

Inspiritus

Guiding individuals and families
on a path from **surviving** to **thriving**.



Disability Services Newsletter



April is Autism Acceptance Month

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability caused by differences in the brain. Some people with ASD have a known difference, such as a genetic condition. Other causes are not yet known. Scientists believe there are multiple causes of ASD that act together to change the most common ways people develop. We still have much to learn about these causes and how they impact people with ASD.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, autism affects an estimated 1 in 36 children in the United States today.

ASD begins before the age of 3 years and can last throughout a person's life, although symptoms may improve over time. Some children show ASD symptoms within the first 12 months of life. In others, symptoms may not show up until 24 months of age or later. Some children with ASD gain new skills and meet developmental milestones until around 18 to 24 months of age, and then they stop gaining new skills or lose the skills they once had. Research shows that early intervention leads to positive outcomes in life for people with autism.

People with ASD may behave, communicate, interact, and learn in ways that are different from most other people. There is often nothing about how they look that sets them apart from other people. The abilities of people with ASD can vary significantly. They may have difficulties developing and maintaining friendships, communicating with peers and adults, or understanding what behaviors are expected in school or on the job. These characteristics can make life very challenging. We still have much to learn about these causes and how they impact people with ASD. It is important to remember that Autism is treatable, and not a hopeless condition.

"If you're always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be."

– Maya Angelou

Welcome to the Team!



Crystal Gauden - New Case Manager

Crystal comes with over 20+ years of experience in the field of social work. She has experience in various areas of social work, public mental health, substance abuse, homelessness to name a few areas. Crystal

is a country girl at heart, a true GA Peach. She is a proud mother of two fur babies. Her hobbies include baking sweet treats, photography, adult kickball, and camping. We are so happy to have her as a Case Manager on the Disability Services team!

Upcoming Mandatory Meetings



2024 Quarterly Support Companion Meeting Schedule

April 2, 2024, 11:00am-12:00pm - ROME

April 4, 2024, 11:00am-12:00pm - ATLANTA

April 11, 2024, 11:00am-12:00pm - SAVANNAH

April 17, 2024, 11:00am-12:00pm - ATHENS

We are so excited to see everyone at our in-person meetings in April!

The July Support Companion quarterly meeting will be held as a virtual meeting. The Zoom link will be sent through the family web portal.

Stay tuned for the October in-person meeting dates, times, and locations.

*Make sure to check your emails for the We Inspire Weekly newsletter for important information and reminders!

Inspiritus WE Awards



Inspiritus WE Awards

Through the family portal, SharePoint, and via email, every individual, Support Companion, and team member can nominate anyone for anything they do "With Excellence." Once a quarter, the Disability Services Leadership Team reviews all nominations for Excellence and chooses one individual, one Support Companion, and one team member who clearly embraces the key concepts of WE. Both a nomination and a quarterly selection earn points to receive Inspiritus SWAG and we highlight them in the quarterly newsletter!

*1st Highlight \$10 + SWAG Bag

*2nd Highlight \$15 + SWAG Bag

*3rd Highlight \$25 + SWAG Bag



Support Companion Highlight - Congratulations Florence Carpenter!!

Ms. Carpenter has been with Inspiritus for 11 years! The work you do does not go unnoticed. We appreciate your dedication to our individuals, and we couldn't do it without providers like you. You make a difference. Thank you!



Individual Highlight - Congratulations Marion Taks!!

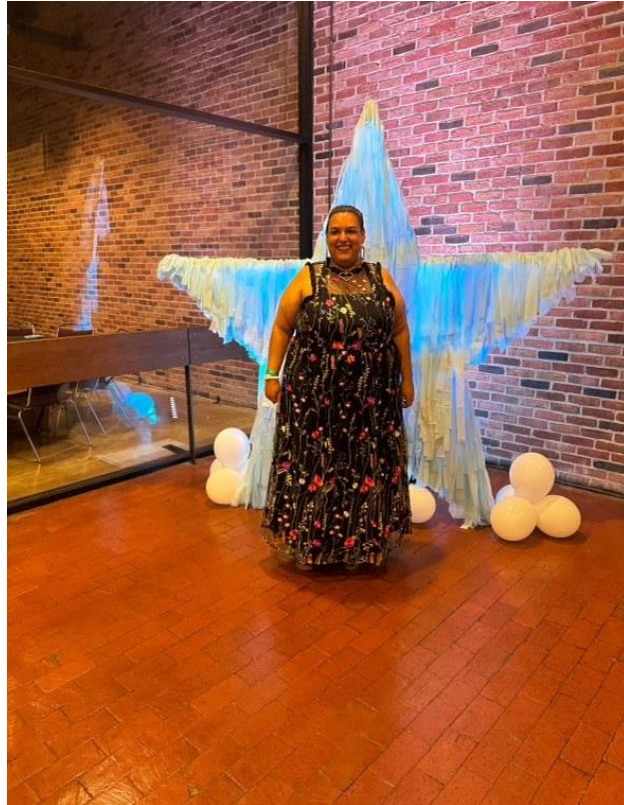
Marion has been in services with Inspiritus for seven years! She is doing great at her placement with Ms. Carpenter. Marion is the sweetest and we are so thankful that we have the opportunity to serve her.

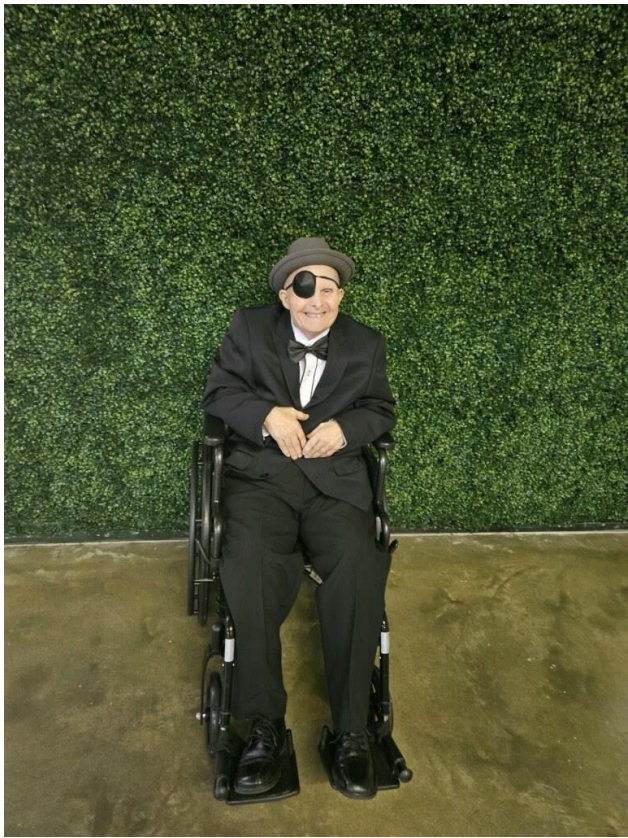


Team Member Highlight - Congratulations Denise Parker!

Denise has been with Inspiritus for nine years and she is such a significant part of our Disability Services team! We can always depend on Denise to know the answer or find the answer. We appreciate her willingness to always help whenever she can. Denise is also a huge advocate for our individuals. She went to Washington, DC to participate in "Hill Day," where she had the opportunity to talk to Georgia Senators, their staff, and other members of Congress about the important needs of individuals with disabilities and the direct care workforce. Thank you, Denise, for all that you do!

Our Individuals are Vibing & Thriving













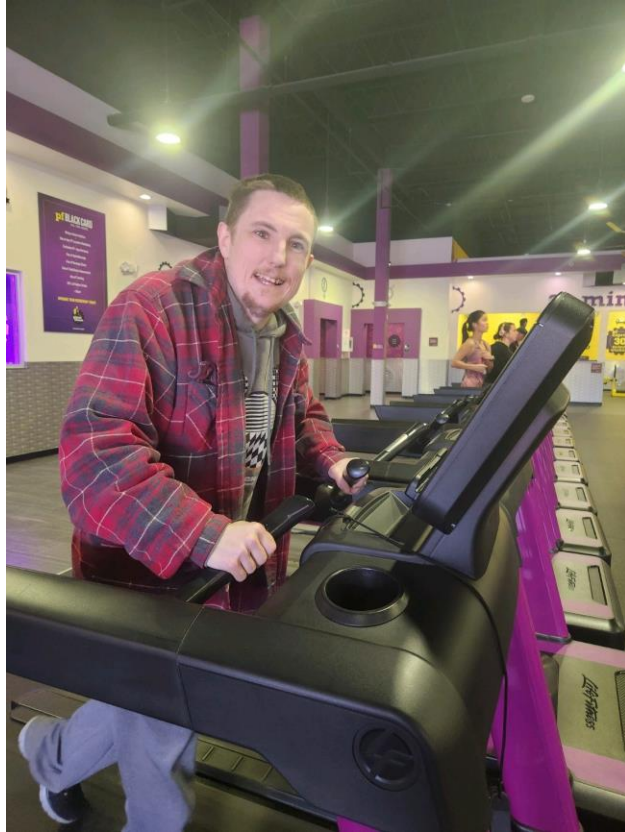




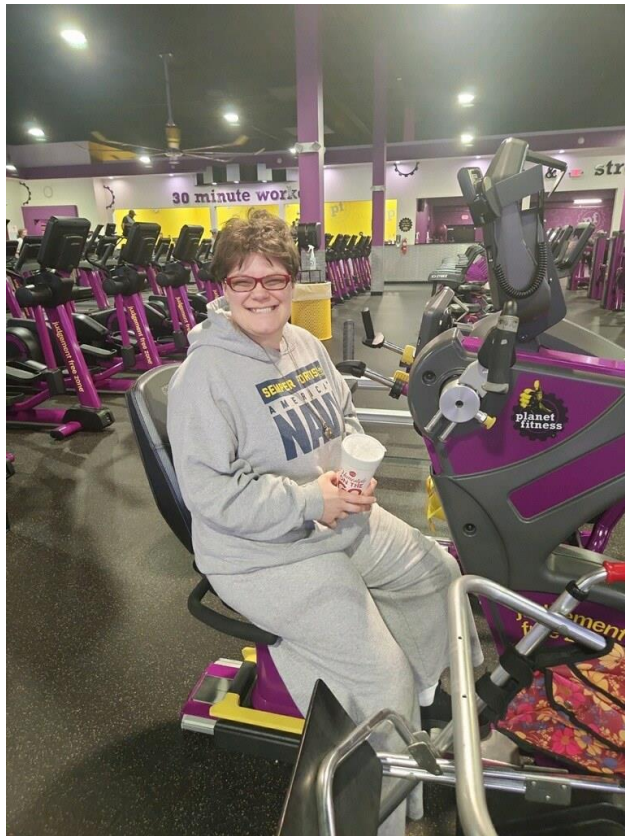
















Director's Corner

5 Steps to Help You Cope with Stress

- STOP
- Relax Daily
- Let Go of the "Should"
- Get Some ZZZs
- See out Support

April is Stress Awareness Month

April is also Stress Awareness Month

Since 1992, April has been recognized as National Stress Awareness Month to bring attention to the negative impact of stress. Managing stress is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. Knowing how

to manage stress can improve mental and physical well-being as well as minimize exacerbation of health-related issues.

It's critical to recognize what stress and anxiety look like, take steps to build resilience, and know where to go for help.

Stress in minor to moderate doses may be expected, as the body is equipped to handle these reactions. However, ongoing or unattended stress can have serious consequences. Chronic stress impacts the entire body and can harm well-being in the long term.

Understanding the signs of stress may help you recognize them and find strategies that target the unique circumstances of your stressful situation.

Below are a few of these indicators:

- Increased irritability and anger
- A loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Mental burnout
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Gastrointestinal distress like nausea, constipation, diarrhea, and indigestion
- Loneliness
- Body aches and muscle tension
- Mood swings
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Headaches, especially tension headaches or migraines

Steps to manage stress:

- Take time for yourself
- Try new routines and hobbies
- Be active, eat healthy, and get plenty of rest
- Stay connected and make new friends

- Recognize and counter signs of stress
- Seek help. Talk to someone you trust or a health care professional

As dedicated Support Companions, you must take care of yourselves first before you can take care of others. The work you do is very important, and it's not easy. We are hoping you do what is necessary for your health, including managing stress, by following some of the recommended self-care suggestions.

We appreciate each of you!

Warm regards,

LaWanda

On Call Information

Weekdays: 5:00pm – 8:30am

Weekends: Friday 5:00pm – Monday 8:30am

Holidays: All day until 8:30am the next weekday morning

**Life threatening emergencies require calling 911 or an immediate Emergency Room/Emergency Department visit followed by notification to the on-call number (or to your Case Manager during normal business hours).*



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