

# Family Workshop Series

Winter 2016  
January - May



The St. Louis Arc Family Workshop Series is designed to provide in-depth information on topics related to supporting family members with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Unless otherwise noted, workshops are free, open to everyone, and take place at the St. Louis Arc Centene Family Center located at 1177 North Warson Road, St. Louis, MO 63132. **Childcare and respite care are not provided unless specifically noted in the workshop description.**

For more information, to register, or to receive our weekly email newsletters please email Brianne Smith at [bsmith@slarc.org](mailto:bsmith@slarc.org) or call **314-817-2216**.

**ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED AND WORKSHOPS WITH FEW RSVP'S MAY BE CANCELLED.**  
**Please plan to arrive 15 minutes before the workshop starts to sign-in and collect handouts.**

## Addressing Caregiver Stress

Join us for any or all of our Addressing Caregiver Stress workshops, which will give you tips on how to improve your physical and emotional health. Make yourself a priority this year!

**Presenter:** Connie Fisher L.C.S.W., Director, Mental Health Promotion, Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri

- **Reaching Resilience: Wednesday, February 17 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

Essential information and skill-building activities to successfully adapt to life changes, transitions, or challenging circumstances.

- **Emotional Intelligence: Wednesday, March 16 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

Explore the relationship between feelings, thinking, and actions and their impact on communication and relationships.

- **Address Stress: Thursday, March 31 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of stress and practical stress management strategies for the workplace and beyond.

- **Live Your Life Well: Wednesday, April 13 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

This workshop uses proven strategies to teach participants skills to maintain wellness and to remain positive and hopeful.

## Family Resource Market - Thursday, April 21 3:00 - 7:00 p.m.

At this free event, families will have the opportunity to sign up for 15 minutes of one-on-one discussions with representatives from various agencies and organizations, to learn more about how to access the services they provide. **Advance registration is required for one-on-one sessions.**

**Participating agencies include:**

- *First Steps*
- *Medicaid*
- *St. Louis Regional Office*
- *Social Security and SSI*
- *Vocational Rehabilitation*
- *Bureau of Special Health Care Needs*

## All Ages

Thursday  
February 25  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

### ABLE Act

The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act is a new law that lets a person with a disability and their family put money into a special tax-advantaged account. This new savings incentive is a big deal: it means that if you get a job, you can start saving without losing benefits. You cannot open an ABLE account yet, as it will take some time before financial institutions or state programs start offering them to the public. Come hear more about ABLE accounts and how the ABLE Act came into effect.

**Presenters:**

**Cathy Brown**, *Director of Public Policy and Advocacy, Paraquad*

**Adam Hartz**, *Divisional Vice President, AXA Advisors*

**Josh Menacher**, *Registered Representative, AXA Advisors*

Wednesday  
March 2  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

### Epilepsy

There are many medications that can help with controlling epilepsy. However, standard medications don't work for everyone.

Discover which new medications and alternatives are being used to control epilepsy and seizure disorders.

**Presenter: Allison Brewer**, *Education Coordinator, Epilepsy Foundation of Missouri and Kansas*

Tuesday  
March 8  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

### Planning Ahead: Estate Planning

Having no financial plan means you may unintentionally disqualify your loved one from receiving public benefits, or not be able to support their future financial needs. Learn how to plan financially for your family. Topics will include avoiding probate, estate tax planning, creditor protection, wills, and planning for the distribution of property and assets, including charitable giving. This workshop is for anyone who is caring for a family member with a developmental disability of any age.

**Presenter: Bhavik R. Patel**, *Attorney, Sandberg Phoenix & Von Gontard P.C.*

## Children

Wednesday  
March 9  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

### Life By Design: What Does Your Great Life Look Like?

Planning for the future will help you to move towards a life that YOU CHOOSE – not something that is chosen out of desperation or random circumstances. Individuals with disabilities and their families are invited to attend this interactive workshop, where we will use tools from the Missouri Family to Family project to clarify your vision of a great future and take steps to move in the right direction.

**Presenter: Sharon Spurlock**, *Director of Family Support, St. Louis Arc*

Wednesday  
February 24  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

### Toilet Training

The issue of when and how to begin toilet training can be particularly challenging for parents of children with developmental disabilities. No parent wants to push a child to perform in ways that are impossible, but the sense of accomplishment experienced when a child does succeed also builds self-esteem. This workshop will focus on determining readiness and strategies for success for children ages two to eight-years-old and is offered just in time for trying the new strategies over spring break.

**Presenter: Valerie Southard**, *Special Educator, Belle Children's Services of St. Louis Arc*

Thursday  
April 7  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

### Beyond Picky Eating

Think outside of the "Picky Eating" box and explore the other variables including: texture aversion, sensory sensitivity, weak mouth muscles, or poor motor coordination and behavior, or control issues. A therapist will demonstrate how to process, prepare, and present foods in order to accommodate different levels of feeding. This workshop is for caregivers with children ages birth to five-years-old with eating issues.

**Presenters:**

**Elizabeth Gallagher**, *Occupational Therapist, St. Louis Arc*

**Bridget Hormberg**, *Occupational Therapist, St. Louis Arc*

**Note: Child care will be provided. RSVP IS REQUIRED by Friday, April 1st if you are requesting child care.**

## Children (Central West End)

The three Children's workshops below will be held at **Childgarden Early Childhood Center in the Central West End - 4150 Laclede Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63108**. **RSVP for childcare is required 1 full week prior to each workshop date.**

**Inclusion**  
**Thursday, March 3, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.**

Childgarden's philosophy is that all children, regardless of their ability, need to be included in all aspects of life, including learning. This panel of parents and educators will discuss the advantages of inclusion for children of all abilities.

**Presenters:**

**Barbara Williams Stewart, MA, MSW,** *Individual and Family Counselor, St. Louis Arc*  
**Lisa Liss, Parent**  
**Sheryl Vickers, Parent and Assistant Director, Childgarden**

**Basic Sign Language and Early Communication**  
**Tuesday, April 12, 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.**

Parents with young children who are still developing their communication skills, regardless of their developmental level, have found sign language as a good bridge to spoken language. It can help you bond more strongly to your child and reduce frustration on both sides of communication. If you are the parent of a young child and are looking for additional ways to help your child communicate, this workshop is for you.

**Presenter: Sally Backer, Certified Sign Language Interpreter and owner of Advancing Interpreting and More, LLC**

**Infant Massage**  
**Tuesday, May 3, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.**

Touch is a powerful communication tool. Infant massage is an age-old tradition that has been passed down for generations. Infant massage has benefits for both baby and parent. Come find out more about how to do infant massage, as well as the many benefits it provides. This workshop is for parents of children ages birth to nine months.

**Presenter: Nancy Kramer, Physical Therapist, Belle Children's Services of the St. Louis Arc**

## Teens - Young Adults

<b>Tuesday</b> <b>January 26</b> <b>6:30 - 8:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Summer Recreation Programs</b>	<b>Tuesday</b> <b>February 2</b> <b>6:30 - 8:30 p.m.</b>	<b>State and Federal Benefits</b>	<b>Tuesday</b> <b>March 1</b> <b>6:30 - 8:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Guardianship and Alternatives for Adults</b>
<p>The Recreation Council is the central resource for leisure, recreation, and camps for people with developmental disabilities of all ages. The St. Louis Arc also has summer volunteer/work programs for teens or young adults ages 13-21 with a developmental disability.</p> <p>Registration for summer programs begins soon. Don't miss this chance to find the right summer program.</p> <p><b>Presenters:</b> <b>Susan Fleming, Executive Director, Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis</b> <b>St. Louis Arc Leisure Staff</b></p>		<p>Do you have questions about what benefits your family member is eligible for when they turn 18? Are you worried about the impact of work on your family member's benefits?</p> <p>Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, SSI – Find out who is eligible, what the differences are between the programs, and how to access the appropriate contacts in order to apply for services. Information about working while receiving benefits will also be covered.</p> <p><b>Presenter: Bhavik R. Patel, Attorney, Sandberg Phoenix &amp; Von Gontard P.C.</b></p>		<p>When your child turns 18, they become a legal adult and they have the legal ability to sign a contract, make decisions about their education, and decide who can be present in their IEP meeting. Because of HIPAA privacy rules, a doctor can no longer share the health information of an adult without their consent. Caregivers of individuals with developmental disabilities must make important decisions prior to their child becoming a legal adult. This workshop will give you the information needed to make an informed decision.</p> <p><b>Presenter: Misty Watson, Attorney, Danna McKittrick, P.C.</b></p>	

## Residential Options - Tuesday, April 26 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

This workshop will address residential options, with two concurrent sessions being held to provide information for:

- Individuals who will need 10 hours or less of staff support per week (St. Louis County funding/Private Pay)
- Individuals who will need 24/7 staff support (Department of Mental Health funding)

**Presenters:**

**Bradley Peters, Community Living Coordinator, St. Louis Tri-County Regional Office**  
**Kelly Griffon, Community Living Coordinator, St. Louis County Regional Office**  
**Beth Moeller, Director of CONNECT, St. Louis Arc**

# Special Needs Trust

Find out how to plan for the financial security of an individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities, while preserving benefits such as Medicaid and Social Security Income. Two locations and dates are available:

- **Tuesday, April 5 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. in Creve Coeur (1177 North Warson Road, St. Louis, MO 63132)**
- **Wednesday, May 4 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. in North County (1827 Dunn Road, Florissant, MO 63033)**

## Presenters:

**Lynn Carter**, Executive Director, Midwest Special Needs Trust

**Michael E. Chiodini**, Financial Advisor, MetLife Center for Special Needs Planning

**Bhavik R. Patel**, Attorney, Sandberg Phoenix & Von Gontard P.C.

## Support, Networking, and Meet Up Groups

*Unless otherwise noted, all groups meet at the St. Louis Arc Centene Family Center located at 1177 North Warson Road, St. Louis, MO 63132. Advance registration is required.*

### Capable Kids and Families® Playgroup

**1st Friday of the month** 10:00-11:30 a.m.

**3rd Saturday of the month** 10:00-11:30 a.m.

The playgroups are open to any families with children ages birth - six years of age, but older siblings are also welcome. For more information, please contact Julia Schaffner at capablekids@slarc.org or 314-817-2247.

### Launch

**Event dates and times vary**

A support group for families of young adults who have the potential to live and work in the community, but who face barriers to success. For more information, please contact Sharon Spurlock at sspurlock@slarc.org or 314-817-2222.

### Parents of Daughters with Autism

**Event dates and times vary**

For more information please contact, Ann Mangelsdorf at amangelsdorf@slarc.org or 314-817-2275.

### Adults with Asperger Syndrome Meet Up Group

**2nd Friday of the month** 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Meet other adults with Asperger Syndrome and their friends and allies for monthly social activities. Locations vary. For more information, please contact Sharon Spurlock at sspurlock@slarc.org or 314-817-2222.

### Adult Siblings

**Event dates and times vary**

A group for siblings of individuals with disabilities to get information, support, and tools to advocate with their brothers and sisters, and to promote the issues important to them and their entire families. For more information, please contact Sharon Spurlock at sspurlock@slarc.org or 314-817-2222.

### Friday Family Fun Nights

**1/29, 2/26, 3/25, 4/29**

**6:00-8:00 p.m.**

The St. Louis Arc offers a series of family-friendly activities on a Friday night, once per month. Some events will have a small fee. For more information, please contact Bre Ward at bward@slarc.org or 314-817-2226.

### Dads Group

**1/12, 2/9, 3/8, 4/6, 5/10**

**5:30-7:30 p.m.**

Get together in an informal setting with other dads who understand the unique challenges of raising a child with a disability. Locations vary. For more information, please contact Mark Keeley at mkeeley@slarc.org or 314-817-2280.

### Caregivers of People with Asperger Syndrome

**3rd Saturday of the month** 9:00-11:00 a.m.

This group is open to mothers who have a child with Asperger Syndrome or a similar diagnosis. For more information, please contact Sharon Spurlock at sspurlock@slarc.org or 314-817-2222.

### Caregivers of Adults Who Are 40-years-old and Older

**3rd Friday of the month** 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Meet caregivers supporting a person with a disability who is 40-years-old or older, and get resources for changes that may occur as you and your family member age. For more information, please contact Sharon Spurlock at sspurlock@slarc.org or 314-817-2222.



**Thank you to Todd Gentry and Michael Chiodini at the MetLife Premier Client Group of the Midwest for underwriting the printing of this brochure.**

**For more information, go to [www.jtgentry.metlife.com](http://www.jtgentry.metlife.com) or call 314-548-4825.**