



OHIO DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORM 2008

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.

COMMUNITY LIVING COMMITTEE

Mission Statement:

To identify and promote strategies, approaches and resources that support adults with developmental disabilities as they choose where and with whom they wish to live... and children with developmental disabilities in safe and nurturing family settings.

Philosophy:

People with developmental disabilities have the right to be productive, interdependent members of their communities and of society at large.

Informal Supports:

- Eliminate institutional bias in state- and federal-funded programs for individuals with disabilities. (Community Choices Act – S. 799/HR 1621)
- Services such as housing and other supports that are traditionally covered through institutional placements should also be supported in community placements.
- Support intervention programs that enable individuals to avoid costly institutional care in order to participate in less-costly, integrated community settings.

Formal Supports:

- Increase the wages of Direct Support Professionals who are paid through waiver services provided by Medicaid(HR 1279).
- Support collective bargaining for independent providers (direct support workers) in Ohio.
- Increase the quality and standards of care provided by Direct Support Professionals through training (Ohio PATHS).
- Promote creative options to increase personal assistance services.

- 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.
- Eliminate or reduce the Waiting Lists by providing the financial resources necessary to provide assistance or services to everyone in need.

Transportation:

- Support expansion of an accessible high-speed rail in Ohio.
- Promote connect-ability of various transit systems to work together.
- Increase opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to provide input in the development and maintenance of transportation services, including the development of rules and regulations.
- Support education programs that teach people with disabilities and their families their transportation rights.
- Encourage state and local entities to pool resources to expand capacity of transportation services for individuals with disabilities, especially for demonstration projects.
- Support efforts to make all publicly and privately operated transportation services to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (HR 3985 – Over the Road Bus Transportation Accessibility Act).

Housing:

- Provide the funds and assistance needed to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain affordable, accessible housing, including increasing funding for the Section 8 mainstream voucher and Section 811 vouchers for building and rehabilitation projects.
- Support the expansion of the Housing Registry Project.
- Support Section 504 of federal law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Also support efforts to require accessible units mandated by Section 504 be made available to individuals based on need.
- Support the closing of beds in Developmental Centers and nursing homes when people are displaced from those beds into waiver services (backfilling).
- Support minimum standards of accessibility and visitability in all new residential buildings.

- Support tax incentives that would create accessible and affordable housing for individuals with disabilities and promote ownership of accessible and affordable housing for individuals with disabilities.
- Support increased involvement of people with disabilities in the development of the Consolidated Plan in local communities.
- Support passage of the Americans with Disabilities Restoration Act (HR 3195/S.1881).

CHILDREN'S ISSUES COMMITTEE

Mission Statement

To promote, evaluate and monitor the development and reinforcement of strategies and approaches that prepare and support children, young adults and their families with developmental disabilities to live, work, and be included in their community.

Education:

Vision

Increase the opportunity for children with developmental disabilities to spend more time in regular classrooms with children who do not have disabilities.

- Support full implementation of the federal IDEA regulations that exceed the minimum requirements as written by the federal government.
- Support full funding of IDEA Part C.
- Fully fund special education programs throughout the state of Ohio.
- Support reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act and oppose efforts to exclude subgroups from consideration of “adequate yearly progress.” Changes that would minimize current exemptions under adequate year progress are also supported.

Early Intervention:

Vision

Develop and implement an interagency, multidisciplinary system for the state that provides early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Identify children under three years of age who are at risk of delay or who have a developmental disability, and create simplified access to appropriate services for these children.

- Restore or replace funding for early intervention services that were lost when Ohio eliminated the Community Alternative Funding System (CAFS) through expanded EPSDT and GRF funding.

- Work to guarantee continued funding for the Bureau of Children with Medical Handicaps (BCMh).

Family Support

Vision

Ensure permanence of a family support system in Ohio for families of people with developmental disabilities.

- Increase day care subsidies for children with special needs – especially children in families that participate in Welfare to Work programs.
- Increase funding amount contained within the Ohio Family and Children First Budget for children and families in need of non-behavioral services and supports without negatively impacting funding to behavioral support services.
- Support efforts to obtain permission to allow limited-income families to access health care services provided by Medicaid for their children with severe disabilities.
- Expand the oversight and scrutiny of foster care parents caring for children with developmental disabilities.
- Eliminate incentives for families to relinquish custody of their children in order to obtain adequate care and treatment.

HEALTH & EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORM 2007

Mission Statement:

To achieve the best possible health and health care for people with developmental disabilities.

To improve and expand opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to obtain and maintain employment in the community to the best of their ability.

Employment:

- Support tax incentives that would encourage private businesses to hire and support individuals with disabilities.
- Increase funding to enable full participation in supported employment. Supported employment expenditures should include costs associated with long-term needs.
- To increase the positive impact on system improvements that strive to ensure transition planning from primary and secondary education to employment is consistent across the entire state of Ohio.
- To educate and support family members and other stakeholders regarding the array of employment options.

Health:

- Increase accessible equipment and amenities in health care facilities throughout the state of Ohio.
- Expand access to a full range of quality health care and explore options to fill the gaps in services.
- 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.
- Create incentives for medical and dental professionals to treat individuals with disabilities, including those covered by Medicaid.
- To improve education and training for medical and dental personnel to work with people with disabilities of all ages.
- Support efforts to promote inter-agency collaboration that would improve services provided through managed care to the Aged, Blind and Disabled population.
- Support the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Act (CLASS Act), which creates a long-term care insurance option for working Americans.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mission Statement:

To provide opportunities for Council members to be effective leaders in Council and in the community, to provide opportunities for skill development for future leaders of Ohio, and to collaborate with other groups to promote Council's vision.

- Encourage the placement and full participation of people with disabilities on boards, councils, etc. in the community.
- To advocate for and promote access and opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to participate in voting.
- To support participation in public meetings via telecommunication devices as a reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities.

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Mission Statement:

To identify, promote, and create through information and advocacy, policies and legislation that advance Council's vision.

Vision Statement:

To be an influential resource for public policymakers. To be an active participant in systemic public policy changes.

Budget:

- Eliminate the Statutory Appropriations Limitation.
- Restore General Revenue Fund levels to amounts that can sustain human service programs with adequate resources.
- Oppose any effort to shift cost burdens for human service programs from federal to state level government, or from state to local level government (devolution).
- Ensure that funding provided to assist individuals with disabilities is indexed for inflation and cost of living adjustments.
- Support retained savings policies that allow cost savings achieved by a department to be used to reach more people in need of assistance.