

# Texas Disability Integration Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 2

May 2016

## Inside This Issue

- 1 Upcoming Events
- 1 - 4 Articles

## Upcoming Events

The **ADA National Network** offers several online training opportunities. These courses are free. Upcoming events can be found at: <https://adata.org/events-calendar/upcoming>

**National Federation of the Blind 65<sup>th</sup> Annual State Convention** – November 4 – 6, 2016 in McAllen, TX  
<https://www.nfbtx.org/events.php?id=14>

## About this Newsletter

This newsletter is published by the *Texas Disability Task Force (DTF) on Emergency Management*, an advisory group sponsored by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). The newsletter will be published on a quarterly basis and will include information, accomplishments, and initiatives related to emergency management preparedness and response activities at the local, regional, state, and organizational levels that are inclusive of people with disabilities.

If you would like to submit a proposed article, please send an e-mail to [denita.powell@dps.texas.gov](mailto:denita.powell@dps.texas.gov).

## The Center for Disability Development

**Dr. Laura Stough**

Associate Professor of Educational Psychology at Texas A & M University, Director of Project REDD

The Center on Disability and Development (CDD) at Texas A&M University supports the self-determination, community integration, and quality of life of people with disabilities and their families. CDD focuses on promoting inclusive schools and communities, improving education and quality of life outcomes, and creating better lives for people with disabilities and their families through education, research, and service. As a University Center for



Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), CDD part of a national network of 67 universities and medical schools. Since its founding in 2005, CDD has engaged in over 40 projects spanning four core functions. The CDD website is [cdd.tamu.edu](http://cdd.tamu.edu).

### **Highlighted Current Projects:**

#### **Bridge to Career (B2C)**

Supported by the Texas Council on Developmental Disability (TCDD), B2C is a four-week college experience program that takes place on the Texas A&M University campus and focuses on independent living, self-determination and self-advocacy skills needed to be successful in postsecondary education and/or employment. *Program Director: Dr. Cheryl Grenwelge.*

#### **Camp LIFE**

Spearheaded by the Family Support Network, Camp LIFE creates an integrated, barrier-free setting in which children with disabilities between ages of 5 and 21 and their siblings can fully participate at the faculties of Camp for All in Burton, Texas. *Program Coordinator: Aimee Day.*

#### **Postsecondary Access and Training in Human Services (PATHS)**

This inclusive two-semester certification program prepares students with and without disabilities for a career supporting people with disabilities and older adults to live in their communities. The PATHS certificate offers employment opportunities for graduates such as Direct Support Professionals positions. *Program Director: Dr. Cheryl Grenwelege.*

#### **Project ELM (Early Literacy Measurement)**

Project ELM investigates the technical adequacy of progress monitoring for kindergarten students who are at-risk for reading disabilities. *Principal Investigator: Dr. Nathan Clemens.*

#### **Project REDD (Research and Education on Disability and Disaster)**

Project REDD conducts basic research on the effects of disaster on individuals with disabilities, as well as evaluation research on programs that deliver disaster services. Project REDD also provides training and workshops on disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness. *Project Director: Dr. Laura Stough.*

#### **Texas Transition Conference (TTC)**

The Texas Transition Conference (TTC) is an annual three-day conference that equips family members and professionals with information about postsecondary education and better employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. *Conference Director: Dr. Cheryl Grenwelge.*

#### **Purposeful Life: Family Training**

The Purposeful Life is a community outreach project that supports self-advocates and family members in living a purposeful life. Trainings are provided free of charge for family members and self-advocates ages eight and up on every first Thursday of the month. *Project Director: Dr. Meagan Sumbera.*

#### **Autism Clinic**

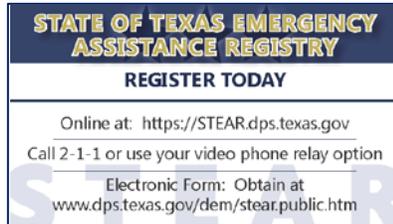
The Autism Clinic is the only Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) therapy provider in the Brazos Valley, providing private therapy, in-home therapy, assessments, and parent education opportunities. *Autism Clinic Director: Dr. Amy Heath*

## The STEAR System Turns 3

**Dede Powell**

State Coordinator for Operations, Texas Division of Emergency Management

March 15, 2016 marked the end of the third year the State of Texas Emergency



Assistance Registry (STEAR) system has been available to Texas citizens and governments. During those three years, the STEAR system has evolved and now offers more capabilities to local planners to obtain information that will assist you in better understanding the needs of individuals within your communities.

A new option, added in 2015, now allows local data custodians to register individuals using the STEAR online form. TDEM's district coordinators now have access to STEAR data as well. Additionally, new fields were added to capture the registrant's e-mail addresses, mailing addresses, and information about safe rooms and storm cellars.

STEAR is increasingly being used to identify the locations of individuals during response operations. During 2015 and 2016 flood responses the state used STEAR data to geocode individual locations to provide mapping products to the search and rescue teams and to local governments working in flooded areas. Many local governments also use this information to identify locations of individuals with disabilities during local events.

STEAR data not only provides local planners with location information, but also provides valuable planning tools for many types of events. The information shown in the table below is an overview of the type of statistics captured by STEAR.

STEAR Statewide Statistics		
Active registrations on April 1, 2016: 32,278 registrations		
STEAR Question	Affirmative Responses	% of Total Responses
Speaks English	27,150	84.1%
Speaks Spanish	4,374	13.6%
Speaks Other Language	754	2.3%
Uses sign language	313	1.0%
Has a visual disability	2,111	6.5%
Has a communication barrier	5,137	15.9%
Is a minor	1,211	3.8%
Has a caregiver	16,257	50.4%
Caregiver evacuates with registrant	10,902	33.8%
Has a service animal	779	2.4%
Has a pet(s)	7,540	23.4%
Needs transportation assistance	17,870	55.4%
Needs moving assistance	14,177	43.9%
Needs assistance to get to evacuation point	12,710	39.4%
Has functional need(s)	19,899	61.6%
Requires medical treatment from doctor/nurse	6,168	19.1%
Needs assistance for daily living activities	15,330	47.5%
Needs a gurney/bed for transportation	4,120	12.8%
Requires oxygen	3,793	11.8%
Needs power for life-sustaining device	3,521	10.9%
Requires wheelchair	8,643	26.8%
Has motorized wheelchair	2,236	2.9%

Local data custodians can obtain access to this information as well as individual information on their registered citizens by assigning a data custodian. Appointing a data custodian allows a jurisdiction access to critical information for determining the needs of individuals within a community and responding to an event. To appoint a data custodian, complete a request form which can be found at <http://www.dps.texas.gov/internetforms/Forms/TDEM-202.pdf>. Requests may be sent to the address identified on the form.

Individuals can register for STEAR using one of three options:

1. On line at: <https://STEAR.dps.texas.gov>
2. Call 2-1-1 and a call specialist will assist you to register
3. Electronic Form: <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/stear/public.htm>

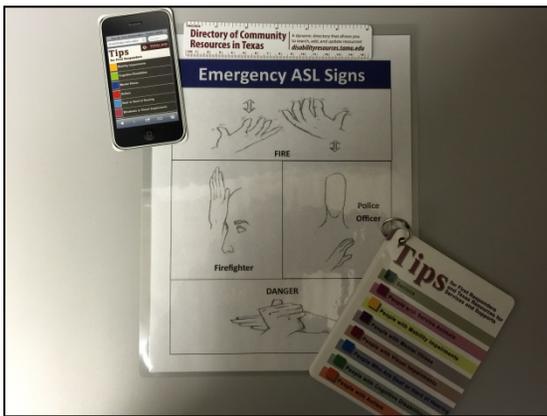
---

## Texas Emergency Management Conference Presentation

**Danielle Hesse**

Vice Chair, Disability Task Force on Emergency Management

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Kimberly Jones, Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), and Danielle Hesse, Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), presented at the 2016 Texas Emergency Management Conference in a session titled: *Opening Doors: Utilizing American Sign Language in Emergency Situations*. The presentation focused on communicating with people who are deaf or hard of hearing during an emergency situation. The course instruction included a basic overview of proper etiquette for communicating with people who are deaf or hard of hearing, in addition to covering basic American Sign Language (ASL) signs to enhance overall communication and understanding during disaster response and recovery. Participants



were also given a variety of resource which included a handout with images of ASL signs they were taught, a TIPS for First Responders booklet, a TIPS for First Responders mobile application information card, and a Directory of Community

Resources in Texas information ruler (see picture).

---

## Welcome Rosemary McKnight

Rosemary McKnight, TDEM, Local and Regional Planner, is the new Chair for the Planning Subcommittee on the Disability Task Force on Emergency Management. Rosemary has been with TDEM for 13 years. Prior to moving to planning, Ms. McKnight worked in the TDEM Operations Section and more recently as a Continuity of Operations Planner in the Preparedness Section. Rosemary volunteered to fill this position because she believes that planning for people with disabilities is a fundamental part of any planning process. She looks forward to working with everyone on this endeavor.

---

## Texas Disability Task Force on Emergency Management Membership

Russell Cook, Chair

Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services

Danielle Hesse, Vice Chair

Texas Department of State Health Services

### Subcommittee Chairs

#### **Disability Outreach and Effective Communications**

Keri Cain – [keri.cain@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:keri.cain@dshs.state.tx.us)

#### **Planning**

Rosemary McKnight – [rosemary.mcknight@dps.texas.gov](mailto:rosemary.mcknight@dps.texas.gov)

#### **Training**

Danielle Hesse – [danielle.hesse@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:danielle.hesse@dshs.state.tx.us)