

# LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL STATUS OF FFY 2009 PLAN ACTIVITIES

Current through August 31, 2009

**QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES:** People have information, skills, opportunities and supports to live free of abuse, neglect, financial and sexual exploitation, and violations of their human and legal rights.

## **Objective 1**

1588 persons with developmental disabilities and family members will be trained to become effective advocates.

**Partners in Policymaking** is currently accepting applications for the upcoming 2009 class on the revised application form.

From July 1 to August 31, 2009, sixteen individuals with disabilities and family members received **Stipends through Families Helping Families** to attend conferences and workshops. During the same period, there were no **People First Stipends** utilized.

**My Choice** conducted twelve trainings in New Orleans, Metairie, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, and Alexandria this quarter on two topics: *Communicating My Wants & Needs to My DSP* and *Identifying & Preventing Abuse*. A total of **154** individuals attended the Communicating My Wants and Needs to My Support Staff, and a total of **86** individuals attended the Abuse training.

## **Objective 2**

The statewide self-advocacy organization will be supported and strengthened through collaboration with the Louisiana Self-Advocacy Project.

**People First of Louisiana** currently has 527 members in fifteen chapters. All chapters are working to meet state People First affiliation benchmarks.

## **Objective 3**

Members of the Council and its committees will be supported to serve as effective advocates for state and national systems change and receive staff and administrative support to effectively implement the Council's mission and goals.

Thirteen self-advocates and family members were supported in attending the Council meeting in July 2009.

One Council member received a stipend to participate in a Positive Behavioral Support conference in July in the amount of \$304.12. The current balance of the **Council Member Travel Stipend Fund** is \$2,695.88. One Council member was approved to receive a stipend to participate in Creating Great Public Schools for All Using Design for

Learning and Inclusive Practices conference in September in the amount of \$512 but the funds have not yet been spent.

**Objective 4**

The lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families will be enhanced by continuing a collaborative relationship among the Council, the Advocacy Center, and the Human Development Center.

The **TriAngle** currently has 3,607 subscribers. A concerted effort is being made to encourage people to switch from the printed to the electronic version of the TriAngle to save costs.

**Objective 5 ACCOMPLISHED IN FFY 2007**

The parents or family members of 25 individuals residing in developmental centers will be educated on the value and benefits of transition from institutional services to individualized community supports and resources that are available in the community (including housing).

**OTHER SERVICES AVAILABLE OR OFFERED TO INDIVIDUALS IN A COMMUNITY, INCLUDING FORMAL AND INFORMAL COMMUNITY SUPPORTS THAT AFFECT THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE**

**Objective 6 ACCOMPLISHED IN FFY 2008**

2500 individuals with developmental disabilities and their families will receive individual and family supports through support of grassroots systemic advocacy.

**Objective 7**

Reform of the long term care system to align resources to meet demand will be advanced through advocacy, collaboration, coordination, and education of legislators, policy makers and other stakeholders.

**LaCAN** has 3,104 members throughout the state. There is a leader vacancy in Region IV which is expected to be filled shortly. The LaCAN debriefing was held July 2<sup>nd</sup> to review activities during the 2009 legislative session. A LaCAN leader training was held August 21<sup>st</sup>. Two roundtables were held this quarter, one in Region VIII September 22<sup>nd</sup> and one in Region V September 28<sup>th</sup>.

**End the Wait!** features three individuals in PSAs that will be re-released in January 2010 in a statewide media campaign.

**Objective 8**

75,000 persons with developmental disabilities and their families will continue to obtain the information, training, and support they need through support to the Families Helping Families Resource Centers.

**Families Helping Families Regional Resource Centers** assisted 11,584 individuals and families with information, referral or other support, between June 1 and August 31, 2009.

**Objective 9 COMPLETED IN 2008**

27,000 people with developmental disabilities and their families will continue to receive information on disability services and resources through the continued operation, update and promotion of the Disability Information Access Line (DIAL) and the Information and Referral services provided by the 10 FHF Regional Resource Centers.

**Objective 10 ACCOMPLISHED IN FFY 2008**

300 direct support professionals (DSP) will be recruited and/or supported through collaboration with the Human Development Center in the development and distribution of recruitment materials.

**Objective 11**

Direct Support Professionals (DSP) will be compensated at or above the southern regional average.

The **OCDD Direct Support Professional Coalition** has not met in many months. At the last coalition meeting OCDD reported that a dismal 48% of NOW providers had not fully complied with the \$2 DSP wage pass through and the office was turning compliance over to the Medicaid Fraud and Abuse Unit. Since that time the federal minimum wage has increased and the NOW rates have been reduced due to budget cuts. These issues complicate the one time goal of mandating a certain percentage of the reimbursement rate going to DSP costs. The ever increasing budget crisis also further exacerbates the issue of being able to sustain a qualified and fairly compensated workforce.

**Objective 12**

The emergency preparation needs of 5,000 people with developmental disabilities will be included in the Red Cross sheltering plans and the state and parish emergency operations' plans.

The **Emergency Management Disability and Aging Coalition** has implemented a system to recruit and coordinate volunteers who have experience in supporting people with disabilities to work in inclusive emergency shelters. The Coalition helped draft ACT 295 (House Bill 554) which provides civil immunity for certain volunteers working in coordination with the state or its political subdivisions.

**Objective 13**

People with disabilities will have expanded social and friendship network opportunities as a result of a Louisiana on-line interactive web-based community

The **Disaboom** website has discussion and information strands on topics relevant to people with disabilities in Louisiana. One feature of the website is *Disaboomjobs* which

helps people with disabilities locate inclusive employment. A recent posting discussed techniques on how to handle bullying of children with special needs.

## **HOUSING ACTIVITIES: Adults choose where and with whom they live.**

### **Objective 14**

Persons with disabilities will have increased access to housing through Council efforts.

Through the **Home of Your Own program** The Arc of Louisiana is assisting five individuals with disabilities who are in different stages of home ownership. The Arc of Louisiana will continue to work with these individuals after the contract year until home ownership is accomplished. Six trainings conducted in Baton Rouge, Shreveport, Gonzales, Houma, Erath, and Donaldsonville had a total of 35 participants in attendance. A housing website ([www.lahousingconnection.com](http://www.lahousingconnection.com)) is updated monthly to provide people with information regarding purchasing a home.

**Money Follows the Person (MFP)** Demonstration program supported the transition of one young man from a nursing home into an apartment in his community. The individual used a Children's Choice waiver to move from a nursing facility to a Permanent Supportive Housing home. The materials purchased using the grant funds involved items needed to set up basic housekeeping. Many large furniture items have been donated to the person through social service agencies and by individuals facilitating his transition.

**LA Housing Connection** website ([lahousingconnection.com](http://lahousingconnection.com)) provides information on housing links and related resources.

## **HEALTH ACTIVITIES: People are healthy and benefit from the full range of needed health services.**

### **Objective 15**

Health care for persons with developmental disabilities will become a priority in Louisiana as a result of the DD Council's collaboration with at least 8 advocacy bodies, programs and projects.

The Council is represented on at least twelve **healthcare-related advocacy groups**: the OCDD Resource Allocation Stakeholders Workgroup, Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) Redesign Workgroup, Louisiana Birth Defects Monitoring Network Advisory Board, Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Governor's Task Force, Down Syndrome Association of Greater New Orleans, National Down Syndrome Society, National Down Syndrome Congress, Spina Bifida Association of Greater New Orleans, Autism Society of America (Greater New Orleans), Autism Research Institute, Louisiana Families for Effective Autism Treatment, Hydrocephalous Association, National Association of Disorders of the Corpus Callosum, Act 648 Autism Insurance

Implementation, and Department of Health and Hospitals Medical Care Advisory Committee.

**Objective 16**

Consumer-directed health care practices will be improved as a result of Council action.

Implementation of **ACT 552 of 2008** allowing routine nursing tasks to be performed by DSPs with appropriate training has been postponed by DHH due to their projected high cost of the training. Rules are currently being written through collaboration between DHH and the Nursing Board.

**EDUCATION AND EARLY INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES: Students reach their educational potential and infants and young children reach their developmental potential.**

**Objective 17**

500 people will become active in systems advocacy about inclusive education through establishment of a statewide family-driven special education grassroots advocacy organization.

**LaTEACH** continues to advocate for inclusive education practices with 942 members. Membership will fluctuate as the database is purged of duplicated names of members. LaTEACH has six Area Coordinators with vacancies in BESE Districts 1 and 2. The newly expanded LaTEACH Advisory Council developed criteria to determine when and how the network will be activated and decided on three priorities for LaTEACH. LaTEACH priorities consist of creating or abolishing policy for behavior related issues (i.e., Positive Behavioral Support (PBS), Restraints & Seclusion, Corporal Punishment, and Zero Tolerance); promoting Universal Pre-K4; and following implementation of the Career Diploma.

**Inclusive Schools Art Contest** is receiving entries meeting the October 5, 2009 deadline. Judging for the contest is scheduled for October 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> at the State Library in Baton Rouge. The awards ceremony will be held December 9<sup>th</sup> at the State Museum in Baton Rouge.

**Objective 18**

The DD Council will be represented on at least 3 educational decision making bodies in order to represent the interests of students with developmental disabilities.

The Council is represented on eight **educational and/or early childhood groups**: State Performance Plan Part B Committee/Policy Review Group, Louisiana State Positive Behavior Support Advisory Committee, Children's Cabinet Advisory Board, State Improvement Grant Management Team, State Autism Team, Low Incidence

Disabilities Consortium, State Interagency Coordinating Council, and School to Prison Reform Coalition.

**Objective 19**

30 children with autism and their families will receive early intervention services in inclusive community-based programs that result in improved language and social skills

**Autism Early Intervention Project** has three families of young children with autism in Region II participating in research on a training and technical support model. One family withdrew from participation with the project citing concerns about committing to the hours and work required of the project. Another family has given consent to participate but has been placed on a wait list. LSU's Human Development Center reported they are at full capacity with three participants. They expect to include the family on the wait list once they decrease the amount of support to the three participating families.

**EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES: People get and keep employment consistent with their interests, abilities and needs.**

**Objective 20 ACCOMPLISHED IN FFY 2008**

Young adults with developmental disabilities will gain employment experience through a governmental internship program developed by the Council in collaboration with other state agencies.

**Objective 21**

The number of people with developmental disabilities obtaining and maintaining integrated, community employment and careers will be increased through Council initiatives.

The **Employment Provider Training** project has four job seekers currently participating in the Consortium and has identified a fifth job seeker to begin in October. Eight Louisiana Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) members attended the National APSE conference in Milwaukee (six individuals and two agencies). Two APSE Board meetings were held and five professional development opportunities were provided. Training topics included Video Diaries; Review of Best Practices; Vocational Exploration; Task Design; and Summary of Activities. One job seeker is waiting for an employment position to start through Green Corp and another has established a small snack shop while seeking other employment. A third job seeker is establishing an employment plan with LRS and a fourth continues to participate in the employment consortium without provider support.

The **Employment Outreach Campaign** has shot footage for five videos highlighting workers with disabilities and employers dedicated to diversity in the workplace. Footage for each video is currently being edited for airing. The videos will air in primetime media

spots and be provided for use in various job fairs around the state to provide examples for employers to demonstrate the benefits of inclusive hiring practices.

**Objective 22**

The Council will learn the status of employment for people with developmental disabilities in Louisiana and have the data to effectively plan and advocate for meaningful employment options for people with developmental disabilities

The **Employment Study** is nearing completion of its report to the Council on employment for Louisiana citizens with significant disabilities. LSU's Human Development Center has collected and analyzed national and state research literature and collaborated with the University of Illinois to conduct the policy analysis of state agencies. Data from the report of the Supported Employment Continuous Improvement Project, the Community Living Ombudsman Program survey, and the APSE survey are being integrated into the final report.

**TRANSPORTATION ACTIVITIES: People have transportation services for work, school, medical, and personal needs.**

**Objective 23**

Transportation choices and opportunities for persons with disabilities will be expanded through the Council's assistance in the coordination of at least one transportation program in Louisiana.

The Council is exploring a DOTD grant awarded to Beauregard Parish to determine the degree this grant can be replicated in other areas of the state.

**RECREATION ACTIVITIES: People benefit from inclusive recreational, leisure and social activities consistent with their interests and abilities.**

**Objective 24**

50 individuals with developmental disabilities will have opportunities to enjoy increased or enhanced recreational activities through Council collaborative efforts.

The **Inclusive Recreation/PBS Project** provided positive behavior supports training and technical assistance to recreation department professionals and volunteers at City of Hammond Inclusive League (C.H.I.L.) and Pelican Park Inclusive Recreation League (P.P.I.R.L.) in Mandeville. C.H.I.L. has had four seasons with multiple sports including: Basketball season which had 34 children, fifteen with developmental disabilities; Bowling season 47 participants, fifteen with developmental disabilities; Kickball season, 58 participants, twelve with developmental disabilities; and Volleyball/Wiffleball Mini-Season, 36 participants, thirteen with developmental disabilities. The next season of C.H.I.L. is scheduled to begin in October is Basketball and will be funded entirely by the

City of Hammond. P.P.I.R.L has had three seasons with multiple sports including: Basketball season had 133 children, including twenty with developmental disabilities; Sports Academy season (six weeks of six different sports) had 60 children including thirteen with developmental disabilities; and Fitness Camp had approximately 36 children including eleven with developmental disabilities. P.P.I.R.L.'s next season will be Flag Football/Floor Hockey Mini-Seasons which will be funded entirely by Pelican Park in Mandeville.

The **Louisiana Indian Education Association** (LIEA) members met to select recipients of the 2009 American Indian Scholarship that is coordinated by the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA). There were thirteen American Indian college students who received scholarships of \$500 each. Currently, there is nothing in place to collect data on the number of GOIA scholarship applicants with disabilities. LIEA will present suggestions to GOIA to resolve this. In addition, LIEA plans to collaborate with Best Buddies Louisiana to increase the number of American Indian students with disabilities who participate in the Spring Indian Youth Leadership Camp.

**CHILD CARE ACTIVITIES: Children and families benefit from a range of inclusive, flexible child care options.**

**Objective 21 ACCOMPLISHED IN FFY 2008**

Childcare providers in each region of the state will have access to training on supporting children with disabilities in inclusive day care settings.