



## **OHIO DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL** **PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORM 2009**

The Ohio Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council is part of a network of DD Councils created by federal law to undertake capacity building and systemic change activities to enable individuals with developmental disabilities to exercise self-determination, be independent, be productive and be integrated and included in all facets of community life. We pursue these goals through advocacy and the use of demonstration grants.

The Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council recognizes:

- The fundamental role of families in making choices and decisions for their minor children
- The need for training and support so families can meet their children's needs effectively and can be effective advocates for their children
- The right of adult individuals with developmental disabilities to make choices about where and with whom they will live and how they will spend their time

Through its issues committees, the Ohio DD Council can examine and recommend important changes to pending public policy matters and existing federal, state and local laws that achieve systemic change to improve the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities. Council's position on these varying issues is developed by the Health and Employment, Children's Issues, Community Living, Outreach, Leadership, and Public Policy committees.

Tier One issues are supported by the work and grants of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council:

### Children's Issues

- Support professional and teacher development for full inclusion of students with developmental disabilities in mainstream classrooms. (state)
- Expand SCHIP and MBI for Children with Disabilities, and allow BCMH to provide service coordination and wrap-around services. (federal & state)
- Provide technical assistance, education and service coordination for foster care parents caring for children with disabilities. (state)

- Support a universal and reliable screening tool and assessment tool that identifies children with social and emotional needs.
- Increase statewide availability of individualized supports to families of children with developmental disabilities

### Community Living

- Eliminate or reduce Waiting Lists for services by providing the financial resources necessary to provide assistance or services to everyone in need.
- Increase the quality and standards of care provided by Direct Support Professionals who are paid through waiver services. (federal & state)
- Eliminate requirements in state or federal policy that individuals with disabilities live, work or play in a specialized facility. This includes expanding creative options for individuals to participate in activities that promote full community inclusion. (federal & state)
- Oppose increases in facility-based residential settings for Ohioans with disabilities. Support closure of institutional /facility based residential settings concurrent with funding increases for equivalent and level of care services in the community. (state)
- Improve public transportation services and options for people with disabilities. (state & local)
- Expand the Housing Registry Project to provide a current and valid inventory of affordable and accessible housing in Ohio. (state)
- Require minimum standards of accessibility and Visitability in all new residential construction. (state)

### Employment

- Create and support economic development incentives for employment and entrepreneurship of individuals with developmental disabilities. (state)
- Establish best practices and provide training for professionals and family members on transition planning from primary and secondary education to employment to ensure a consistent effort and positive outcome across the state of Ohio. (state)

### Health

- Create incentives for medical and dental professionals to treat individuals with disabilities, including those covered by Medicaid. (state)
- Improve education and training for medical and dental personnel to work with people with disabilities of all ages. (state)

### Leadership Development

- Encourage the placement and full participation of people with disabilities on boards, commissions, councils, etc. in local, state and federal government as well as in community organizations. (federal & state)

Tier Two issues are policy items that are developed through the course of Council's discussion and work on needed improvements to the service delivery systems that impact Ohioans with developmental disabilities and their family members:

- Support full funding of IDEA Part B and Part C
- Establish an instrument to measure the performance of public special education programs
- Create incentives for systems to assist families in obtaining adequate care and treatment for their children without relinquishing custody.
- Support policies that create financial instruments that provide parents with savings and investment tools to maximize resources for the care and well-being of their children with disabilities
- Create flexibility in the nursing home and ICF/MR reimbursement rate by deleting the reimbursement formula from statute and providing executive agency authority to set the rate
- Support expansion of an accessible, high-speed rail in Ohio
- Provide the funds and assistance needed to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain affordable, accessible housing, including increasing funding for Section 8 mainstream vouchers and Section 811 vouchers for building and rehabilitation projects.
- Support tax incentives that create accessible and affordable housing for individuals with disabilities and promote ownership of accessible and affordable housing for individuals with disabilities
- Increase accessible equipment and amenities in health care facilities throughout the state of Ohio
- Support efforts to ensure that every Ohioan has affordable health care coverage, including efforts to create Universal Health Care Coverage and efforts to expand and strengthen the State Children's Health Insurance Program
- Support new long-term care insurance options for working Americans
- Ensure access for voters with disabilities in all aspects of the election process
- Require that funding provided to assist individuals with disabilities is indexed for inflation and cost of living adjustments
- Work to guarantee continued funding for the Bureau of Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMh).