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Community Inclusion and the ADA Resources to Fulfill the Promise

Two recent publications provide information on how we can work together to ensure all people with disabilities are fully included and participating members of their communities. One of the publications, timed to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), used five decades of research and the statements of people with disabilities themselves to conclude that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) have the best quality of life outcomes when they live in their own homes or with their families, with appropriate supports. The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) and the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) released [Community Living and Participation for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: What the Research Tells Us](#) to describe how their organizations “think the next 25 years of the ADA should translate into access, opportunity, and support for people with disabilities,” according to their Executive Directors.

The paper includes recommendations for policy makers and advocates to consider that will move us closer to realizing the goals of the ADA – equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.

In another recently released publication, [The Case for Inclusion 2015](#), Louisiana is ranked 24th in the nation in how well State Medicaid programs serve people with I/DD and their families. This is a huge improvement from 2007 when the state was ranked 44th in the annual report produced by United Cerebral Palsy. Louisiana is ranked third in the nation in the provision of family support services that keep families together and individuals at home. However, Louisiana is one of nineteen states that do not meet the 80/80 Home and Community Standard of serving at least 80 percent of all individuals with I/DD in the community and 80 percent of all resources spent on those with I/DD are for home (less than 7 residents per setting) and community support. There has been vast improvement in this area however, and Louisiana is listed as one of the most improved states.

In addition to state rankings, this publication includes strategies states have used to reduce waiver waiting lists, best practices on transition, and much more.

Both documents will prove valuable in our advocacy efforts to fully realize the promise of the ADA in Louisiana.