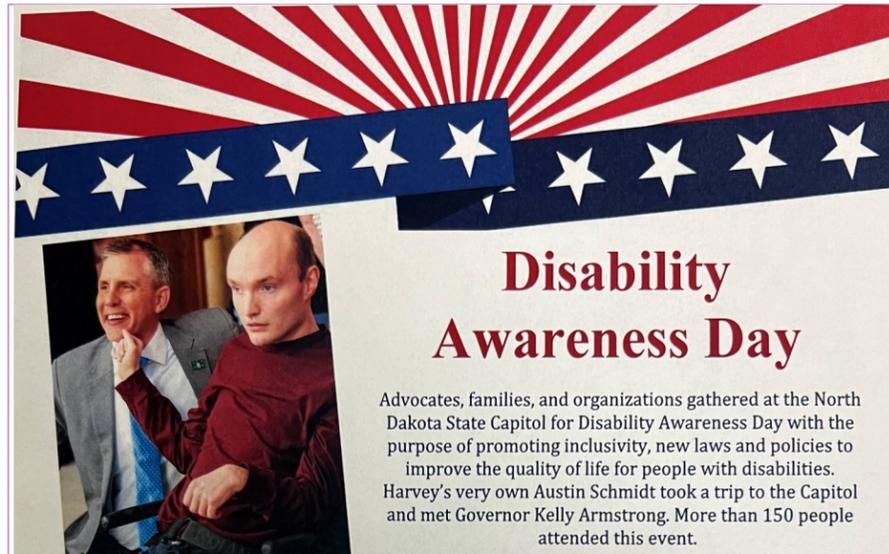


# HAV-IT MONTHLY

**February 2025**



## Disability Awareness Day

Advocates, families, and organizations gathered at the North Dakota State Capitol for Disability Awareness Day with the purpose of promoting inclusivity, new laws and policies to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. Harvey's very own Austin Schmidt took a trip to the Capitol and met Governor Kelly Armstrong. More than 150 people attended this event.

*Inclusion is within everyone's ability.*

*"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."  
-Martin Luther King, Jr.*

### Contact Us

Please send feedback/ contributions regarding our monthly newsletter to:

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### Welcome!



**Alyson Fischer**  
Direct Support Professional

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*Be somebody who makes everybody feel like a somebody.*

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Stay tuned for the March edition of HAV-IT's newsletter where we will feature the **AMAZING STARS of Night to Shine...You won't want to miss all the beautiful faces!**

## The Month of Love and Kindness

Physical touch is essential for human well-being. Hugs can have many physical and mental health benefits. For example, they can help you feel calmer, happier, more connected to others around you.

Some physical benefits of a hug are lowering blood pressure and heart rate - improving your cardiovascular function. Hugs can reduce pain and inflammation. Physical health benefits stem from the mental and therefore emotional benefits a hug can bring such as helping you feel calmer and more relaxed which reduces the presence and pressures of stress and anxiety. Hugs can release dopamine and oxytocin which improve your mood. Hugs can help you feel more secure and grounded which can build trust, strengthen relationships and reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Hugs are incredibly underrated. It's the most beautiful form of communication that allows the other person to know beyond doubt that they matter. Sometimes we don't need advice, just a hug to make us feel better. Human touch can contain more power in a good handshake, side hug, or full hug than many words combined.

Too often we underestimate the power of little things like touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, or a thoughtful compliment. The smallest, most inexpensive act of caring can have the potential to turn a life around.



*"No other form of communication is as universally understood as touch. The compassionate touch of a hand or a reassuring hug can take away our fears, soothe our anxieties, and fill the emptiness of being lonely." -Randi Fine*

*Hugs are a simple, yet meaningful way to show someone they matter, they are safe, they are accepted, and they are loved.  
Hug someone today.*

*EmergencePositive.com*

# The Power of a Smile

According to Walden University, "Smiling increases mood-enhancing hormones while decreasing stress-enhancing hormones, including cortisol, and adrenaline. It also reduces overall blood pressure. And because you typically smile when you're happy, the muscles used trigger your brain to produce more endorphins-the chemical that relieves pain and stress."



# Can You Guess Who?



The trip to the Discovery Center proved to be a fascinating trip. There were so many stations and activities that stimulated senses for all abilities. But, the best thing discovered in all of these photos...the sparkle in their eyes and smiles on their faces!