

# INSIDE LOOK

## LGBTQ+ Pride Month



The month of June is recognized as **Pride Month** which honors the LGBTQ+ community. This annual event highlights the importance of acceptance, diversity, love, and unity. Pride Month brings together individuals and communities to celebrate the progress made in society for LGBTQ+ rights and culture. Pride Month began due to the Stonewall Uprising in New York City in June 1969, where there were protests against police brutality and discrimination. This event was a pivotal moment for the LGBTQ+ community. Since then, many Pride parades were held to commemorate the uprising. Pride Month is symbolized by six colors: red represents life, orange is healing, yellow is sunshine, green is nature, blue is harmony and purple is spirit. All month long, let us take a moment to recognize the LGBTQ+ community and their efforts for an inclusive environment and advocacy for equal rights.

## Medicaid Information

Medicaid is a important source of healthcare. Proposed cuts to Medicaid will negatively impact nearly **80 million people**, which includes **1.8 million New Jersey residents**. It is important to act now and contact your Congressional Representatives at **1-866-426-2631** to protect Medicaid and let your voice be heard.



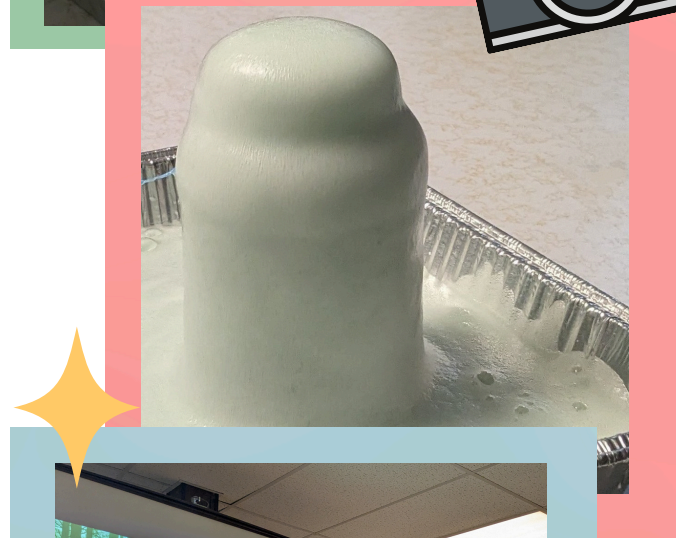
# DIAL Recreation Corner

In May, the Recreation Program began the month with crafts for Mother's Day. Consumers used sponges to paint beautiful pink flowers on cards to make original Mother's Day cards. They also made gift bags using the same theme. These gifts were created from the heart with mom in mind.

Next, the consumers had "Lava" fun with the Volcano Science Experiment. This project was conducted by using simple household items such as dish soap, baking soda and vinegar combined to create a volcano! The volcanoes erupted before everyone's eyes and there was an explosion of fun!

Guest Speakers from the New Jersey Wildlife Federation came to the program and gave a video presentation on the black bears of New Jersey. Everyone learned what bears eat, where they live and why they hibernate. They even got to touch real bear fur. Consumers learned what to do if you see a bear! You want to stay calm and avoid panicking. If you run, it might trigger a chase response. It was an educational and exciting presentation.

If you would like to join the fun at the Recreation Program and are a resident of Passaic County, please call Susan Kramer at (973) 470-8090 extension 306 for more information.



# DIAL Welcomes New Staff

## **Meet Valeria Romero: Community Services Navigator**

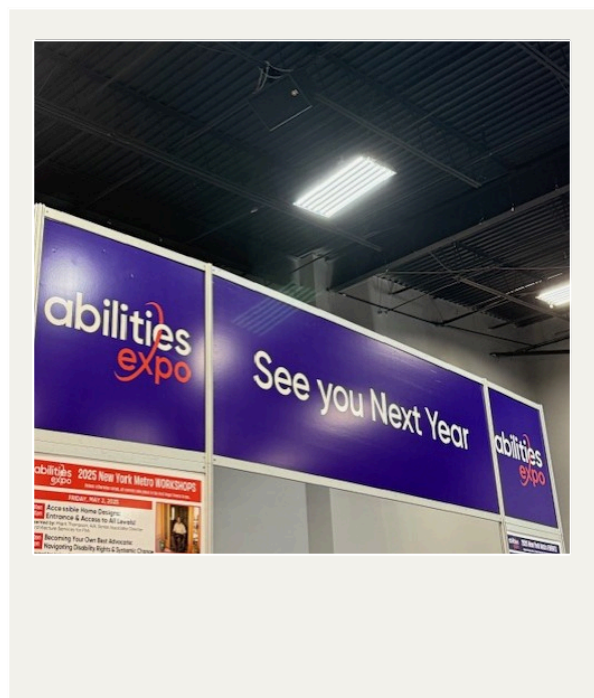
Valeria graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Family Science and Human Development at Montclair State University. Her experience working with children, adolescents and older adults in the mental health field has provided her with the proper skill set in helping individuals with advocacy, resources, and support. Working with many different populations has led Valeria to develop active listening skills, empathy, and knowledge of resources within the community. Valeria's hours as a Community Services Navigator at DIAL are Monday through Friday from 9:00am-5:00pm.

## **Meet Shirley Rejouis: Deaf Services Specialist**

Shirley graduated with a Bachelor's in Psychology and American Sign Language (ASL) and a Master's degree in Social Work at Kean University. Shirley also obtained a certificate in ASL and Deaf Studies from Union County College. Shirley has worked with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community for 10 years in various settings including schools, non-profits, and hospitals. Shirley's hours as a Deaf Support Specialist at DIAL are Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00am-1:00pm and Fridays from 10:00am-2:00pm.

## **Abilities Expo**

On May 1-3, 2025, the Abilities Expo was held in Edison, New Jersey. This 3-day convention exhibited innovative assistive technologies and resources for individuals with disabilities. At the expo, DIAL staff had an opportunity to participate in an adaptive climbing wall and witness adaptive sports, artwork, and informative accessibility workshops. DIAL staff were able to educate the public about Independent Living services and programs through the New Jersey State Independent Living Council as well. If you are interested in attending this event, please visit [www.abilities.com/new-york](http://www.abilities.com/new-york) for next year's dates within the New York metro area.



**SAVE!**  
THE DATE

# DIAL - Upcoming Events

**June 5th**

## **Passaic County Peer Support Group**

Time: 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Address: Clifton Main Library  
292 Piaget Avenue, Clifton, NJ 07011

## **Essex County Peer Support Group**

Time: 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Held via ZOOM Until Further Notice

**June 11th**

**June 24th**

## **Monthly Independent Living Skills Program**

Time: 6:30pm - 8:30pm

Address: Clifton Senior Barn  
900 Clifton Avenue, Clifton, NJ 07013

**DIAL - CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING  
2 PROSPECT VILLAGE PLAZA FLOOR 1  
CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY 07013**

**(973) 470-8090—PHONE**

**(973) 556-0226—VIDEO PHONE**

**(973) 470-2521—TTY**