

Winter 2017

ISS Newsletter

An Independent Support Services Publication
for Participants, Families and Support Staff

Self-Direction: *Make Your Own Path*



Welcome! We are *very* excited to introduce our first quarterly ISS Newsletter issue. The purpose and value of this newsletter is to provide you with a common place to find informative and up-to-date news, helpful hints and tips, and a place to share success stories as it relates to Self-Direction.

Note: We have signed you up for our newsletter in the hopes that you will find great value in its content and that it will aid you in your own goals to grow and thrive. You may opt out at any time, simply click on 'unsubscribe' at the bottom of this newsletter.

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If you ever wondered what it means to be Self-Directed, watch this video of the Self-Directed life of Joseph Astarita. Beautifully done by Mrs. Astarita.

Click on the "My Life" button to view



My Life

Meet our Family Liaison



Hi Everyone,

I'm Liz Luchsinger your newly appointed Family Liaison at ISS. This position was recently created because we recognized the importance of building, and maintaining strong relationships with our participants, parents and advocates. We also realize that navigating the Self-Direction process isn't always easy. As a parent of a Self-Direction participant and as a former Self-Direction Coordinator, I understand the process can be daunting at first. My role is to help you navigate

the system, to make you feel welcome and to find ways to support you in Self-Direction.

I encourage participation and am eager to help you on this new journey. We welcome your input, your success stories and we hope you will share your ideas regarding what's working and what we can improve on.

Feel free to reach out to me at 631-864-2536 x 454 or Family@issny.org

Featured Article



"Don't Wait For Opportunity, Create it!"

Everyone deserves the right to choose their own path in life, to follow their dreams and desires unique to their interests and goals, and to be independent thinkers and doers. This is one of many Self-Direction stories that demonstrates the success of providing individuals with the opportunity to pursue their own happiness and choose their own path.

A special thank you to Mr. Stieglitz and Adam Stieglitz for consenting to share their Self-Direction story.

ISS: Tell us a little bit about Adam?

Mr. Stieglitz: Adam loves to eat ice cream, cakes, cookies pizza and Chinese food. He likes to do art projects and play with his stuffed animals. His biggest talent to be a good friend, Adam loves talking to anyone and making people happy.

ISS: What would you write as a title for this photo of Adam?

Mr. Stieglitz: Cruising in Camp Hasc with style.

ISS: How long has Adam been Self-Directing?

Mr. Stieglitz: Adam has been in Self- Directing for three years.

ISS: If you could pick one thing in Self-Direction that has made a difference in Adam's ability to be independent, what would that be?

Mr. Stieglitz: Self- Direction has taught and given Adam the capabilities to be independent with support.

ISS: What is Adam's favorite thing about his Self-Direction plan?

Mr. Stieglitz: His two favorite items from Self-Direction is his Community Habilitation workers, who have helped him to be more independent and





who support him when he needs it. The second item Adam is really thankful for, is that he can go to a sleep away camp like “normal” children, where he can be among his peers with disabilities and get amazing care from his counselors. Each year at Camp Hasc Adam learns a new trait to be more independent. An example would be he learned how to button his shirt.

ISS: Is there anything that Adam does not like about Self-Direction? Or something he might want to add to it in the future?

Mr. Stieglitz: No, there is nothing Adam does not like about Self-Direction, because all of Adam’s needs are met through Self-Direction.

ISS: Can you make a statement expressing how ISS has helped Adam with his Self-Direction? Can you suggest anything that could be done better?



Mr. Stieglitz: ISS is a great resource that is both knowledgeable, and provides a seamless service. These two attributes have helped Adam tremendously through Self-Direction. Without the support and staff at ISS we truly do not know where we would be today.

ISS: If you could give advice to a new participant of Self-Direction, what would you say?

Mr. Stieglitz: The advice we would give someone new to Self-Direction is to look at the budget categories and see which category is where the individual will get the most need. If you do not do this, you can be wasting money that can be used for categories that the individual needs.

Did You Know?

Payroll processes approximately 3,300 time sheets per pay period

Resources

Need more information? Click on a link below:

[**OPWDD Self Direction**](#)



~~ We are excited to announce that we will be phasing in our electronic application process over the next two months. This will make the hiring process much faster. More information will follow in early 2018.

~~Pension information was emailed out to all Employees in early December, those Employees who did not have email addresses on file were mailed the information. If you have any questions or did not get the information please email hr@issny.org

~~ Reminder: All Employees part time or full time are required to take the state mandated training within 90 days of hire and annually. This training is done via the internet through a program called Mindflash. Employees with email addresses on file are sent the information via their email addresses during certain periods of the year that coincide with their original hire date. There are videos and certain reading curriculum that **must** be completed. Employees have 60 days to complete the training. Alternative arrangements are made for Employees that do not have an email address.

~~ Please remember to let Human Resources know when staff are no longer working. You can obtain an Employee exiting form from our website or send us an email informing us. When sending us this information, please make sure you include why the Employee is no longer working.

~~As always please email us or call us with any questions.

Quality Assurance & Compliance

Quality Assurance

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines Quality Assurance (QA) as “a program for the systematic

Corporate Compliance

ISS is committed to ensuring compliance with regulations and

monitoring and evaluation of the various aspects of a project, service, or facility to ensure that standards of quality are being met.”

At ISS the QA Department is responsible for reporting, assessing, investigating, reviewing, and monitoring incidents in an effort to protect service recipients. It is important for all ISS employees to remember that ISS operates under the auspices of the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). OPWDD mandates the QA Department to follow the Part 624 and Part 625 Handbook for incident regulations and guidelines. Part 624 requires an incident management system to protect people receiving services (to the extent possible) from harm, to ensure program participants are free from abuse and neglect, and to enhance the quality of their services and care. It is the responsibility of all ISS employees to recognize and stop all forms of abuse immediately, to protect the person from further danger or harm, to seek medical attention if necessary, and to report incidents to QA as soon as they occur, or are discovered. Part 624 relates only to incidents that occur “under the auspices of the agency,” meaning they take place during the delivery of Self-Directed Services to a Program Participant involving Self-Direction support staff. Alternatively, Part 625 applies to incidents that occur when “not under the auspices of the agency,” such as incidents that take place while the person is in a hospital setting, school, work, day program, community location, etc. The QA department also files formal case notes for situations that may not fall under the regulations outlined in Parts 624 or 625 but still require attention.

If staff is unsure what constitutes an incident, they should contact the QA Supervisor of Incident

legal mandates that govern the delivery of Medicaid Funded Services. Our Corporate Compliance program works for the detection, prevention, and avoidance of fraud, waste, and abuse. ISS has a confidential hotline for Program participants, families, and employees to report any Corporate Compliance incident that may constitute fraud, waste, and/or abuse.

Contact ISS Corporate Compliance department if:

- You know or suspect something is not right;
- You know or suspect billing fraud or abuse;
- You know or suspect violation of the Federal and NYS False Claims Act, falsified documentation;
- You have a question or seeking information regarding Compliance.

Please note, as per the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989, ISS cannot retaliate or terminate persons who report to Corporate Compliance.

We all can help with the detection, prevention, and avoidance of fraud, waste and abuse!

If you suspect harm, mistreatment, or fraud, call or email the QA/Corporate Compliance Department immediately.

General QA/Corporate Compliance:

qualityassurance@issny.org

Corporate Compliance Officer:

Johanna Arteaga, MPA

jarteaga@issny.org or 631-864-2536 ext. 422

Corporate Compliance/QA

Investigator: Byron Avilán

bavilan@issny.org or

845-794-5218 ext. 334

QA/Incident Management

Specialist: Allison O’Keefe

aokeefe@issny.org or 631-864-2536 ext. 452

Investigations, Jennifer Klang at jklang@issny.org or 631-864-2536 ext. 423 for clarification and guidance.

Corporate Compliance Hotline: 855.734.2401

Helpful Hints and Tips *from the ISS Team*

Reminders from your friends in **Accounts Payable**

- ~**All** forms must be completed in their entirety, including Provider name, Participant name and Signatures.
- ~ **Signature** dates cannot be prior to the last day of service requested.
- ~ **NO** Photocopies, **NO** White Out, **NO** Pencil/Erasable Pen
- ~ **Watch** voucher type/version. Use the latest Forms found at www.issny.org/forms
- ~ **Do not** combine months on mileage forms. Even if it is only one day, it will be returned for corrections.
- ~ **Corrections** must be made with a single line cross out and initialed.
- ~ **Please** return corrections with the original letter to avoid delayed processing. Corrections received with the letter attached are processed more quickly.
- ~ **Best Contact** – finance@issny.org



Payroll Tips *Think C.A.R.E.*

- ~**Completion**
Did you include all the necessary information per your Checklist?
- ~**Accuracy**
Are the final documents you sign true and correct before you submit?
- ~**Risk Areas**
What steps can and should you take to ensure you are paid on time and remain an employee in good standing?
- ~**Extra tips**
Refer to the Payroll tips and Check list for additional measures you can take to ensure better efficiency and accuracy.

Self-Direction Coordinators

- are here to help participants navigate the Self-Directed process
- To name a few things we do:
- ~Help with communications between departments
 - ~ Track documentation across all departments to ensure Medicaid compliance
 - ~ Generate and distribute updates, timesheets and Monthly Summary Notes to ensure they match the current Hab Plan
 - ~ Participate in annual and semi-annual ISP meetings, addressing any issues that arise.
 - ~ Communicate with the Circle of Support to address issues with staff, expenses, incidents, or just to check in on how each participant is doing with their services
 - ~ Assist with approvals for services such as community classes, camp, household items and services, services rendered outside of NY state, and more
 - ~ Assist with setting up

Did you know? The Accounts Payable department processes approximately 7,500 expenses per month?



In this issue we are reminded, and we honor those individuals who have passed away this year. We celebrate your memory as you live on in our hearts.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Does ISS insurance cover any lost, damaged or stolen items that my daughter/son may incur while they are receiving support services?

Answer: No, we do not cover any loss, stolen or damaged property.

Question: How can I find out how much PTO I have accrued?

Answer: You can view your most recent pay stub, either online via the UltiPro portal or by looking at the actual hard copy pay stub. Under the section labeled Paid Time Off, under balance, there's a number indicating the current hours you have available.

Upcoming Events/Announcements

Annual Picnic - 2018

Date: June 10

Place: Sunken Meadows State Park
Kings Park, NY

Participants Picnic, Sunday, June 10th



// CONNECT WITH US //



Coming Soon!
All New and Improved Website

Newsletter comments or suggestions welcome: [Email](#)

Independent Support Services provides self-directed, person-centered, individualized supports to people with developmental disabilities, to assist them in making choices that will lead them to realizing their dreams and improving their lives.

[Visit our website](#)