

MILC RUN

MIDSTATE INDEPENDENT LIVING CHOICES

“Working for persons with disabilities towards empowerment to make informed choices.”

HEARING SCREEN

5/5/2022 - 9:00am-12:00pm

Marathon County Library | 300 1st St | Wausau, WI

Per Library policy, registration will need to be made
in advance.

To schedule your free hearing screen, and to
schedule an interpreter/SSP for deaf-blind,
contact Sandi Walkush at 715.344.4210



PAGES 2-3

- Opportunity For Presentations
- Immediate Openings!
- Falls Prevention

PAGES 4-5

- The Lifeline and 988
- Tech Time

PAGES 6-7

- Assistive Technology Review At MILC
- Walk-in Tubs– Buyer Beware!
- Loan Programs

Opportunity For Presentations



If you are receiving this newsletter, chances are you have either been in contact with Midstate Independent Living Choices at one point or another. Designed and operated by individuals with disabilities, Centers for Independent Living (CILs) provide independent living services for people with all types of disabilities.

Out of 55,447 people with disabilities in Midstate Independent Living Choice's 11 county service area, 1092 people with disabilities have been served either through information and referral calls, or by becoming consumers to develop and work on goals. That is 2% of people with disabilities. There could be a number of reasons why this number isn't larger, but most likely the reason we are discovering is that there are so many people from Adams to Florence counties who are unaware we even exist.

Our goal is to help people remain in a community environment and out of restrictive institutions. We do this by helping people with our five core services of information and referral, advocacy, peer support, independent living skills training, and transitional services (from nursing home or assisted living to community living, students in transition to life after high school, and incarcerated people with disabilities returning to community living). We also have services designed to help PWD remain in their homes, such as our Assistive Technology Loan and Demonstration Program, PRE-ETS curriculums to teach students in transition, and our Peer Support and Mental Health Centers in Stevens Point, Marshfield, and Wisconsin Rapids.

In 2022, one of our goals is to provide more outreach to the communities in our service area, as well as underserved/under reached populations. If you are an organization, business, group, or establishment that serves people with disabilities, employs people with disabilities, or provides business to people with disabilities, we would like to provide a presentation regarding MILC services! We can come to you with displays of equipment from our loan and demonstration program, and resources that we have available to share, or we can conduct a presentation virtually.

To call and request a presentation regarding MILC services, please call 715-344-4210 and ask to speak to the Independent Living Department!

~Eric Riskus, Independent Living Program Director

IMMEDIATE OPENINGS!

Variety of shifts! Positions available throughout our
11 county service area!

Great
opportunity to earn
extra income!

Midstate Independent Living Choices



is in search of **CAREGIVERS** interested in assisting individuals in their homes providing personal, supportive and/or respite care. Travel allowance for eligible cases/employees. Experience preferred, or willing to learn new skills.

To see a full listing of our current openings visit

www.milc-inc.org

Complete the application online and submit to

ebuckles@milc-inc.org or

call 715-344-4210, ext. 222 to request an application

Falls Prevention



*One-third of people over the age of 65 years will fall every year. Wisconsin has one of the highest rates of death from unintentional falls in the nation. In fact, the death rate due to unintentional falls in Wisconsin is twice the national average. **The good news is falls are preventable.***

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov

One of the best (and free) ways to decrease your fall risk is to increase your strength and balance. This can be done by doing a few exercises a day. Most of the exercises can be done with no added weight and all of them are very functional, meaning that they help you function in your normal life safer. To learn how to perform these exercises and to address some of the many other factors that influence falls, please attend one of the Stepping On workshops in your area.

Stepping On addresses these factors, among others, in a non-judgmental way, coupling expert advice with peer-to-peer learning. Through Stepping On, the incidence of falls has actually decreased by 31% (Wisconsin Institute on Healthy Aging (WIHA), 2022).

If you are interested in attending a Stepping On workshop, you can contact Dana at the ADRC, 715-346-1914 or lawsonda@co.portage.wi.us, to register in Portage County. You can also check out the website at www.wihealthyaging.org or you can contact me, Karalyn, at MILC 715-344-4210 x230 or kpeterperson@milc-inc.org.

THE NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

BACK TO BASICS: HOW OUR CALLS ARE ROUTED

THE LIFELINE PHONE SYSTEM

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and administered by Vibrant Emotional Health.

The Lifeline is made up of a network of over 180 independently owned and operated local centers. To reach the Lifeline, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or chat at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

The Lifeline network was designed to connect callers with local crisis centers, by using a phone system that routes calls based on the caller's phone number.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE CALLS THE LIFELINE?

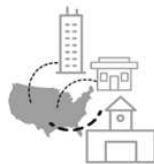
When someone calls 1-800-273-TALK, they will hear our automated greeting message that features additional options.

"You have reached the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, also serving the Veterans Crisis Line. Para español, oprima numero dos. If you are in emotional distress or suicidal crisis, or are concerned about someone who might be, we are here to help. If you are a US military veteran or current service member, or calling about one, please press 1 now. Otherwise, please hold while we route your call to the nearest crisis center in our network."

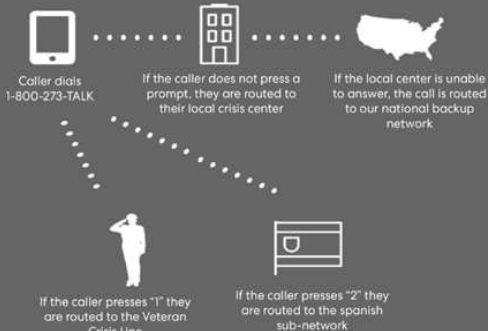
We'll play a little music while we connect the caller to a skilled, trained crisis counselor. Our phone system will route the call to the closest crisis center in the Lifeline network based on area code. Each crisis center picks their coverage area (which can be defined by zip code, area code, county, or even state), and their hours of operation.

A trained crisis counselor at a local center will answer the phone.

This person will listen to the caller, work to understand what the caller is experiencing, provide support, and collaborate with the caller on ways to feel better and connect with any needed help or resources.



CALL FLOW



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE CHATS WITH THE LIFELINE?

When someone uses the Lifeline chat via <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/>, they'll first complete a short survey letting the crisis counselor know a little about their current situation, and then see a wait-time message while they are connected to a crisis counselor.

A trained crisis counselor will answer the chat, converse with the chatter to understand how their problem is affecting them, provide support, and share resources that may be helpful.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE TEXTS THE LIFELINE?

When someone texts 1-800-273-8255, they will complete a short survey letting the crisis counselor know a little about their current situation.

They will then be connected with a trained crisis counselor, who will interact with them to understand what the texter is experiencing, provide support, and connect them with any needed help or resources.

LEARN MORE

To learn more about the Lifeline, please visit:
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org



The Lifeline and 988

988 has been designated as the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. While some areas may be currently able to connect to the Lifeline by dialing 988, this dialing code will be available to everyone across the United States starting on July 16, 2022.

When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support, and connect them to resources if necessary.

The current Lifeline phone number (1-800-273-8255) will always remain available to people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis, even after 988 is launched nationally.

The Lifeline's network of over 180 crisis centers has been in operation since 2005, and has been proven to be effective. It's the counselors at these local crisis centers who answer the contacts the Lifeline receives every day. Numerous studies have shown that callers feel less suicidal, less depressed, less overwhelmed and more hopeful after speaking with a Lifeline counselor.

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/current-events/the-lifeline-and-988/>

Resources:

- **Lifeline phone number: 1-800-273-8255** (available for call or text)
 - *For Veterans dial the Lifeline and press 1
 - *Nacional de Prevención del Suicidio 1-866-628-9454
 - *For TTY Users: Use your preferred relay service or dial 711 then 1-800-273-8255
 - *To chat: www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat
- **CrisisTextLine:**
 - *Text "home" to 741741
- **The Trevor Project (LGBTQ+ support):**
 - *Call: 1-866-488-7386
 - *Or Text "start" to 678678



2022 TECH TIME

January 3

April 4

July 11

October 3

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

3262 Church Street,
Stevens Point, WI 54481

FREE
FOR PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES

FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHO WANT
TO INCREASE THEIR INDEPENDENCE WITH
THEIR CURRENT TECHNOLOGY

Bring in a device you own



Midstate
INDEPENDENT
Living Choices

- ✓ CELL PHONE
- ✓ LAPTOP, TABLET/IPAD, ETC.

To request an interpreter /SSP for the deaf-blind
contact Alex Lena



715-344-4210 ext. 232

Assistive Technology Review At MILC:



Sheepshead, Euchre, Cribbage, Poker, Go Fish and so many more are games that you play with a deck of cards. We are taught these games at a young age, usually from a grandparent, parent, family member or friend, and many continue to play throughout our life. Card games can be difficult for individuals with certain disabilities such as arthritis, low-vision, etc. that make it difficult to see or hold the cards. Often when low-vision is a barrier, a common suggestion is getting jumbo playing cards. While this makes the card very large, the numbers are still too small to see. Instead, if someone has low-vision, a low-vision style card should be used. These style cards have larger numbers instead of making the card larger. Online retailers sell adapted versions of other games such as Uno, Skip-Bo, Scrabble Slam (MILC does not have these games). Braille, high contrast versions are available through these retailers.

At MILC we have low-vision playing cards and playing card holders that can be used to play your favorite card game. Having a disability should not keep you from playing and interacting with family/friends.

For more information contact Alex Lena at 715-344-4210 ext. 232



Walk-in Tubs - Buyer Beware!



Most of us have seen the commercials about walk-in tubs and how they increase comfort and safety for individuals with disabilities and/or older individuals. Unfortunately, what they don't advertise are the downfalls of having a walk-in tub.

Here are some reasons Midstate Independent Living Choices does not recommend walk-in tubs:

1. **Prepare to be chilly!** Unlike regular tubs you cannot add or drain water without being physically in it. You will have to spend as long as 15 minutes sitting in a cold tub waiting for it to fill or drain, which leads to an increase risk of hypothermia.
2. **Temperature regulation is tricky!** Since you must remain in the tub while it fills up, you risk being exposed to and adjusting to dangerous temperatures. This could lead to scalding and burns.
3. **Do you like waterparks?** Since most walk in tubs have swing-in doors for entry it leads to an increase risk of flooding if the door is not latched properly, or if seals wear down over time. You do not want your bathroom to turn into a waterpark!
4. **You can look forward to an increased water bill!** Walk in tubs typically hold more water than traditional tubs. Additionally with older homes, your water heater may not be able to handle that much water usage.
5. **Do you have an average or above average height?** Since a walk in tub is in an upright seated position, you may only be half submerged in the water. If you're seeking a walk in tub for relief to your upper back, neck or shoulders then you might be left disappointed.

LOAN PROGRAMS

What is Wisloan?

Wisloan is a statewide, alternative loan program that allows Wisconsin residents with a disability, or their families, to purchase adaptive equipment, assistive technology or modify their homes so that they can live more independently. The applicant must be 18 and a resident of Wisconsin who wishes to improve his or her quality of life through the acquisition of items (examples include assistive technology, modified vehicles, etc.).

Both Telework and Wisloan loan amounts will depend on the item being purchased and the ability to repay. The current interest rate is 6.5%.

Bad credit, including bankruptcy is not a reason to not apply. The focus is on the ability to make the monthly payments. Reasons for credit issues are taken into consideration by the review board. Contact an IL Consultant at the MILC office for assistance in completing an application.

What is Telework?

Telework is a statewide, alternative loan program allowing Wisconsin residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from remote sites away from the office, including at home, on the road or at a Telework center. In addition to the purchase of equipment, the loan funds can be used for training to use equipment, extended warranties, the cost of maintenance and repair.

What is TEPP?

Telecommunications, Equipment Purchase Program

If you are one of the millions of people who have difficulty using a telephone, you should know that help is available through the Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program, or TEPP. The TEPP Program provides funding, (through the Universal Service Fund), for people with disabilities to purchase specialized telephones and related equipment.

The TEPP program issues vouchers, each with different dollar amounts, based on several categories of disability. For example, the Hard of Hearing voucher is \$100, the Deaf/Severely Hard of Hearing voucher is \$800, and the Mobility Impaired voucher is \$1,600. (Vouchers over \$100 require a \$100 co-pay, but there are programs available that may help cover that cost).

If you don't know what kind of phone will work for you, we have several different types of phones that you can borrow from our Wistech Loan and Demonstration Program so you can 'Try before you buy'.



Please contact MILC for further information about the TEPP Program or to schedule an appointment to try a few phones. (We can also assist with the application).

Midstate Independent Living Choices
3262 Church Street
Stevens Point WI 54481

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Electronic Service Requested

Information regarding EVV: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/evv/index.htm>

How To Get a Hold of Us:

Midstate Independent Living Choices
3262 Church Street
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-344-4210 or 800-382-8484
milc@milc-inc.org or www.milc-inc.org

Newsletter Editor: Jennifer Strike: I&R Specialist

To contact the following departments dial:

Mental Health/Peer Support: Ext. 243
IL Program: Ext. 238
PAS Program: Ext. 224
Human Resources: Ext. 226
Accounting: Ext. 214

MOVING?

**Let us know so we can keep
you on our mailing list.**

Contact us at milc@milc-inc.org



Partially Supported by Wistech,
Wisconsin's State Assisive Technology Program



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