chemicals, more research on brain development, and better policies to protect vulnerable populations.

Thank you to the [Disability Scoop](#) for this news.

Disability Simulation

One disability awareness activity is to have a person wear earplugs, a blindfold, or be in a wheelchair for some amount of time. This activity is meant to increase sensitivity and awareness,

and result in increased accessibility. Emily Ladeau argues that it is ineffective in her article "[I Won't Pretend that Disability Simulation Works](#)".

She argues that any feelings are temporary, and don't "dig deep to the root of discrimination against people with minority identities." We recommend you read the whole article - her thoughtful piece concludes with "We must move away from equating empathy with acceptance. We must embrace differences..."

Thanks to The Mobility Resource and the AAPD Disability Daily for this excellent article.

10 of the Most Common ADA Violations that Need to Stop

by Tiffany Carlson.

Even 23 years, " isn't enough time for society to get their act together when it comes to following all aspects of the law." Read the [whole piece](#) from The Mobility Resource and learn exactly how non-compliance affects people.

1. No Accessible Entrance
2. Baby strollers in the wheelchair spot on city buses.
3. Bathrooms not accessible.
4. No van accessible parking spot.
5. Cruise ship inaccessibility.
6. Fired/Not hired because of a disability
7. Business owners refusing service dogs.
8. Gas station doesn't assist with pumping gas.
9. Cluttered and narrow store aisles.
10. Too steep / no curbcuts.

"ADA violations only happen because business owners don't understand or respect how vital the law is to our independence. If all of them became disabled, just imagine how things would change. I could finally get into the 1930's steakhouse by my mom's like a "normal person" and not a sack of potatoes. Now that would be the day."

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MetroWest Center for Independent Living | 280 Irving Street | Framingham | MA | 01702