

Patricia E. Kefalas Dudek & Associates

Protecting and Inspiring Dignity
and Respect

July 2017



Next Steps for Seniors

Last month Patti was a guest on the radio show *Next Steps for Seniors* discussing two very important topics relating to seniors, driving & elder abuse. To listen to the discussion follow the link below.

[Next Step for Seniors June 17, 2017](#)

To access all of the *Next Step for Seniors* episodes visit

<http://salemDetroit.podbean.com/category/next-steps-4-seniors/>

The Mary Ann Greenawalt Annual Award Luncheon presented by UCP/Detroit

Friday, October 20th, 2017

This event is named in honor of former UCP/Detroit board member Mary Ann Greenawalt who was a powerful voice in both the disability and business community in Southeastern Michigan.

Key note speaker is scheduled to be State Representative Frank Liberati.

[Click Here](#) for an event flyer & additional information.

Independence Day #independence

from [Special Education Law Blog](#) by Jim Gerl

The Fourth of July is a big holiday for our country, and these days we really need a big holiday. I have always loved this day; what other country believes in an inalienable right to pursue happiness! Independence Day is also a time to reflect on the concept of independence.

For people with disabilities, independence is an important goal. Congress has stated that encouraging independent living for people with disabilities is the policy of the United States government. IDEA, Section 601(c). Indeed, one of the purposes of special education is to prepare children with disabilities for independent living. IDEA, Section 601(d)(1)(A).

Before passage of the EHA, the predecessor of the IDEA, in 1975, education of children with disabilities, who were then called "handicapped," was iffy at best. According to the legislative history of the EHA, which is quoted in the seminal Rowley decision by the Supreme Court, millions of children with disabilities were then either totally excluded from school or were warehoused until they were old enough to drop out. *Bd. of Education v. Rowley*, 458 U.S. 176, 191, 103 LRP 31848 (1982). At the time, it was estimated that of the eight million children who required special education, only about 3.9 million were receiving an appropriate education. *Bd. of Education v. Rowley*, 458 U.S. 176, 191, 103 LRP 31848 (1982).

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From Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Bridge Card holders can double their purchasing power at farmers markets

LANSING, Mich., July 11, 2017 – As the weather warms and farmers markets open across the state, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and Michigan Farmers Market Association encourage families receiving food assistance benefits to head to their local market to purchase fresh food.

In addition to accepting Bridge Card payments, over 140 farmers markets also participate in Double Up Food Bucks, which allows Bridge Card holders to get double their money for fruits and vegetables (up to \$20 every market day), while supporting local growers. For instance, if a family spends \$10 in food assistance benefits at a participating farmers market they receive \$10 in Double Up Food Bucks to buy locally grown produce.

[Click Here](#) for more information

Suggestions for Improving Relative Foster Care Placements

(Excerpt from a letter from Tobin Miller Chief Investigator from Office of Children's Ombudsman)

Although the MDHHS has increased the number of children placed with relatives, I believe there is still room for improvement. The OCO receives many calls from children's relatives who were ignored or denied placement for undocumented reasons. My suggestions for improving procedures for making relative foster care placements are contained in an article, which may be read here:

http://www.cooley.edu/lawreview/_docs/2015/vol32/32-3/Improving-Foster-Care_Miller.pdf

For those who don't want to wade through a law review article (albeit a short one), follow the link below to a copy of Mr. Miller's letter which contains a summary of the problems with the current law and practice and his suggestions.

http://pattidudek.typepad.com/pattis_blog/2017/07/suggestions-for-improving-relative-foster-care-placements-.html

Don't Take the Bait, Step 1: Avoid Spear Phishing Emails

The IRS, state tax agencies and the tax industry today warned tax professionals to beware of spear phishing emails, a common tactic used by cyber-criminals to target practitioners.

Spear phishing emails, often tailored to individual practitioners, result in stolen taxpayer data and fraudulent tax returns filed in the names of individual and business clients.

"We are seeing repeated instances of cybercriminals targeting tax professionals and obtaining sensitive client information that can be used to file fraudulent tax returns. Spear phishing emails are a common way to target tax professionals," said IRS Commissioner John Koskinen. "We urge practitioners to review this information and take steps to protect themselves and their clients."

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IRS Offers Tips for Teenage Taxpayers with Summer Jobs

Students and teenagers often get summer jobs. This is a great way to earn extra spending money or to save for later. The IRS offers a few tax tips for taxpayers with a summer job.

[Click Here for the Full Article](#)

Proposed Cuts to Medicaid Put Medicare Savings Programs At Risk

Many low-income older adults are only able to participate in Medicare because Medicare Savings Programs help with their Medicare premiums, deductibles and co-pays. These critically important programs reach over 7 million people with Medicare, including 1.7 million older adults who are too poor to be able to afford Medicare but do not qualify for other Medicaid programs.¹ With \$772 billion in Medicaid cuts, the Better Care Reconciliation Act now being considered in the Senate could knock many older adults and people with disabilities off these programs, making Medicare unaffordable. As a result, those with the greatest needs will lose access to Medicare benefits because they will be unable to shoulder Medicare costs.

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