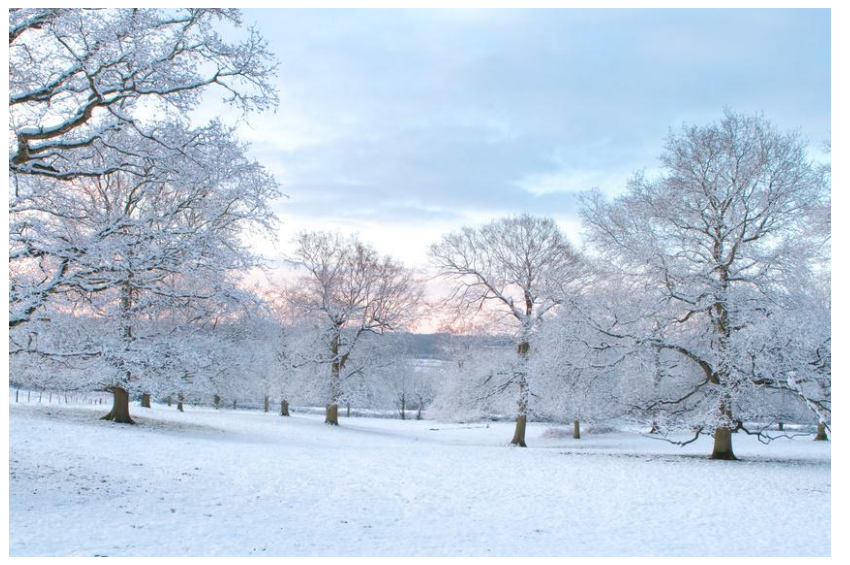




Florida
Developmental
Disabilities
Council, Inc.

124 Marriott Drive, Suite 203
Tallahassee, FL 32301-2981
Phone: 850-488-4180
Toll Free: 800-580-7801
TDD Toll Free: 888-488-8633
Fax: 850-922-6702
Email: admin@fddc.org
www.fddc.org



Winter 2012 NEWSLETTER

Vote in 2012.....	Page 1
Director's Message.....	Page 2
Project SEARCH.....	Page 3
Project PIECE.....	Page 4
Let's Get Everyone to Work!...	Page 5



In 2012, Americans will elect a President, members of Congress and many state and local officials as well. Individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, caregivers and friends can make their voices heard by registering and voting in the 2012 elections. The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council and The Arc of Florida are implementing the “Your Vote, Your Voice” campaign to encourage all Floridians, especially those with disabilities, to register and vote in the 2012 elections. For more information on why and how you should register and vote, go to www.fddc.org.

Council Members

Reneé Valletutti - *Brevard County* - **Chair**

Kathy McAllister - *Sarasota County*
Vice-Chair

Susan Gold, Ed.D. - *The Mailman Center*
- Treasurer

Rixys Alfonso - *Broward County*

Pat Archer - *Palm Beach County*

Ronni Bianco - *Miami-Dade County* -
Member-at-Large

Cathy Bishop - *Department of Education,
Bureau of Exceptional Ed. & Student Services*

Mike Hansen - *Agency for Persons with
Disabilities*

Sylvia James-Miller - *Marion County*

Susan Kabot, Ed.D. - *Sarasota County*

Shirley Kervin - *Department of Elder Affairs -
Community and Support Services*

Beth Kidder - *Agency for Health Care
Administration - Medicaid Program Development*

George King - *St. Lucie County* - **Member-
at-Large**

Kathy Leigh - *Bradford County*

Aleisa McKinlay - *Department of Education -
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*

Barbara Moss - *Broward County*

David Ott, Ph.D. - *Seminole County* -
Member-at-Large

Susan Redmon - *Gadsden County*
- Member-at-Large

Tricia Riccardi - *Citrus County*

Sara Romine - *Polk County*

Vacant - *Department of Health - Children's
Medical Services*

Ann Smith - *Santa Rosa County*

Michael Smith - *Escambia County*

Casey Stewart - *Broward County*

Robert Whitney - *Disability Rights Florida*

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The Council is a non-profit organization that receives its funding from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities. The Council operates independently of any state agency or department.



Director's Message

On August 15, 2011, after two years of hard work, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council completed and submitted their 5 Year State Plan to the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), the national agency that has oversight of the Council. This has been a long journey, and we have had input and assistance from many people in the disability community.

Our new plan, which we will put into operation during 2012-2016, has seen a shift in the Council's focus and how we do our work to a more concerted focus on system change and more detailed strategic planning. This process has also generated enthusiasm and commitment among FDDC staff and the Council members to carry out the goals and objectives of the Plan. The Council has committed to undertaking some really exciting initiatives over the next five years that can make a huge difference in the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Please go to www.fdcc.org to view the State Plan Goals and Objectives, the State Plan Blueprint, which is the Council work plan for what we want to accomplish over the next five years, and the Complete 5 Year State Plan as submitted to ADD. We also have a Spanish version of the State Plan Goals and Objectives.

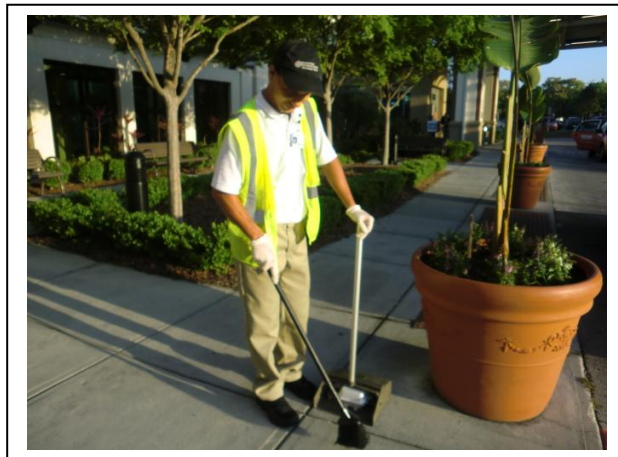
While we do not have a Spanish version of the Blueprint or the Complete 5 Year State Plan as submitted to ADD, we will translate these documents to Spanish upon request.

I am very proud of all the hard work that went into creating this plan, and I want to thank everyone who helped make it a reality.

Debra Dowds

Council Initiatives

Many Council initiatives focus on programs that provide individuals with developmental disabilities with the skills needed to find and keep a job, job placement assistance, job coaching, on-the-job support, and career advancement opportunities. Below are some success stories resulting from these Council initiatives.



Melvin

Melvin, a bi-lingual individual, works at Winter Park Memorial Hospital. He was offered a job as a groundskeeper in March, 2011, and has excelled in his position. Melvin wakes up at 5 a.m. every morning to catch two buses to work, Monday thru Friday. He is consistently on time and maintains his work integrity as a groundskeeper. Due to his willingness to learn new jobs, Melvin has been trained to do various tasks outside of his position, such as pressure washing and floor maintenance. Melvin also assists with setting up and breaking down the rooms where special events are held. With an outstanding personality and friendly attitude, Melvin has developed a wonderful relationship and gained a great circle of natural support from co-workers around the hospital.



Edward

Edward was a dedicated worker from day one, learning the different tasks and always asking to help with new things. Less than two months after beginning his internship, Edward was asked if he would like to be featured in the Florida Hospital monthly magazine (distributed across all Florida Hospital locations in the state) as well as the company newsletter. This was a very proud moment for Edward and his family. Edward's mother expressed how wonderful the program had affected Edward's mood and passion for living. Edward was later offered a job and continues to build his relationships with his co-workers and supervisors.



Jordan

When Jordan began his job search, he had poor social skills, would not provide eye contact and would not interact with anyone. Now he has great social skills and employability skills. These new attributes shine in the hotel package room where he now works. This job takes speed and customer service skills when delivering packages to hotel guests. With the assistance of the staff in the package room and his job coaches, Jordan was able to gain the self-assurance he needed to succeed. Jordan is now able to interact with guests, answer the phones and attend to guest requests confidently and independently. Jordan is a prime example of amplifying the abilities of an individual for success instead of focusing on disability.

Program for Inclusive Early Care and Education (PIECE) Project



Attendees at the February 2011 PIECE training in Clearwater.

Project PIECE was designed to develop a network of early child care and education providers who would be trained on evidence-based inclusive practices to improve inclusion of young children with developmental disabilities, developmental delays and who are at risk in Florida's early child care and education programs. During the first four years of the project, Pinellas Early Learning Coalition was hired by the Council to develop, implement and provide on-going training, coaching and monitoring for the project. They also identified potential barriers and challenges and assisted with resolution. During that time, PIECE focused on implementing the concept of Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) in early education centers in order to ensure young children are in a stable and consistent early learning environment and experience success.

PIECE also assisted with identifying young children who may need early intervention services and referred them for evaluation when needed. In the fourth year of the project, ten early learning coalitions from different areas of the state sent their inclusion specialists to a four-day training designed to develop and expand the use of PBS in those coalitions. During this training attendees learned to use materials and practices that they could take back to their centers and in turn teach others to implement not only PBS but also Beyond Differences in Diagnosis – a program that teaches educators how to include students with developmental disabilities in general education programs. During the fifth year of this project a national expert on PBS has sought child care centers whose staff have been trained in PBS and who agree to implement program-wide PBS. The outcome of the fifth year of this project will be the creation of five model programs spread throughout the state where interested persons can come to learn how they can set up similar programs at their centers.

New Council Initiatives

Let's Get Everyone to Work: Will develop three videos to highlight the great work happening around Florida to employ individuals with developmental disabilities. These videos will provide self-advocates, families, businesses, school districts, legislators and higher education personnel with a tool to replicate the best practices leading to employment throughout the state of Florida. This tool will include three videos: Video #1 will have a target audience of self-advocates, school districts and families; Video #2 will target the business community, legislators, and community stakeholders, i.e., Centers for Independent Living, ARCs, UCP, and state agencies; Video #3 will be for use in higher education settings. The Council wants future teachers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, social workers and others who will work with people with developmental disabilities to see people with disabilities as capable and productive citizens who only need training and support to take their rightful place in the workforce and be contributing members of every community. The videos will be ready for distribution December of 2012.

Rural Routes to Employment: Will develop employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities who have graduated from high school, live in rural areas, and are unemployed. This project will focus on three to five rural communities to identify the barriers to employment that face individuals with developmental disabilities, find out how employment needs in rural communities can be addressed, and assist the rural communities to develop and implement a plan for employing individuals with developmental disabilities. The project will also foster the interest and partnership of community supports in these rural areas to improve employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Employ Me 1st: Will develop an Employment First strategy for Florida where the expectation is employment for all individuals with developmental disabilities. This involves working with the key players in Florida to create the policies and practices that will support individuals with developmental disabilities in finding and keeping a job.

Physician Training for Adults with Developmental Disabilities: Will develop a training program for physicians about how to provide effective care to adults with developmental disabilities. The availability of primary and specialty care physicians who treat adults with developmental disabilities has been consistently identified as one of the most critical needs for people with developmental disabilities in Florida. The importance of physician education with regard to caring for adults with developmental disabilities cannot be overestimated.

Physician education can improve overall quality of care and reduce potential misdiagnosis. It is important to provide this training to physicians who treat adults with developmental disabilities so that they can provide the best possible care.

The Florida Physician Education in Development Disabilities (FL PEDD) consortium will be established. A total of 12 hours of continuing education will be presented online. These courses will be offered for CME credit, free of charge to Florida-based participants, and will be hosted online. The courses will be marketed to practicing Florida primary care physicians. During the first year of the project the FL PEDD will begin to work with medical residency programs in order to determine how best to integrate topics related to the field of developmental medicine into their curriculum.

Waitlist Strategic Plan: Will conduct research and develop a comprehensive written strategic plan to address the Developmental Disabilities Home & Community Based Services Waiver Wait List. It is anticipated that the completed strategic plan will be used to provide verifiable information and recommendations to key state decision makers such as the Governor and the Legislature on this issue.

Developing Community Coalitions - The Council, the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) are developing three sustainable coalitions in Florida that eventually can support the development of informal and volunteer services to help meet identified unmet needs of individuals with developmental disabilities, including those who are currently on Florida's Medicaid Waiver waitlist. A long-term goal of this project is to form grassroots coalitions throughout the state that are capable of identifying and increasing access to generic or shared services that can be utilized by the larger community. During the first year of this project, coalition building will take place in APD Area 1, Area 2B and Area 3. Participants of each coalition will meet monthly to discuss the needs of their communities, conduct resource mapping and networking activities, and develop a cohesive structure for their coalitions.

To learn more about the Council, including information on free publications, go to www.fddc.org.

You can also learn more about the Council by going to the Council Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/TheFDCC>