

DISABILITIES GROUPS

This list of disabilities-related self-help groups in and around Champaign County is prepared by the staff and volunteers of the Self-Help Center of Family Service. If you don't find the group you are looking for, or if you want to start a group, please contact the Self-Help Center at 352-0099 or by e-mail at lliss@familyservicecc.org.

The following is a key to the coded information that appears before group descriptions: 1. Year group was formed 2. A=Affiliated with a state, national or international group; F=Freestanding group 3. L=Lay run/organized group; P/L=Professional and Lay persons share facilitation/organizational roles in group; P=Professional facilitates and/or organizes group meetings.

Inclusion in this list does not constitute an endorsement or evaluation.

General

Champaign County

Access UP! (2013 F,L) This on-line group is part of the Uniting Pride (UP) Center of Champaign County. The group hopes for dialogue among individuals with disabilities and their allies. Topics of conversation are not limited. They can include accessibility, independence, community building, and sexuality (heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual, and any other identity you choose). The group is open to all individuals over the age of 18. To stay connected with the group, join on Facebook at facebook.com/groups/434291759998217/members. **Call:** UP Center (217) 550-4248 **E-mail:** info@unitingpride.org **Website:** unitingpride.org **Write:** 44 E. Main St. Ste. 516, Champaign, IL 61820

Adult Survivors with Disabilities (2015 F,P) This group is for women over 18 who have disabilities and who are survivors of sexual abuse or sexual assault. It is an eight-week closed support group. Begins Weds., March 25, 2015, 3:00 p.m. Call Stephanie by March 18 at (217) 344-6298 for more information or to schedule an intake interview. **Call:** (217) 344-6298 **Website:** cu-races.org **Write:** Rape Advocacy, Counseling, and Education Services, 145A Lincoln Square, Urbana, Illinois 61801

Advocates for Access (1991 F,L) This advocacy group is a forum for people with disabilities, their family, and friends to work towards eliminating physical, attitudinal, and legal barriers in the community. Advocates for Access empowers people to work with their peers toward solutions to overcome access barriers. Meeting times and days may change, but this is rare. Call to confirm a meeting before attending. PACE membership fee is \$15 per year. PACE provides a newsletter and has an equipment loan program. Meets 3rd Wed., 3:00-4:00 p.m., PACE, 1317 E. Florida Ave., Urbana on the north side of Sunnycrest Center. **Call:** Eric (217) 344-5433 (voice), (217) 689-0289 (video phone), (217) 344-2414 (fax), or (217) 344-5024 (TTY) **E-mail:** eric@pacecil.org **Website:** pacecil.org **Write:** PACE, 1317 E. Florida Ave., Urbana, IL 61801

Disabled American Veterans - Champaign County Chapter 8 (1952 A,L) This group provides fellowship and assistance to disabled veterans. The membership fee is \$40 per year. A newsletter is available. Meets 3rd Wed., 6:00 p.m., VFW Hall, 609 Edgebrook Dr., Champaign. **Call:** Bill Anderson (217) 356-4283 (home) or (217) 649-9793 (cell) **Write:** Bill Anderson, 716 W. Maple, Champaign, IL 61820

Illinois Early Intervention (EI) Clearinghouse This clearinghouse identifies and collects research-based early-intervention best-practice information to share with families. It provides a free lending library of parenting and special needs DVDs, books, and journals related to the development of young children with special needs, including autism, Down syndrome, and speech disorders. The staff can help families and service providers find resources. The website has links to other resources in the state and nation. **Call:** Sarah Isaacs (217) 333-1386 or toll free (877) 275-3227 **E-mail:** Illinois-eic@illinois.edu **or:** isaacs@illinois.edu **Website:** eicclearinghouse.org **Write:** Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse, Early Childhood and Parenting Collaborative, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Children's Research Center, Rm. 20, 51 Gerty Dr., Champaign, IL 61820

Speak Out! (2008 F,P/L) This group is for teens and young adults with disabilities. The group helps youth to speak up for their rights, socialize, and have a good time. It meets at the same time as the Parents of Adults with Disabilities support group. The group is sponsored by Community Choices, Inc. Bring snacks and drinks to share. Meets 2nd Thurs., 7:00-8:30 p.m., Sept.-May, St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 2200 Philo Rd., Urbana. **Call:** Ryan Thompson at Community Choices (217) 621-1090 **E-mail:** jen.advocacy@gmail.com **or:** ryan.communitychoices@gmail.com **Website:** communitychoicesinc.org **Write:** Community Choices, Inc., P.O. Box 17551, Urbana, IL 61803

Sangamon

Parent 2 Parent (1999 F,P) This group is for parents of teenagers and young adults with disabilities that focuses on the transition process from school to adult life. These meetings provides an opportunity for parents to become familiar with the agencies and professionals who can ease the transition process. Newsletters and group literature are available. Meets 2nd Tues., 6:00-7:30 p.m., Lawrence Education Adult Center, 101 E. Laurel St., Springfield. **Call:** Carolyn Thorpe (217) 523-2587 V/TTY or Mary Wyman (217)525-3060 **E-mail:** cthorpe@scil.org **or:** mwyman@sps186.org **Local Website:** scil.org **National Website:** www.sps186.org/parentmentor/ **Write:** Carolyn Thorpe, Springfield Center for Independent Living, 330 South Grand Ave. West, Springfield, IL 62704

Autism / Asperger's Syndrome

Champaign County

Adults with High Functioning Autism or Asperger's Garden Get-Togethers (2014 F,L) This group provides adults with high functioning autism or Asperger's syndrome support, friendship, and encouragement. Meets 2nd Sat. 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. at the U of I Family Resiliency Center, Doris Kelley Christopher Hall, 904 W. Nevada St., Urbana. **Call:** Alisa Chapman (217) 359-0675 **E-mail:** alisachapman@thewhitedovegarden.com **Write:** 703 W. Hill St., Champaign

C-U Autism Network (1995 F,P/L) C-U Autism Network is a support group for anyone living or working on the autism spectrum. Phone support, education, and networking opportunities for individuals living with or supporting those with autism spectrum disorders are provided. The group sponsors meetings, workshops, and family/caregiver events, offers opportunities to exchange information on resources, trainings, interventions, legislation, advocacy, and more via e-mail, website, and listserv. C-U Autism Network is a project of the Autism Society of Illinois. Check the website for information on meetings, family events, and workshops. Meets 1st Thurs., 6:30-8:00 p.m., Sept.-May, (not in Jan.), Stephens Family YMCA, 2501 Fields S. Dr., Champaign. **Call:** Teresa O'Connor (217) 621-8429 **E-mail:** teresa@autismillinois.org **Website:** cuautismnetwork.org **Write:** C-U Autism Network, P.O. Box 107, Savoy, IL 61874

Illinois Autism Training and Technical Assistance Project (1998 A,P/L) This group hosts programs for parents and educators on topics related to autism spectrum disorders (ASD). This is an initiative of the State Board of Education which provides training and technical assistance to educate students and support families with ASD. A resource lending library is available. Parent webinars, support meetings and Parent Cafes take place. See website for other information, meeting schedule and location. **Call:** Kathy Gould, Project Director, Lombard State Office (630) 862-1200 **E-mail:** gouldkl@comcast.net **Website:** illinoisautismproject.org **Write:** Illinois Autism Training and Technical Assistance Project, 550 Quail Ridge Dr., Westmont, IL 60559

Macon

Autism/Asperger Syndrome Support Group for Macon County (2006 F,P) This group provides support for parents, grandparents, relatives, and professionals who live or work with children with autism and Asperger's syndrome. The group provides time to share, listen, and learn from one another about what can be done to help loved ones with autism succeed in life. Meets monthly at Garfield Montessori School. Call for meeting dates and times. An informal coffee group meets to get to know others and make friends who truly understand. Call Jan to be added to the group e-mail or phone list or for information on resources. **Call:** Jan Kriisa (217) 855-9890 **E-mail:** jankriisa@comcast.net **Write:** Jan Kriisa, 2187 Hoyt Dr., Decatur, IL 62522

East Central Illinois

Parent Support Group for Parents Raising Children on the Autism Spectrum (2003 F,P) This support group, sponsored by the Autism Society of Central Illinois, is for parents and caregivers of children with autism spectrum disorders. Group is co-facilitated by Dr. Karen Kirkendall, PhD, a developmental psychologist with a specialty in developmental disabilities, and Catherine Wells, LCPC, a licensed professional counselor specializing in children and families. Meets on the 1st Thurs. of the month, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., Noll Medical Pavilion, 5220 S. 6th St. Rd., Rm. 1800, Springfield. **Call:** Karen Kirkendall, PhD (217) 206-7246 or Catherine Wells, LCPC (217) 561-1159 **E-mail:** info@autismcil.org **or:** info@autismcil.org **Website:** autismcil.org **Write:** Autism Society of Central Illinois, 5220 S. 6th St. Rd., Ste. 1300, Springfield, IL 62703

McLean

Autism Society of McLean County (A) This society provides support groups for families, adults, and teens. Days and times of groups vary. Family outings, sports camps, and autism education and awareness events are also offered. **Call:** Jill Enchelmayer, President (309) 661-9440 **E-mail:** info@autismclean.org **or:** asmctnt@gmail.com **Website:** autismclean.org **Write:** 2404 E. Empire Ave., Ste. 231, Bloomington, IL 61704

Blind / Vision Impaired

Champaign County

Low Vision Support Group - East Central Illinois (1989 F,P/L) This group is a life and goal-oriented group that provides support and education to people with low vision and their family members. Newsletter and resource information are available. Meets 1st Wed., 1:30-3:00 p.m., PACE, 1317 E. Florida Ave., Urbana. **Call:** PACE (217) 344-5433 (voice), (217) 689-0289 (video phone) or (217) 344-5024 (TTY) **E-mail:** info@pacecil.org **Local Website:** pacecil.org **Write:** Low Vision Support Group, PACE, 1317 E. Florida Ave., Urbana, IL 61801-6044

Prairie Village Vision Loss Support Group (2000 F,P) This group provides education and support to people with vision loss who are residents of Prairie Village or who live in the Rantoul area. Meets 3rd Fri., 1:00 p.m., Prairie Village Retirement Community, 200 W. International Dr., Rantoul. **Call:** PACE (217) 344-5433 (voice), (217) 689-0289 (video phone) or (217) 344-5024 (TTY); or Activity Director (217) 892-2800 **E-mail:** info@pacecil.org **Website:** pacecil.org **Write:** Low Vision Support Group, PACE, 1317 E. Florida Ave., Urbana, IL 61801-6044

Rural Champaign County Special Ed Cooperative (RCCSEC) This group only provides phone support and a lending library for parents of children who are visually impaired. **Call:** Pam Golden (217) 892-8877, ext. 164 **E-mail:** goldenp@rccsec.org **Website:** rccsec.org **Write:** Pam Golden, Rural Champaign County Special Ed Cooperative, 201 S. Sheldon, Rantoul, IL 61866

Windsor of Savoy Vision Loss Support Group (2012 F,P) This group provides education and support to people with vision loss who are residents of Windsor of Savoy or who live in the Savoy area. Meets 1st Fri., 10:30-11:30 a.m., Windsor of Savoy Retirement Community, 401 Burwash Ave., Savoy. **Call:** PACE (217) 344-5433 (voice), (217) 689-0289 (video phone) or (217) 344-5024 (TTY) **E-mail:** info@pacecil.org **Website:** pacecil.org **Write:** Low Vision Support Group, PACE, 1317 E. Florida Ave., Urbana, IL 61801-6044

Edgar

Edgar County Low Vision Group (2014 F,P/L) This group meets quarterly on the 1st Thur. from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. in Feb. May, Aug., and Nov. at the Paris Public Library, 207 S. Main St., Paris. **Call:** PACE (217) 344-5433 (voice), (217) 689-0289 (video phone) or (217) 344-5024 (TTY) **E-mail:** info@pacecil.org **Website:** pacecil.org **Write:** Low Vision Support Group, PACE, 1317 E. Florida Ave., Urbana, IL 61801-6044

Piatt

See You in Piatt County - Low Vision Support Group This group provides education and support to people with vision loss who are residents of Maple Point Retirement Community or who live in the Monticello area. Transportation is available. Meets 1st Tues., 1:30-3:00 p.m., Maple Point Retirement Community, 1000 N. Union, Monticello. **Call:** PACE (217) 344-5433 (voice), (217) 689-0289 (video phone) or (217) 344-5024 (TTY). For transportation, call Julie Glawe, Faith in Action (217) 762-7575 **E-mail:** info@pacecil.org **Website:** pacecil.org **Write:** Low Vision Support Group, PACE, 1317 E. Florida Ave., Urbana, IL 61801-6044

Vision Loss Support Group (2000 F,P/L) This group is for Monticello and Piatt County residents who are experiencing vision loss. The group addresses new ways to accomplish old tasks, such as reading, writing, and cooking. People share thoughts, struggles, triumphs, obstacles, and adjustments to vision loss. Transportation is available. Meets 1st Tues., 1:30-3:00 p.m., at the Maple Point Supportive Living Education Room in Monticello. **Call:** John Nation (217) 762-8117 or PACE (217) 344-5433 **E-mail:** johnnannation@gmail.com **or:** info@pacecil.org **Write:** John Nation, 603 Cedar Lane, Monticello, IL 61856

Vermillion

VIPIO (Visually Impaired Persons Inspiring Others) (1991 F,L) This group provides services to people with low vision and their families. Meetings include referrals, information, peer counseling, and coping skills. Meets 4th Mon. (except May), socializing beforehand 1:00-1:30 p.m., and meetings 1:30-3:00 p.m., Danville Public Library, 319 N. Vermillion, Danville. **Call:** PACE (217) 344-5433 ext. 18 (voice), (217) 689-0289 (video phone), or (217) 344-5024 (TTY) or Mary Jane Starnes, Danville Public Library (217) 477-4227 **E-mail:** info@pacecil.org **or:** mjstarnes@danville.lib.il.us **Website:** pacecil.org **Write:** Low Vision Support Group, PACE, 1317 E. Florida Ave., Urbana, IL 61801-6044

Developmentally Disabled / Down Syndrome

Champaign County

Down Syndrome Network (1989 A,L) This group improves the quality of life of people with Down syndrome and their families through support, education, and public awareness. Meets monthly for activities and events throughout the year. Calendar can be accessed through the website. **Call:** (217) 778-6702 **E-mail:** president@champaigndsn.org **or:** secretary@champaigndsn.org **Website:** champaigndsn.org **Write:** P.O. Box 1143, Champaign, IL 61824

McLean

Central Illinois Down Syndrome Organization (1978 F,L) This organization provides a support group for parents of children with Down syndrome and works to increase public awareness. Has annual Buddy Walk event and CIDSO Open, a golfing tournament and gala. Facebook page: Central Illinois Down Syndrome Organization. **Call:** Central Illinois Down Syndrome Organization (309) 452-3264 **E-mail:** info@cidso.org **Website:** cidso.org **Write:** P.O. Box 595, Normal, IL 61761

Learning Disabilities

Champaign County

Linking Educators and Parents (LEAP) (2006 F,P) This study group focuses on strategies to help children cope with dyslexia and find ways to overcome the stress that accompanies it. Meets 4th Tues., 6:30-8:00 p.m., Urbana Free Library, 210 W. Green St., Urbana. **Call:** Marilyn Kay (217) 367-0398 or the International Dyslexia Association (410) 296-0232 **E-mail:** mfkay@sbcglobal.net **Website:** interdys.org **Write:** Marilyn Kay, 607 W. Nevada St., Urbana, IL 61801

Physical Disabilities

Champaign County

Disabled American Veterans - Champaign County Chapter 8 (1952 A,L) This group provides fellowship and assistance to disabled veterans. The membership fee is \$40 per year. A newsletter is available. Meets 3rd Wed., 6:00 p.m., VFW Hall, 609 Edgebrook Dr., Champaign. **Call:** Bill Anderson (217) 356-4283 (home) or (217) 649-9793 (cell) **Write:** Bill Anderson, 716 W. Maple, Champaign, IL 61820

East Central Illinois Amputee and Family Support (2001 A,L) This group provides peer support and a peer visitor program for new amputees and their families. **Call:** Bob Devlin (217) 344-6664 **Write:** Bob Devlin, Omni Care, 502 S. Vine St., Urbana, IL 61801

*For a complete listing of area support groups, visit the Self-Help Center website at
selfhelp.famservcc.org*