



Our Journey

Meaningful, relevant information for our community, published monthly.

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Northern Lakes
Community
Mental Health
northernlakescmh.org

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Welcome to *Our Journey*. We hope you will find the articles informative and helpful. Your ideas and submissions are welcome! Please also take time to check out the Northern Lakes Community Mental Health (NLCMH) website, the flat screen monitor, information tower, and monthly calendar (in the tower) for more information on topics in this newsletter and more. Join us in the ongoing creation of this newsletter to best serve you!

Walk a Mile in My Shoes!



Walk a Mile was held Wednesday, May 10 in Lansing for the thirteenth year. The weather was wonderful and so was the crowd that turned out for the rally. The above photo is of many of the NLCMH area representatives. Here are the statements made by Northern Lake's representatives for their county:

Crawford - Each of us must do his or her part to be compassionate and show tolerance to others. Let's create a stigma-free culture. **Grand Traverse** - Legislators have a responsibility to protect and promote public mental health services. **Leelanau** - For people with disabilities, not only is it important to have health care. It is also important to have support to live in the community. The public mental health system knows us and how to help us get the support we need. Keep the public mental health system in place. **Missaukee** - Michigan legislators must protect and promote the public mental health system. Say no to Boilerplate 298. **Roscommon** - I have a disability and I vote. I am depending on my lawmakers to do the right thing and protect our healthcare. **Wexford** - Michigan's public health system puts people first - Private health plans put profits first. Say no to 298! All followed with a resounding "Walk a Mile in My Shoes!"

MiABLE



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to receive
Our Journey
electronically.
Submissions may also
be accepted, space
permitting.

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funded by Northern
Lakes CMH.



You're a grand
old flag,
You're a high
flying flag

And forever in
peace may you
wave.

You're the
emblem of
the land I love

The home of the
free and the
brave

Flag Day is
June 14, started
in 1861.

Having a loved one who has challenges in life can be difficult for the entire family. It can be distressing to want to help a loved one to access benefits above they are entitled to, to help them get the items they need to make their live nicer that are not covered. We want to take care of our loved one even when we are no longer there for them. In 2015, the state began a new program for these individuals. Private funds can be contributed to an ABL (Achieving a Better Life Experience Act) account to help these people. A parent or family member can contribute to the health, independence and quality of life of the person. *The mission of MiABLE is to encourage and assist the saving of private funds to help persons with disabilities cover costs that support their health, independence and quality of life.*

An individual with significant disabilities whose onset of disability was on or before age 26 may qualify by meeting one of the following:

- is eligible to receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- is eligible to receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
- has been diagnosed by a [qualified physician](#) with a physical or mental disability resulting in marked and severe functional limitations that is expected to last no less than 12 months.

Persons who do not receive SSI or SSDI may qualify under other conditions including adults, visit the following website for more specific information, <https://www.miable.org/Eligibility.php>.

What are the disability expenses covered under ABL?

Expenses made for the benefit of a disabled individual for education; housing; transportation; employment training and support; assistive technology and personal support services; health, prevention, and wellness; financial management and administrative services; legal fees; expenses for oversight and monitoring; funeral and burial expenses; and any other expenses approved under regulations.

Does having an ABL account affect Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits?

*Only if the ABL account exceeds \$100,000. SSI benefits would be suspended but not terminated. In other words, the beneficiary of the account would not receive a check but would retain eligibility for the SSI program. **

**<https://www.autismspeaks.org/news/news-item/10-things-know-about-able-act>*

Read about an individual's personal story at: <https://themighty.com/2017/05/able-accounts-allow-savings-without-losing-social-security-benefits/>

In the News

Fidgets – some schools are choosing to ban them. These are intended to be tools for people with Autism, ADHD and other diagnoses, **not toys**. Do you have one?

13 Reasons Why – a wildly controversial show on Netflix about a teen's suicide. There is a great conversation that has been started because of this show. Have you seen it? What do you think?

Affordable Health Care Act – Obama Care, Replace and Repeal health care. How does this affect you?