

Red Cross Guide for Emergency Preparedness



By Jim Stinehoff, Emergency Services Coordinator

Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities is a comprehensive guide in PDF (Portable Document Format) that can be downloaded from the Red Cross website, www.prepare.org. In order to open it, you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader which can be downloaded for free from the Adobe website.

The guide outlines the following steps in developing a personal emergency plan. Before emergency contacts and medical information lists are made, emergency kits are put together, and summary checklists are completed:

- (1) Learn about the emergencies that could impact San Mateo County. Consider what your environment might look like after one occurs and how the availability of certain resources could disrupt your daily routine and independence. Apply contingencies you use daily to deal with power outages or transportation delays or breakdowns.
- (2) Create a personal support network of family, friends, relatives, neighbors, roommates, and co-workers who could assist you at a moments notice. They can help identify and get resources you need to cope effectively in an emergency. Your network can also help you practice vital activities, like evaluating your home or workplace.
- (3) Complete a personal assessment with your network. Decide what you be will able to do for yourself and what assistance you will need before, during, and after an emergency. Make a list of your personal needs and your resources for meeting them based on the environment and the capabilities and limitations you believe you will have after the emergency.

Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities includes checklists and extra space to help you and your network identify, get, develop, organize, manage, and maintain the information, the resources, and the activities you will do to be prepared for natural disasters so that you will be ready when one strikes.

From the Executive Director

Kent Mickelson

Director's Report

When you live in the San Francisco Bay Area you must be aware that a natural or man-made disaster can happen at any time. It is very important for individuals to be prepared to handle a disaster and even more important for a person with a disability!



Are you prepared with a plan in case of an emergency? Past disasters have warned us that police and fire departments are going to have their hands full taking care of large groups of people who are in danger when a disaster strikes. Your ability to survive a disaster is greatly increased if you have a plan. For more information on how to create a plan, please read Emergency Services Coordinator, Jim Stinehoff's article in this issue.

Holiday & Food Box Distribution 2005

by Marta Florez

Center For Independence of the Disabled holds an Annual holiday food box and toy distribution. Holiday assistance is given to families and children who are having difficulties during the holiday season. This year the center was able to assist 253 families and children. I would like to acknowledge the schools and organizations that made this possible. Charles Armstrong School donated hams and pies. Second Harvest food bank donated fresh turkeys and turkey gift certificates. Notre Dame University, and the production of a Christmas Carol donated



Phyllis Ridgley & Arsie Zacarias



two truckloads of toys and food. San Carlos Fire Department donated toys, plus a generous donation of \$300 to purchase gift certificates for older children who fell into the 12-18 year old group. A staff member, Carol Torno and her husband Lowell Torno, donated another \$200 to purchase gift certificates for children. A family drove from the South Bay, so their young son could donate his out-grown bicycle.

I'd like to mention the staff at the center who worked very hard to pick up the toys, sort the toys and food every year. Denise H., Nicole C., Carol T., Elizabeth P., Jim S., Reggie Z., J.D., Scott D., Gayle P., Ray P., Arsie Z. and Drew R.

Thankful and very teary eyed families left the Center for Independence of the Disabled with food and toys in hand. Make a commitment this year to make a financial donation early in The year. If you are a business who would like to donate toys, children's books, or school pack bags, please call Marta at (650) 595-0783 ext 118, Coordinator of the Holiday and Food Box distribution.

Be Governor Schwarzenegger for a Day

by Nicole Cortichiato, Systems Advocacy Coordinator



The California State budget affects Californians in many different ways. It affects how much we spend on certain programs and services for our children, young adults, people with disabilities, and the elderly.

How does the California Budget affect you personally? Think about it.

What if I told you there was a way you could learn more about the budget process? Would you take the challenge? The challenge I'm talking about comes from Next Ten.

Next Ten is an independent, nonpartisan organization in Palo Alto, California. Next Ten creates tools to empower Californians through a deeper understanding of critical issues affecting our future economy and quality of life. One of their online tools includes a California Budget Challenge.

This challenge allows users to build their own state budget. You, the user, get to make the critical choices on what programs to spend money on and how to pay for them. The budget you create is for the next ten years. You get to decide on how much to give to transportation, schools, Medi-cal and prisons.

See if you can balance the budget and do a better job than Governor Schwarzenegger. Whether you want to learn fast facts about the budget or want an in-depth look there is something for you on Next Ten's website. Check out the Next Ten website at <http://www.next-ten.org/>

Year 2005 Tax Benefits for Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities

If you have a child with a severe learning disability (LD), you may qualify for valuable tax benefits. If your child has AD/HD, or other physical, mental, or emotional impairment, you may also qualify for tax benefits. Because tax laws are complex, and many tax preparers often do not have occasion to use these unique tax benefits, families are at risk of losing refunds worth many thousands of dollars. It's likely that 15-30 percent of families with a disabled child have one or more unclaimed tax benefits.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) "Publications" represent the most accessible form of guidance to the tax rules for the general public, and relevant IRS publications are cited for each of the tax benefits listed below. The IRS also issues interpretations of the code and regulations called "Revenue Rulings." These interpretations are formal, binding policy statements. Tax professionals rely on revenue rulings in advising clients about tax liabilities and tax benefits. For example, Revenue Ruling 78-340 authorizes a medical expense deduction for tuition or tutoring fees paid for a child with a severe LD who is attending a special school at the recommendation of the child's doctor.

Tip: Relative caretakers, such as grandparents or aunts, and non-relative caretakers, such as foster parents, also may qualify for tax benefits.

Tax decisions should not be made simply on the basis of the information provided here. You are advised to print out the guide provided at the link below and give a copy to your tax advisor. This guide provides a brief summary of the most significant federal income tax benefits and should not be considered legal advice.

For a more in-depth discussion on this topic go to:
<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?r=1065>

For help with Assistive Technology, please contact Steve Freier (ext. 115) or Brent Duisenberg (ext. 116)

The Personal Assistance Program



CID is committed to assisting elderly clients and disabled persons remain in their homes for as long as possible. The Personal Assistance Program is one of many ways in which we can help our clients by providing in-home care through our attendant program.

Please call JD at extension 125 if you have any questions and/or wish to request information about the services.

Eviction Notice Law Change 60 Day Eviction Notice Law Expired

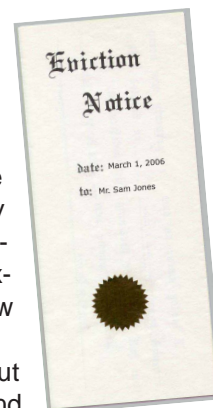
For the last three years every Californian who is renting an apartment or house has had the protection of a 60 Day No Fault Eviction law.

This law was to protect renters who were in good standing with their landlords. The law did not protect renters who didn't pay their rent or were problem tenants. Unfortunately the 60 Day No Fault Eviction Law expired on December 31st 2005. The law now reverts back to a 30 Day Eviction Notice.

Systems Change Advocates throughout California and the Western Center on Law and Poverty worked vigorously with Our state legislature to preserve the 60 day until December 31st 2009.

The bill, which was called SB51, passed The State Senate, but failed in the State Assembly. In each case our local legislators voted against the bill and their constituents who rent.

- Marta Florez, Housing Specialist



The Plan for Achieving Self-Support

The Plan for Achieving Self-Support (P.A.S.S.) can provide a Social Security recipient with additional income by sheltering excess income and resources in a special account, that would normally reduce Supplemental Security Income, thereby qualifying the PASS candidate for additional SSI income.

The money placed in the special PASS account must be spent on vocationally-related expenses (i.e. training, equipment, transportation) that have been pre-approved by submitting a written PASS plan to the Social Security Administration. The PASS plan is designed to achieve a specific vocational goal that will enable the PASS candidate to become self-supporting.

Recently, the PASS plan has been used to launch training as a nursing assistant; to develop a private consulting and web design business to other disabled business owners; and to establish a private practice in Psychology.

On the internet please see <http://www.passplan.org/> for sample PASS plans and <http://www.passonline.org/> for a tutorial.

For additional information, or for assistance preparing a PASS Plan contact the Benefits Planning Assistance and Outreach program at CID, Christine Fitzgerald in Santa Clara County, 408-246-1178, or David Mon, 650-595-0783, in San Mateo County.



RAY'S CORNER

Assistance at Self-Service Gas Stations

People with disabilities may find it difficult or impossible to use the controls, hose or nozzle of a self-service gas pump. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires self-serve gas stations to provide equal access to their customers with disabilities. If necessary to provide access, gas stations must:

- Provide refueling assistance upon the request of an individual with a disability. A service station or convenience store is not required to provide such service at any time that it is operating on a remote control basis with a single employee, but is encouraged to do so, if feasible.
- Let patrons know that consumers with disabilities can obtain refueling assistance by either honking or otherwise signaling an employee.
- Provide the refueling assistance without any charge beyond the self-service price.



THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION PROGRAM

The **CIP Resource Bulletin** is an excellent resource which provides a wealth of information about all the many services provided by all the various agencies in San Mateo County.

The February 2006 Issue is out now and can be seen online at: http://cip.plsinfo.org/resource_bulletin.htm

NEW EMPLOYEES

New Financial Benefits Counselor



CID is pleased to welcome Alexa Johanson, Financial Benefits Counselor, who joined our staff in January. Alexa is very experienced in the Social Security Disability Benefits field, including serving as Social Security Benefits Technician at Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) in San Carlos, and most recently as B.P.A.O. for ILRC, San Francisco. In addition to Consumer Benefits Counseling, Alexa will be working on developing community outreach presentations for benefits information.

New Receptionist

Elizabeth Palko is our new receptionist at CID. She went to the University of San Francisco and graduated with a BA in Politics. She used to work at AG Ferrari (just down the street) and at a children's group home in San Francisco. She is a native of the Bay Area and is happy to be at CID!



Hugs

by Gayle Prytz

Hi Folks! As we enter the New Year I am reminded that we sometimes forget how many blessings we have been given as individuals. Even though our disabilities may stress us physically, emotionally, and spiritually we can strive to

elevate ourselves above that which afflicts us. We can continuously moan and groan to others and ourselves about our situation and as many of us have learned such behavior alienates us from other people. Also, obsessing over a situation without entertainment for change breaks down our inner person that needs to be understood and healed.

Hopefully there comes an awakening when we realize that even as people with disabilities we are greater than the sum parts of our individual challenges. Also, acknowledging the worthy individual that lives within all of us is a cathartic experience.

It is sometimes easy to forget that our true essence is in constant need of being nourished with understanding, compassion, and the desire to move forward. We are continuously learning to adjust and adapt, revealing new insights of how to live with ourselves and others.

If we allow ourselves to listen to our inner voice, disability can offer insight and direction as to who we are and how we can grow in an often-difficult world for both the disabled and able-bodied.

We are more than the "good ole' days" before disability. Do not sell yourself short as there is an intelligent, insightful, and interesting person living within. Please, share the inner wealth that is you with others.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Hugs, Gayle

Family Caregiver Support Program

Additional monies are available for Family Caregivers who meet the following criteria:

1. Any member of a family providing homecare for a family member over age 60, or
2. A grandparent raising a grandchild under the age of 18.

The Housing Accessibility Modification (HAM) program covers San Mateo County.

The HAM program can provide such items as minor home modification such as small ramps, grab bars in tubs, showers and toilet areas, wooden rails in and out of your home, and other safety devices as needed.

An Occupational Therapist may be sent to evaluate your home for an evaluation. CID has experienced installers who will perform any necessary installations.

The Assistive Technology Program can assist with researching and finding other technologies such as walkie-talkies, assistive computer devices, or other devices that you feel would make your life easier.



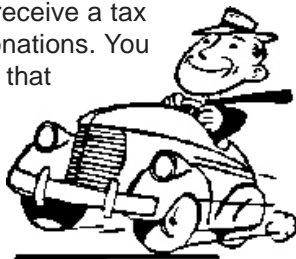
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Belmont, CA
94002

Center for Independence of the Disabled
875 O'Neill Avenue
Belmont, CA 94002
TEL: 650-595-0783
TDD: 650-595-0743
FAX: 650-595-0261
<http://www.cidbelmont.org/>

Donate Your Old Car to CID!

Do you have an old "junker" car sitting in your driveway? Donate Your Old Car to CID and receive a tax write-off. CID is now accepting donations. You will receive a tax donation receipt that you may use to reduce your personal income tax.

You will also gain from the satisfaction of knowing that your donation will help CID. For more information, call Steve Freier at (650) 595-0783 ext. 115 or Brent Duisenberg at ext. 116.



FREE TELEPHONES & LOW-COST BASIC PHONE SERVICE!



If you have a temporary or permanent disability you may be eligible for a free telephone. CTAP has telephone products available to make your life easier when using your phone.

If you're on a limited or fixed income, you may be eligible for basic telephone service for about half the regular cost. The Assistive Technology Department can help you obtain either of these services. Call Brent Duisenberg at (650) 595-0783 ext. 116.

CID NEEDS VOLUNTEERS!

CID needs volunteers to help people in San Mateo County in these two programs:

- o **SASH** serves people who are unable to leave their homes or unable to lift or carry groceries. Some people have diminished sight or a physical challenge and cannot lift heavy objects.
- o **VIMM** volunteers are trained to help individuals with basic money management; including help sorting and paying bills and organizing a simple bookkeeping system.

**Please give of your time;
Your efforts WILL be appreciated!**

To become a volunteer please contact **Sally Pierotti**, VIMM/SASH Coordinator at (650) 594-0783 ext.117.

FREE TAX PREP SERVICE!

AARP-National Tax Aide is offering free tax preparation service for seniors throughout San Mateo County. If you find you need help in preparing your Federal and CA state tax forms, and would like to know the site closest to you, please call 1-888-227-7669

