
CENTER FOR DISABILITIES AND DEVELOPMENT

Possibilities in Education and Training

A quarterly publication of the Center for Disabilities and Development, Iowa's University Center for Excellence on Disabilities at University of Iowa Children's Hospital, Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1011

Linda's Choice

By Mike Hoenig, Program Coordinator, State and Community Projects- Center for Disabilities and Development

"I didn't belong in the nursing home. I'm glad to be out of there!"

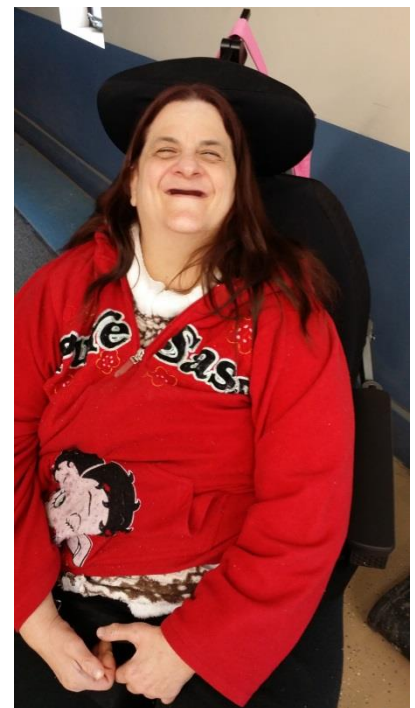
Those were the first words out of Linda Hopkins's mouth when I sat down with her recently to talk with her about her move from a nursing home in Oakland to an apartment in Council Bluffs. "I get along good with my roommate and staff," Linda continued. "I get to go shopping for my own groceries. I get to make my favorite foods like nachos, pizza and German chocolate cake. I had no choices like that in the nursing home."

Linda's story is unique in that REM, the residential provider which serves her, reached out to her in the nursing facility where she was living. "A REM staff member who learned about the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program referred Linda to Program Manager Brooke Lovelace, who then referred her to me," explained MFP Transition Specialist Paige Shelton. "REM staff were familiar with Linda because she was a former consumer, and they were eager to serve her again," Shelton continued.

Shelton is quick to point out that the decision on whether to move was all Linda's. "I had fun getting ready to move," Linda told me with pride. "I got to shop for furniture, and then we ate at Pizza Ranch!"

Linda admits that the move was difficult at first. "I had to get used to my new house, my new staff, and my independence," she explains. "Now that I've been here awhile, it's getting easier."

The move is paying big dividends for Linda. She works five days a week at the Crossroads Pre-Vocational Center, and is excited to be working with MFP Employment Services Specialist SueAnn Morrow to find a job in the community. She's happy about living close to both her



sister and husband, as she gets to spend time with them and see her cat. Because she's able to be more active, she's lost 10 pounds. As a result, she's been able to reduce her medication. She's set a goal to continue to lose weight.

Linda has discovered some creative uses for assistive technology. She uses her iPad not only to play games but to text with her roommate, who is deaf. She finds it much easier to get around, now that she's been able to replace her manual wheelchair with an electric one which she's christened "The Monster."

Linda has this advice for those considering a move to the community: "Go for it!"

New Year, New Visions in the Disability Resource Library (DRL)

Like Stars on Earth: Every Child is Special = Taare Zameen Par / story, dialogue and screenplay by Amole Gupte; produced and directed by Aamir Khan. Burbank, CA: Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, [2009]. (165 min.)

A magical film produced in Hindi and dubbed in English, featuring a very imaginative young boy who has singular behaviors that cause all sorts of distress for his family until a teacher deciphers his hidden disability. Not to be missed for the stars' stellar performances, Pixar animation touches, and global appeal.

Uniquely Human: A Different Way of Seeing Autism / Barry Prizant, with Tom Fields-Meyer. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015.

Dr. Barry M. Prizant calls upon his four decades of experience working with children on the autism spectrum to help parents understand the motivation of their children in this immensely readable and important book. Through numerous examples and simple strategies, Prizant encourages parents to work with behaviors that can be encouraged through nuanced cues, and to accept certain idiosyncracies (or in Prizant's vocabulary, enthusiasms) that make sense in terms of the whole child.

Neurotribes: the Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity / Steve Silberman. Foreword by Oliver Sacks. New York: Avery, 2015.

This is a huge book literally and figuratively that is definitely worth the read. It pulls together the threads of psychiatric history and social expedience to form a cogent history of what we now know as the autism spectrum. How did Asperger's "lost tribe" emerge? What was the basis of the "refrigerator mothers" theory? What is neurodiversity? The answers are here, in a dense brew of personalities and competing agendas. By the end though, the focus of the book is on the people who truly mattered all along, individuals on the human spectrum.

Making Life Work: Freedom and Disability in a Community Group Home / Jack Levinson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

An ethnography of a time (2000), a group home (Driggs House, New York City) and the dynamics of human relationships in a large urban apartment that is home to 15 residents and is a workplace for a rotating crew of counselors. The author notes that due to changes in regulations and the influence of the independent living movement since this book was written, this is a capsule snapshot of accommodation in a time not so far off from institutionalization that visits the tensions between the concepts of freedom and group organization.

Talk to me: a practical guide to conversational therapy for parents of children with speech and language difficulties or Asperger syndrome / Heather Jones. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2014.

The Disability Resource Library contains a number of books for speech therapy in various diagnostic categories. This is the latest book to help you to help your child develop words and vocabulary in the home setting. The activities are practical and enjoyable for parent and child.

Iowa Health Link Program Scheduled To Begin March 1

The Iowa Managed Care Medicaid program (also called IA Health Link) is now scheduled to begin on March 1, 2016, instead of the original January 1 start date. Clients and support personnel are advised of the following changes to the program:

- The state has withdrawn the WellCare contract. Iowa Medicaid is tentatively reassigning members of WellCare to a different Managed Care Organization (MCO). The new assignments are being sent to Medicaid members in January. If patients have questions about this change, they should contact Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME) via email at IMEMemberServices@dhs.state.ia.us or by calling 1-800-338-8366, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- Starting Jan. 1, 2016, Medicaid members needing behavioral health services are covered through Iowa Medicaid Enterprise until IA Health Link begins on March 1, 2016. Patients can visit dhs.iowa.gov/iahealthlink for more information.
- Wellmark has announced it is not continuing with the hawk-i program and those patients are being reassigned to United Health and the IME to ensure continued coverage. If patients have questions about who will be taking over their insurance, they should contact Iowa Medicaid Enterprise via email at IMEMemberServices@dhs.state.ia.us or by calling 1-800-338-8366, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

"Independence is happiness"
-Susan B. Anthony, American Social Reformer and Feminist

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