

Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities: Governor Evers proclaims October Residents' Rights Month

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Madison, WI – Governor Tony Evers is celebrating the rights of people with disabilities to promote their dignity and autonomy in making their own life choices to live independent and fulfilling lives in their communities. By proclaiming October Residents' Rights Month, the State celebrates the rights of over 100,000 people with disabilities and older adults using our long-term care system.

The Wisconsin Board for People with Disabilities (BPDD)-Living Well grant works to improve the lives of people with disabilities while focusing on ways to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Disability organizations, led by BPDD, including the Waisman Center and Disability Rights Wisconsin, work with Wisconsin's Family Care/IRIS programs, service providers, self-advocates and the state to be sure that people with disabilities, their families/guardians, and services providers are educated on the rights for people with disabilities.

Another grant partner, The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL), which works to define, measure and improve quality of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, has research that shows that only 42% of people with disabilities exercise their rights. Also, that people with disabilities are 3 times more likely to be free from abuse and neglect when they are able to exercise their rights.

“When people with disabilities exercise their rights, they experience overall improvement in their health and safety and overall improvement in their quality of life.” said Beth Swedeen, WI-BPDD Executive Director. “Our work has focused on

educating on rights to all levels and using the voice of our self-advocate leaders to tell their stories.”

During Resident’s Rights Month, the Living Well grant is making available their “Let’s Talk About Rights Guides” for self-advocates, families/guardians, and agencies along with rights videos created with the grants self-advocates leaders. Find the rights series here: <https://wi-bpdd.org/index.php/-2022/09/09/living-well-rights-guides/>

Living Well Project Manager, Sally Flaschberger, says, “Self-advocates working with the grant have been sharing their personal experience asserting their rights and telling knowing why rights is important to them.” The Living Well grant will be posting videos through the month of October, December and January on the Self-Determination Channel. Look for the rights series here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohBplrwiUQc&t=30s>