

ProActive Caring e-News



August 30, 2022

ProActive Caring to launch new Train-the-Trainer program series

ProActive Caring is inviting applications for a free program that will train professionals and family caregivers to teach individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities how to learn and practice mindfulness strategies independently, using task analysis and assistive technology.

The program is a partnership between the Center on Aging and DIS-Ability Policy at Mount Saint Mary College, Parent Network of Western New York (PNWNY), and MPower Me. Participants will complete two Zoom sessions to prepare them for supporting individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD).

If you live or work with people with intellectual or developmental disabilities, our Train-the-Trainer Program is for you!

- Learn to teach mindfulness and other stress reduction strategies.
- Receive guidance on how to use assistive technology to teach these strategies to people with IDD

Zoom sessions will be available on **Sept. 13** and **20** (morning option) or **Sept. 21** and **28** (evening option).

ProActive Caring team welcomes Valerie Capalbo

Valerie Capalbo, M.S., LCSW, has joined the ProActive Caring team as Administrator of the ProActive Caring Train-the-Trainer project.



Valerie is a clinical social worker who works with neurologically diverse individuals and their families. Her efforts with her clients are focused on independence and social inclusion. She also teaches in the Human Services field at the undergraduate level and has a private therapy

While the training is free, space is limited. **Applications are due by Sept. 9.**

[Apply Here](#)

practice.

Valerie fills the previous role of Elaine Sproat, who remains on the team as Senior Adviser.

What is MPower Me?

Training participants will learn how to use the **MPower Me** platform and app in relation to working with individuals with IDD. **MPower Me** designs, installs, and supports personalized assistive technology to increase Independence, Communication, Employability, and Inclusion, while enhancing existing services and reducing the need for human intervention.

MPower Me founder Maria McWhirt, Ph.D., has over 30 years of experience in social work and policy research. As she faced service challenges with her youngest son who has autism, she recruited his older brother, who was born with severe vision impairment, to develop MyGuide™.

Dr. McWhirt and her son worked together with clinicians and teachers to develop do-it-yourself tech-based tools to empower people with special needs to participate more meaningfully in their own lives.

MyGuide™ has been used by nearly 1,000 users over the past three years.

ProActive Caring receives COVID-19 Response Grant

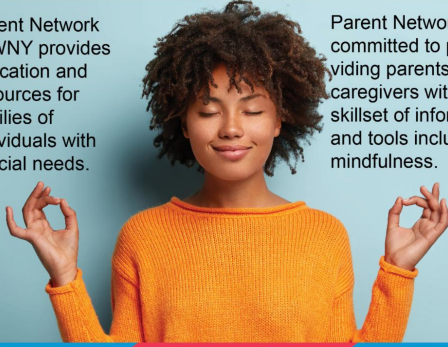
ProActive Caring has been awarded a grant by the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (NYS DDPC) to support the program's new Train-the-Trainer project. The DDPC funding recognizes that people with IDD have faced numerous challenges as a result of COVID-19, and that mindfulness has been shown to be an effective tool for addressing stress and building coping resources in this challenging time.

We are delighted to have the opportunity to bring mindfulness training to individuals through our new Train-the-Trainer program, and we look forward to partnering with professionals and family caregivers across the state.

[Join our mailing list](#)



Parent Network of WNY provides education and resources for families of individuals with special needs.



Parent Network is committed to providing parents and caregivers with a rich skillset of information and tools including mindfulness.

716-332-4170 | www.parentnetworkwny.org
info@parentnetworkwy.org



MyGuide by MPower Me provides user-directed, interactive multimedia Guides for activities, thought processes, & social interactions.



800-674-2943 | Info@mpm.care | <https://MPM.care>



Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

The ProActive Caring Program is funded by a grant from the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.



[Proactive Caring Digital Resource Center](#)