



# APRIL

## April Activity/ Appreciation Days:

- Autism Awareness Month!
- World Autism Day- 4/2
- Participant Awards Luncheon
- Easter - 4/20



LOVE•HOPE•ACCEPT  
**AUTISM**  
Awareness

## Upcoming events

### Hastings:

- Volunteer @ Freedom Factory
- Volunteer @ Crane Trust
- Jenifers Farewell Party- 4/11
- Meals on Wheels

### Grand Island:

- Tours around the Community
- Movie theater time!
- Fishing
- Cooking Class

### Kearney:

- Bingo
- Adaptive Art Class- Wed.  
@ YMCA
- Visit Museums
- Activities with Hanny  
Arram Students





# **AUTISM & A SUCCESS STORY**

- **Caleb's primary diagnosis is Autism Spectrum Disorder. He possesses remarkable talents in various areas, particularly in playing video games. In addition to this interest, he enjoys hands-on activities, such as working on welding projects at school, including creating a vehicle creeper for mechanic work. Caleb has also started exploring 3D printing at the library after visiting with Goodwill. A few Christmases ago, he received a 3D printer, which has allowed him to undertake several projects. He has even established a consignment arrangement with Freedom Factory to sell his creations. Furthermore, Caleb is eager to learn about kinetic energy and engage in origami.**



## **Celebrating Autism Acceptance Month**

### **Charles:**

**Celebrate Charles this Autism Acceptance Month! 🎨 Charles is incredibly artistic and amazing! ⭐ His creativity knows no bounds.  
#AutismAcceptanceMonth**

### **Andrew:**

**Meet Andrew, who embodies curiosity and intelligence! 🧠 Andrew never shies away from asking questions and completing research to satiate his curiosity, then shares his newfound knowledge with others.  
#AutismAcceptanceMonth**

### **Tristen:**

**Introducing Tristen, our weather and fire truck enthusiast! ⚡🚒 Tristen has an incredible knowledge of fire trucks, weather safety, and predicting storms. #AutismAcceptanceMonth**

### **Stephen:**

**Spotlight on Stephen, our movie aficionado! 🎬 Stephen's knowledge of old movies is truly remarkable. He can tell you everything about the classics.  
#AutismAcceptanceMonth**

### **Megan:**

**Say hello to Megan, who loves spreading joy! 😊 Megan has a knack for making people laugh and isn't afraid to speak her mind.  
#AutismAcceptanceMonth**

**Website for Autism Acceptance Month Infographics and resources:**

**<https://autismsociety.org/autismis/>**





# APRIL IS NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

## AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

is a range of conditions affecting social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech, and nonverbal communication.

**APRIL IS NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH,** with celebrations to understand this disorder. Here are some facts to learn what autism is and how you can help those who have it.

## AWARENESS

- Most obvious signs of autism appear between two and three years old.
- Children may fail to respond to their name or have a reduced interest in people.
- Around one third of people with autism stay nonverbal their whole life.
- Seizures, ADHD, and anxiety frequently accompany autism.



## ACTION



- Developmental delay screenings should occur at nine months.
- Autism Spectrum Disorder screenings should be at 18 months.
- Child psychologists and neurologists can help detect autism in your child.

## INCLUSION & ACCEPTANCE

- Children with Autism don't get the same sense of inclusion in schools as other children, making them feel excluded and alienated.
- Adults with autism often have trouble getting a job.
- Social inclusion is having access to education, health care, and services.
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states those with autism have the right to be included in their community.



USE THE HASHTAG **#LIGHTITUPBLUE** ACROSS SOCIAL MEDIA platforms to share your experiences and help light the world in blue this April!



# April is

## NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH



### Did you know?

Every 20 minutes someone is diagnosed with autism

Autistic individuals (speaking and non-speaking) may use a variety of different and unique ways to communicate

Many individuals on the spectrum stay in school until they are 21

People with autism have very special gifts and talents!

**The Autism Society has a resource  
for support called Autism Source.**

*To reach us call: 800-3Autism*

#AutismFriendly #NAAM16

 **AUTISM SOCIETY**





# NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



## Home & Community-Based Services (HCBS) Stakeholder Meetings

What is new in the Division of Developmental Disabilities?  
Get updates from all DHHS Divisions!

Meetings are held on the first Monday\* of every month.  
Join us at 4:00 p.m., CT

We will provide updates  
and give you the opportunity to ask questions.  
Send questions or request topics ahead of time:  
[DHHS.DDDCommunityBasedServices@nebraska.gov](mailto:DHHS.DDDCommunityBasedServices@nebraska.gov).

Presented on Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81170221250?pwd=ZXFrUHc0VhCUDBrWHpnVmdnakcrUT09>

Upcoming meeting dates on the Stakeholder webpage:

<https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/HCBS-Stakeholder-Meetings.aspx>

Login information on the DDD calendar (bottom of the homepage):

<https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Developmental-Disabilities.aspx>

\*Meeting will be held the second Monday when the first is a holiday.



# Goodwill

Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

Although Goodwill assists with monitoring certifications and licenses, it is YOUR responsibility to ensure you attend a training in the time scheduled before providing supports alone and in time so yours remains valid. Inability to attend may impact employment and/ or contract.

If you would like more information regarding these trainings, please notify your local program manager.

- Public comment page to get the heading with the information and hyperlink on where they have to register for sessions if they want to listen to the changes; the bottom has the link to actually submit comments:

- <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/DD-Public-Comment.aspx>

- Sessions to support families can be registered at:

- <https://dhhs.ne.gov/pages/developmental-disabilities.aspx>





# JOIN OUR TEAM



Are you someone who is passionate about empowering others? 🧑‍💻 🤖

Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska is seeking dedicated individuals to join our team as Direct Support Professionals (DSPs)

Locations: Grand Island, Kearney, and Hastings!  
Great benefits package for full-time employees!



DSPs provide support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

## DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

Monday – Friday, off by 5:00 p.m. and no weekends required!

Competitive Wages and Benefits!

Goodwill vehicles for providing transportation!

Newly renovated workspace!

### JOIN WITH US!

Are you someone who is passionate about empowering others?

Goodwill is seeking dedicated individuals to join our team as Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) in Grand Island, Kearney, and Hastings! DSPs provide support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Duties may include:

- Assist participants in the community with fun activities such as bowling, fishing, and volunteering.
- Encourage participants to self-advocate, in order to live independent and fulfilling lives.
- Utilize Positive Support Programs to guide daily interactions.
- Provide person-centered support.

LEARN MORE  
AND  
APPLY AT

[GOODWILLNE.ORG/JOIN-OUR-MISSION/CAREER](http://GOODWILLNE.ORG/JOIN-OUR-MISSION/CAREER)



**GRAND ISLAND**  
1804 South Eddy Street  
PO Box 1863  
Grand Island, NE 68801

Phone: 308.384.7896  
Fax: 308.384.9231

Program Manager:  
Pam Buckles

Shared Living Manager  
Tia Hayman

**HASTINGS**  
835 South Burlingron  
Plaza  
Suite: 110,112  
Hastings, NE 68901

Phone: 402.463.1467  
Fax: 402.463.1445

Program Manager:  
Jenifer Phinney

Shared Living Manager:  
Tia Hayman

**KEARNEY**  
4009 6th Avenue  
Suite: 37, 45  
Kearney, NE 68845-2386

Phone: 308.455.1400  
Fax: 308.455.1402

Program Manager:  
Kim Anderson

Shared Living Manager:  
Tia Hayman





# UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS



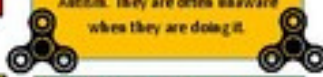
## Understanding Autism in the Community



All two people with Autism are the same, just like no two people without Autism are the same.



If you see someone in the community rocking, looking at their hands, humming loudly, or spinning that is called "stimming." Please do not stare or be concerned. Stimming is often a coping skill for people with Autism. They are often unaware when they are doing it.



Sometimes people with Autism who are able to speak clearly, still have difficulty with understanding fast verbal instructions. They might also speak in a quiet or loud voice or take longer to answer questions.

People with Autism can be overwhelmed by loud noises and bright lights. Some might wear protective headphones or sunglasses inside to help with this.



If you see someone having a difficult time, and you suspect that they might have Autism, look for their parent or DSP.

DSP stands for Direct Support Professional. DSPs are trained professionals who know how to help someone with Autism. Many first responders are also trained in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention and know how to help people with Autism and other developmental disabilities.



Above All, be kind. People with Autism want live, work, and play in the community just like everyone else.



## Public Comment Period for Amendments

Pursuant to 42 C.F.R. §441.304(f), the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is required to give public notice related to the state's plan to amend the 1915(c) Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Comprehensive Developmental Disabilities Services (NE.4154), the Developmental Disabilities Day Services Waiver for Adults (NE.0394), Family Support (NE 2366) and the Aged and Adult and Children with Disabilities (NE.0187) waivers. The 30-day public comment period is from January 13, 2025, through February 13, 2025.

Upon approval by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), these waiver amendments would go into effect July 1, 2025.



# ENABLE ACCOUNT TRAINING SCHEDULE IN 2025

**15**

JAN 2025

**LEARN ABOUT THE ENABLE  
ACCOUNT SAVING PLAN**

7-8:30 PM REGISTER TO GET ZOOM LINK

**28**

APRIL

**SAVE WITH THE  
ENABLE ACCOUNT**

6-7:30 PM LOCATION TBA REGISTER

**17**

JULY

**PROTECT BENEFITS &  
SAVE WITH ENABLE**

7-8:30 PM REGISTER TO GET ZOOM LINK

**23**

SEPT

**HAVE A DISABILITY? WANT  
TO SAVE?**

6-7:30 PM LOCATION TBA REGISTER

FOR MORE INFO : [WWW.TECTONICCHANGEINC.COM](http://WWW.TECTONICCHANGEINC.COM)



# Advisory Committee

*The Advisory Committee's purpose is to advise, assist, and advocate in establishing, operating, and evaluating Goodwill's Developmental Disability Services (DDS) and Employment and Career Services (ECS) so we are providing the highest quality of services to our service area.*

The Advisory Committee through Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska provides a window for our program into the community. Our member's knowledge and expertise assist with understanding the needs of those we serve. Making these connections with our industry partners opens the door for deep relationships that may lead to work-based learning opportunities, employment opportunities, volunteer opportunities or internships, and apprenticeships, new providers for Shared Living homes, new referrals for services, and new staffing opportunities

It is required that all Committee members are either:

- A person with developmental disabilities;
- A family member or legal guardian of persons with developmental disabilities; or
- A person who is an interested community member

Advisory Committee meetings are scheduled on a routine quarterly basis on the last Thursday of the quarterly month, except December. Meetings generally last one hour at noon and rotate between each of the Goodwill DDS/ECS sites. Members near that site are asked to join the meeting in person if able but there is a virtual option for all who cannot attend in person.

All members are expected to meet quarterly.

Members are a group of experts in a specific field who collaborate to oversee our services. Each member will advise in the development and operation of our services at Goodwill.

If you would be interested in helping Goodwill provide the best services we can, please contact us for more information on how to join our Advisory Committee!

A review will be provided by Goodwill prior to officially starting on the Committee.

**We thank you for considering this opportunity and look forward to hearing from you!**

Contact Name: Laura Schenk  
Email: [lschenk@goodwillne.org](mailto:lschenk@goodwillne.org)



## Human Legal Rights Review Committee

*A person with a developmental disability has the same legal, human, and civil rights and freedoms guaranteed to all citizens; they do not give up their rights when they accept services from DHHS-DD or GIGN.*

The Human and Legal Rights (HLR) Review Committee through Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska (GIGN) is responsible for protecting those said rights by monitoring GIGN practices in accordance with federal and state requirements. A HLR practice is important to make sure individual rights are not limited or restricted without an appropriate reason and due process.

HLR Committee members contribute to the decision making regarding potentially restricting the rights of individuals served since they are familiar with people with disabilities and have relevant professional or personal experience.

The Committee membership will be persons free from conflict of interest and who will ensure the confidentiality of information related to individuals served. Membership may include interested community persons/professionals, family members and/or legal representatives.

Due to circumstances requiring immediate attention to maintain the participant's safety, all HLR Committee Members are expected to be available for phone calls and/or emails in order for GIGN to obtain reviews and approvals for proposed restrictions needing swift implementation. Additionally, regular HLR Committee Meetings are conducted on a routine bi-monthly basis to review new and ongoing restriction proposals.

If you would be interested in helping Goodwill protect the rights of individuals receiving services, please contact us for more information on how to join our HLR Committee!

Training will be provided by Goodwill prior to officially starting on the Committee.

We thank you for considering this opportunity and look forward to hearing from you!

Contact Name: Laura Schenk  
Email: [lschenk@goodwillne.org](mailto:lschenk@goodwillne.org)