



S.I.B.S.
SUPPORTING ILLINOIS
BROTHERS AND SISTERS

CHAT WITH US!
**SIBSADVOCACY
@GMAIL.COM**

Advocacy & Policy Committee

MISSION

Provide information, supports, and tools to build awareness around disability policy/advocacy topics and aid siblings in advocating for the changes that are important to them and their brothers and sisters



Join Us

The A&P Committee is seeking new members who are passionate about sharing their unique voice as a sibling. The committee meets every 2-3 months. Please email sibsadvocacy@gmail.com to learn more about current opportunities.

Resource Spotlight

The Mainstream Housing Choice Voucher Program is aimed at helping non-elderly people with disabilities transitioning from institutions or other isolated settings as well as those at risk of institutionalization or homelessness. If you are assisting your sibling in securing funding for housing and want to learn more about the U.S. voucher program, please email

MainstreamVouchers@hud.gov.

Policy Updates

- **Work force crisis:** IL General Assembly appropriated \$12.5M for grants, recruitment, and retention of direct support persons, aides, and other front-line personnel working in community-based services and intermediate care facilities
- **Federal government funding:** Government passed increased funding for Title I Education Grants, Special Education, and SSA
- **ABLE Act:** Age adjustment allows people who develop their disabilities before age 46 to establish ABLE accounts (as opposed to 26 as is currently law)

January 2023



The 103rd IL General Assembly is in session from January-May. This is a great time to let your elected officials know the issues that are important to you as a sibling. The A&P Committee can help amplify your voice. Email us!



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APRIL 2023



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The A&P Committee met up in March to create position statements related to the political issues that impact us and our siblings. Check out our statements on the next page! Want to join us? Please email sibsadvocacy@gmail.com to learn more about current opportunities.

HB3569 and SB2026

There is a collective effort underway to support investment in community based services in IL. As part of this effort, we are supporting a \$4 an hour wage increase for direct support personnel (SB2026 and HB3569). Please consider writing your legislator to share your support for these bills. Share your story from the sibling perspective.

Here's an example: I am urging you to support HB3569 and SB2026, identical bills that would appropriate a \$4/hour wage increase for DSPs who support individuals with IDD.

My sister is reliant on a DSP for activities of daily living, including bathing, grocery shopping, and completing work-related duties. As the DSP workforce crisis worsens, I'm worried my sister will lose access to the supports that are critical to her quality of life. As a working professional myself, I do not have the capacity to become my sister's full-time direct supporter should she lose her DSP to inadequate wages. My sister, my family, and DSPs deserve better. Please support HB3569 and SB2026 to protect my sister and others like her, invest in our communities, and create sustainable jobs.

Write your legislators here:
<https://www.theydeservemore.com/take-action/>

Dates to Know



Mark your calendar for Wednesday, June 7th at 7pm. The A&P Committee will be hosting a virtual "Chat for Change" event. This virtual drop-in hour will be an opportunity to refresh your advocacy toolbox and receive personalized strategy advising for the issues you want to talk about.

www.sibsnetwork.org



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Chat for Change

Thank you to all who joined the Chat for Change event hosted by the A&P Committee. You can find resources from the event on our Facebook page or please email sibsadvocacy@gmail.com.



Important Updates

- Annual re-enrollment of Medicaid is resuming. Learn how to protect you and/or your sibling's coverage [here](#)
- The VITAL Act (Federal bill [S.1377](#)) increases the low-income housing tax credit to meet housing needs of individuals with disabilities. Urge your representatives to support this bill!
- Gov. Pritzker signed [SB 2247](#) into law, allowing any entity to make contributions to an ABLE account



Sibling Leadership Network

Did you know S.I.B.S. is the Illinois chapter of the national Sibling Leadership Network? The SLN website has many useful resources for advocacy, including an advocacy toolkit tailored to siblings. Please explore this resource and many others by following this [link](#).

July 2023



July is Disability Pride Month. It is an excellent time to watch a film or read up on Disability history. Follow this [link](#) for more content!

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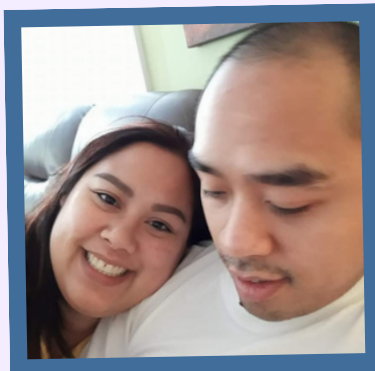
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Meet Committee Member, Angel

I have guardianship of my brother who has an intellectual disability and his influence led me to choose education as my vocation. We love having car concerts! I practice yoga and I am proud to share that last year I became yoga teacher certified. My goal is to learn more about policymaking as a sibling. I look forward to us growing as a community.

If you're interested in becoming a committee member like Angel, please email sibsadvocacy@gmail.com.



Important Updates

The SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act (Federal bill [H.R. 5408/S. 2767](#)) was introduced to Congress on September 12. If passed, this would allow millions of people with disabilities to earn and save money by raising asset limits. Urge your [senators](#) and [representatives](#) to cosponsor the bill.



S.I.B.S. Online Resources

We are excited to unveil a new and improved S.I.B.S. website. You will find a plethora of resources, including advocacy resources, at the following link: <https://www.sibsnetwork.org/resources>. Check it out now!

October 2023



October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month. You can help spread awareness and support advocacy efforts on social media by posting with [#DownSyndromeAwarenessMonth](#).