



FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL, INC.

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**“Inclusion NOW!” Strategic Action Plan
Executive Summary**

This plan is the product of an extensive review of where Florida stands today in regard to inclusion practices in comparison to other states across the nation and well-documented evidence-based best inclusion practices. The plan recognizes that people with disabilities have the same hopes and aspirations to live, learn, work, play, and participate in life experiences and responsibilities as valued members of the community. The plan seeks to align public policy, financing, and services in a manner which promotes individual choice, independence, self-sufficiency, productivity, and responsibility. The plan sets forth an agenda for large systems change and calls upon elected officials, state agency leaders, and service providers to join with persons with disabilities and their families in building a statewide capacity that will move Florida forward in achieving the goal of full inclusion in all aspects of community life for all people.

Education Goal

All individuals are educated within general education classrooms and have continuous access to the regular education curriculum and instruction.

- Infants and toddlers have access to developmental screening as a routine part of well baby care.
- Infants and toddlers have access to comprehensive developmental evaluations and intervention services within their home and other natural child-care settings.
- All persons with disabilities complete their education within inclusive general education classrooms which a) value diversity and b) achieve academic, vocational and community living skills needed to transition into their adult lives as self-sustaining, productive, and contributing citizens.
- All teachers and administrators receive professional preparation and ongoing support to meet the diverse needs of all students within general education classrooms.
- School personnel value and engage parents as partners in matters related to the education of their children.
- Florida moves beyond compliance with IDEA and practices inclusion within all schools based on shared values that recognize the learning potential of all students.

Health Promotion and Care Goal

All individuals have access to comprehensive, quality medical, dental, and vision health care in their community throughout their lives.

- People with disabilities and their families are essential partners on the health care team and the ultimate decision-makers for their care.
- Prevention and health promotion provide the focus of the health care delivery system for all persons with disabilities.
- All people with disabilities have access to comprehensive and seamless health care sufficient to meet their needs regardless of their age, level of disability, income, or where they live.
- People with disabilities receive health care from competent, sensitive, caring providers of their choice.
- Transition from pediatric to adult care ensures continuity in care, the identification of a medical home, and access to a comprehensive array of adult health care services.

Employment Goal

All individuals have the opportunity to contribute to the economic viability of their community as workers and consumers of services and goods.

Persons with disabilities have a range of integrated employment opportunities which recognize their diversity of interest, career stage, and continuing desire for self improvement.

- A competitive living wage which promotes self-sufficiency and independence is the standard for compensation.
- Integrated employment will ensure that persons with disabilities are present in natural proportion to the larger workforce within any particular work setting.
- Accessible benefit management and coordination is provided by persons with the knowledge and skills required to maximize all public, private, and personal resources available to persons with disabilities who have earned income.
- Economic self-sufficiency, independence, and self-reliance are the underpinnings for how services and supports are provided to individuals who are employed.

Community Living Goal

All individuals a) have access to safe affordable housing that includes both home ownership and rental opportunities and b) can participate in the full range of life experiences within their community.

- Persons with disabilities have control over resources including waiver funding that allows flexible person-centered and individualized spending for services and supports that promote self-sufficiency, productivity, and community inclusion.
- Waiver funding is intentionally used to leverage, support, and nurture mainstream resources and natural relationships whenever possible.
- Performance and outcome accountability systems within public funding programs are based on measurable quality of life outcomes which are defined in terms of individual self-sufficiency, independence, productivity, personal responsibility, and community participation.
- Individual supports provided to persons with disabilities are reliable and provided by personnel who are competent in person-centered services.
- A range of affordable transportation options are available to support day-to-day connections that are essential to community participation.