



WINTER EDITION 2025

[WWW.IRI-DELAWARE.ORG](http://WWW.IRI-DELAWARE.ORG)

### Our Mission:

To unlock the potential of Delawareans with disabilities by empowering them to realize, achieve and maintain independent living

## TOPICS

- **Letter from the Executive Director**
- **Office Closings:** The days our offices are closed for the holidays
- **Health Corner:** Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)
- **Potassium Iodide (KI) Information**
- **Independent Resources, Inc. Quarterly Mixer!**
- **Honoring Craig Richards**
- **Community Central:** Happy New Year! Check out these articles during the new year
- **Upcoming Events:** See what's on the horizon in the community!

## ABOUT IRI

Independent Resources Inc, is a Nonprofit Organization that helps people with disabilities. We are located in New Castle County, Kent and Sussex County.

We continue to grow in our services and programs to increase independence of persons with disabilities.

### OUR CORE SERVICES

- Advocacy
- Information and Referral
- Independent Living Skills
- Peer Counseling & Peer Support
- Transition Assistance

### OTHER SERVICES WE PROVIDE

- Health Navigation
- Student Pre-Employment training (Pre-Ets)
- Small Business Development training
- Home Modification
- Housing Assistance

For more information please check our Website [www.iri-delaware.org](http://www.iri-delaware.org) or call 302-765-0191

## Announcements!

January Is Braille Literacy Month!

[Click Here to Read More](#)

February Is Low Vision Awareness Month!

[Click Here to Read More](#)

# Letter from the Executive Director's Desk:

Greetings Everyone and Happy New Year,

I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to the staff of Independent Resources Inc. Their hard work, dedication, passion and commitment to our mission have made a profound impact on the lives of those we serve. It is an honor to work alongside such a talented and compassionate group of individuals.

To our readers and consumers, thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. We hope that its contents have helped you learn new resources to aid you in your daily life. And we hope our various events, like our quarterly mixer and workshops, have helped broaden your horizons. At Independent Resources Inc. we are constantly growing and learning, so we can better help people with disabilities to live more independently.

May the new year bring you and your loved ones peace, joy, and prosperity. Let us embrace the year ahead with enthusiasm and a renewed sense of purpose, knowing that together we can achieve remarkable things.

Thank you to the staff, consumers, readers and everyone I look forward to a wonderful year ahead with all of you.

Happy New Year from me and the IRI family,

Lillian Harrison  
Executive Director  
Independent Resources, Inc.

## **MAKE YOUR IMPACT TODAY**

**Please help us in our mission to help all people with disabilities live independently.**

**[CLICK TO DONATE](#)**

# Office Closings

Below are the following dates that our offices will be closed:

- **Monday, January 20, 2025**  
**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- **Monday, February 17, 2025**  
**President's Day**
- **Friday, March 14, 2025**  
**Ed Robert's Day**

## OFFICE LOCATIONS

### New Castle County Office

Two Fox Point Centre  
6 Denny Road, Suite 101  
Wilmington, DE 19809  
Phone: 302-765-0191  
FAX: 302-765-0195  
VP: 302-504-4754

### Kent County Office

154 South Governors Ave.  
Dover, DE 19904  
Phone: 302-735-4599  
FAX: 302-735-5623  
VP: 302-450-1699

### Sussex County Office

10 N. Church St  
Milford, DE 19963  
Phone: 302-536-1387  
FAX: 302-536-1407  
VP: 302-504-4754

# Health Corner

## Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

By Dr. Jackie Reyes



While many people experience mild sadness during winter months (also known as Winter Blues), there are some who experience clinical depressions called Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD. Both conditions start when the days get shorter, typically during late fall or early winter. In addition to just “feeling down” (winter blues), people with SAD have significant changes in their mood and behavior.

Studies have shown that SAD is linked to a decrease in serotonin, a brain chemical that aids in mood regulation. During winter months, serotonin levels fall due to shorter daylight hours. Decreased vitamin D levels secondary to reduced sunshine during winter months also contribute to SAD, depression and low mood.

SAD is more common in women than men and tends to start in young adulthood. It is also common in people with family history of depression or in those with preexisting mental health conditions like depression or bipolar disorder.

The info graphic below may help guide someone to determine if what they are experiencing is just the “winter blues” or SAD and when to seek professional help:

**Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):  
More Than the Winter Blues**

As the days get shorter and there is less daylight, you may start to feel sad. While many people experience the “winter blues,” some people may have a type of depression called seasonal affective disorder (SAD).  
The first step is to determine how much your symptoms interfere with your daily life.

<p><b>Do you have mild symptoms that have lasted less than 2 weeks?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling down but still able to take care of yourself and others</li> <li>• Having some trouble sleeping</li> <li>• Having less energy than usual but still able to do your job, schoolwork, or housework</li> </ul>	<p><b>These activities can make you feel better:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing something you enjoy</li> <li>• Going outside in the sunlight</li> <li>• Spending time with family and friends</li> <li>• Eating healthy and avoiding foods with lots of sugar</li> </ul>
<p><b>If these activities do not help or your symptoms are getting worse, talk to a health care provider.</b></p>	
<p><b>Do you have more severe symptoms that have lasted more than 2 weeks?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social withdrawal</li> <li>• Oversleeping</li> <li>• Gaining weight</li> <li>• Craving foods with lots of sugar like cakes, candies, and cookies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Seek professional help:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light therapy</li> <li>• Psychotherapy (talk therapy)</li> <li>• Medications</li> <li>• Vitamin D supplements</li> </ul>

For help finding treatment, visit [nimh.nih.gov/findhelp](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp).  
If you or someone you know is in immediate distress or is thinking about hurting themselves, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org)

National Institute of Mental Health [nimh.nih.gov/sad](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/sad)

Ref: [Seasonal Affective Disorder \(SAD\): More Than the Winter Blues - National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\)](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder-sad-more-than-the-winter-blues)

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder-sad-more-than-the-winter-blues>

# Potassium Iodide (KI)

## Information

Information on potassium iodide (KI) for those who live or work within 10 miles from the power plant in New Jersey. Information may be updated.

Credit/source reference: Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA). Please contact DEMA with questions or concerns.

**(Please note: if you have any issues with the links below please to cut and paste the links into your browser.)**

CDC infographic (picture) on how KI works: [https://www.cdc.gov/radiation-emergencies/media/pdfs/infographics/Infographic\\_KI.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/radiation-emergencies/media/pdfs/infographics/Infographic_KI.pdf)

· PrepareDE: <https://preparedede.org/emergency-types/industrial-technological-emergencies/#nuclear-power-radiological-potassium-iodide-ki>

· Atlantic Apothecary Pharmacy in Smyrna: <https://www.atlanticapothecary.com/>.

· Check with a local pharmacy or KI distribution events for information: <https://preparedede.org/event/potassium-iodide-ki-distribution/>

· Newest 2024-2025 calendar. Delaware maps on pages 33 and 35: [https://preparedede.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/PSEG-Digital-Calendar-2024-25-.pdf?fbclid=IwY2xjawFVbjlleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHdQ-QqSUcvqBBZ7v5K506MNVN2xs1ry6OV\\_9xr3GAnbg0pmlJrcDOQbDvw\\_aem\\_rzoe6YAh8QC8t55FFNhSWw](https://preparedede.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/PSEG-Digital-Calendar-2024-25-.pdf?fbclid=IwY2xjawFVbjlleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHdQ-QqSUcvqBBZ7v5K506MNVN2xs1ry6OV_9xr3GAnbg0pmlJrcDOQbDvw_aem_rzoe6YAh8QC8t55FFNhSWw)

Zip codes within the 10-mile emergency planning zone--- Please check to see if you are in 10 mile area: <https://dshs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=be1ef1285e9b48f197c44991bae2cfec>

·19734  
·19709  
·19977  
·19730  
·19731  
·19706  
·19733  
·19701

More detailed nuclear planning info (2017 edition) can be found at [https://readysalem.org/wp-content/uploads/nuclear\\_ep\\_brochure.pdf](https://readysalem.org/wp-content/uploads/nuclear_ep_brochure.pdf).

Delaware's disaster plan can be found at <https://dema.delaware.gov/contentFolder/pdfs/HazardMitigationPlan.pdf?cache=1726491332508>

Sign up for Smart911: <https://www.smart911.com/>

# Independent Resources Inc. Quarterly Mixer!

**Independent Resources**, will host its next quarterly mixer in partnership with **The Freedom Center** at The Freedom Center's Middletown location. This **'Spring Fling'** will be held on **Thursday, March 13th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM**. The address is 105 Sleepy Hollow Drive, Suite A in Middletown, Delaware. We are extending invitations to Healthcare organizations and community-based providers as well as staff and consumers. Please forward RSVPs to Mary Parker, at [mparker@iri-de.org](mailto:mparker@iri-de.org) or at 302-241-4166, by Friday, March 6th. We highlight a premier partner at each mixer, and we will highlight Pace Your Life this time. Please come ready to mix it up, make some partnerships and enjoy some heavy hors d'oeuvres and mocktails.

There are over 500 centers for independent living (CILs) in the United States.

Independent Resources, Inc. (IRI) and The Freedom Center are Delaware's two CILs. Lillian Harrison is IRI's Executive Director and Jody Hougentogler is the Executive Director of The Freedom Center. CILs are designed to provide services, support and advocacy for people with disabilities. We aim to empower individuals with disabilities to live independent and fulfilling lives. CILs are primarily federally funded and share five mandated core services. The core services are: advocacy, transition, independent living training skills, peer support, and information and referrals.

Although our core services are identical, IRI and The Freedom Center, both jointly and separately, focus on other programs and services like housing, home modifications, healthcare navigation, entrepreneurship, and services for the visually and hearing impaired. In an effort to serve our consumers in the best holistic manner possible, we collaborate with each other and with other community providers. Our mixers specifically serve that purpose of collaboration.

IRI has been growing its community care hub and has already partnered with several agencies, to include our newest partnership with Bayhealth. Community care hubs connect community-based and healthcare organizations to address social determinants of health that affect medical outcomes.

As a community care hub, IRI intends to be that one-stop single point of contact for clients, outpatients, healthcare systems and community-based organizations. We will have trusted partners as resources as we continue to support the social determinants that affect total health. We can help patients transition to/from nursing homes. We can help the person with diabetes obtain housing to have a safe place to store their medications. We can show the one who is visually impaired how to take the bus to doctors' appointments. We can be part of that patient's care team to ensure that the gaps in social care are addressed, and the patient can follow the doctor's orders without hinderances.

When social needs are met, health needs are positively affected. This is the value CILs bring to a closed and complete healthcare system. This perspective makes so much sense because everyone gets access to quality care and it all makes for a healthier community. This approach has also been proven to keep people out of the emergency rooms and nursing homes and that saves time and money for all of us.

So, do reach out, join us and share this information so that we can build that healthy community together!

## **Independent Resources, Inc.**

302-765-0191 (New Castle County)

302-735-4599 (Kent County)

302-536-1387 (Sussex County)

## **The Freedom Center**

302-376-4399

# Honoring Craig Richards

## In Loving Memory of Craig Richards

It is with heavy hearts that we at Independent Resources, Inc. (IRI) remember the life of Craig Richards, one of our cherished clients who was recently found deceased.

Craig faced immense challenges during his life, living with a disability and the hardships of homelessness. Despite these struggles, his story reminds us of the resilience of the human spirit and the dignity inherent in every life.

Craig was more than his circumstances. He was a person with dreams, struggles, and a profound story that deserved to be heard. While his journey on this earth has ended, his memory compels us to continue fighting for those like him—individuals often forgotten or overlooked in our communities.

As advocates for those experiencing homelessness and disabilities, we reaffirm our commitment to fostering change. We will continue to push for better resources, stronger protections, and meaningful support for the most vulnerable among us. Craig's life is a stark reminder of the urgency of this work.

To honor Craig's memory, we call on our community to join us in addressing the root causes of homelessness and disability inequities. Together, we can ensure that no one is left without hope, shelter, or dignity.

Rest in peace, Craig. You will not be forgotten, and your life will inspire us to advocate for a world where everyone has a place to call home.

With heartfelt condolences,  
The Independent Resources, Inc. (IRI) Team

Ref: <https://www.yahoo.com/news/craig-richards-death-dover-symbol-090752927.html>

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/craig-richards-death-dover-symbol-090752927.html>

# TAKE STEPS TOWARDS PREVENTION

## DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM



If you're at risk for Type 2 Diabetes you can make small, measurable changes that can reduce your risk and help you live a happier, healthier life.

Lifestyle changes such as weight control, physical activity and healthy eating can help many people with prediabetes.

You may be eligible to participate in the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program with **no out of pocket cost.**

### PROGRAM FEATURES

- 26 sessions delivered over the course of 1 year
- Led by a trained Lifestyle Coach
- A group that offers motivation and support
- Access to your local Delaware YMCAs

Talk to your Healthcare Provider about your risk for developing Type 2 Diabetes.

**ENROLL TODAY!**  
302-572-9622  
healthyliving@ymcade.org  
www.ymcade.org/preventdiabetes/



# Click Here to Learn More

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://www.ymcade.org/preventdiabetes/>



# REDISEÑE SU SALUD TRANSFORME SU VIDA

El Programa de Prevención de  
la Diabetes de la YMCA



Si corre el riesgo de padecer diabetes de tipo 2, puede introducir pequeños cambios cuantificables que reduzcan su riesgo y le ayuden a llevar una vida más sana y feliz.

Los cambios en el estilo de vida, como el control del peso, la actividad física y una alimentación sana, pueden ayudar a muchas personas con prediabetes.

Usted puede ser elegible para participar en el Programa de Prevención de la Diabetes de la YMCA sin costo alguno.

#### Características del programa:

- 26 clases EN ESPAÑOL impartidas durante un año
- Enseñado por una entrenadora de estilo de vida entrenada
- Un grupo que ofrece motivación y apoyo
- Acceso a todas las YMCAs de Delaware

¡Hable con su médico sobre su riesgo de desarrollar diabetes tipo 2 o tome nuestro cuestionario de riesgo gratuito en la parte posterior de esta página!

**¡REGÍSTRESE HOY!**  
302-572-9622  
healthyliving@ymcade.org  
www.ymcade.org/preventdiabetes/



**Haga clic aquí para obtener más información**

O corte y pegue el enlace abajo en su navegador.

<https://www.ymcade.org/preventdiabetes/>

## Community Central

**It's a new year, there is snow on the ground, and a chill in the air. Why not enjoy a nice hot beverage while looking at the articles below. Also below are some dental resources to help get those teeth fixed in the new year.**

### My Experience as a Deaf Person in Science

Melody Schwenk a PHD student at Gallaudet University aims to show others that it is possible to succeed in Science and be Deaf.

#### [Click Here to Read More](https://neuroonline.sfn.org/diversity/my-experience-as-a-deaf-person-in-science)

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://neuroonline.sfn.org/diversity/my-experience-as-a-deaf-person-in-science>

### Bringing Braille into the Digital World

Michaela Leung from Accessiblity.com talks bringing braille into the digital space along with the challenges that come along with it.

#### [Click Here to Read More](https://www.accessibility.com/blog/bringing-braille-into-the-digital-world)

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://www.accessibility.com/blog/bringing-braille-into-the-digital-world>

### Walmart Expanding Sensory-Friendly Shopping Hours Nationwide

Yi-Jin Yu from Good Morning America on ABC talks about Walmart expanding its sensory friendly shopping hours to make shopping calmer and quieter.

#### [Click Here to Read More](https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Living/walmart-expanding-sensory-friendly-shopping-hours-nationwide/story?id=104764473)

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Living/walmart-expanding-sensory-friendly-shopping-hours-nationwide/story?id=104764473>

### 5 Ways to Support People with Disabilities in the Winter

Lucia Rios from The Lakeshore Disability Inclusion talks about some ways people can help people with disability during the winter season.

#### [Click Here to Read More](https://www.secondwavemedia.com/lakeshore/features/5-ways-people-and-organizations-can-support-people-with-disabilities-in-the-winter.aspx)

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://www.secondwavemedia.com/lakeshore/features/5-ways-people-and-organizations-can-support-people-with-disabilities-in-the-winter.aspx>

## Dental Resources

Delaware Tech Dental Clinic  
300 Orange St  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
(302) 571-5364

La Red Health Center  
21444 Carmean Way  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
(302) 855-1233

Henrietta Johnson Medical Center  
601 New Castle Ave,  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
(302) 761-4610

Hope Dental Clinic  
1121 Forest Ave.  
Dover, DE 19904  
(302) 735-7551

### [Click Here for More Dental Resources and More](https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dsaapd/files/aging_and_disabilities_guide2.pdf)

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

[https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dsaapd/files/aging\\_and\\_disabilities\\_guide2.pdf](https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dsaapd/files/aging_and_disabilities_guide2.pdf)

# Upcoming Events

HERE ARE SOME EVENTS, WORKSHOPS AND MORE THAT WILL BE COMING UP THIS YEAR.



## Wilmington Police January Community Resource Fair

**Date:** Thursday, January 16th

**Time:** 4:00PM-6:00PM

**Location:**

MSK Community Center  
1009 Sycamore Street  
Wilmington, DE 19805  
302-416-4017

**Price:** Free

**[Click Here to Learn More](https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/government/public-safety/wilmington-police-department/wpd-community-resource-fairs)**

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/government/public-safety/wilmington-police-department/wpd-community-resource-fairs>

## Delaware Art Museum MLK Day of Service

**Date:** Monday, January 20th

**Time:** 10:00AM - 4:00PM

**Location:**

Delaware Art Museum  
2301 Kentmere Pkwy,  
Wilmington, DE 19806  
302- 571-9590

**Price:** Free

**[Click Here to Learn More and Register](https://delart.org/event/mlk-day-of-service/)**

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://delart.org/event/mlk-day-of-service/>

## Newark Employment and Volunteer Fair

**Date:** Saturday, February 1st

**Time:** 10:00AM - 1:00PM

**Location:**

Newark Free Library  
750 Library Ave,  
Newark, DE 19711  
302-731-7550

**Price:** Free

Prospective employees ages 16 & over and/or volunteers ages 14 and older can come out to the Newark Free Library to learn about employment and volunteer opportunities offered in Newark.

## Delaware Trailblazers: New Castle County's 2025 Black History Month Kick-Off Celebration

**Date:** Saturday, February 1

**Time:** 11:00AM - 2:00PM

**Location:**

YMCA Walnut Street  
1000 N Walnut Street  
Wilmington, DE 19801

**Price:** Free

**[Click Here to Learn More](https://newcastlede.gov/BHM)**

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://newcastlede.gov/BHM>

## 7th Annual Health-Fitness & Leisure Expo

**Date:** Saturday, March 8th

**Time:** 9:00AM - 4:00PM

**Location:**

Cape Henlopen High School  
1250 Kings Highway  
Lewes DE 19958

**Price:** Free

**Contact Person:**

Kathy Benson  
302-236-0857

**[Click Here to Learn More](https://deexpos.com/health-fitness-%26-leisure)**

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://deexpos.com/health-fitness-%26-leisure>

## Delaware Department of Education Virtual Recruitment Fair

**Date:** Wednesday, March 12th

**Time:** 4:30PM - 7:30PM

**Price:** Free

**[Click Here to Learn More and Register](https://ddoevirtualrecruitmentfair.vfairs.com/)**

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser.

<https://ddoevirtualrecruitmentfair.vfairs.com/>



# PLENTY

@ THE WAREHOUSE

**Tuesday & Thursday**  
**10am to 12pm**

**Wednesday**  
**5pm to 7pm**

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The Warehouse  
1121 Thatcher Street  
Wilmington, DE 19802





# 2025 LIFE CONFERENCE

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## SAVE THE DATE

Do not miss the next  
LIFE Conference at  
Bally's Dover  
Conference Center!

**JANUARY 29, 2025**

**8:00 AM - 4:30 PM**



**[Click Here to Learn More](https://lifeconferencede.org/)**

Or cut and paste the link below into your browser

<https://lifeconferencede.org/>



Thank you for hanging in there until the end. We hope you enjoy the content. Well, it's time to go but stay tune for our spring edition.

**For more info:**

**[WWW.IRI-DELAWARE.ORG](http://WWW.IRI-DELAWARE.ORG)**

**Please follow us on:**



**Facebook**