

July, 2004

The Riot!

Self-Advocacy
It's a riot!

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

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"Riot"

The word "Riot" can mean...
Uprising... protest... funny...
lawless... noisy...
So... go ahead...

Let's have a regular RIOT!

The Riot! Is Born!

Dear Reader,

Welcome! This is our first issue.

Mostly, The Riot! is for "self-advocates." A self-advocate is somebody who has a disability and speaks up for themselves. Are you a self-advocate?

We hope that other people, like parents, staff and policy makers will enjoy it too. But these pages are written mostly for our main audience... self-advocates!

Here's what we promise to do... We will:

1. Entertain you. We want to have fun. Don't you? We are not happy unless we make you laugh at least once.

2. Give you good information.

Self-advocates want to live in the

community and be the boss of their life. We will try to help.

3. Help make self-advocacy strong. Self-advocates are speaking up all over the country. We'll help you make your voice heard.

The Riot! will come out four times each year.... In July, October, January and April. It's FREE!!

If you are on our email list we will send it to you by email. You can get on the list by coming to our website:

www.hsri.org/leaders/theriot

Once you have it, make copies and share it with your friends.

So... Are you ready? Read on and enjoy!

The Riot! Staff

Man Proposes Marriage Before Hundreds!

A man proposed marriage to his girlfriend before hundreds of people at the national SABE Conference. The meeting was held in Anaheim, California in May.

According to Jeff Ridgeway of Alabama, the man received an award in front of a large audience. He walked off the stage. Then he turned around and walked back. He grabbed the microphone and called his girlfriend up on the stage too. Before a stunned crowd he

proposed marriage to her! In tears, she said YES!

Who was this man? Who is his wife to be? When will they get married? Will they live happily ever-after? **The Riot! wants to know!** If you know who the groom and bride are, let us know. Write us, email us or call us!



**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 come up with ideas and write the stories.

Here's who "we" are:

Editor

Teresa Moore – Arizona

Contributors & Advisors

Ricky Broussard – Texas

Dayna Davis – Oregon

Chester Finn – New York

Michael Fodge – Idaho

Cindy Helvington – Oregon

Michael Long – California

Joe Meadours – Alabama

Eric Mathes – Utah

Nancy Ward – Oklahoma

Marion West – New Hampshire

At HSRI

John Agosta, Reena Wagle,
Jaime Johnston, Kerri Melda

"Self-determination means that I am the boss of my own life..."

Chester's Corner

On Freedom and Self-Advocacy



Hi everybody! Here are a few questions about self-advocacy and my answers.

What is Self-Advocacy?

Self-advocacy is speaking for yourself, but also being responsible for your life and working on issues to help yourself and others.

Self-advocacy is letting people know that people with disabilities are capable of participating in the community and living their lives like people... just like other citizens in the country.

What is a Self-Advocate?

"Self-advocate" is not only a word that you speak, but it is part of life. You advocate for yourself, rather than having some organization or person speak for you and make decisions for you. You have the opportunity to take part in decisions that affect you. Some people leave it to other people to say what they can and cannot do. They think...

"someone will decide for me."

Being a self-advocate means letting people know that you are capable of speaking up and participating.

What is SABLE?

On a national level, Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABLE) has about 45 states participating in our organization. Other states are joining all the time. Hopefully we will have all 50 states.

Some of the things we are working on include: transportation, housing and helping America vote. We will be setting up meetings and working with the Senate and Congress on some of these issues. We can always use your help. Try helping by working with self-advocates in your area to speak up on important issues. Let's all be effective self-advocates!

(Chester Finn is a self-advocate from New York and presently co-chairperson of SABLE)

SABLE Elects New Leaders

Self-advocates across the country elected a new Executive Committee in May, at the 2004 SABLE National Self-Advocacy Conference in Anaheim, California. About 1,300 people from 45 states and 3 Canadian Provinces came to the conference. Now, that's a lot of people!

Before the election, the candidates told everyone why they should vote for them. A lot of people voted! Here is who won...

Chester Finn was re-elected as a Chairperson and *Victor Robinson* from Washington D.C. was elected as Co-Chair.

Chester is a Special Assistant to the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities in New York.

Victor is one of the founders of DC Self-Advocates Unite Together. He is a Health Care Specialist at a Health Resource Center.

Julie Petty was elected as Vice-President. She is the State Coordinator of Arkansas People First.

Ben Borell was elected Secretary. Ben is from Colorado and has a lot of national and state level experience in self-advocacy.

Trisha Jones from Arizona was elected Treasurer. She is starting her own business on self-advocacy. She likes public speaking.

Congratulations to all the new SABLE Leaders!! Now, The Riot! wants you to have a regular riot doing good things!



Check out SABLE at www.sabeusa.org

Did You Know?



That self-advocates work hard on issues important to YOU!

We mailed surveys to self-advocacy groups across the country. 103 groups told us about the issues they work on all year long. Here's the list. We ranked them in order of what they said they worked on the most. 1 got the most work. 10 got the least.

1. Teaching people with disabilities about self-advocacy
2. Getting new members
3. Teaching providers and staff about self-advocacy
4. Helping people live in the community
5. Helping people register to vote
6. Working for better transportation
7. Helping people get the jobs they want
8. Talking with decision-makers
9. Talking about relationships and sexuality
10. Teaching families about self-advocacy

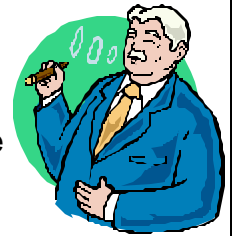
Head Honcho Wants Self-Advocates to Speak Out in Alabama!

Fordyce Mitchel wants self-advocates to speak out about the way services are delivered in Alabama. **“We need self-advocates to get involved!”**

Fordyce is the head honcho of community services for people with cognitive disabilities. He makes budgets, plans and policies for services that help self-advocates participate in their communities like anyone else.

To reach this goal, Fordyce and others at the state level, need to

hear from self-advocates. **“We need you to speak out about the type of services you want and need to live your lives.”**



Self-advocates can participate on committees and task forces, and talk to legislators about changing the way services are provided. Self-advocates have been helpful so far. But more help is needed!

Self-Advocates Take Charge!

In Idaho

Self-advocate leaders, Eric Yeary, Calleen Smith, Tyler Hancock, Michael Fodge and Burt Seward are working for self-advocacy.

They teach self-advocates, parents, legislators, and others in Idaho about self-determination.

They also express their opinions to the Director of the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities about how people get services. Their voices are being heard and change is on the way. **Don't mess with this group!**



In Utah

Self-advocates and others encouraged Utah legislators to pass a computer bill for people with disabilities. The bill was signed into law on March 24th!

The new law allows state offices to donate extra computers to

agencies that can give them to people with disabilities.

Tom Brownlee, of Brownlee Consulting, says ... **“Now people with disabilities can get a used computer at no cost.”**



In Washington

Thanks to People First of Washington, respectful language is law!



For months, People First members encouraged their legislators to pass a **“Respectful Language Bill.”**

This bill requires that all laws be written with words that treat people first and disabilities second.

Since the bill has passed and is now a law, the state is required to refer to people as “people with disabilities.” **Calling people “the disabled” is not okay anymore!**

Summer Horoscope

“Hey Baby, What’s Your Sign?”

A horoscope is a prediction of the future based on the position of the planets and your birth date. Find the sign that fits with your birthday. Then read on to find out what’s in store for you!

Aries (March 21-April 19): This summer you are hot stuff! You will experience several fiery attractions.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): Don’t be too stubborn or your date will have to take you by the horns!

Gemini (May 21-June 20): You can adapt to any situation – especially romantic ones!

Cancer (June 21-July 22): You’ll inspire romance in the people around you.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Don’t be afraid to really roar. Your soul mate is waiting to hear your call!

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don’t be surprised to get mail from secret admirers. Watch out!

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): The scales are tipped in your favor. Too much of a good thing is never enough!

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don’t worry about finding the right love potion... Your sting is going to set someone on fire!

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Slow down you move too fast! Several romances are waiting to catch your fancy.

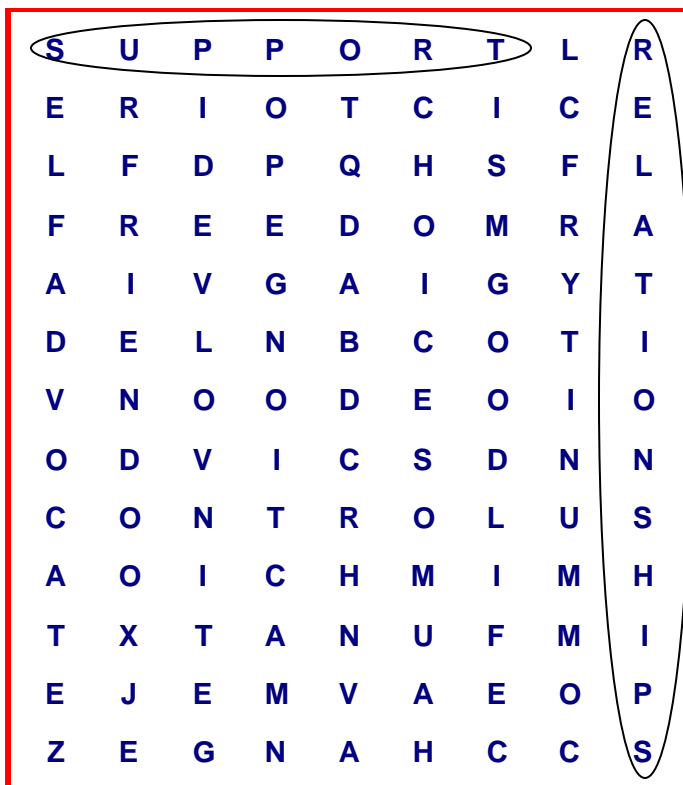
Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): With your charm, admirers will climb mountains just to get your number!

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Keep your eyes open! The stars are lined up and so are your dates.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): You’ll be singing Karaoke love songs to your date in no time!



WORD FIND PUZZLE



Each of the words or phrases listed below are hidden in this puzzle. Can you find them? We did a couple for you so you can get the idea.

Look from top to bottom, left to right, bottom to top, or right to left. See if you can find them all.

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| ACTION | FUN |
| CHANGE | GET INVOLVED |
| CHOICES | GOOD LIFE |
| COMMUNITY | RELATIONSHIPS |
| CONTROL | RIOT |
| FREEDOM | SELF ADVOCATE |
| FRIEND | SUPPORT |

(See page 7 for the answers.)

Eight Tips For Finding A Date

So you think you want to have a boyfriend or girlfriend in your life? You might start by asking someone out on a date.

How do you find a date? That's a good question. Well, The Riot! has the answers! If you want to find a date, just follow these steps.

- 1. Find someone you want to date.** Look around at self-advocacy meetings, work, the store, or the laundromat! When you meet someone you or your friends don't know, be careful... Don't give out your phone number to anybody who asks for it. Trust your gut feelings, but if you're not sure, ask a good friend for help.
- 2. Ask the person out!** Don't be shy gals and guys... someone has to speak up first!
- 3. Have a fun first date.** Talk about where you want to go and who will pay. These days it's OK to share the cost of a date. If you can, it's OK to pay for your date too.
- 4. Talk about fun things.** Get the conversation

started! Ask your date questions about what they like to do for fun.

- 5. Be yourself!** No need to try to be cool or cute. We know you already are!
- 6. Do the right thing!** Always be kind and thoughtful to your date. And, don't be pushy. It's not important to get to first base on the first date. If you're nice, he or she will want to see you again!
- 7. If you're getting along... ask for another date.** Don't be shy. If you want to go out again, say so. Chances are your date feels the same way. Go ahead – ASK!
- 8. Don't ever get discouraged. Keep trying.** Things don't always work out. If they do, then good for you! If they don't, then start over. Remember... there is someone for everybody out there! Good luck!



Ask “Cubby” – He Knows What To Do!

Dear Cubby,

I really like a boy and want to go on a date with him but I'm afraid to ask him out. Any advice?

Shy in South Dakota



SHY, BASHFUL

Dear Shy,

Ask him to a movie with you and your friends. While you're out, be open and honest. If you're honest, your friendship will be like a flower. It might be slow in the beginning but it will grow.

Good things can take time.

Sincerely,
Cubby

Dear Cubby,

I've been going out with Suzy for a while. But Suzy doesn't know that I'm dating other girls too. What should I do?

Two-Timing in Texas

Dear Two-Timing,

It sounds like you need to decide what you want before you end up in the dog house!



Whatever you decide – be honest! Let Suzy know what you want from your relationship. Listen to what she wants too. Then decide together what kind of relationship you will have. It's okay to date more than one person as long as you are honest with the girls you date – including Suzy! **Dating and relationships can be hard for everyone.** Get help if you need it. You can talk to a good friend or someone you trust.

Good luck!

Cubby

Want Advice From Cubby?

Write him at The Riot! or submit your question to him by visiting our website. Maybe YOUR question will appear right here in The Riot!

Get Fit Or Else!!

Here's How...



Hey you couch potatoes! Yes... YOU! Time to get off the couch and DO something. That's right. The Riot! wants you to start exercising and get fit! It's not hard. And you'll feel better. Summer is a great time to begin a fitness program. Here are a few tips to get you started.

- ✓ Talk to your doctor to make sure it's OK to exercise.
- ✓ Choose your favorite activity – walking, running, a yoga class or swimming are some good examples - choose what works for you.
- ✓ Find comfortable clothes and shoes for exercising.
- ✓ If you need help, ask a friend to help you think of ways you can take part in the activity you choose.
- ✓ Start SLOWLY – just 5 or 10 minutes of exercise everyday will go a long way. Build up from there.
- ✓ Keep yourself excited about keeping fit. Find a friend to exercise with, you can keep each other company.
- ✓ Drink lots of water, especially in hot weather.
- ✓ Now... GET STARTED!!

Everyday Fitness Tips

If walking, running or going to the gym won't get you off the couch—then take these Tips from us. They can help you get fit...

- ✓ Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- ✓ Walk during lunch or to go to the grocery or video store.
- ✓ Do sit-ups in front of the TV.
- ✓ Take your dog for a couple of walks a day.
- ✓ Eat half your dessert.
- ✓ Skip seconds.
- ✓ Even chores around the house like sweeping and mopping provide some exercise!



Want more tips? Check out...

www.smallstep.gov

Crunch Your Way Through Summer With Salad

Salads can be yummy – no really! And good for you too. The Riot! says so! Salads are made with vegetables and are full of vitamins. Salads will help keep your weight down and your heart healthy. Your body loves a good salad. Here are some simple tips to keep salad fresh.



- ♥ Wash those greens before you eat them! Then, remove extra water from vegetables, especially green, leafy vegetables like lettuce or spinach.
- ♥ Keep salad in the refrigerator until you are ready to toss and eat it.
- ♥ Try squeezing some lemon on your salad. It's good for you...and better than those creamy store dressings.
- ♥ Serve the dressing on the side so you can take as much or as little as you want (this also makes it easier to save leftovers.)



Great Summer Recipe Salads!! Try One!!

A salad can look as good as it tastes. Try these vegetables with the usual green leafy ones like lettuce or spinach that you see in salads. Not only do vegetables make salads prettier but healthier too.

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| ♥ Tomatoes | ♥ Peppers |
| ♥ Avocado | ♥ Olives |
| ♥ Mushrooms | ♥ Cucumbers |
| ♥ Asparagus | ♥ Carrots |
| ♥ Onions | ♥ Zucchini |

Check out the Self-Advocate Leadership Network!!
www.hsri.org/leaders

Craig Says... “Silly Rules Stink!”



My name is Craig. I travel around the country talking with self-advocates about life. Today I want to talk to you about RULES.

Rules tell us what we are expected to do or not to do. Some rules are good. Here’s a good rule: *Never play with fire!*

But some rules are silly and just plain stink! People talk a lot about choice and self-determination. But for many people who live in group homes there’s a lot of talk about choice and a lot of SILLY RULES too! Some rules are OK, but there are some silly rules that stink! Rules, rules and more rules. Do you know what I am talking about? Here are a few examples of **Silly Rules** that self-advocates tell me about:

1. Bed time is 10:00 pm. *Why do adults need a bed time?*
2. You have to ask for permission to use the phone. *Yes, even to call a friend!*
3. You can’t go on a date without a staff person too. *Are you kidding me?*
4. You can’t decide what to eat for dinner. *What? It’s already posted on a menu?*
5. You can’t choose what time to take a shower. *But I hate morning showers!*
6. You have to go on the same “outing” as everyone else. *No way! And do I really have to go bowling?*

Do you have any rules like this in your life? If you do, talk to your friends. Then talk with staff, your parents or anyone you think can help to get rid of silly rules.

You can do it! Be a self-advocate and Speak Up!!

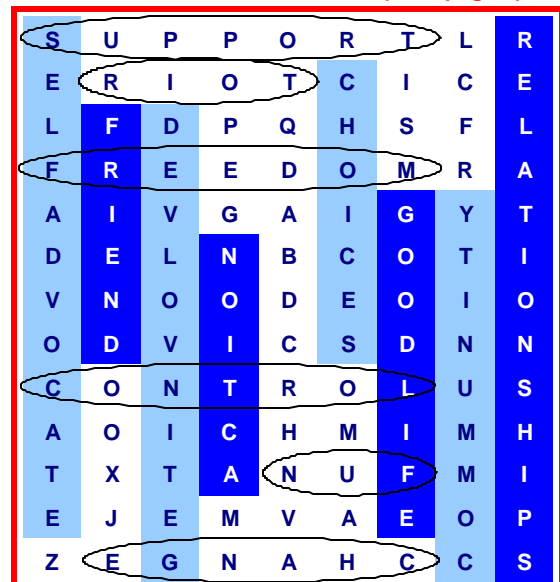


What does this cartoon mean to you?

The person labeled “You” is a self-advocate. He lives in a group home. The other person is staff. The staff person is telling the self-advocate about all the choices he has in the group home. But look in the background on the wall. What do you see?

We see signs with all sorts of rules... Silly Rules!!! What should the self-advocate do about it? What should he say?

PUZZLE ANSWER (from page 4)



The Riot! Action Page

Self-Advocates Speak Up! and Speak Out!

Stir things up at your next self-advocacy meeting,

Ask the questions below and talk about the answers you hear.

1. What does "freedom" mean to you?
2. What does "self-determination" mean to you?
3. What does it mean to be a "self-advocate"?
4. What rules are in your life that you don't like?
5. What could you do to get more control of your life?



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

Do You Like The Riot!?

We hope you like The Riot! If you do, we need your help. The Riot! is an e-newsletter that is FREE. We'll email it to anyone and we want you to share it with others.

We put it together at no cost to you because it's fun to do and we want self-advocates to have a good time reading it.

But we can use a little help. If you like The Riot!, please send us a contribution! YES!!! We mean money! We can use some money!

We will use the money to help keep things going. **Any money we get will go toward making The Riot! better.**

We want to pay self-advocates for helping with The Riot! And we have ideas for making The Riot! more accessible to people with disabilities. But we need your help!

Send your contribution to:

The Riot!
c/o HSRI
8100 SW Nyberg (#205)
Tualatin, OR 97062

Don't send cash! Checks or money orders are best.

Or see how to contribute on line at www.hsri.org/leaders/theriot

No amount is too small.

**We Need
Your Help!**