



Mississippi Shaking It Up With Self-Advocacy

Some Current Self-Advocacy Organizations & Their Activities or Functions





Together Enhancing Autism Awareness in Mississippi (TEAAM)

www.teaam.org

TEAAM is a non-profit, volunteer organization comprised of parents, family members, educators and service providers interested in the field of Autism. Focused on advancing the service potential for Mississippians with autism, as well as those who serve them and those who support them. Our organization is dedicated to improving the understanding of Autism through extensive training. TEAAM is also focused on being Mississippi's central source of information regarding Autism related services and resources.

Activities:

- Resource Provider
- Adventure Based Retreats
- Respite Services
- Trainings/Presentations
- Annual State Conference
- Kamp Kaleidoscope (Summer Camp)

Funding Sources:

- Fundraisers/Donations and Private Funders
- Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities
- King's Daughters and Sons Nonprofit

autistic
ADVANCEMENT

To promote neurodiversity, and integrate individuals with autism into the workplace.

**National Federation of the Blind
of Mississippi**
www.nfbofmississippi.org

Activities:

- Braille Teaching Courses
- Disability Awareness Trainings/Presentations
- Newsletters
- Annual State Convention with Parent and Youth Tracts
- Educational Scholarships
- Peer Mentoring
- Annual Retreat for Parents and Youth
- Sponsorship of Youth to National Events and Camps

Funding Sources:

- Fundraisers/Donations
- Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Membership Fees
- Grants



The **National Federation of the Blind of Mississippi** is a statewide organization of the blind individuals. The ultimate purpose of the NFB-MS is to assist with the integration of the blind into society on a basis of equality. This objective involves the removal of legal, economic, and social discriminations; the education of the public to new concepts concerning visual impairments, and the achievement by all visually impaired persons of their right to fully exercise their talents and capabilities. It means the right of a person with a visual impairment to walk along with their sighted neighbor in the professions, common callings, skilled trades, and regular occupation.



Living Independence for Everyone of Mississippi (LIFE)

www.lifeofms.com

Healthy Opportunities for Transition (HOT!)

Funding Sources:

- Fundraisers/Donations
- Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Mississippi State Department of Health
- Private Funders & Grants

Partners: DRMS, Arc, IDS, MS CDD and MDMH

Activities:

- Trainings/Presentations
- Peer Support
- Self-Advocacy Support
- Life Skills Training
- Transition Services
- Annual Retreat with Youth
and Parents

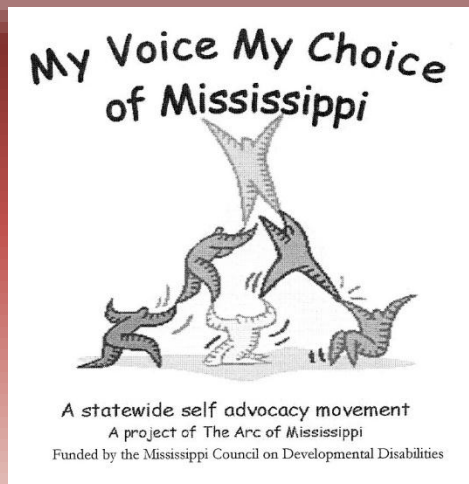
Living Independence for Everyone of Mississippi (LIFE) provides the four core services of independent living (peer support, information and referral, skills training, and advocacy) to individuals with disabilities throughout Mississippi. LIFE also provides other independent living services to consumers with disabilities as needed. These services include, but are not limited to, home and vehicle modifications, durable medical equipment and supplies, adaptive technology, rehabilitation engineering and much more.

HOT works to provide comprehensive, family-centered, culturally competent transition services, with a primary focus on health, which prepares children with special health care needs throughout Mississippi to make successful transitions to adult and community life including adult health care and related services, employment, and independent living.

My Voice My Choice of Mississippi

www.myvoicemychoiceofms.org

A project of The Arc of Mississippi promoting to individuals with disabilities, their family and friends, and/or service providers the importance of self-determination, self-advocacy, and general disability awareness. The project also teaches about the great gifts that people with disabilities have to offer. This project is led by self-advocates.



Activities:

- Seasonal Retreats
- Topical Trainings/Presentations
- Self-Advocates Developed Newsletters
- Resource Provider
- Self-Advocacy & Leadership Conference
- Peer Mentoring

Funding Sources:

- The Arc of Mississippi
- Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Membership Fees/Donations/Fundraisers

Partners:

- Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)
- National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN)
- Easter Seals Project ACTION
- DRMS, LIFE, IDS, MS CDD and MDMH

What has worked in Mississippi for Self-Advocacy Organizations

- Increasing opportunities for self-advocates to get out in the main stream by working, attending college and volunteering
- Offering self-advocates the opportunities to reach out to others and tell their stories and inspire others to be self-advocates
- Partnering/Collaborating with other organizations on activities to limit duplication of services
- Offering separate self-advocacy trainings for youth, adolescents, and adults with disabilities and their family member(s), service provider(s), and etc. during retreats and conferences
- Increasing self-advocacy perspectives on governing boards, advisory councils, and decision making entities

Mississippi's Self-Advocacy Organizations & State Partners Challenges & Struggles

- Appropriate public transportation throughout the state
- Lack of interest in disability awareness from the general public
- Hesitation toward “Step Back, Support, & Learn” from family members
- Statewide efforts for self-advocacy training
- The “I” Syndrome (territorial issues). Example: An individual who has a physical disability thinks that his disability takes precedent over another type of disability. Not all for one, one for all thought
- Coordination of a self-advocacy resource & information center
- Lack of employment opportunities for persons with disabilities
- Funding

What we are most proud of in regards to Self-Advocacy in Mississippi

- Conferences on self-advocacy such as the Arc Bi-Annual Statewide Self-Advocacy & Leadership Conference and the LIFE Summer Retreat
- Self-Advocacy implementation throughout the state through various agencies and organizations that all have great resources available. They are all working to educate society and get legislature to see, understand, and appreciate the wonderful voices of the disability community
- Mississippi has quite a few “fun” disability-specific activities that promote self-advocacy through recreation, such as fencing, soccer, basketball, tennis, and so on
- There are several organizations focusing on self-advocacy within the disability community

Our Goals and Dreams for Self-Advocacy in Mississippi

- Increased funding to help the agencies/organizations better implement and teach the importance of self-advocacy, self-determination, independence, and leadership throughout our state to the disability community, their families, friends, colleagues, and more
- Increased appropriate public transportation throughout our state
- Increased mentoring activities
- Increased number of self-advocates with disabilities throughout the state to include at least 65% of the members of the disabled community
- Increased awareness - Everyone (agencies/organizations, service providers, legislative members, etc.) come together to make sure the voice of Mississippi's self-advocates get recognized and appreciated

Mississippi Self-Advocacy Team Members

NAME		ORGANIZATIONS
Kris Jones	NASDDDS	Mississippi Department of Mental Health (MDMH), Bureau on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (BIDD)
Edie Hayles	NACDD	Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities (MS CDD)
Jerry R. Alliston	UCEDD	The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies (IDS)
Beth Porter	NDRN	Disability Rights Mississippi (DRMS)
Nickey Kirkwood	SABE	My Voice My Choice of Mississippi, The Arc of Mississippi & BIDD Council Member
Le’Ron Jackson	NYLN	National Youth Leadership Network, My Voice My Choice of Mississippi & DRMS Board Member
Cynthia Singletary	Self-Advocate	LIFE of Mississippi Healthy Opportunities for Transition (HOT!) , National Youth Leadership Network & IDS Community Partnership Advisory Council Chairperson
Kendrick Kennedy	Self-Advocate	National Federation of the Blind of Mississippi
Trineka Anderson	Self-Advocate	LIFE of Mississippi Healthy Opportunities for Transition (HOT) & My Voice My Choice of Mississippi
Eric Hogan	Self-Advocate	TEAAM & Autistic Advancement
Jesse Gable	Self-Advocate	STEP UP to Leadership Advisory Council, IDS