

Independent Perspective #1899 with Julie Andrews

Transcript

00:00:00 Speaker 1

Welcome to Independent Perspective, a public affairs program of Western New York Independent Living.

00:00:06 Speaker 1

Taking Control Self-Directed Home Care provides programs that empower individuals with disabilities or chronic health conditions to shape their support to fit their lives.

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WNYIL's Taking Control team is enhancing the work it does with consumers through the addition of a monthly speaker series on topics such as technology, finance, mental health, and more.

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Joining us today to talk about the 2026 Speaker Series and what is coming up next is Director of the Taking Control Program, Julie Andrews.

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Welcome to the program, Julie.

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Thank you for having me back and giving me the opportunity to talk about this exciting new series of topics that we're sharing with the public.

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It's our pleasure.

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Let's start by telling our listeners about Taking Control.

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What exactly is Taking Control?

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Taking Control is the name of the department that helps individuals with their self-directed home care.

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There's three kinds of programs within Taking Control Self-Directed Home Care that includes the assistance,

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facilitation to the consumer directed personal assistance program.

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It includes the expanded in-home services for the elderly program, and it also includes the newest veteran directed care program.

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Terrific.

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Let's switch gears to the monthly speaker series.

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What prompted the development of the speaker series, and how does it tie in with the services Taking Control offers?

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Certainly.

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Well, a number of these topics came directly from consumers who had approached us multiple times with similar requests for information that are sort of on the fringes of what we do within the department.

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So, we sat down and we compiled a list of these topics that seem to keep cropping up, and we decided to create a monthly speaker series whereby

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consumers, staff, and anyone else interested could participate in these sort of mini workshops on a number of these different interesting topics such as navigating technology.

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Next month we'll be talking about financial literacy.

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In September, on Emergency Preparedness Month, we'll be discussing ways that individuals with disabilities can prepare for emergencies.

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So just additional support topics that we offer, ways that we can provide additional support in addition to the things that we do within our programming.

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You've already given us something of a hint, but

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how can someone participate in the speakers series and what can listeners expect?

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Well, each month, as I mentioned, we're discussing a different topic, a little mini workshop where we're engaging with people and they're sharing their experiences and we're giving hints and tips on how to make life easier.

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The way that people can participate is,

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we have in-person opportunities at all of the Western New York Independent Living Family of Agency sites that is directly at Western New York Independent Living, at Independent Living of Niagara County, Independent Living of Genesee Region, and also through our subcontractors up at Maximizing Independent Living Choices in the North Country and also through the Catskill Center for Independence

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in Oneonta.

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You've mentioned a few of the topics already.

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What's the top?

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Did you mention the one for April by any chance?

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Yeah, we're really excited.

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We're going to have a guest speaker from M&T Bank giving us some guidance on financial literacy and banking basics as the topic.

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So, we're excited to partner with another community resource and

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that they can help, you know, guide us along the way on this topic in the month that, as we know, is tax month.

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If someone is looking for more information on the speaker series,

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what's a good phone number for someone to connect to or get more information?

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Anyone can always reach out to the agency.

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That's the main phone number, 716-836-0822.

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But more, we do have it posted on all of the social media and it's pinned there.

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Within that is a QR code linked directly to the Zoom if people want to access it that way.

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Thanks so much for being with us, Julie.

00:04:44 Speaker 2

Thanks

00:04:44 Speaker 2

Thank you for having me once again, Ernie.

00:04:45 Speaker 1

You've been listening to Independent Perspective, a public affairs presentation of Western New York Independent Living.

00:04:52 Speaker 1

Our guest today has been the director of the Taking Control program, Julie Andrews, and I've been your host, Ernie Churchwell.