



Alliance for Freedom News

July-August, 2006

Volume 3, Issue 4

Features

[Freedom to Choose](#)

[SABE Leadership Change](#)

[Money Follows the Person \(State Reports\)](#)

State News

[Michigan](#)

[Minnesota](#)

[Texas](#)

Closing Quote

Principles of Self-Determination

The Freedom to Choose

An excellent resource about self-determination can be found in the new online learning course [“Partners in Living”](#)

Created by the **Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities** as a part of the *Partners in Policymaking*® online curriculum, the self-study course is designed to assist people with developmental disabilities, their family and friends explore four important elements that, together, can help them create a meaningful life: Self-Determination, Family Support, Community Living and Assistive Technology. In **The Freedom to Choose** module, participants clearly can learn about the history of personal choice, life planning and self-determination for people with disabilities. This exceptional curriculum has glossary of terms and a wide arrangement of topics crucial in understanding self-determination ranging from **“Hard Choices, Big Decisions: Your Dream vs. the System's Dream”** to **“Who might benefit from Self-Determination.”**

Leadership Changes at SABE

Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered ([SABE](#)) elected new officers recently who plan to promptly review their goals and mission. Julie Petty from Arkansas is Chairperson and Chester Finn (New York) stays on as co-chairperson. Betty Williams from Indiana was elected Vice President, Teresa Wilding from Idaho as Treasurer and Chad Sinanian from Connecticut as Secretary. **“As chairperson, my first priority is to look at goals and see where people want to go in the future,”** says Chairperson Petty and State Coordinator of Arkansas People First. **“Self-Determination should be a goal of SABE because self-advocacy and self-determination go hand in hand.”** Chester Finn added **“States confuse self-directed services with self-determination and do not include people with disabilities in the development.”** For more information about SABE goals and mission contact [Julie Petty](#).

MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON - What is your state doing?

In July, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) released a **Money**

Freedom to live a meaningful life in the community

Authority over dollars needed for support

Support to organize resources in ways that are life enhancing and meaningful

Responsibility for the wise use of public dollars

Confirmation of the important leadership that self-advocates must hold in a newly designed system

Editors

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Follows the Person [Final Report](#) describing the activities of nine Real Choice Systems Change grantees. The report reviews fiscal year 2003 grants that developed Money Follows the Person initiatives and discusses program and policy issues the grantees encountered. Additionally, CMS will be holding a conference call on Tuesday, August 22, 2006, 3:00 PM ET until 4:30 PM for potential applicants for the next round of Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration. After a brief overview of the demonstration, interested persons will be able to ask questions and to receive clarification concerning the rebalancing demonstration. To participate call TOLL FREE #:1-888-390-8568 a caller passcode: MFP DEMO.

State News

Michigan Academy has Lessons to Share

After three years and many participants, the Academy faculty is currently pulling together successful course work to build a reproducible curriculum called **Lessons Learned: The Michigan Academy on Self-Determination**. This DD Council funded project is wrapping up with two popular sessions **Self-Determination as We Know and Need it** with Tom Nerney, Center for Self-Determination and [Peter Leidy](#) and **Sharing What You Now Know** with Center Resource Guides Pat Carver and Jan Lampman. Contact the [Arc of Midland](#) for more information.

Visitors from Korea Learn about Self-Determination

Community Living Services, [\(CLS\)](#) a non-profit organization located in Wayne, Michigan was in the spotlight this month as a camera crew from Korea filmed a documentary on how self-determination works in Michigan. The documentary consists of several interviews with people supported by CLS who are living in their own places and working in the community. Center for Self-Determination Founder Tom Nerney was interviewed as well as representatives from the local advocacy organizations. The five man crew from a private television station in Korea was very interested in how families work within the support system and how the funding dollars flow from the federal, state and local governments. "The crew is very interested in how the system works and how people with disabilities have choices and freedom and independence," said [CLS President/CEO Jim Dehem](#).

Minnesota To Be Chiefly Valued

In July **A Good Life Conference** came off without a hitch at the St Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. Center Resource Guide Dennis

Harkins opened with "Organizing for Self-Determination" while Center Director Tom Nerney presented "Universal Human Aspirations" at the special event sponsored by the Minnesota Team of the Alliance Full Participation, Statewide Steering Committee on System Redesign for People with Developmental Disabilities. Harkins began his inspirational keynote with a Socrates quote "*Not life, but a good life, is to be chiefly valued.*" In-depth follow-up sessions "**A GOOD LIFE...How do I plan for one?**" are scheduled for October 25 and 26, 2006. Contact Rebecca Rooker at [The Statewide Steering Committee for System Redesign and the Minnesota Team of the National AFP](#).

Texas

The Promise of Freedom

Despite serious flooding and evacuations, the [Self-Determination in Texas](#) project continued in full force August 8 & 9 in El Paso. Center Director Tom Nerney and Resource Coordinator Jan Lampman joined Ricky Broussard from **Get A Life Texas** in presenting "Guaranteeing the Promise of Freedom."

The event was hosted by the El Paso del Norte Disabilities Parents' Alliance. Ricky Broussard provided information via presentations that not only helped to explain self-determination, but details personal experiences in his quest for freedom and control in his life. Living in an ICF-MR group home, Ricky brings a unique perspective on self-determination. His discussion included what life would be like if the money followed the person and the importance of the confirmation principle of self-determination. For further information visit [Get A Life Texas](#)

Center Special Assistant Deborah L. Crowley Report

The website is continually being updated to make it more user-friendly. The publications section is being separated into six topical sections: Self-Determination, Aging, Guardianship, Employment, Mental Health and Quality. The Center's membership, including the Alliance for Freedom, Listserv and E-Newsletter list now includes over 1800 members. The number of website visitors is averaging 87 per day, with visitors from as far away as Germany, India, Korea and Australia. For More information contact [Debbie Crowley](#).

Closing Quote

"It's hard to be self-determined with policies that stand in the way. But it's important to take control, even risks. It's a part of life."

- [Aaron Westendorp](#) from [Partners in Living](#)

