



believes in a future where all persons, regardless of their ability, can reach their full potential as responsible, valued and contributing members of their community. We strive for excellence in providing employment, healthcare, housing options and community supports that are chosen by individuals and families. Together we transform lives and bring dignity, purpose, confidence and hope to every individual, every day.



In order to support its Vision Statement, **sasi** recognizes that individuals receiving services have unequivocal rights, as established by the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. As a provider agency, **sasi** is committed to protecting these rights.

sasi has been assisting people with special needs for over 40 years. Although philosophies, funding sources and regulations may have changed, **sasi's** commitment to focusing on individuals and their desires has remained consistent.

sasi continues to be one of Western New York's leading human service agencies by its progressive approach to providing services to individuals with intellectual and physical challenges. **sasi's** culture of excellence is achieved by listening to stakeholders, focusing on outcomes and self-evaluation through continuous quality improvement.

Thank you for choosing **sasi**!

Terms to Know:

The Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) is responsible for coordinating services for New Yorkers with developmental disabilities through a network of service provider agencies. **sasi** is one of these agencies. It's kind of like **sasi's** boss.

The New York State Justice Center For The Protection of People With Special Needs (Justice Center) is committed to supporting and protecting the health, safety, and dignity of people with special needs. The Justice Center is a law enforcement agency that oversees all state operated facilities and related programs certified by OPWDD and other state agencies. The Justice Center conducts background checks of all agency employees to insure the safety of individuals receiving services. The Justice Center operates a call center, should anyone want to report an allegation of abuse. The Justice Center conducts investigations and in some cases they work with local district attorneys to prosecute staff who may have abused people with special needs.

Jonathan's Law When an incident occurs, you or your "qualified person" are entitled to receive notifications and information about an incident you were involved in and the outcome.

Incidents—In this booklet, the word "incident" has been used as a generic term to describe abuse, neglect, mistreatment and other events which need to be reported according to regulations.

Acknowledgements: The line drawings of people used throughout this booklet are from: <http://escapenow.wikischolars.columbia.edu>

The full-color pictures are from: http://www.ct.gov/advocatescorner/lib/advocatescorner/publications/say_no_to_abuse.pdf

Let's Talk About It

Below are scenarios for discussion. You can talk about these situations with staff, a family member or anyone you like.

1. You are sick and tired of working on a goal to count money and you don't want to do it any more. Do you have the right to tell staff you want to quit this goal?
☐ Yes or ☐ No
2. You tell staff that you don't want to do your money counting goal anymore and the manager asks you to work on it for another month and you can change it at your next team meeting. You agree. Have your rights been violated?
☐ Yes or ☐ No
3. You get up in the middle of the night and you see your staff asleep on the couch. You wake her up and she says, "Thanks, but don't tell anyone I was asleep." Should you keep the secret?
☐ Yes or ☐ No
4. A friend tells you that a staff yelled at her and made her cry because she wet the bed. Should you tell a manager about this?
☐ Yes or ☐ No
5. You are walking in a doorway and a staff is walking out. You bump into each other and later your shoulder hurts. Is this physical abuse?
☐ Yes or ☐ No

1. **Yes**—You have the right to decide what goals you want to work on.
2. **No**—If you agree to keep doing a goal, you are giving permission. If you don't agree, you should clearly say, "No. I don't want to."
3. **No**—You should always report something that could endanger you or your peers.
4. **Yes**—If you hear about something that could be abuse, you need to report it.
5. **No**—This was an accident. No one was trying to hurt you.

Answer Guide:

You Are Protected

sasi has established policies and procedures based upon New York State regulations to protect you. As a citizen of the United States of America and a New Yorker, it is important that you know your rights.

Every type of abuse is wrong and no one deserves to be abused. If your rights have been violated or if someone has abused you or someone you know, while participating in a **sasi** program, in the community or at home, **sasi's** Quality Management Department is here to help.

For immediate assistance: Call 9-1-1

Justice Center Hotline: 1 (855) 373-2122

sasi Quality Management Hotline: (716) 860-8481

Say **NO**
to Abuse



If abuse happens (continued):

If you feel your life is in danger, call the police (9-1-1). After you call the police, they may meet with you and take a report. Sometimes the police will tell you that your issue is not a police matter and they will not become involved.

Most times, telling staff or your Care Coordinator starts the reporting process.

You can call the Justice Center at 1 (855) 373-2122 or **sasi's** Quality Management Department at (716) 860-8481.



Although you may feel wronged or upset, your issue may not be considered an “incident” according to regulations. In these cases, a Manager or Care Coordinator will follow-up with you and offer solutions to your problem.

Neglect

Neglect can happen when someone from your support team fails to keep you safe, whether on purpose or not. Examples include:

- . You need medical care and no one helps you.



- . Staff person gets a speeding ticket while you are in the car.

- . A support staff falls asleep when they are supposed to be awake.



Other types of abuse

There are other situations where your rights may be abused. Some other types of abuse include:

- Taking your money or personal belongings (theft).
- Inappropriate use of controlled medication.
- Preventing you from calling/hanging out with friends (limiting your rights).
- Preventing you from moving (unauthorized restraints).



Mistreatment

Your support team is required to follow your individualized plan to keep you healthy, safe and promote your independence.



Mistreatment can include:

- When staff don't follow your dining plan.
- When a support provider goes through your personal belongings without your permission.
- When a support staff refuses to help you because you did something they didn't like.