

RI Self-Direct Coalition Begins Streamlined, Cost-effective Resource Support System for I/DD Community, Job Readiness

WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND, USA, July 5, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Rhode Island Self-Direct Coalition \(RISDC\)](#), is excited to announce that they have officially begun to recruit, train and refer Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) who will provide practical daily assistance to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). This new organization provides information, resources, and guidance to individuals and families interested in Self-Direct services. Empowering individuals to make the best decisions about their lives is the primary goal.

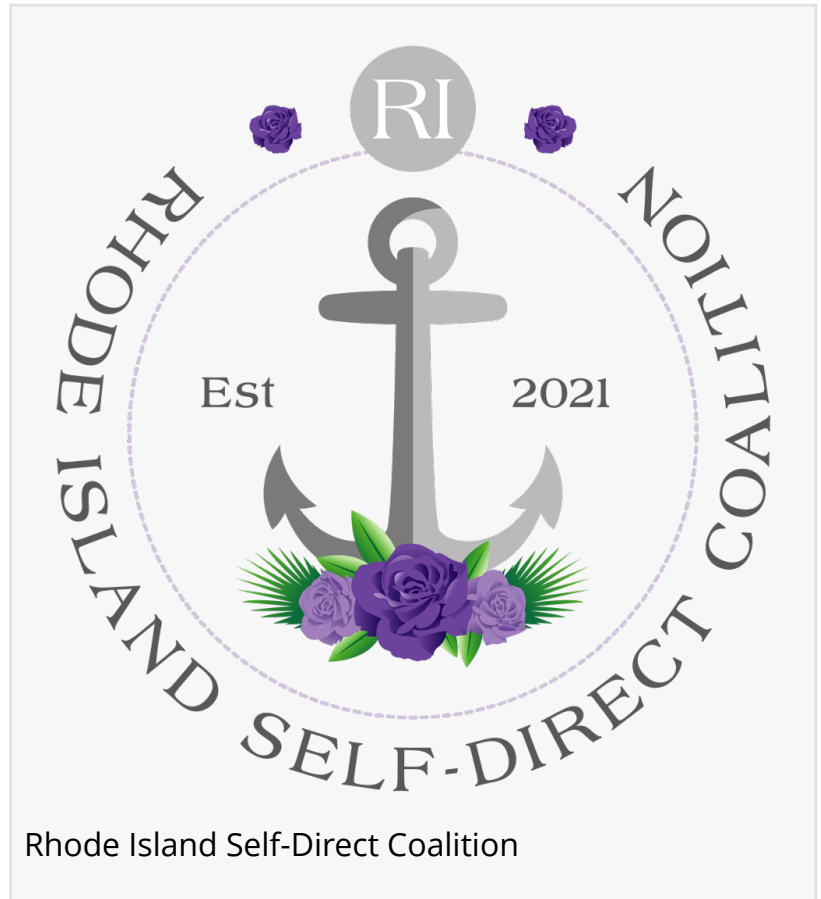
Among the recipients of Rhode Island's Transformation Grant funded by The Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals ([BHDDH](#)), RISDC is alone in its unique initiative to train its newly recruited DSPs, using a healthcare learning management system familiar to and often adopted by larger support agencies. Early plans include preparing twenty-five people to respond to requests for assistance.

While Self-Direction has many benefits, navigating the system can be overwhelming and confusing. To demystify the various processes, procedures, and offices with which the I/DD community interacts, RISDC will be holding monthly informational sessions to address various topics.

Among the select topics are:

Self-advocacy

Personal safety



Self-empowerment to promote a healthy, person-centered life.

They are forming an Employment Hub of Direct Support Professionals to be partnered with individuals seeking to expand their workforce. They will also be a starting point for local businesses that are looking to hire employees. RISDC will connect and align qualified applicants with developmental disabilities to job opportunities. RISDC will also help to increase awareness around the potential for individuals with I/DD to pursue self-employment.



I/DD Entrepreneurs

RISDC Co-founders Sheila Coyne and Claudia Lowe, both have entrepreneurial adult children with developmental disabilities. Both children with their supportive parents completed the RI Developmental Disabilities Council's Self Employment Project and have completed marketing and business plans. Red White and Brew Coffeehouse/The Budding Violet is a combined coffee shop/bakery and retail store, co-owned by Michael and Sheila Coyne. Cheetah Greetings, owned by Claudia's daughter, Katie Lowe, creates hand-made personalized greeting cards, stamps, and pins.

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Individuals with disabilities have life & employment goals or dreams of starting a small business. We want to support both DSPs and individuals with I/DD to help goals and dreams become a reality.”

Sheila Coyne

Ms. Coyne noted, “We are in a workforce crisis. Now is the time to appreciate and support Direct Support Professionals. DSPs support people with developmental disabilities. Individuals with disabilities have life goals,

employment goals or even dreams of starting a small business. We want to support both DSPs and individuals with I/DD to help goals and dreams become a reality.”

Ms. Lowe added, “We have all faced situations and obstacles that have left us feeling alone and frustrated with the system. Our goal is to share appropriate, up-to-date information, avoid misinformation and improve the way self-directed communication is provided, hopefully making life just a bit better.”

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About Rhode Island Self-Direct Coalition

Founded in 2021, the 501(c)3 non-profit organization Rhode Island Self-Direct Coalition (RISDC), works with individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families and caregivers to navigate the self-directed services landscape in Rhode Island. In addition, they help connect people with I/DD with employers and in collaboration with the RI Developmental Disabilities Council provide self-employment resources to those interested in starting their own businesses.

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