

Advocate for the ABLE Age Adjustment Act (S. 651/H.R. 1814)

By ABLE National Resource Center

What is the ABLE Age Adjustment Act?

The ABLE Age Adjustment Act (S. 651/H.R. 1814) would amend Section 529A(e) of the Internal Revenue Code to increase the eligibility threshold for ABLE accounts for onset of disability from prior to age 26 to prior to age 46. ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) accounts are tax-advantaged accounts that are designed to enable individuals with disabilities to save and pay for qualified disability expenses.

spectrum of disabilities without jeopardizing their much-needed public benefits.

Why is it important that the ABLE Age Adjustment Act be passed this Congress?

There are now over 40 state ABLE programs that empower individuals with disabilities, either in their own states or nationwide, to achieve and maintain health, independence and quality of life. However, the long-term sustainability, availability, and affordability of these programs are in doubt without this expansion of eligibility. Data from the National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) in 2017 showed that passage of the ABLE Age Adjustment Act is critical for the sustainability of ABLE programs. According to the NAST's Sustainability Report, the "age increase legislation...will be paramount to achieving ABLE sustainability..."

Previously introduced in the 114th and 115th Congresses, the bipartisan ABLE Age Adjustment Act has been reintroduced in the 116th Congress by Senators Bob Casey (D-PA), Jerry Moran (R-KS), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Pat Roberts (R-KS). A House version was also recently reintroduced by Representatives Tony Cardenas (D-CA) and Cathy McMorris-Rodgers (R-WA).

Why is an increase in the age of eligibility necessary?

As currently written, the existing ABLE Act prevents otherwise-eligible individuals with disabilities (many of whom spent years advocating for the Act) from realizing the benefits of ABLE accounts. By passing the ABLE Age Adjustment Act, more than 14 million people with disabilities would be allowed to open ABLE accounts, nearly doubling the currently eligible population.

Passing this critical legislation will increase the financial security of people across the

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ABLE New Mexico Presentation Available

Do you know a person or an organization who would be interested in an ABLE New Mexico presentation? For more information, contact:

Heather Benavidez at (505) 639-3525 or heather.benavidez@state.nm.us; or **Denise V. Balderas** at (505) 629-9476 or denise.balderas@state.nm.us.

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How can you help?

Advocates should reach out to each of their two U.S. Senators and their member of the U.S. House of Representatives and urge them to cosponsor the ABLE Age Adjustment Act, S. 651 in the Senate, and H.R. 1814 in the House. Members of Congress need to hear that it is imperative that the legislation be enacted immediately both to bolster the national viability of state ABLE programs and to dramatically expand the reach and benefit of ABLE accounts to individuals who experience disability for the first time before the age of 46.

The Honorable Martin Heinrich, U.S. Senator

303 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-5521
<https://www.heinrich.senate.gov/contact>

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján, U.S. Senator

B40C Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-6621
<https://www.lujan.senate.gov>

The Honorable Debra Haaland, 1st Congressional District

1421 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-6316

<https://haaland.house.gov/contact>

The Honorable Yvette Herrell, 2nd Congressional District

1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-2365
<https://herrell.house.gov/contact>

The Honorable Teresa Leger Fernandez, 3rd Congressional District

1432 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-6190
<https://fernandez.house.gov/contact> ✚

“Pick of the Litter” Documentary Film Becomes a TV Series

Guide Dogs for the Blind was the subject of an award-winning 2018 feature-length documentary called “Pick of the Litter.” In 2019 the documentary was developed into a television docu-series by the same name and airs on the subscription streaming service Disney+.

The series documents the ups and downs of an adorable group of six dogs on their fascinating and surprisingly suspenseful quest to become guides for Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB), the ultimate

canine career. The series captures both sides of the harness by showcasing the people who love, train, and are paired with GDB dogs.



View the trailer for the series here: <https://youtu.be/wDT6MUtTkKo>

The award-winning, feature-length documentary had its world premiere in January 2018 at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. Directed by Dana Nachman and Don Hardy, it follows a litter of GDB

puppies from the moment they are born. The filmmakers received unprecedented access to raisers, staff, and clients in order to capture the puppies’ journeys. The movie can be found on Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, YouTube, Vudu, and other platforms.



View the trailer for the documentary here: <https://youtu.be/oW7GVR2c80k>

Official website for Pick of the Litter: <https://www.guidedogs.com/pickofthelitter> ✚

Siblings at Work: D.A. Greg Totten and Chief Assistant D.A. Cheryl Temple Welcome Star and Trakr

In October, Trakr joined his sister Star at the Ventura County District Attorney's Office in their Courthouse Dog Program. This program is designed to aid in the investigation and prosecution of crimes by providing crime victims and witnesses neutral support as they navigate the criminal justice system. Studies have shown that facility dogs provide both physical and emotional benefit to vulnerable victims, resulting in more accurate testimony in the judicial system. Courthouse facility dogs are currently used in 38 states and over 20 district attorney's offices in California.

Dogs like Trakr and Star are chosen by Assistance Dogs of the West (ADW) to train as facility dogs due to their calm demeanor and temperament to work with children and adults in courtrooms, public settings, and in facilities where stress levels are high. Star and Trakr will assist in interviews, case preparation, testimony, and sentencing along with providing support to visitors and staff at the Hall of Justice and Family Justice Center.

Star was the first facility dog to join the office in June and began working with crime victims as well as providing much-needed love to all those that worked in the Hall



“Trakr is not all business though; the goofy playful boy comes out once the vest is off.” Rachele Helm Dean, Supervising Senior Deputy District Attorney

of Justice as they navigate the stresses of working in the criminal justice system and the COVID-19 pandemic. Star has become quite a celebrity in the courthouse among the judges, attorneys, court reporters, and staff. The social distance and masks that are required to keep us safe while working in the courthouse tends to have a very isolating effect on a rather social environment. Star

bridges that gap and provides some comfort and personal interaction in the otherwise cold and stressful environment.

While Trakr is still completing the end of his training, he is already quickly becoming a known celebrity of his own. He is all business once the vest and halter are on; the stoic serious soul quietly walking the halls.

Trakr lives with his handler Jillian, her husband, and their other dog Breacher. He loves to come home and play with his new brother in their big backyard. ✚



She Makes My Heart Smile



I'm Lisa Veres and my canine partner is the beautiful ADW Hedy. Her namesake is Hedy Lamarr, the 1940s Golden Age actress famous for co-inventing what is essentially bluetooth technology. My girl is both brains and beauty too!

I'm especially grateful to Susan and Don, her puppy raisers, who offered her experiences like flying,

camping, and hiking that helped make her a perfect match for me and my family. I want to thank Chloe, Ari, Jodie, Aimee, Ian, and all the volunteers who had a hand in participating in the 1,600+ hours of training to make Hedy the best dog for my specific needs.

One of the first things we were able to do together was to go vote in the primary election. Hedy got a sticker too. She loves to go with us when we go jeeping and camping. What better way to see God's beautiful creation than with our new best friend?

Hedy joins me at the nail salon, grocery shopping, dining out, and she goes with me to all my medical and PT appointments at the VA SCI (Spinal Cord Injury).

Due to all the surgeries on my spinal cord, I have to use a

walker. Hedy helps by picking all kinds of items up when I drop them. She has reduced my incidents of falling immeasurably. She assists me with the laundry by handing me the articles of clothing that I have sorted on the floor. I taught her to pull my walker to me when it rolls away.

I'm a Senior Chaplain with the International Fellowship of Chaplains. It is a ministry of presence where we often come alongside Fire and Police to help in the community and beyond. Hedy is a wonderful co-chaplain when she joins me on chaplain calls.

Hedy is truly my faithful friend. We enjoy watching the hummingbirds in the backyard along with our beautiful sunsets. She makes my heart smile. I just love her so! Thank you ADW! +

Making the World a Softer Place



Just a note to let you know what an amazing addition Stubby is to our family. We are so happy and so in love with him. From day one, moment one, I knew Stubby

was mine and I was his. Although we have been partnered for less than six months, it feels as though we've been together forever. I can't imagine life without him.

Being quadriplegic, I rely on help with daily activities. The reason for getting Stubby was to help provide more independence in my daily life. Success! He is so smart! He unzips my jacket, pushes elevator buttons, opens and closes doors, picks things up (phone, keys, etc.). And he always does it with an enthusiastic wag!

Although he is an amazing helper, he is so much more than that. Stubby is my adventure buddy and companion. We navigate life together. He is glued to me and I am glued to him.

A typical day consists of getting ready with Stubby by my side. I drink my latte and he waits (drooling all the while) until I'm done so he can drink the froth. We continue our day running errands, and going on play dates with his pack of newfound doggie friends. He's just the happiest dog. He is constantly wagging his tail.

It's amazing how much joy he brings to everyone he meets. Everybody needs to know that somebody cares. There's something about Stubby that strips away the feeling of judgment...people become soft. He makes everybody smile.

This has been an amazing journey. I love my dog! He was truly heaven sent. Stubby is the joy amongst the chaos. I'm forever grateful. Susan Camicia +



ABLE New Mexico YouTube Video

“Saving for the Future of
Your Child with a Disability”

<https://youtu.be/5KzieaoyKSQ>



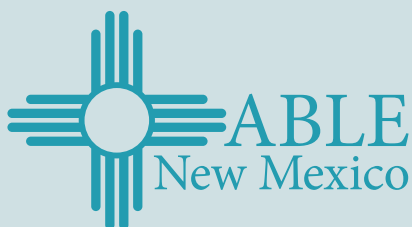
ABLE Online Demonstration YouTube Video

<https://youtu.be/kcDx0en7khc>

You can email Ronn at
info@ABLEReport.com

**Happy 3rd
Anniversary,
ABLE New Mexico!**

**ABLE New Mexico
Now Has 652
Active Accounts.
Go, New Mexico!**



Call for Presentations

Parents Reaching Out invites you to submit a proposal to present at the 16th Annual Family Leadership Conference to be held virtually throughout April 2021.

This conference will help families improve their advocacy skills so they can impact the systems that affect their children. We are looking for workshops that offer an innovative approach toward helping families develop their skills as advocates for their children and as leaders in their communities.

We also encourage workshops to be delivered in Spanish as an option but not required, and also those that address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic upon families of, and individuals living with, disabilities.

Please make sure to include specific points detailing how your workshop will encourage and develop advocacy skills and parent/family participation in policy.

Sessions can take the form of a PowerPoint presentation, panel discussion, or activity-based session for up to an hour in length with an additional 15 minutes for questions and answers.

Sessions will take place throughout the month of April. If



Parents Reaching Out

selected, we will contact you to discuss specific dates and times.

All proposals must be received no later than March 1, 2021.

Suggested topics:

- Early Childhood/Infancy
- Parenting Children With Disabilities or Complex Medical Needs
- IDEA Part C and/or Part B
- IEP Strategies
- Inclusion
- Family Engagement
- Literacy
- Behavior
- ADA
- Youth/Young Adults
- Transitions
- Advocacy/Self-Advocacy
- Section 504
- Self-Care/Resilience
- Other topics are welcomed!

Please contact Belinda Vigil with any additional questions at bvigil@parentsreachingout.org or (505) 247-0192. ✦

Free Virtual Legal Clinics Throughout 2021

The Second Judicial District Court's Pro Bono Committee will host monthly Legal TeleClinics throughout the year 2021.

These clinics will allow individuals who cannot afford to hire attorneys to get advice on a wide range of legal matters, including:


- Family law
- Landlord/tenant and other housing issues
- Public benefits
- Employment
- Consumer law
- Criminal record expungement

- Real ID/name change
- Wills, estate, and probate
- Property/real estate
- Immigration
- Bankruptcy
- Contracts

"The global pandemic has changed the way courts operate—causing most hearings to be held virtually—but it hasn't stopped people from having to deal with legal issues. It has, however, made it more difficult for many people to get professional assistance with those issues," said Judge Jane Levy, co-chair for the Second Judicial District Court's Pro Bono Committee. "That is

why the committee adopted the TeleClinic model last year, and we are continuing it this year."

The clinics, scheduled for the first Thursday of each month starting February 4, will allow individuals to speak with attorneys about their specific legal issues. There will be no charge for these consultations. The Volunteer Attorney Program of New Mexico Legal Aid has recruited attorneys who have agreed to donate their time to staff the clinics.

Anyone wishing to attend one of the legal clinics can request a registration form by sending an email to audreym@nmlegalaid.org or calling (505) 521-6129. 

Increasing ABLE Account Savings Through Employment During COVID-19

This webinar from the ABLE National Resource Center reviews the basic rules for funding an ABLE account from contributions and earned income. The presenters share information about ease of access to savings and investments to address COVID-19 expenses, and best practices on integrating ABLE accounts into employment services for customers with disabilities. The webinar also includes how ABLE savings helps people with disabilities to begin and maintain

Facilitator and Presenters

Miranda Kennedy, M.P.P.
Director, ABLE National Resource Center



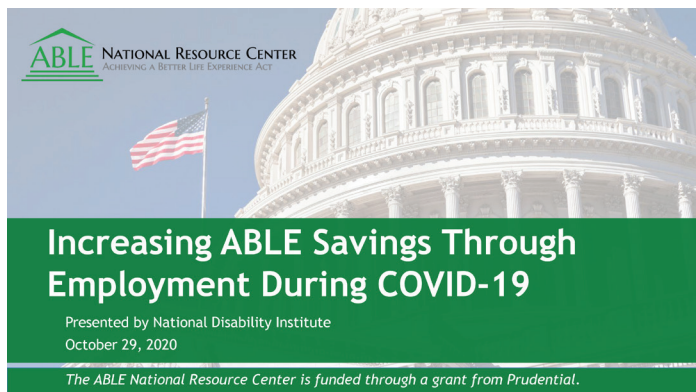
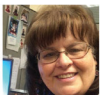
Tim Elliott,
ABLE Account Owner and 2020 Ambassador



Laurie Schaller,
Manager Financial Empowerment, National Disability Institute



Kathy DeAngelo,
Certified Benefits and Work Incentives Planner and Disability Resource Coordinator




Increasing ABLE Savings Through Employment During COVID-19

Presented by National Disability Institute
October 29, 2020

The ABLE National Resource Center is funded through a grant from Prudential.

employment and engage in career development to maximize their earnings, use of work supports, and savings potential, including savings for retirement.

For more information visit <https://www.ablenrc.org/increasing-able-account-savings-through-employment-during-covid-19/>. To view the webinar, visit <https://youtu.be/hJUgRxP4FnI>. 

National Latino Behavioral Health Association NLBHA

Promotores(as) de Bienestar (PdB)

Wellness Training plus Narcan Training

FREE VIRTUAL Training Opportunity in New Mexico + 7 CHW CEU's
+ Narcan ****DOH-Office of Community Health Workers Approved****

Part 1

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

9:00 AM-2:00PM

Part 2

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

9:00AM-2:00PM

****To Received ALL 7 CEU's, you must attend both virtual sessions****

PdB TRAINING
Wellness training and
Narcan training
for limited English proficient
communities and Latino
serving providers

- 2-Days 5-hour training
- 7 FREE CHW CEU's

Day 1: 9:00am-2:00pm

Day 2: 9:00am-2:00pm

TRAINING SITE:
This training will be done
VIRTUALLY using ZOOM

PdB was developed by the
National Latino Behavioral
Health Association (NLBHA).

Promotores(as) de Bienestar (PdB)

PdB contains highly illustrative culturally relevant content that relates to our Latino community. Its content emphasizes in wellness pertaining to mental health, substance use and physical health. Literature includes parent education and current Community Health Worker/Promotores best practices. It is supported by culture and language research, data and bibliography. PdB includes introductory behavioral health concepts and terminology and it meets the Enhanced Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards.

NM Opioid Training and Narcan Training

NLBHA is glad to partner with the New Mexico Opioid Hub as their purpose is to address the tremendous opioid crisis by expanding access to treatment, reducing unmet treatment needs, and reducing opioid overdose-related deaths through the provision of prevention, treatment and recovery services for Opioid Use Disorders (OUDs) in New Mexico. This partnership will also include participants to be Narcan trained. Per BHS, when administered timely and properly, Narcan counteracts the life-threatening effects of opioid overdose. It is an opioid antagonist and can reverse the effects of opioids by restoring normal respiration to a person whose breathing has slowed or stopped as a result of overdose by heroin or prescription opioid pain medications.

Who should attend this training?

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Parents, Head Start Parents, Latino parents (adult and teenage parents), Community Health Workers, Peer Support Specialist, other community members, individuals serving Limited English Proficient populations and those seeking Narcan Training.



DEADLINE: Registration is available up to ONE DAY before the scheduled training session.

To register for one of the available slots, please click on this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMsf-yspzkoE9J9ci4PIgHmWDyTGkA3EA2t>

For questions about the training please contact:

Ruth Yanez

ruth@nlbha.org

505-554-8440 (text/voice)



NM OPIOID HUB

Harm Reduction
Prevention
Treatment
Recovery

A BHSD Funded Program

CEU DISCLAIMER: **To Received ALL 7 CEU's, you must attend both sessions. CEU's are applicable to Community Health Workers ONLY and are approved through the Department of Health, Office of Community Health Workers **

ZOOM DISCLAIMER: **Zoom link and password will ONLY be available after registration has been confirmed**

****AT THIS TIME THIS TRAINING IS AVAILABLE FOR NEW MEXICO RESIDENTS ONLY****

Money Smart



The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) are working together to make it easier for schools to bring financial education to students and families.

Join us for a 4 part workshop series that will offer you and your child information on functional financial literacy: how to earn, spend and save money for the future. Community organizations will join us during our sessions.

This Workshop Series is designed for co-participation with the student and parent.

Space is limited, so please register as soon as possible.



Click [HERE](#) to Register

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Workshop 1: EARN

Dream Big! Understanding Sources of Income and Your Paycheck / SSI

Thursday, January 28, 2021

Workshop 2: SPEND

Spending and Budgeting / Bank

Thursday, February 4, 2021

Workshop 3: SAVING

Understanding Savings and Planning for a Rainy Day / ABLE NM

Thursday, February 11, 2021

Workshop 4: Financial Finesse

Putting it all Together for Financial Success!

All Workshops :
6:00p.m.-7:30p.m.

**Sponsored by
APS Special Education
Department**

For questions about accessibility,
or to request accommodations,
please contact:
Jill Vice (vice@aps.edu)