



Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Newsletter



Creating inclusive communities:

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is recognized annually in March, through presidential proclamation, as an opportunity to celebrate the inclusion of people with disabilities in civic and social life to create strong and diverse communities.

The month also provides the catalyst to raise awareness about the many barriers that people with disabilities still face in achieving both self-determination and full societal inclusion.

Read about the [history of developmental disabilities awareness month](#)

Every March, the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) and its partners collaborate to lead [Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month](#) (DDAM). The annual campaign highlights how people with and without disabilities come together to form strong communities. DDAM raises awareness of the inclusion and contributions of people with developmental disabilities (DD) in all aspects of community life and serves as a time to explore the work still needed to remove barriers.

NACDD's 2024 theme, *A World of Opportunities*, focuses on people working together to remove obstacles to building communities where everyone can do well and succeed. This year's [DDAM poster](#) features artwork by [Lee Waters](#). NACDD encourages others to use the image in their own branding and materials.

What are developmental disabilities?

[Easterseals](#), the national nonprofit leader in empowering people with developmental disabilities to be full and equal participants in society, defines developmental disabilities as disabilities that occur from birth to the first few years of development, may impact day-to-day functioning, and are typically lifelong diagnoses.

Common developmental disabilities include autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, down syndrome, hearing or vision loss, learning disorders and ADHD. Developmental disabilities are understood to be caused by a complex interaction of factors including genetics, parental health and behaviors during pregnancy, or by complications during birth, among other possible factors. The specific cause is often unknown.

The prevalence of developmental disabilities is more common than people realize. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), 17% of children in the United States between the ages of three and 17 have one or more developmental disabilities or delays.

More than five million Americans reportedly have developmental disabilities. Living with developmental disabilities can create a variety of challenges, such as difficulties with mobility, communication, self-help, independent living and physical and mental health issues. Moreover, people with developmental disabilities are vulnerable to abuse and neglect on many levels, including physical, psychological, legal, and systemic abuse.

Learn more and get involved: Parents and caregivers can use the CDC's [Learn the Signs, Act Early](#) program to monitor children's development and know when there might be a concern; the [brief checklist of milestones](#) provides a child development baseline.





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Irish-American Heritage Month, 2024

On February 29, 2024 the President of the United States shared:



During Irish-American Heritage Month, we honor our Irish ancestors, all those who carry on their legacies, and the values that have always bound Ireland and the United States together.

These values — including determination, decency, and dignity — have been passed down from generation to generation in families like my own and have been grafted into the American character. Last year, I had the honor of visiting the home of some of my Irish ancestors, including the Blewitts of County Mayo and the Finnegans of County Louth. As I traveled across Ireland, I learned the true meaning of the Gaelic expression, “a hundred thousand welcomes.” I was reminded that everything between Ireland and America runs deep — from our history and sorrow to our future and joy. But more than anything, hope is what beats in the hearts of all of our people.

For centuries — even during times of darkness and despair — hope has kept us marching forward toward a better future. It is what led so many of our Irish ancestors to leave the only place they had ever called home and seek a new beginning in the United States. It is what drove generations of Irish immigrants to help build the foundations of America with grit and persistence, even as they endured discrimination and were denied opportunity. It is what continues to drive tens of millions of Irish Americans across our country to stand up for greater dignity, liberty, and possibilities for all. As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of United States-Irish diplomatic relations this year, hope remains the bedrock of our partnership, as evidenced by our work together to stand with the brave people of Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression, combat the climate crisis, and advance workers’ rights across both of our nations.

In the years ahead, I look forward to strengthening the partnership and friendship between the people of Ireland and America even further. United by history, heritage, and hope, nothing is beyond our reach.



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Women's History Month, 2024

On February 29, 2024 the President of the United States shared:

During Women's History Month, we celebrate the courageous women who have helped our Nation build a fairer, more just society.

Throughout history, the vision and achievements of powerful women have strengthened our Nation and opened the doors of opportunity wider for all of us. Though their stories too often go untold, all of us stand on the shoulders of these sung and unsung trailblazers — from the women who took a stand as suffragists, abolitionists, and labor leaders to pioneering scientists and engineers, groundbreaking artists, proud public servants, and brave members of our Armed Forces.

Despite the progress that these visionaries have achieved, there is more work ahead to knock down the barriers that stand in the way of women and girls realizing their full potential — in a country founded on freedom and equality, nothing is more fundamental. That is why my Administration has put women and girls at the heart of everything we do. When I first came into office, I established the White House Gender Policy Council to advance their rights and opportunities across domestic and foreign policy. I also released the Nation's first-ever National Gender Strategy to advance gender equity and equality across my Administration — from women's economic security and leadership opportunities to freedom from gender-based violence and equal access to education and health care. Women are seated at every table where decisions are made in my Administration — from our first female Vice President, Kamala Harris, to a record number of female cabinet secretaries to the most diverse set of judges ever nominated to the Federal bench, including Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson.





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If we want to have the strongest economy in the world, we cannot leave women — half of our workforce — behind. Since I have been in office, the economy has created nearly 15 million jobs, and we have seen the lowest unemployment rate among women in more than five decades. As we implement major pieces of legislation like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act, we are ensuring that women get their fair share of opportunities. We are increasing their access to new jobs in sectors where women have been historically underrepresented, like manufacturing, construction, and clean energy. We are championing equal pay, including issuing new regulations that advance pay equity and pay transparency for Federal workers and employees of Federal contractors.



To promote the health and wellness of women in America, under the leadership of Vice President Harris, we launched the Blueprint for Addressing the Maternal Health Crisis to combat the high incidence of maternal mortality — especially for Black, Native, and rural women — due to systemic inequities in quality health care. We have expanded access to health care services for women veterans — the fastest growing group of veterans receiving services at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Last fall, we launched the White House Initiative on Women's Health Research to change how we approach and fund women's health research, and pioneer the next generation of discoveries in women's health care.

Globally, my Administration is supporting initiatives that help expand access to child care, end gender-based violence, cut the digital gender divide in half, promote women's leadership, and more. Thanks to the leadership of Vice President Harris, we have galvanized more than \$2.9 billion in investments to advance the economic status of women around the world and ensure they play a meaningful role in the industries of the future.

This Women's History Month, may we recognize the long, storied history of great women helping to realize our Nation's founding promise and highest aspirations. May we all continue working to build a world worthy of the dreams and goals of all women and girls.



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Resources & Articles

Developmental Disability Awareness

[Developmental Disability Awareness Month 2024](#)

[Developmental Disabilities Resource Guide](#)

Irish-American Heritage Month

[Irish American Heritage Month and St. Patrick's Day, March 2024](#)

[Ways to Celebrate Irish American Heritage Month](#)

Women's History Month

[Why March is National Women's History Month](#)

[Why do We Celebrate Women's History Month](#)

Registration is Open

April 6, 2024: OSAA Student Leadership Conference @ Camp Withycombe, in

Clackamas, OR

April 27, 2024: Oregon Girls Sports Leadership Summit @ OES

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