

# The Riot!



**Anniversary Issue!**

A National E-Newsletter from the Self-Advocate Leadership Network @ HSRI

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Happy Anniversary

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## Self-Advocates On A Roll!

What is a self-advocate? All over the country people are answering this question the same way.

*"A self-advocate is someone who speaks up for himself or herself."*

Self-advocates speak their minds about many things. It can mean...

- Speaking up in a simple chat or conversation with a friend.
- Speaking up in a restaurant to place an order.
- Speaking up in a shoe store to pick out some cool shoes.
- Speaking up to tell people where you want to live or work, or about the services you need.

People are speaking up more and more everywhere. Self-advocates just want to live the life they want. It's pretty simple!

People don't have to speak up with spoken words.

People also speak up with sign language

and in other ways too. Pay attention and watch. You'll see!

Self-advocates are also joining together to get things done like never before. When self-advocates speak up together they can have a very loud voice. Think about it. A loud voice can change lots of things.

Self-advocates are speaking to mayors and governors. They are speaking to state legislators too. Some are speaking with US Senators and Congressmen.

Self-advocates are on a roll! Read all about it inside The Riot!.



Self-advocate Joe Meadours with US Senator Ted Kennedy

## The Riot! Speaks Out Against SPAM

Recently, many of our readers received strange emails from someone claiming to be from The Riot! These emails were ads to buy watches, medicines and other stuff. The spam emails did not come from The Riot! They were sent by a spammer who pretended to be from the Riot! This is called "getting spammed." We were spammed! We think we fixed the problem.

We added more safeguards to prevent Spam.

You will still get The Riot! emails, but they will be sent from a new address. Please contact us if you continue to receive strange emails claiming to be from The Riot!

**Thank you for your patience.**



**About  
The Riot!...**

The Riot! is produced by the Self-Advocate Leadership Network at the Human Services Research Institute.

We work together with self-advocates to develop and write each issue.

Here's who "we" are:

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**Julie's Jive**

Hello readers. It's time to celebrate! Self-advocates are speaking up across the nation and making change! They are challenging silly rules, supporting each other to live better lives, and working with legislators to make new laws.

Everyone knows we've been saying "No more R word." This year self-advocates across the nation put action behind this demand by writing respectful language legislation.

This past month, our Governor in Arkansas signed into law a respectful language bill and we're going to celebrate!

Like self-advocacy groups across the country, Arkansas People First has worked long and hard on this bill. I realize some states have passed bills in recent years. Self-advocates in those states are the leaders we look up to.

We can also ask them for help.

When Arkansas People First was in the process of writing our bill, we asked People First of Washington for advice. This is a great example of how self-advocates in different states can work together to get things done.

In 2008, SABE will be celebrating the National Conference in Indianapolis! There is not a date yet, but it will be in the fall. Start saving so you can join us in the race for self-advocacy in Indianapolis!

Finally, I have a personal reason to celebrate. I am joining the HSRI staff. I will be working on many different projects wherever my expertise can be used the best. HSRI has worked with many great self-advocates over years. I am happy to join the team!



Julie Petty

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The Riot!**

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t-shirts and  
much more!**



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**Rocky's Rap**

Self-advocates all over the country are becoming leaders and making changes to improve their lives. Being a leader means listening to what people want, helping people to speak up for themselves, and speaking up for others. This is the best way to make change.

I learned how to be a leader by going to People First meetings and conferences. Eventually, I became Secretary and then Vice President of my local chapter. Later, I was elected Chapter President for about four years. Now, I am President of Montana People First.

Over the years, I've learned that good leaders treat others the way they want to be treated and support others to reach their goals.

I've also learned that everyone needs some kind of support. Ask for support when you need it.

If you want to make change in your life or your community, try to do it. Keep working until you reach your goals.

It's very important to be a leader in your own life. Nothing will change if you don't try.



Rocky Hughes

*Rocky Hughes is President of Montana People First and lives in Kalispell, Montana.*

# Self-Advocates are taking the lead

Self-advocates around the country are working together to make change in their own lives and in their states. They are making change by:

**Supporting each other** to have the life they want, to be healthy, and learn about their rights.

**Writing legislation** to get rid of hurtful language like the "R" word in state agency names, language, and written documents;

**Challenging Silly Rules** that control people and keep them down; and

**Making self-advocacy stronger** by starting new groups and getting more members.

## Supporting Each Other

**In California**, the *Pathfinders* program employs self-advocate "Lifeguides" to help other self-advocates create a "Life Plan" for how they want to live their lives. Service coordinators make sure that services and supports are provided according to an individual's Plan.

Ted Cottini has been a Lifeguide for about three years. When he visits with self-advocates, he asks them a lot of questions about things like what they like and their goals. A Life Plan *"is really up to the individual,"* says Ted.



Most people want to get a driver's license, a new job, or a new place to live in the community. Last year, Ted and five other Lifeguides helped over 280 self-advocates living in Redding and Chico develop Life Plans.

**In North Carolina**, self-advocates support each other to set their own health goals and achieve them! The self-advocacy group Real Advocates Now Emerging leads a project called "Be Well! Feel Fit!" in the Carrboro area. Using a "peer support" approach, self-advocates help other self-advocates to eat well, exercise, stay safe, have good relationships, and feel great about themselves.

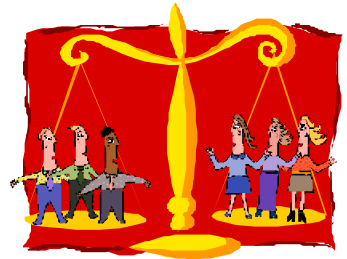
**People First of Oklahoma** and the Oklahoma Disability Law Center worked together to teach self-advocates about their voting rights.

Law Center staff train self-advocates to teach others about voting rights. Then, People First members visit people living in big places called "ICF/MRs" to teach them about their voting rights. So far, about 100 people living in ICF/MRs have registered to vote in the past 2 years!

## Writing Legislation

**People First of Connecticut** members are working on two bills to get rid of the "R" word! For the second year in a row, they have submitted a respectful language bill. If

passed, the bill will stop the "R" word from being used to describe people with intellectual disabilities.



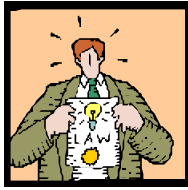
The organization has also been working on the name change bill. This bill would change the name of the Department of Mental Retardation to the Department of Developmental Services. These two bills are currently being considered in legislative committees.

Meanwhile, People First got rid of the "R" word in the Hartford Courant newspaper! After reading an article that used the "R" word many times, Chad Sinanian of People First wrote a letter to the paper. He convinced the Courant to use People First language when writing about people with disabilities from now on.

**Missouri People First** wants to get rid of the "R" word too. They want to take the "R" word out of the name of the state disability agency with Senate Bill 621. If passed, this bill would change the agency's name to the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

*Continued on next page* →

People First conducted a survey about the name change. Of 458 people surveyed, 402 people said they want the name changed!



People First is also working with others to bring the "Medicaid Buy-In" program back. This would allow people with disabilities to work without losing Medicaid healthcare benefits that make living and working possible.

*The Texas Advocates* are working on a bill with others to start a self-determination pilot project. If the bill passes, 50 self-advocates will get to control their services and supports. The project will demonstrate how self-directed services and supports work.

Supporters of the bill hope the project will convince the state to write a self-determination waiver in 2008. A new waiver would give people control of their services and allow providers to offer services that people want. The current waivers limit what providers can do and limit choices that self-advocates can make about their lives.

## Challenging Silly Rules

*People First of Montana* discovered that "There are too many silly rules keeping self-advocates down!"



Good rules keep people safe and help people do things the right way. But silly rules don't make sense and keep people

from living the lives they choose. For example, "No dating" is one silly rule that they found.

People First members interviewed self-advocates living in group homes around the state to create a long list of silly rules. Now, they have a plan to get rid of silly rules.

People First has asked for support from groups and organizations that can help them convince providers to change the rules. They have started asking providers to get rid of their silly rules.

Rocky Hughes, State Chapter President, said that staff generally agree about silly rules. "Right now we're taking a step back to see what will happen."

Meanwhile, self-advocacy organizations from other states are interested in the Montana Silly Rules project. They may start similar projects of their own!

## Growing Self-Advocacy

*In Idaho*, what began as a project to educate people about self-directed supports is a state-wide self-advocacy movement!

With support from the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, self-advocate leaders across the state are organizing the first ever statewide self-advocacy organization. *The Idaho Self-Advocate Leadership Network* is working to grow their membership and become a nonprofit organization.



The Network's goals are to (1) reach self-advocates statewide, (2) improve the lives of self-advocates, and (3) influence state policies that affect the lives of people with disabilities.

*The Illinois Self-Advocates in the Lead* project is funded by the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities. The project is led by 16 self-advocate leaders from around the state. These leaders will travel all over Illinois to talk to self-advocates about issues that are most important in their lives. The group will use this information to develop a plan to grow the self-advocacy movement across the state.

*In South Dakota*, self-advocate leaders are working to build partnerships, spread the word, and grow a self-advocacy movement across the state. Their work is funded by the State's Council for Developmental Disabilities.

They talked to many self-advocates about what they need to get the movement going in their communities. They will use this information to develop a strategic plan. The plan will outline steps that self-advocates can take to get more people involved and work together for change.



## Spring Horoscope

A horoscope predicts the future based on the position of the planets and your birthday. Find the sign that fits with your birthday. Then read about what's in store for you!

**Aries** (March 21-April 19): A new relationship will perk up your love life. Romance is most likely on Friday and Saturday nights!



**Taurus** (April 20-May 20): Your ideas and friendly personality will lead to an adventure!

**Gemini** (May 21-June 20): Your friends will play an important role in your career.

**Cancer** (June 21-July 22): Now is the time to develop your musical or artistic talents. You may even become famous!



**Leo** (July 23-Aug. 22): You're a natural leader and people look to you for support. Are you ready to speak up for what you believe?

**Virgo** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Variety is the spice of life. Mix it up this spring by trying three new things.



**Libra** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Say goodbye to sheltered workshops. Ask for support to find a real job!

**Scorpio** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Look for new opportunities to teach others about their rights or work for change in your community.

**Sagittarius** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Think about what you want to do with your life. What are you doing to get there?

**Capricorn** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Are you tired of the same old thing? Shock your friends with a new hair color, piercing or tattoo!

**Aquarius** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Set a goal and work to reach it. If you try, your dreams may come true.

**Pisces** (Feb. 19-March 20): What are you really good at? Use your talents to make people happy, make money, or have fun.



## Need Romance Advice? ...Ask Cubby

### Dear Cubby:

I'm dating a woman who says she likes to "love 'em and leave 'em!" I think she's going to leave me. Help!

— *Nervous in Nashville*

**Dear Nervous:** Maybe she's just joking. But if she really is going to leave you, dump her first!

### Dear Cubby:

I live in a group home with silly rules. One rule is that I can't go on a date unless all the residents and staff come too. This is wrong! How can I change this?

— *Crowded in Cloverdale*



**Dear Crowded:** Tell staff you don't like this rule. Or see if your self-advocacy group can help you change the rule. If that doesn't work, ask your case manager if you can live on your own or with a roommate you choose.

### Dear Cubby:

My husband won't let me go out with my girlfriends. I have to get his permission first.

— *Tired of it in Texas*



**Dear Tired of it:** First, tell him how this makes you feel and have a good talk about it. Maybe he is worried you will find someone else. If you can't work it out on your own, get help from a counselor.

Email your romance questions to Cubby at: [www.theriotrocks.org](http://www.theriotrocks.org)

Move Review ★★★★★

The Pursuit of Happiness



By Nancy Ward

**Rap:** Christopher Gardner wants to be a broker and own his own firm. But after losing his wife, his home, and all his money, he and his son are homeless. Despite these problems, he works really hard and starts his own firm, making his dream come true.

**Riot Rumble:** People with disabilities are a lot like Christopher. We fight against great odds to make our dreams come true. Even our own families, who should believe in us, don't. We must show them that we can reach our goals.

**Riot Rave:** This movie is about a true story. It shows that if you believe in yourself, you can reach your goals. Never let anyone tell you that you can't make your dreams come true.

10 Steps to a Healthier You

Thinking about getting into that swimsuit for summer? Here are 10 steps you can take to look slimmer, trimmer and snazzier in your suit. You'll feel better too!



1. Make sure you eat breakfast.
2. Drink water before each meal.
3. Eat dinner early in the evening.
4. Ask your doctor about taking a multi-vitamin.
5. Go for a walk instead of watching TV.
6. Eat more carrots, less cake.
7. Snack on fruits and vegetables.
8. Dance to fun music!
9. Ask friends for flowers instead of chocolate.
10. Ask a friend to exercise with you.

Find more tips at [www.smallstep.gov](http://www.smallstep.gov)

Word Find Puzzle

R	S	C	I	T	I	L	O	P
E	Y	L	I	F	E	P	F	B
S	W	S	N	M	A	E	R	D
P	U	A	H	O	J	G	E	I
O	R	G	A	N	I	Z	E	N
N	C	I	D	U	K	D	D	V
S	Z	L	V	E	T	S	O	O
I	P	E	O	P	L	E	M	L
B	R	L	C	A	M	N	O	V
I	E	P	A	Y	X	V	L	E
L	V	O	T	R	A	S	T	D
I	I	S	E	P	O	W	E	R
T	L	M	S	T	A	X	I	V
Y	E	H	U	N	D	R	E	D

Quotes about Advocacy:

Justin Dart, Jr. was often described as the godfather of the disability rights movement. Below are some of the inspirational thoughts he wanted to share with self-advocates.

Can you find the **UNDERLINED** words hidden in the puzzle? Look from left to right, right to left, top to bottom, and bottom to top. Cross off each word as you find it.

- You have the **POWER** ~ **LIVE** the **DREAM**.
- Get **INVOLVED** in **POLITICS** as if your **LIFE** depends on it.
- **PEOPLE** from age one to a **HUNDRED** can be good **ADVOCATES**.
- I know what people need to do to really win **FREEDOM**. Get off our \*%\$\*# and **ORGANIZE**.

**Craig Says... “Self-Advocates NOT getting enough attention Stinks!”**



Why am I cranky today? I am cranky because I watch the news on television EVERY night and NEVER see self-advocates on TV.

Have you noticed that too? Self-advocates don't get attention for the great

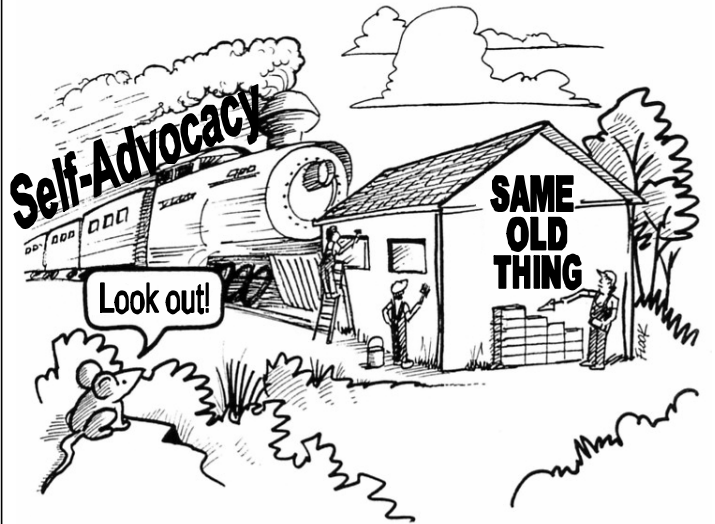
things they do. Sure they show self-advocates on TV to make people feel sorry for them and put them on telethons to make money (Telethons stink!). But they don't show self-advocates talking to politicians, fighting for their right to vote, or trying to get rid of silly rules.

Self-advocates are working to remove the “R” word from laws and policies. Self-advocates are getting rid of silly rules. And younger self-advocates are working to have the history of people with disabilities taught in school. Is any of this on TV? NO! Do you read about it in newspapers? NO! Do you hear about it on the radio? NO! Well, I'm here to tell you that NO, isn't good enough! And it stinks!

Self-advocates are PEOPLE first! The PEOPLE deserve to be heard! Self-advocates are doing great things and they deserve attention.

What do you want to do about it? How about getting some attention for the good work you are doing? Here are three things you can do.

1. **Make a contact list** of people who you'll tell about what you and other self-advocates are working on. Do you know a local reporter for your newspaper or TV station? Do you know someone in radio? Who do you know that can spread the word about self-advocacy?
2. **Tell them all about your work.** Tell them by calling them by phone or sending a letter or email. Keep in contact with all of them! Ask them to come and see out what you are doing.
3. **See if you can get in the newspaper or on radio or TV.** I don't want to be Cranky Craig when I watch the news or read the paper. I want to see a story about self-advocates on every page!



**Self-advocates everywhere are tired of the “same old thing.” Look out—the self-advocacy train can't be stopped!**

**Silly Rules Toolkit**

*Coming soon!*

from the  
**Self-Advocate Leadership Network**

**STAMP OUT**

**SILLY RULES**

**PUZZLE ANSWERS**

R	S	C	I	T	I	L	O	P
E	Y	L	I	F	E	P	F	B
S	W	S	N	M	A	E	R	D
P	U	A	H	O	J	G	E	I
O	R	G	A	N	I	Z	E	N
N	C	I	D	U	K	D	D	V
S	Z	L	V	E	T	S	O	O
I	P	E	O	P	L	E	M	L
B	R	L	C	A	M	N	O	V
I	E	P	A	Y	X	V	L	E
L	V	O	T	R	A	S	T	D
I	I	S	E	P	O	W	E	R
T	L	M	S	T	A	X	I	V
Y	E	H	U	N	D	R	E	D



# The Riot! Action Page



## Self-Advocates Speak Up! and Speak Out!

Self-advocates around the country have done great things by working together for change. *You can too!*

Discuss the questions below at your next self-advocacy meeting.

- What are the burning issues in your state? Make a list and vote on the top three. Then, choose the most important one.
- Set a goal about what you want to change about your most important issue.

- List people and organizations that will support your goal.

- Make a plan and take action!  
Meet regularly to discuss issues and report progress on your goal.



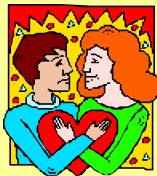
Make a difference by working together!

**Talk it up...  
Have yourselves a regular Riot!!!**

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by Joe Meadours. To order a copy call 503-924-3783 ext. 10.

## From the Self-Advocate Leadership Network...

Get these great Toolkits from the Self-Advocate Leadership Network! Each toolkit has information that you need to help self-advocates lead their own lives and help shape the service system.

Prices vary from \$15 to \$30. A Bargain! Come and check it out!



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and YOU!**



**Participant-Driven  
Supports: A Toolkit  
on Planning and  
Giving a Presentation**



**How Your Organization Can  
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AmeriCorps\*VISTA Members**

Go To: [www.hsri.org/leaders](http://www.hsri.org/leaders)



**Working Together  
for Change**



**Using Medicaid to Fund  
Trainings for Self-Advocates**



This is  
really Cool  
Stuff!  
Look for  
yourself!