

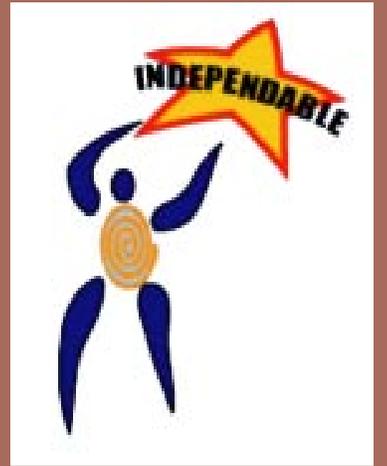
VISION

To open up the world to people to encourage them to experience everything it has to offer; communicate effectively; and to be as healthy, safe, and financially secure as possible. experience everything it has to offer; to communicate

For people to feel good about themselves and their relationships with others, to have fun, be happy, and have meaningful things to do.

For people to live in safe and decent neighborhoods where they are accepted, valued, and respected including their cultural preferences.

To guide people on their journey to discover their abilities, talents, and desires by empowering them to be interdependent; to encourage people to make their own choices and decisions so they will have control over their own lives, and over the services and supports they use.



STEP News

February 2005 Volume 8/Issue 15

Knowledge Is Power



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STEP has always made a commitment to quality staff training and this has been an area of focus in the last few years. Other agencies in Sacramento as well as Northern California respect STEP for our staff training tools. They mention RESPECT class, new employee orientation, health related classes, supervisor training, new staff training with consumers, etc as being innovative and effective. We are very proud of this reputation and continue to look at ways to educate our employees because **Knowledge Is Power**.

STEP's Vision includes this statement, "To guide people on their journey to discover their abilities, talents, and desires by empowering them to be interdependent". This applies to both our employees and our clients and we are saying we want to invest and give people power- that's what empower means. If **Knowledge Is Power**, then our efforts to educate are one way we can empower our employees and clients. In 2005, we want to focus on this empowerment of our consumers. By educating them, we will give them power to "make their own choices and decisions so they will have control over their own lives, and over the services and supports they use;" another part of our Vision. If we further develop consumer skills, they will guide us in how to support them instead of us having the control.

In 2005, while we will continue to provide quality training to our employees, we will look at how we are educating our consumers and develop learning opportunities for consumers and their support staff together. The word "interdependent" means mutually dependent. That means that we need our consumers and they need their support systems; we teach them and they teach us. We are planning to start a formal consumer advisory committee where consumers will advise STEP on many issues including training opportunities and staff evaluations. If you are a consumer who would like to be involved with this committee or want to recommend someone, please contact Melanie at STEP. We are also working to develop a supervisor training course for consumers so they can learn how to manage their own support staff and communicate effectively to get their needs met. If you have ideas on how we can further educate our consumers and employees, we'd love to hear them! **KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!**

MELANIE BAZILE-FERNANDEZ

STEP STARS



S

Londa Brock- many thanks for your efficient work.

Emilita Cayapan- your flexibility is appreciated.

Martha Baxter- I appreciate your efforts going out walk with scott and encourage him going out community

Richard Faringer- nice work advocating for your client and getting medication changes.

Darvis Hale-you are a lifesaver! Thank you for being flexible and covering some shifts where we really needed your help.

Bree Klock -You rock!! Thanks for all the help with our Deaf/Blind events.

Jeff Thompson and Cecilia Quera-I You made David Gehri's birthday really special. You are appreciated for that.

T

William Marks-thanks for your work as a SLS Coordinator and good luck as ILS instructor.

Lisa Barrows- for communications with staffing. (Smile) I appreciate you very much!

Kristen Carmichael-thank you for caring about the quality of your services!

Cherrylene Baxter, Ashley Snodgrass, Stephanie Piscitelli -for taking up extra shifts.

Michelle Noschese -for being such a great roommate for Noel Harris. You will be missed.

Sam Holden and Diana Miller- for their support and feedback during emergencies.

Jacquie Dillard-Foss , Robin & Kelly McGurran - for your help and concern with my sick grandmother. I really respect and appreciate the people and the company for caring so greatly about your employees. THANK-YOU!.

Stan Willis -for all his extra help with his clients. You have been very dependable and willing to cover shifts at the last minute.

Xavier Kochne- for assisting Tom in the ER your help and teamwork were greatly appreciated.

Judy and Ada, I speak for all here at STEP office. We appreciate how much you help us everyday. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

Darrell Utley- for your teamwork and help with taking your client to the ER I know it was hard work.

Nick O'Donnell-thank you for your effort and help keeping the clients home clean.

Joe Sanchez- you have done an amazing job with Tom overnight. You have showed so much patience with him when he is not sleeping.

Sam Holden -for all your help assisting and advocating for Tom to get the medical help he needs

Wendell Dondonayos-thank you for giving your clients the attention they deserve.

E

WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A WARM AND HEARTFELT

"WELCOME BACK"

TO

MELANIE BAZILE-FERNANDEZ (MEL)

We are glad to have you back. You were missed!

P

Happy Birthday

Katerine Cavanaugh 3/1

Dennis Smith 3/3

William Marks 3/3

mathew Scott 3/4

Michael Emory 3/4

Leslie Kendall 3/5

Londa Brock 3/5

Bradley Boulger 3/6

Raquel Valdez 3/7

Troy Hadley 3/7

Hugh long 3/8

Stacie Young 3/9

Kelly McGurran 3/11

Anna Venteicher 3/1/3

Wendell Dondonayos 3/14

Cassandra Rodriquez 3/14

Linda Grizzelle 3/15

Ronald Russell 3/16

Charles Edwards 3/17

Bobbie Jean Smith 3/18

Ashia Gibson 3/18

Jerry Welsh 3/19

Tina Harris 3/19

Sarah Gee 3/20

Kevin Hopper 3/20

Beth Engle 3/21

Jude De La Concepcion 3/22

Lorraine Richards 3/23

Charlotte Barnes 3/24

Ruby De La Cruz 3/24

Laura Tighe 3/25

Patricia Dixon 3/26

Charles Betz 3/26

Mathew Callaghan 3/27

Larry Bartmann 3/30

Thomas cavalieri 3/30

Atif Shabbir 3/31

Fred Deatherage 3/31

CONGRATULATIONS
& HAVE A WONDER-
FUL BIRTHDAY!



THE SIX R'S FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT

RESPONSIBILITY

- You are in control
- Establish priorities
- Say "no"

REFLECTION

- Know your stress triggers
- Be aware of stress symptoms
- Check your balance in life

T

RELAXATION

- Do something good for you
- Schedule "worry time"
- Schedule time out

RELATIONSHIPS

- Maintain supportive relationships
- Manage your relationships
- Improve your relationship with yourself

REFUELLING

- Eat a balanced diet with high fiber, low salt, and low cholesterol
- Be aware of poisons: caffeine, fats, nicotine, processed foods
- Drink water

E

RECREATION

- Laugh
- Have fun
- Enjoy life

IF YOU CAN'T CONTROL IT, YOU CAN'T WORRY ABOUT IT!

STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES BEFORE YOU STOP AND THE ROSES SMELL YOU!

SUGGESTED READING

Benson, H. *The Mind/Body Effect*. Simon & Schuster, 1979

Bracker, Harriet. *The Type E Woman*. Donald Mead & Company, 1986

Braham, Barbara J. *Calm Down: How To Manage Stress at Work*. Scott Foresman and Company, 1990

Comprehensive Stress Management. William C. Brown, 1987

Covey, Stephen. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Simon & Shuster, 1989

Crane, Kathryn. *Staying On Top*. Penquin Books, 1988.

Holmes, T.H. and Rahe, T.H. "The Social Readjustment Rating Scale." *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 11:213, 1967.

Josefowitz, Hatahs. *Paths To Power*. Addison Wesley publishing Co., 1989.

Kabasa, S.C. "Stressful Life Events, Personality & Health: An Inquiry Into hardiness." *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*. 37:1-71, 1979.

Klarreich, Samuel H. *Work Without Stress*. Brunner/Mazel, Inc., 1990.

LaRouche, Janice and Regina Ryan. *Strategies for Women at Work*. Avon Books, 1984.

LeBoeuf, M. *Working Smart*. McGraw-Hill, 1979.

Markell, Jan. *Overcoming Stress*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1983.

Murphy, Dennis. *Time Management for Supervisors*. Professional Training Associates, Inc., 1990.

Submitted By:
Sandy Goodsell

P



Look for more Human Resources information throughout this newsletter

SLS -HEARING

S

Several of the clients from the hearing team went on a snowtrip recently. Many thanks to Stephanie Sgro for organizing such a fun event. Carl Weidman, Zipporah Gaines, and Bobbie Jean Smith you three are tremendous for going this extra mile and supporting the clients on this trip. We want to welcome new clients Laura Sowdon (starting STEP in February) and Annie Miller (starting in March) to our team. The new coordinators seem to be adjusting well to their jobs and tackling some difficult situations. Our team has also been completing several evaluations. If you think yours is due please talk to your supervisor about it. Happy 70th Birthday to Thurston Miller, the hearing team's eldest client!!

Patti Uplinger

*We want to remind everyone that there is a PA training on March 14 from 9:30-11:30 at the STEP office.

SLS- Deaf

We would like to say "THANK- YOU" to everyone who came together to do the service for Stephen Lewis. It was beautiful and the family was very pleased by what was done for Stephen. So again, THANK -YOU to EVERYONE for making it possible!

The Deaf Unit will be hosting a P.A. Meeting on Feb. 28th, 2005 (Monday) at 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. @ the S.T.E.P. Office. I hope you all can show up to discuss the agenda for the year 2005 and other topics that need to be discussed. If you have any questions or ideas you want to make sure to be at your P.A. Meeting. Please contact Sam Holden at samjr@tmail.com for further information.

Thanks!
SAM HOLDEN

Day Program Next STEP

I am so thankful for the educational opportunities STEP has provided me over the years. Everything I know about Deafblindness I learned here. STEP is the place I was encouraged to grow personally and professionally. Recently I attended a conference where professionals from all branches of services to clients in California came together to discuss the future. I was so inspired. Great things are on the horizon. Scary and uncomfortable things are looming too, but I don't worry so much because I am here at STEP. We can weather any storm and celebrate every success...together!

I am so proud to work everyday with some of the most caring, motivated, hard working, intelligent, and ethical people it has been my good fortune to meet. I am sincerely thankful to all of you.

Very soon we will be welcoming new clients to day program, so be on the look out to greet Laura, Janine, Alex, and Jennifer!

Lynn Vaughan

PAAC

Next Personal Attendant Advisory Committee Meeting: February 28th, 2005 9:00 am - 11:00 am - Classrooms #1 & #2

Please re-submit all e-mail addresses to Charlene if you would like the newsletter and other notices e-mailed to you.

There was a computer "gliche" so all was lost. You may submit your email address to Charlene@stepsite.com.

We offer our apologies for any inconvenience this may cause you.

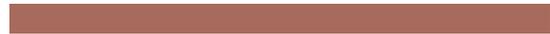
Thank-you!

P

ILS

The ILS Unit would officially like to welcome William Marks to the ILS/Parenting unit. We would also like to welcome back Jan Jesse as a full-time ILS Instructor. ILS recently met to develop our 2005 Unit Smart Path which will include developing a ILS/Parenting Training video. ILS recently completed Mini-ELP's for each of the ILS clients.

Anna Shands



"Important Message"

We all need to remember the importance of medications in the lives of our clients.

Physicians prescribe medications, as we all know, for a wide variety of reasons. Since these are the professionals who know most about medications, uses, side effects, etc., etc., we are best to follow their instructions, unless a medication poses a problem for someone.

Since our folks take meds for all different reasons, and often we are the ones responsible for administering them, we must pay very close attention when doing so. Remember to pay very close attention when giving medications, as well as documenting that you have given them. This is one of the most serious things we are responsible for at work with our clients, and potentially one of the most dangerous.

So please, pay close attention to this important task.

KELLY MCGURRAN



Human Resources

Any articles, announcements, STARS, and resource information is welcome. The deadline for the next newsletter is 3/15/05.

Jen's Trivia Question:

Be the first person to visit Jen Jone's office with the correct answer and receive a prize:

LAST MONTH:

WHAT DOES THE WORD VALENTINE MEAN?

Answer: "Sweetheart"

Winner: Mike Jones

This months Trivia (Must have ALL (below) correct to win)

The meaning of each color rose listed below:

- Red
- Yellow
- Pale Pink
- Pink
- Dark Pink
- White
- Lavender
- Peach
- Peachy Pink
- Orange
- Coral
- Black
- Burgundy

NOTE: AN INDIVIDUAL CAN WIN ONCE EVERY 3 MONTHS.

Benefits Info:

THANK YOU ALL FOR A TERRIFIC RESPONSE TO OUR OPEN ENROLLMENT!!! It was a great success, and I appreciate all the help from so many of you!

For some folks it was not clear that we no longer have the same vision coverage we had before. Previously, the vision plan came with the dental plan, and since we no longer have that dental plan, that vision coverage has also ended. I have passed out discount cards for Sterling optical. There is more specific information in the bulletins that all of you received at the time of open enrollment, or you are welcome to stop by and see me with any questions you have.

Attached to this newsletter is a flyer for Liberty Mutual Insurance Company. They are offering a discount to our employees. If you are considering changing your auto or home insurance, I would encourage you to get a quote from them (you can fax the form over to them). Personally, I am now saving \$60 month and have better coverage with them. It is an option for you if you are interested.

Thank you,

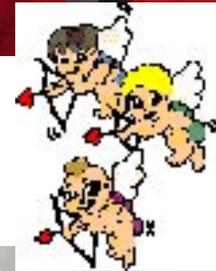
Patti Dixon

VALENTINES DAY DANCE

MIX MASTER -D.J. "ANGIE O"
SPINS THE MUSIC WITH FINESSE



WHILE **PARTY-GOERS,**

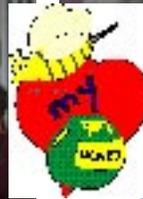


FRIENDS,

COUPLES,



**& EVERYONE, DANCED
THE NIGHT AWAY!**



Pictures Submitted by: Angela Olsen A Special

"Thank-you" to Katrina Parham for her assistance in setting-up the party!

"Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace, and gratitude."

Denis Waitley



STEP STARS..... continued

Justin Lathus -Welcome to our team with Atif Shabbir. I appreciate the motivations you have shown.

Bobbie Jean Smith-You are a super star! Your work is appreciated!

Tracy Taylor- for doing subbing with Barry Krems. Many thanks!

Bonnie Fuchs, Ayren Gabrielson-thank-you for your support and coverage. You two are really team players!

Jaimie Dillard and Sam Holden-for coordinating Atif Shabbir's arrangements as a team.

Jessica Miller- for her patience with Jamie Christopher during tough times.

Charlene Rhodes-for helping around the office and with the different types of computer assistance.

Jen Jones -for continuing to help with Atif Shabbir's living arrangement

Jobina- I appreciate your willingness to work extra hours and your efforts with Sarah Gee's behavior keep it up

Matty Spannton- I appreciate your many years as a Personal Attendant working with Scott Wirth.. you are missed..

Idris Osborne- your motivation with Scott is greatly appreciated!

Christy Schoneman-for facilitating the move for Jenifer from Tahoe into her new home.

Angela Olsen-for providing additional training to new ILS during client transitions.

Annette Butler for assisting Rachel in following through with the Housing Choice Voucher so that she can find a place to move to.

Katrina Parham-for the wonderful job you do with Atif and the office staff would like to thank-you for the friendly greetings you spread throughout the office on a daily basis. "You Rock!"

The Office Staff would like to thank all who have been leaving the cubicles neat and closing all programs on the computers when they finish with them at the end of the day. We greatly appreciate it!

Mike B.-for continued support with Rick Hodgkins.

Stallina Nava -for learning how to use the fax machine with minimum (if any) assistance.

Thomas Waters, Stephanie Sgro, Donette Reins-for doing such an awesome job with Noel Harris and preparing for the skiing trip.

Bonnie Fuchs-for her professionalism at the front desk.

Hey Henry Gibson! Congratulations on your paintings being part of the 2nd Saturday exhibitions. You are amazing!!!

Thanks to everyone that made their Valentine's Gift purchases from JohnTusing's gift baskets. Wait til you see what he has planned for St. Patrick's and Easter.

Personal Attendants-who showed up for the scheduled meeting that was cancelled-thank-you for your understanding and dedication

Gloria Goode & Stephanie Tate-for providing additional support to Jenifer during her move.



COMPUTER HELP CORNER

Must Know For Computer Users

It's been thought for years that heavy computer use can damage the eyes, but research couldn't prove it — until recently. A new study of 9,000 Japanese workers published in the Journal of Environmental and Community Health did indeed find that among nearsighted people who used computers heavily, the risk of glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness, skyrocketed.

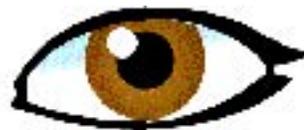
Nearsighted people are already at risk for glaucoma, a disease in which pressure inside the eye grows to the point that it damages the optic nerve and causes vision loss. It typically shows no symptoms and in rare cases can develop rapidly, even in just a few hours. The Japanese study found that the risk of glaucoma among nearsighted, heavy computer users rose 82 percent, linking computer usage with one of the leading causes of blindness.

The good news is that the study also found, surprisingly, that among normal-sighted people, the risk of glaucoma and other eye diseases, such as cataracts, went down as computer use went up.

For your employees who wear corrective lenses to treat nearsightedness, the following precautions can guard their vision and preserve their sight:

- Require that computer users take regular breaks away from the screen — every 20 minutes is recommended.
- Make sure there is enough space behind each screen so that the person can look beyond it to relax the eyes.
- Provide screen cleaner to keep dirty screens from causing eyestrain.
- Keep monitors adjusted for comfortable levels of brightness and contrast. Position computers so that light comes in from the side(s) rather than from in front of or behind the screen.
- Ensure that employees wear their corrective lenses when required.
- Encourage regular eye checkups that include exams for glaucoma.

Sight is precious, and vision loss due to glaucoma is permanent. Take these steps to make sure your most vulnerable employees are protected. It's the healthy thing to do.



MORE HUMAN RESOURCES REMINDER

- PLEASE REMEMBER YOU MUST FILL OUT THE "CHANGE OF INFO (STAFF)" FORM WHEN YOU MOVE
- FILL OUT THE NEW W-2 FORMS AND PUT IT IN ROBIN'S BOX
- LEARN YOUR EMPLOYEE I.D. NUMBER, (EXAMPLE-21-SAMO 10) AND INCLUDE THIS ON YOURTIMESHEETS

ROBIN MCGURRAN

MASON LELAND

STEP APPRECIATION #101

I had a dream one night about 3 years back. I was at a crossroads at that time in my life, staring at a handful of college credits that aimed in no particular direction. It was a time when I was struggling to choose which way to go with my life. I always knew that the possibilities were endless, and that is what made these kind of decisions all the more hard. I found that especially true when all I really strived for on any given day, back then was a good cup of coffee in the morning, and perhaps some strong conversation with my new lady friend; the same lady who I can now happily call my wife. I awoke after that dream with a sense of duty. What I knew at that moment was that I wanted to only do one thing with my life, I wanted to help people. I wanted to see people achieve things in their lives that they never thought possible. I wanted to splash smiles across faces of each and every one of the people I saw each day. I wanted to be happy and contagious; infecting others whether they were biting into their morning bagels or passing me on the highway oblivious to the joy that surrounds them, the joy that surrounds us all and is always there ready to swallow each and every one of us if we let it. I awoke that day with a direction. I wanted to help people.

This job has given me the opportunity to fulfill some of the goals I have that stemmed from the dream I had. One such opportunity presented itself about 6 months ago (this letter is dated 8/10/04). One of my clients here at STEP had been in desperate need of new carpet in his apartment for far too long. Torn and frayed, stained and smelly the carpet stretched wall-to-wall with less than enthusiastic intentions. I think, when it just came down to it, the carpet had given up hope. As you walked in the door or rolled in as my client did (he is in a wheelchair), the carpet had quit greeting with enthusiasm as a more well kept carpet may have done. That carpet wanted to be put out of its misery.

Knowing that I am now in the privileged position to make some things happen for my clients, I set out to put that sad carpet to rest. I found myself in the office here at STEP and thanks to the help of some wonderful ladies who took the time to assist me in finding the necessary tools to start digging the metaphorical hole to bury that resentful carpet, I found myself pouring over the California Tenant Handbook. After a little bit of digging I found a few interesting passages in the book and figured out a way I could put them to use. I wrote a letter to the property management company, xeroxed some of the more interesting parts of the book, attached those as well, and faxed over my request for a new carpet. It was not but a few hours later that day that we received a response and within the week, my client received brand new carpet. My part wasn't all that great or profound, but it did make a change in my client's life.

Isn't it funny how the little things can change the way we look at the world around us? I came by my client's home a few days after the carpet was laid down and it was not hard to see how it had brightened things up. The smile on my client's face was quite noticeable as was his light-hearted demeanor. Even his staff seemed a bit brighter that day (at least, to me).

The carpet itself layed sprawled, wall to wall, relaxing and reveling in its cleanliness in the most peaceful way. After a few words of enthusiasm and excitement being exchanged between all of us in the room, as I walked out the door I could swear I heard the apartment itself whisper a "thank-you."

I will continue to try and assist people for as long as I live. The rewards far outweigh any of the actual hardships or obstacles that the process may put in our way. In fact, those are what make the journey what it is, and what makes the outcome what it is. It is also what allows us to feel that sense of accomplishment and pride that we as humans, yearn for on such a deep level. Maybe it was selfish to do what I did because I am the one who gets to feel better about my place in the world at the end of the day. I get to feel better due only to a few hours of my time on this earth putting forth the effort to splash a smile about or infecting someone else's day with joy. Maybe, just maybe, that is a selfish thing to do. But do you know what, I don't think it will stop me from doing it again, and again, and again....."

HEALTH EDUCATION LIAISON PROJECT

Welcome to the first edition of the HELP Health Bulletin. The goal of the health bulletin is to provide wellness information and resources. If you have health information or content suggestions, please contact the Health Education Liaison Project Director, Jaimie Dillard at: jaimied@stepsite.com or (916) 679-1555 ext 103.



"Health Bulletin"

Dear Dr. Know:

I was recently diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes and my mom says it's because I am overweight, is this true?

Thank you,
Ima Concerned

Hello Ima,

First of all, I cannot comment on your individual diagnosis since I am not your physician. However, the American Diabetes Association points to research which has revealed that 80% of those with Type 2 Diabetes are overweight and for many of them simply losing the excess weight can result in a remission of their Diabetes. Please follow up with your primary care doctor to see if there are lifestyle changes you can make to reduce or eliminate your Diabetes symptoms.

ASK
DR.
KNOW

Eating Right
According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), eating for weight management can be accomplished by simply reducing the amount of fat and sugars in our diets and selecting a wide variety of foods from each of the 5 food groups which include Breads/Grains, Fruits, Vegetables, Dairy and Protein. Please visit the USDA website for more details.

Spotlight on Health

Stress Management is in the health spotlight this month. The American Heart

Association's booklet entitled "How Can I Manage Stress?" offers the following information on stress management:

1. What is Stress? "Your body's response to change"
2. How does stress make you feel? "It can make you feel angry, afraid, excited or helpless. It can make it hard to sleep and give you aches in your head, neck, jaw and back. It can lead to habits like smoking, drinking, overeating, or drug abuse."
3. How can I cope with it? Focus on changing your reaction to external events by developing coping mechanisms which might include activities such as: sitting quietly and breathing deeply for 15-20 minutes per day; engaging in daily physical activity; learning to accept things we cannot change; limiting alcohol, smoking and overeating.

*For more information on stress management, please contact the American

Heart Association at: 1-800-AHA-USA
(1-800-242-8721).

Exercise for Life

For many of us the word exercise elicits visions of hours at the gym surrounded by physical specimens. The good news is that the single most affordable and effective form of exercise does not require a gym membership or peak fitness - it's walking! In the Staywell Company's "Walking for Fitness" booklet the benefits of walking for wellness are outlined including the following walking safely tip: "Walk facing traffic and on smooth surfaces, such as dirt paths or sidewalks. You could trip and fall on an uneven surface" (for more information please visit www.staywell.com).

SUCCESS STORIES

Have you or do you know someone who has been successful at managing a health condition? Please send us your stories of success to be included in future editions of the HELP Health Bulletin. Thank you, Jaimie Dillard