



ATLANTIC

CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC

APRIL NEWSLETTER 2026 • VOL. 6



Photo: Close-up of pink cherry blossoms on branches with a soft bokeh background and lens flare.

From our ACIL family to yours...

We're glad you're here! Inside this April edition, you'll find news, events, and opportunities designed to support and empower our community.

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Atlantic Center for Independent Living

160 S. PITNEY RD., UNITS 3 & 4, GALLOWAY, NJ 08205

PHONE: (609)748-ABLE (2253) | ATLANTICCIL.ORG

Our Mission

Atlantic Center for Independent Living, Inc. is a center that assists individuals with disabilities to live and work as independently as possible.

Our core services include:

Information & Referral

Information about & referrals to services and organizations that can help you achieve your independence.

Advocacy

Staff assist individuals with personal issues to advocate for what they need. Systems advocacy identifies issues that affect others within the community and develop strategies to bring about systems change.

Peer Support

We believe that individuals experiencing the same issues (peers) are in the best position to support one another dealing with similar experiences.

Life Skills Training

Services are designed to assist you in gaining the skills necessary to live independently in your community.

Transition Services

Youth: Our youth services provide support and guidance to students transitioning from school to adult life with a strong emphasis on employment.

Seniors: Atlantic staff can assist seniors living with disabilities to ensure they are receiving benefits and services designed to ensure the greatest independence possible with the goal of remaining within their communities.

Atlantic Center for Independent Living, INC



Community Spotlight

Community Walks

With Coach Tadris & Friends
Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:15pm
 Call (609)748-2253 Ext. 4 or email
jburke@atlanticcil.org For More Details.



ACCESS to ART

ATLANTIC CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

DATES FOR 2026

March 10	Join us each month for a fun, all-levels art session where you can explore your own ideas or follow along. No experience necessary! All supplies provided. Please arrive early so that the program can begin on time.
April 14	
May 12	
June 9	
September 8	
October 13	
November 10	
December 8	

TIME
6:00 - 8:00 PM

LOCATION
The Atlantic Center for Independent Living,
160 S. Pitney Road, Suite 3-4, Galloway, NJ

Co-sponsored with Atlantic Center for Independent Living supporting equal access for all. For accommodations, contact Michael Cagno, mcagno@noyesmuseum.org, 609-626-3420

HERizon
A WOMEN'S GROUP BY MOCEANS CIL

Join our April HERizon session with life coach
Cherry! Audra Sharp from Grace Wellness Academy!

Session Topic:
Mind, Body, And Spirit

April 15th 2026
3:00 - 4:00 PM
Zoom ID: 878 6054 0838

Scan the QR code to RSVP!

NFB South Jersey Shore Chapter



10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Next Meeting: April 18th

Ocean City Library, 1735 Simpson Ave. (17th St. Entrance)

For more information contact: President Ed Garcia at 650-759-0470

Please visit: <https://www.nfbnj.org/chapters/south-jersey-shore-chapter/>

Our Stories

Meet ACIL's New Peer Support Specialist

Hi, my name is Amadeo Astillero, and I am the new Peer Support Specialist at the Atlantic Center for Independent Living. I'm very excited and grateful to be a part of this team. I've spent most of my life living in Northfield, New Jersey, and I'm an alumnus of Northfield Community School and Mainland Regional High School, Class of 2012—go Mustangs! I later went on to earn a bachelor's degree in psychology.



Photo: Amadeo Asillero, Peer Support Specialist

One thing that's important to know about me is that I've always considered myself an encourager and motivator for my friends and family. I've always been someone who is willing to listen when others are going through difficult moments, even when I may not fully understand their situation. Over the years, friends have told me that simply having someone listen has helped brighten their day, and that experience has shaped the way I see advocacy. Sometimes it starts with just being present.

You may also be wondering how and why my natural desire to help and motivate others took shape. I was born with cerebral palsy (CP), a condition that affects my legs and mobility. I use a wheelchair for long distances and crutches for shorter ones. Growing up, learning to accept that I do some things differently wasn't always easy, but over time I've come to embrace those differences as part of my story and what makes me unique.

As a Peer Support Specialist, I hope to help others embrace their own differences, recognize their strengths, and see that even through life's challenges, there is always meaning and purpose. I also feel it's important to understand that life does not come with an instruction manual for anyone, so it's okay not to have all the answers right away. Just keep going and you will eventually find the light in it all.

Nation's Disability Services System Under Growing Threat



Photo: Crowds of advocates, activists, families and individuals with disabilities rallied earlier this month outside the State House in Annapolis, Md. to protest cuts to the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration. (Surya Vaidy/The Baltimore Sun/TNS)

Across the country, disability advocates are warning that services supporting people with disabilities are facing unprecedented risks. Even before recent developments, many programs were already strained by workforce shortages, long waiting lists, and rising costs. Now, proposed federal and state policy changes could significantly deepen these challenges.

At the center of concern are potential Medicaid cuts, which threaten funding for home and community-based services that help people with disabilities live independently. These services include personal care, job supports, residential assistance, and transportation. Advocates say fewer federal dollars could force states to reduce services, tighten eligibility, or expand already lengthy waiting lists.

Advocates emphasize that disability services are not optional; they are critical to employment, independence, and community participation. Many are calling on policymakers to consider the real-world consequences of funding decisions and to protect services that millions of Americans rely on every day.

Source: [Nation's Disability Services System Faces 'Unprecedented' Threats](#)

Virtual Support Groups & Activities

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all.
For accommodations please contact Jennifer at jburke@atlanticcil.org | (609)748-2253 ext.4

Atlantic CIL Weekly Activity Links

Life Skills | Monday | 1pm | Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83007585374?pwd=McU3UFciKbQjIltuB1kk9yLjCRufQp.1>
Call In: 1-346-248-7799 | Meeting ID: 830 0758 5374 | Passcode: 248110

Sketchbook Club | Monday | 3:30pm | Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83854391536?pwd=YWtFekQyeE9wTlBqdVpkQVIvRUdiQT09>
Call In: 1-309-205-3325 | Meeting ID: 838 5439 1536

Socialization and Wellbeing Group | Tuesday | 1pm | Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88558466172>
Call In: 1-301-715-8592 | Meeting ID: 885 5846 6172

Life Skills | Thursday | 6pm | Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85063153999?pwd=NmJXd1ZUUhpkUkxneExISEJQWk8xQT09>
Call In: 1-646-931-3860 | Meeting ID: 850 6315 3999 | Passcode 154100

Additional Atlantic CIL Collaboration Activity Contacts

United by Wellness virtual support groups with MHA

Visit: <http://www.mhaac.info/ubw.html>

Community Walks with Coach Tadris, Tuesdays & Thursdays at 5:15pm

Contact Jen at jburke@atlanticcil.org, to join

Access to Art Classes with the Noyes Museum of Art

Ongoing programming Co-sponsored by Atlantic CIL

Visit <https://noyesmuseum.org> for details.



Monthly Calendar



April

Activities & Support Groups

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
 <p>AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH</p>	 <p>Parkinson Awareness Month</p>		<p>1</p>  <p>APRIL FOOLS DAY</p>	<p>2</p> <p><u>Life Skills 6pm</u></p> <p>Community Walk 5:15pm</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p> <p>HAPPY EASTER</p>	<p>6</p> <p><u>Life Skills 1pm</u></p> <p><u>Sketchbook Club 3:30pm</u></p>	<p>7</p> <p><u>Socialization & Wellbeing Group 1pm</u></p> <p>Community Walk 5:15pm</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p><u>Life Skills 6pm</u></p> <p>Community Walk 5:15pm</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p><u>Life Skills 1pm</u></p> <p><u>Sketchbook Club 3:30pm</u></p>	<p>14</p> <p><u>Socialization & Wellbeing Group 1pm</u></p> <p>Community Walk 5:15pm</p> <p>Art 6pm </p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p><u>Life Skills 6pm</u></p> <p>Community Walk 5:15pm</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p><u>Life Skills 1pm</u></p> <p><u>Sketchbook Club 3:30pm</u></p>	<p>21</p> <p><u>Socialization & Wellbeing Group 1pm</u></p> <p>Community Walk 5:15pm</p>	<p>22</p> 	<p>23</p> <p><u>Life Skills 6pm</u></p> <p>Community Walk 5:15pm</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p><u>Life Skills 1pm</u></p> <p><u>Sketchbook Club 3:30pm</u></p>	<p>28</p> <p><u>Socialization & Wellbeing Group 1pm</u></p> <p>Community Walk 5:15pm</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p><u>Life Skills 6pm</u></p> <p>Community Walk 5:15pm</p>		

Click on each group/activity title for active zoom link.
 Contact us for more information at jburke@atlanticcil.org | (609)748-2253 ext. 4

Weekly Life Skills Activities

Join us for Life Skills every Monday and Thursday! New topics are presented each week to assist you in gaining the skills necessary to live independently in your community.



Spring Cleaning

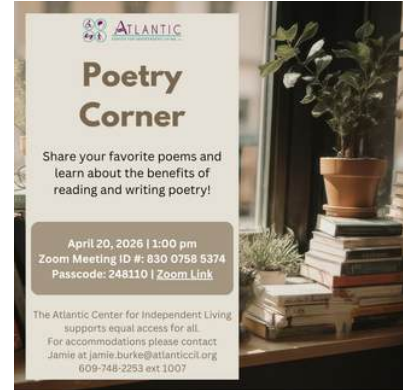
Learn simple spring cleaning tips to organize, refresh, and care for your living spaces.

April 6, 2026 | 1:00 pm
Zoom Meeting ID #: 830 0758 5374
Passcode: 248110 | [Zoom Link](#)

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jamie at jamie.burke@atlanticcl.org 609-748-2253 ext.1007

MONDAY

Mondays at 1pm with
Independent Living Specialist
Jamie Burke
Zoom Meeting ID #: 830 0758 5374
Passcode: 248110 | [Zoom Link](#)



Poetry Corner

Share your favorite poems and learn about the benefits of reading and writing poetry!

April 20, 2026 | 1:00 pm
Zoom Meeting ID #: 830 0758 5374
Passcode: 248110 | [Zoom Link](#)

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jamie at jamie.burke@atlanticcl.org 609-748-2253 ext.1007



Building Confidence

Join us to discuss ways to build self-confidence, identify personal strengths, set goals, and expand positive thinking!

April 13, 2026 | 1:00 pm
Zoom Meeting ID #: 830 0758 5374
Passcode: 248110 | [Zoom Link](#)

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jamie at jamie.burke@atlanticcl.org 609-748-2253 ext.1007

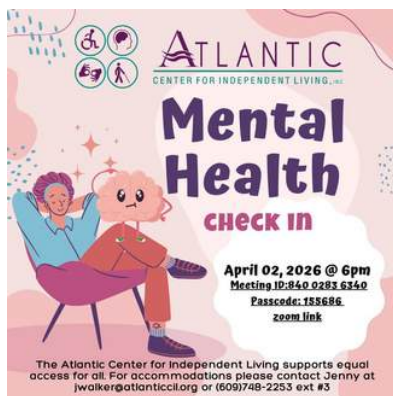



Common Courtesy

Join us to learn ways to show politeness, respect and consideration for others during everyday interactions.

April 27, 2026 | 1:00 pm
Zoom Meeting ID #: 830 0758 5374
Passcode: 248110 | [Zoom Link](#)

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jamie at jamie.burke@atlanticcl.org 609-748-2253 ext.1007



ATLANTIC
CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING...
Mental Health
CHECK IN

April 02, 2026 @ 6pm
Meeting ID: 840 0283 6340
Passcode: 155686
[zoom link](#)

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jenny at jwalker@atlanticcl.org or (609)748-2253 ext #3

THURSDAY

Thursdays at 6pm with
Independent Living Specialist
Jenny Walker
Zoom Meeting ID #: 850 6315 3999
Passcode: 154100 | [Zoom Link](#)



ATLANTIC
CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING...
April 23, 2026 @ 6pm
Meeting ID: 840 0283 6340
Passcode: 155686
[zoom link](#)

**THINK IT.
WANT IT.
GET IT**

Discuss ways to tackle problems one step at a time.

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ATLANTIC
CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING...
Let's talk about emotional wellness

- Embrace small moments of calm.
- Take it one step at a time.
- Speak kindly to yourself.

April 9, 2026 @ 6pm
Meeting ID: 840 0283 6340
Passcode: 155686
[zoom link](#)

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jenny at jwalker@atlanticcl.org or (609)748-2253 ext #3



ATLANTIC
CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING...
ELIMINATE
stinking thinking
by....

April 16, 2026 @ 6pm
Meeting ID: 840 0283 6340
Passcode: 155686
[zoom link](#)

THROWING AWAY
NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jenny at jwalker@atlanticcl.org or (609)748-2253 ext #3



ATLANTIC
CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING...
CELEBRATE
Your Strengths

Join us to share your successes, explore personal strengths, and support one another.

April 30, 2026 @ 6pm
Meeting ID: 840 0283 6340
Passcode: 155686
[Zoom Link](#)

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jenny at jwalker@atlanticcl.org or (609)748-2253 ext #3

Collaboration Activities



MONDAY

2-3 PM: COPING SKILLS SUPPORT GROUP

MEETING ID: 975 3587 3500

[HTTPS://ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TJMODOYGOTGVGTSW_LUNGCBEY582MB6VZKL](https://zoom.us/join/97535873500)

THIS GROUP IS OPEN TO ANYONE INTERESTED IN ADDING TO THEIR WELLNESS TOOLBOX! EACH MEETING INCLUDES AN ACTIVITY AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE & REFLECT.

5-6 PM: MENTAL HEALTH WRITING GROUP

MEETING ID: 861 6663 5659

[HTTPS://ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TJULDCORZ8OH9XRYD03OHTXQJPDNWCVR-T](https://zoom.us/join/86166635659)

EACH WEEK, A NEW READING WILL BE PRESENTED ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH. MEMBERS WILL TAKE THE TIME TO WRITE ON THE READING, AND CAN CHOOSE TO READ OFF WHAT THEY HAVE WRITTEN/GIVE FEEDBACK AND REFLECT.

TUESDAY

5-6 PM: LIFE AFTER LOSS

MEETING ID: 850 5917 9372

[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TZMOCEIRRD8IETAPSQ0DD-01VP4GHGIVIBFO](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/85059179372)

JOIN US IN OUR OPEN SHARE/TOPIC BASED GROUP DEDICATED TO FINDING COMFORT, JOY, AND GROWTH FOLLOWING LOSS.

* THIS IS A CLOSED GROUP, MEMBERS WILL NOT BE ADMITTED AFTER 5:10PM. *

WEDNESDAY

8-9 AM: SHARE YOUR SUNSHINE

MEETING ID: 890 3553 9203

[HTTPS://ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TJALDEYUPIGUG9FAWK7JM7HBNSYXHEZ3RRO7](https://zoom.us/join/89035539203)

THE PURPOSE OF THIS GROUP IS TO CREATE A COLLABORATIVE SPACE IN WHICH MEMBERS FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS CAN COME TOGETHER AND FIND CONNECTION, SUPPORT, AND JOY FROM EACH INDIVIDUALS INTERESTS. THE GOAL IS TO CREATE A SPACE THAT NURTURES EMPOWERMENT AND SELF FULFILLMENT. ,

3PM-4PM: BETTER TOGETHER

MEETING ID: 875 6132 4882 [HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TZMOCEIRRD8IETAPSQ0DD-01VP4GHGIVIBFO](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/87561324882)

TOPIC FOCUSED GROUP - THIS IS A SUPPORT GROUP FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO STRUGGLE WITH A COMBINATION OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES. TOGETHER WE WILL DISCUSS A TOPIC SURROUNDING THE STRUGGLE OF BALANCING PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING. LET'S SUPPORT EACH OTHER IN OUR JOURNEYS TO WELLNESS!



To receive the zoom information in a daily newsletter become a member of United by Wellness today

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8>



WWW.MHAAC.INFO/UBW



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609-652-3800

Atlantic Center for Independent Living, INC



6-7 PM: DEPRESSION SUPPORT GROUP

MEETING ID: 934 5705 3073

[HTTPS://ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TJPCU600ZGQHDFBPSFROLZAEUIOFOAMZMCY](https://zoom.us/join/93457053073)

THIS SUPPORT GROUP IS FOR THOSE LIVING WITH DEPRESSION TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AND RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM OTHERS WHO UNDERSTAND. GROUP MEMBERS BENEFIT FROM MUTUAL SUPPORT AND CONNECTION.

THURSDAY

4-5 PM: LIFE SKILLS

MEETING ID: 870 3716 4227

[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TZMTD06POD80GNMLNVDJJIOSTZ3BTW_NISO](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/87037164227)

LEARN ADAPTIVE, POSITIVE WAYS OF DEALING WITH THE DEMANDS AND CHALLENGES OF ALL FACETS OF EVERYDAY LIFE, SUCH AS FAMILY, RELATIONSHIPS, WORK, ENVIRONMENT, SELF-CARE, RESILIENCE, AND MORE.

FRIDAY

2-3 PM: LIGHT BULB- A GROUP FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

MEETING ID: 995 1443 1197

[HTTPS://ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TJ0ODU2SRTORE90BFWEOWPI4BGO9GVM187FW](https://zoom.us/join/99514431197)

DURING THIS GROUP REFLECTION QUESTIONS ABOUT VARIOUS WELLNESS TOPICS WILL BE SHARED AND THEN EXPLORED AS A GROUP. EACH GROUP WE WALK AWAY LEARNING SOMETHING NEW!

4-5 PM: BREAKING BARRIERS

MEETING ID: 885 2514 6106

[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TZWODEYPQJORGJOTKARTN_P6FK7MMXOXT72#/REGISTRATION](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/88525146106)

A SUPPORT GROUP WHERE WE WILL LEARN, GROW, SHARE, AND BECOME MORE EMPOWERED TO BREAK THE BARRIERS TO HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO LIVE THE LIFE WE WANT.

SATURDAY

11 AM-12 PM: PUT OFF PROCRASTINATION

MEETING ID: 891 6577 9251

[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/JRVLDATOCW_60GEBLCMMW](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/89165779251)

WHETHER IT'S FINISHING A CHORE, WORKING ON A PROJECT, OR EVEN STARTING A NEW HOBBY, LET'S START PUTTING OFF PROCRASTINATION TOGETHER.

SUNDAY

10-11 AM: OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

MEETING ID: 891 6452 0279

[HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TZOSCE2TRDSOHD2CUHEEDTNY_HPPOAQOOLQ](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/89164520279)

THIS IS A SAFE SPACE FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE COMMON EXPERIENCES, FEELINGS, AND STRUGGLES WHEN IT COMES TO LIFE'S OBSTACLES. WE'LL SHARE AND DISCUSS OUR WORRIES... WHILE ALSO CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESSES.

7-7:45 PM: MEDITATION

MEETING ID: 927 8257 0162

[HTTPS://ZOOM.US/MEETING/REGISTER/TJYQF-UTQTSRHHYABPFWUMGQ4NVXJHIFKP-X](https://zoom.us/join/92782570162)

EACH MEETING A 15-20-MINUTE GUIDED MEDITATION WILL TAKE PLACE FOLLOWED BY OPEN SHARING OF REFLECTIONS AND SETTING INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK.



To receive the zoom information in a daily newsletter become a member of United by Wellness today

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8>



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609-652-3800

Atlantic Center for Independent Living, INC

10

DVRS Public Forum

Your
VOICE
MATTERS

State Rehabilitation Council
Public Forums

2026

The SRC & DVR want to hear from you!

- Share your experience with DVRS services.
- Make suggestions for improving awareness of & access to DVRS.
- Share your thoughts on DVRS services

Dates, times & link to register:

April 30 - 6 pm, May 13 - 3 pm, June 2 - 11 am

REGISTER HERE



[SRC public forum 2026](#)

HAPPY
SPRING