

Winter 2010
Newsletter



NACDD 2010 National Conference.

Executive Director's Message

**Message from Sharon Lewis, Commissioner,
Administration on Developmental Disabilities**

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D i s a b i l i t i e s
C o u n c i l

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National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities 2010 Annual Conference

From Sunday, September 26 through Tuesday, September 28, nearly 300 people crowded the Renaissance Hotel at SeaWorld in Orlando, Florida for three days of informational workshops, inspiring speakers, and fellowship. Beginning with the opening night reception, where hundreds were entertained and danced to the music of the Sunshine City Rock Band from Tallahassee, FL, to the final keynote speaker at Tuesday's luncheon, a wonderful time was had by all.



Council Members

Renee Valletutti - Brevard County -
Chair

Kathy Henderson - Sarasota County
Vice-Chair

Vacant - *Treasurer*

Rixys Alfonso – Broward County

Pat Archer – Palm Beach County

Jim DeBeaugrine - Agency for Persons
with Disabilities

Ronni Bianco - Miami-Dade County

Susan Gold, Ed.D. – The Mailman Center

Sylvia James-Miller – Marion County

Susan Kabot – Sarasota County

Shirley Kervin - Department of Elder
Affairs

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

George King – St. Lucie County

Kathy Leigh – Bradford County

Bambi Lockman - Department of
Education - Exceptional Education &
Student Services

Karmel McCarthy – Broward County

Barbara Moss – Broward County

David Ott – Seminole County

William Palmer - Department of
Education - Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation

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

Tricia Riccardi – Citrus County

Sara Romine – Polk County

Phyllis Sloyer, Ph.D. - Department of
Health - Children's Medical Services

Ann Smith - Santa Rosa County

Michael Smith - Escambia County

Phil Stevens, Ph.D., PE - Polk County -
Member-at-Large

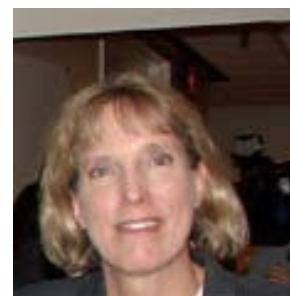
Casey Stewart - Broward County

Robert Whitney – Advocacy Center for
Persons with Disabilities

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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



Sharon Lewis, the new Commissioner of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), is one busy lady. She was a guest speaker at the annual conference of the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities in Orlando this past September, then she travelled across the country for ADD's "Envisioning the Future" Summit Series. In her opening remarks at the Philadelphia Summit (on page 4), Sharon did an excellent job of articulating the essence of the mission of the Developmental Disabilities Act.

These summits were an opportunity for self-advocates, family members, allies and professionals to describe their vision of the future for individuals with developmental disabilities. I had the honor of attending the summit held in Orlando on November 8, and it was a truly moving experience.

The ideas expressed at the summits will be used as part of the process to develop goals and priorities in a Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

A draft of the Five-Year Strategic Plan will be posted on the ADD website for public comment in March, 2011. The final plan will be posted on the website in April 2011. I urge you to review the draft and provide your comments and share your vision for the future of individuals with developmental disabilities. You can provide your comments in March 2011 by going to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/add/> and locating the public comment section.

Debra Dowds
Executive Director

Commissioner Sharon Lewis' Opening remarks at the Administration on Developmental Disabilities Envisioning the Future Summit in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

We're glad to have you and we're glad to get started. I thought I would start our day with a story. Early this morning my daughter called to say hello before she left for school. In the course of the conversation we had, she asked me what we were doing here today. I said that I was listening to people from all across the country, talking to us about how to make this a more welcoming and inclusive place for people with developmental disabilities. She said, "You mean for people like me?" When I replied, "Yes, that's right", she said, "Well, but what about for Rae?" (Her sister.) I had to pause and I had to correct myself. "You're right. We need to think about how to make sure all people have friends, can go to school together, can work together, can play together, and can live together, both people with disabilities and people without disabilities. You are absolutely right."

I thought that that was a fitting conversation to start our day together as we embark on this, the first of our listening sessions. I am very excited to have this opportunity with all of you to hear about your priorities, your ideas, your hopes, your fears, and your dreams for our communities, and to think together about how we can ensure that people with developmental disabilities have the rights and the privileges that the Americans with Disabilities Act affords them; equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.

We have over 40 people planning to speak today, and each person has a perspective we need to hear. Over the course of the next two months we anticipate hearing from hundreds of individuals concerned about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through these listening sessions. All of us are here to listen, to understand and to learn.

To each of you who have come as presenters, thank you. Thank you for your commitment, for your willingness to share your stories, the ideas from your heads, and the emotions from your hearts. It takes a lot of courage to do this. We appreciate your leadership and your conviction. At the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act a few months ago, President Obama remarked on his vision for our country, and I quote, "To look out for one another. To advance opportunity and prosperity for all of our people. To constantly expand the meaning of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. To move America forward. That's what we did with the ADA."

And that's what we hope to continue to do with your help at the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. To look out for one another, to improve our society so everyone, including people with disabilities, are welcomed, accepted, supported, and have the opportunity to be contributing members of our diverse communities pursuing rich and meaningful lives.

During the most recent reauthorization of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act in 2000, the sponsor of the legislation, Senator Jim Jeffords charged the Administration on Developmental Disabilities with the responsibility to pursue and join with

other executive branch entities in activities that will improve the choices, opportunities and services for individuals with developmental disabilities. He also remarked upon how much individuals with developmental disabilities can accomplish when they have access to the same choices and opportunities available to others, and that it is ADD's rule to support self-advocates in their system's changed agenda.

As Commissioner, I take both of these responsibilities very seriously. We are working hard to collaborate with many of our federal partners who provide the resources, the monitoring and the oversight for many of the services and supports that families and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities receive in their local communities. Our colleagues at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services, the Social Security Administration, the Health and Human Services Office on Disability, the Administration on Aging, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor and the Department of Justice have been invited to participate with us in this process, and many of them will be joining us at various points along the way, reading through your comments and your submissions, and considering everything we hear.

Additionally, we are partnering with self-advocates and their allies across the country to ensure that self-advocates have a strong voice throughout ADD strategic planning process, both in these listening and prioritizing sessions, as well as through a series of meetings next year focused solely on the self-advocacy movement. The voices of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are absolutely critical and must be central to all of our efforts.

The DD Act lays out our mission and our purpose very clearly. We are; to assure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of, and have access to, needed community services, individualized supports and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, integration and inclusion in all facets of community life. The expectations established in these two federal civil rights laws, the ADA and the DD Act, provide a tremendous foundation for us to build upon. While the ADA has protected the civil rights of all Americans with disabilities for over 20 years now, for nearly 50 years the legacy of the DD Act has acknowledged our country's responsibility to protect the rights of and ensure equal opportunity for some of our most vulnerable citizens; people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Services and supports across the lifespan are critical for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. I don't think anyone here today would disagree with that, but how we deliver those supports, what we focus upon and prioritize continues to evolve and to change over time. Not so very long ago we thought that the delivery of services through congregate institutions was the most humane and appropriate thing we could do. We thought that doctors knew best and we focused primarily on medical care. Quality of life and quality of relationships were often secondary considerations. We certainly did not think about education, let alone employment and economic self-sufficiency. Our expectations as a society were embarrassingly low. Thankfully, much of our country has moved beyond this outdated thinking. However, the old ways still linger in some places, and we still have people living in institutions, children attending segregated schools, and few supports for people with significant disabilities to pursue employment. This, despite the fact that we know that people with disabilities, including people who have been labeled as "profoundly disabled" or "medically fragile" or "severely affected", benefit most when they are supported to pursue the same goals

and aspirations that most of us have; to live where and how we choose, to have access to school and education, to have the chance to do work that we like, to earn and maintain financial resources, and most importantly, to have real love in our lives -- meaningful, reciprocal relationships in our communities with friends, neighbors, spouses, children and families.

We know that with supports, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can exercise choice, control and self-determination, and they can achieve many things including completing elementary and secondary school, going on to college, working in competitive and integrated employment, falling in love and raising families, and participating as fully as contributing members of our interdependent, integrated and inclusive communities. Members who both receive and give support to other in a variety of ways. To expect anything less is simply disrespectful and would be a loss to all of us as a country and as a society. How we get there, what we prioritize in order to achieve this vision is the question we hope that you will help us answer.

As we begin, I leave you with this quote from Senator Harkin on the passage of the last DD Act reauthorization from his floor remarks. "The toughest barriers faced by people with disabilities are not architectural. They are attitudinal. They are not in the environment. They are in our hearts and in our minds. When people with disabilities are integrated throughout our communities we are given the opportunity to change our attitudes from ones based on stereotypes, fear and ignorance to ones based on admiration, acceptance and affection. We all gain from the opportunity to experience people with developmental disabilities as friends, as neighbors, as coworkers and as classmates."

New Council Officers and Members

The Council met in September and elected new officers. They are: **Renee Valletutti** of Brevard County, *Chair*; **Kathy Henderson**, of Sarasota County, *Vice-Chair*; **Susan Redmon** of Gadsden County, *Elected Member-at-Large*; **Phil Stevens**, Ph.D., PE, of Polk County, *Elected Member-at-Large*. **Ronni Bianco**, of Dade County, was appointed *Member at Large* by the Chair, as was **Susan Gold**, Ed.D, of the Center for Excellence, The Mailman Center. In addition, 11 new Council members were appointed by Governor Charlie Crist. Please join us in welcoming these new members to the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.

Rixys Alfonso - Broward County – Ms. Alfonso, of Pembroke Pines, is Vice President of Development for Herb's Help, Inc. She was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

Pat Archer - Palm Beach – Mr. Archer, of Boca Raton, is a front-end bagger with Publix Super Markets. He was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

Sylvia James-Miller - Marion County – Ms. Miller, of Ocala, is a Parent/Partner at the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of Florida. She was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

Susan Kabot - Sarasota County – Ms. Kabot, of Plantation, is the director of clinical and therapeutic services for NOVA Southeastern University. She was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

George King - St. Lucie County – Mr. King, of Port St. Lucie, is a deputy officer with the St. Lucie Sheriff's Office. He was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

Kathy Leigh - Bradford County - Ms. Leigh, of Starke, is a receptionist with the ARC of Bradford County. She was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

Barbara Moss - Broward County – Ms. Moss, of Miramar, is retired. She was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

David Ott - Seminole County – Mr. Ott, of Oviedo, is clinical director of Devereaux Florida. He was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

Tricia Ricardo - Orange County – Ms. Riccardi, of Inverness, is president of The Dream Society. She was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

Sara Romine - Polk County - Ms. Romine, of Lakeland, is a student at Polk State College. She was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

Robert Whitney - Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities – Mr. Whitney, of Oviedo, is Executive Director of the Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities. He was appointed for a term beginning October 7, 2010 and ending September 30, 2014.

News and Notes

Rosa's Law - On October 8, 2010 President Obama signed Rosa's Law (S. 2781) which changes references in federal health, education and labor laws from "mental retardation" to "intellectual disabilities." It makes the language in federal law consistent with that used by the Centers for Disease Control, the health arm of the United Nations, and the White House through the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities.

Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) sponsored the bill with bi-partisan support including that of Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, and Labor & Pensions Committee. Senator Mikulski was inspired to sponsor this bill by Rosa Marcellino, a Maryland constituent who has Down syndrome, and her family, who do not allow the R-word to be used in their home or in reference to Rosa.

Florida's iBudget - An exciting new era for the Agency for Persons with Disabilities began in August when APD announced the site for the initial phase-in of the new individualized budget concept called iBudget Florida. It's the new system for people enrolled on the Medicaid waiver that pays for supports and services so they may live in their local community.

Customers, families, waiver support coordinators, providers, and advocates came together last year to develop the iBudget Florida plan with the support of agency staff. iBudget Florida was approved by the Legislature in the spring as the new direction for delivering services to people through APD's Medicaid waiver. Federal approval must be received before the initial phase-in begins. The approval is expected in late 2010 or early 2011.

APD has selected several North Florida counties for the initial implementation, and APD held several meetings to tell stakeholders about the program. The first two meetings were held in Tallahassee in Leon County. The third meeting was held in Madison County, and the last meeting was in Carrabelle in Franklin County. The attendees were very interested in how iBudget will work and the agency's plans for moving it from concept to reality.

iBudget Florida implementation will begin in Franklin, Leon, Wakulla, Gadsden, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Jefferson counties. APD serves approximately 1,000 waiver-enrolled customers in this region. During 2011, iBudget will be expanded to Bay, Gulf, Calhoun, Jackson, Washington, and Holmes counties. APD has already notified people of the phase-in plans by letter and e-mail. APD plans to eventually expand iBudget Florida statewide over the next few years.

By selecting the Tallahassee region, it allows the agency's headquarters employees to support the local area office staff, customers, families, waiver support coordinators, and providers in implementing iBudget Florida. Its size will allow for a manageable implementation of the new program while permitting APD to collect data for evaluation.

Individualized budgeting is a concept that is being used in many other states for people enrolled in developmental disabilities Medicaid waivers. iBudget Florida is designed to make the funding process fair and equitable for all Medicaid waiver customers. It will provide for more self-direction for the person to direct their care. The new system will also allow the agency to have more budget control and financial predictability.

Some of the customer benefits of iBudget are:

- Greater ability to choose services that matter to them, given their unique situations.
- Greater flexibility for customers to respond to changing needs.
- Reduced bureaucracy and "red tape."
- Support coordinators freed to focus on providing help that makes a real difference.
- Confidence that funding is fair compared to other customers who are similarly situated.
- Reduced likelihood of policy changes that cause significant disruption due to budget deficits.
- Security of a financially stable system that will be there to serve customers down the road.
- Greater control over their lives.
- Greater opportunity for APD to use new funds to serve people on the waiting list rather than resolve deficits.

The proposed waiver services that will be available under the iBudget are:

- Life Skills Development – includes Adult Day Training, Supported Employment, Residential Habilitation, Companion Care, Mentoring and Community Training Services
- Supplies and Equipment - includes Consumable Medical Supplies, Durable Medical Equipment and Supplies, Environmental Accessibility Adaptations, Personal Emergency Response Systems
- Personal Supports – includes In-Home Supports, Respite (only for children in the family home), Personal Care and Companion Care for adults in their own or the family home
- Residential Services – includes Residential Habilitation (standard), Residential Habilitation (Behavior Focused), Residential Habilitation (Intensive Behavior), Specialized Medical Home Care, and Supported Living Coaching

- Support Coordination – includes Limited, Full and Enhanced Support Coordination
- Therapeutic Supports – includes Private Duty Nursing, Residential Nursing, Skilled Nursing, Dietician Services, Respiratory Therapy, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Specialized Mental Health Counseling, Behavior Analysis Services, Behavior Assistant Services
- Transportation –
- Dental - includes Adult Dental Services

2010 Legislative Awards - The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council presented three legislative awards this year to Senator Andy Gardiner, Representative Bill Heller and Rep. Rick Kriseman for their extraordinary contribution to the State of Florida and its citizens with developmental disabilities.



Council Member Judy Owen (second from right) and FDDC Public Policy and Advocacy Coordinator Margaret Hooper (right) present the 2010 Legislative Awards to Representative Rick Kriseman (far left) and Representative Bill Heller (second from left) at the annual SPARC Conference in September

UPDATES ON COUNCIL PROJECTS

The FIT Club

The participants at Gulfstream Goodwill Industries, Inc., in West Palm Beach, Florida, are experiencing life enhancing changes through the implementation of the FIT Club Health and Wellness Program.

The FIT Club offers persons with developmental disabilities the opportunity to participate in activities and receive education that promotes healthy living. Through behavior changes and heightened understanding of the importance of making choices that support a healthy lifestyle, participants have experienced increased self-esteem, health awareness, and weight loss in supportive community and facility-based environments.

The FIT Club program is guided by an active Advisory Committee comprised of staff, parents, participants, support providers and therapists who met quarterly to review activities, and discuss recommendations for the future.



*“Exercising makes me strong and yoga helps me to relax” **David G.***

The 5-phase program is modeled after and mentored by Goodwill Industries in Cincinnati and utilizes an exceptional curriculum developed by the University of Ohio, Columbus, specifically for persons with developmental disabilities. The program covers: Physical Activity and Nutrition: Making Healthy Choices; Changing Lifestyle: What Are the Things I Do; Making Lifestyle Choices: Doing My Program; New Lifestyle: Keeping My Program Going.

After receiving consent and release notes from doctors with the initial reporting of blood pressure, weight and BMI (our program success indicators), and the completion of the pre-program health and self-esteem awareness assessments, participants begin 12-week rotations and can choose to participate in community Weight Watchers meetings, personal training in their in-house gym, yoga classes at a local studio, the walking club, Wii Fit games, and health and nutrition classes, and guest speakers.

**At the end of our first year:
31 people walked 172 miles
77% gained improved Self-Esteem
54 lbs were lost at Weight Watchers
75% improved their Health Awareness
115 Personal Training Sessions were held
33 classes were attended at the Yoga Studio
64 Health and Nutrition Classes were taught**



The Fit Club staff and participants were very proud to have influenced the CEO of Weight Watchers International to encourage his local chapters to collaborate with Goodwill agencies across the country as a result of our local club participation. Going forward the program will make a concerted effort to educate parents, caregivers and group home staff to support and encourage healthy living in all aspects of a participant's life. Internally we intend to replicate parts of the program in three additional agency rehab sites which serve persons with developmental disabilities. Based on participant input, the new program year will also bring the inclusion of dance classes that will focus on the introduction of basic steps and will build to become a fun and high energy program using videos and live instruction.

Behavioral Success for Parental Success

The Behavioral Success for Parental Success series offers skills training designed to address the extreme behaviors of children in order to preserve the family unit and keep children in their own homes and included in all aspects of life – home, school and community. If parents are unable to learn and utilize specialized strategies, their children's severe behavioral challenges can often throw the family units into chaos which can lead to abuse, neglect and costly residential placement. Through this series, parents are taught flexible and creative strategies to maintain the family unity and promote the success of their children and themselves. A session is planned every three weeks, beginning in December 2010, and continuing through August 2011. The first session, titled Designing the Ideal Home Space for Your Child with Autism, is scheduled for Dec 14 from 6-8 p.m. at the ARC Broward main campus in Sunrise. For more information go to info@arcbrowardlearning.com or call 954-746-9400.

Project Discover

The Martin County School District Department of Vocational, Adult and Community Education, in collaboration with Helping People Succeed, Inc. (HPS), developed Project Discover with the goal of expediting students' movement through transition services, thus reducing the need for state-funded job coaching and other customized employment related services.

To accomplish this, the project offered additional workshops to train personnel to implement the Discovery process within the school system. Over the past three years personnel in Martin County Schools have been taught to implement the Discovery process in the schools. The major outcome of this project, besides students gaining work experience and employment in their areas of strengths and desires, has been the inclusion of the Discovery process throughout the Martin County School District curriculum.



Kayla works four hours a day, five days a week at a compounding pharmacy where she packages, separates and sorts pills.

ELC Pinellas

The Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County is a project that trains, coaches, and provides mutual learning for participants to continue to support inclusive early care and education environments. The program developed a network of early care and education providers trained on evidence-based inclusive practices. A focused expert responsible for the program development, implementation and ongoing monitoring resulted in quickly identifying potential barriers and challenges and assist with resolution. The outcome of this project was that over a three-year period no pre-school child at any of the childcare centers where this project was implemented was expelled from a childcare setting. All of the staff at the twelve childcare facilities was trained in Positive Behavioral Supports and Beyond Differences and Diagnosis.

They also created a mentoring network among the twelve childcare centers participating in the project where they give feedback and assistance to each other when challenging behaviors need to be discussed. Year four has been approved to train five more Early Learning Coalition Inclusion specialists to use these research based strategies to improve the quality and success of children in early care settings and remain in inclusive setting.

Special Education Law and Advocacy Workshops



Advocacy Center staff (from left to right) Katherine Dutton Mitchell, Ann Siegel, and Catalina Urquijo lead a discussion during the IDEA workshop in Ft. Lauderdale.

During August 2010, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council and The Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities presented four free workshops throughout the state of Florida on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The workshops covered a variety of topics, including: Eligibility and Evaluation, Universal Education (Inclusion), IEP and Advocacy Tips, School Discipline, Transition from High School to Post-School activities (work, school), and Problem Solving (with a Question and Answer session). The workshops helped over 200 participants, parents, teachers, self-advocates, attorneys and lay advocates to be better informed about their IDEA rights.

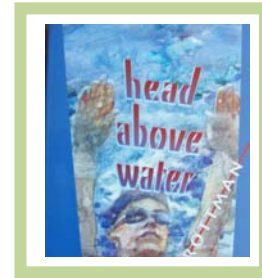
Implementation of Universal Educational Practices

This project was designed to collaborate with DOE/BEESS, Florida Inclusion Network (FIN), and other key stakeholders, to work with school districts on implementing best practices/evidenced-based practices for universal education. The outcome of the first year of this project is that three school districts in the state of Florida have been trained and completed the Best Practices in Inclusive Educational Practices assessment (BPIE). Action plans have been developed and plans are underway to possibly expand the project to include two more districts and add an assistive technology component to the project.

Higher Education and Special Education Survey

It is unclear how many university and college general education teacher preparation programs include a requirement for students to take courses in special education in order to receive a degree in education. The Council funded this survey to gain knowledge about the information and training that is provided in teacher preparation programs throughout the state of Florida pertaining to including and educating student with disabilities. Check the Council website after January 1 for the outcome of this survey.

Disability Awareness Through Literacy



The Florida Department of Education (DOE) has distributed their Disabilities Resource Guide to school districts throughout Florida. In this guide is a list of resources and books meant to educate students on inclusion of persons with disabilities into schools and communities. The Council selected some books off of this list and researched other books to include in the Council's disability literacy program. The Council provided over 3,200 preschool, elementary and middle/high school level books (see examples above) to public and private schools in order to assist them in educating students on inclusive practices through literature. The Disabilities Resource Guide is available on the DOE website at <http://www.fl DOE.org/ese/pdf/DHA-Resource2010.pdf>.

Inclusive Recreation

The goal of this program is to enhance the quality of life for children with developmental disabilities by encouraging participation in, and access to, barrier-free physical activities and recreation programs. Improving and making these programs more readily available has increased participation in the programs from both children with developmental disabilities and those without disabilities. These shared recreational activities lead to the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual growth and development of everyone since the more experience we have of one another,

regardless of our differences and abilities, the stronger our interpersonal ties and commitments will be and the more respect we will have for each other. The outcome of the last three years has been that City and County Recreation staff in Leon and Pasco Counties has been trained on inclusive recreational practices and an Inclusive Recreational Manual has been developed.

Early Steps Plan for Sustainability

As the Early Steps model has changed to better meet the needs of the families it serves, available service providers have dwindled. Providing services within the natural environment is less cost efficient for providers, and at times their costs in providing services exceed reimbursement rates. There are also problems with insurance and Medicaid billing which becomes another costly process leading to attrition of service providers. Florida has reached a crisis point in its attempts to meet the demands as the cost of services increase, needs increase, and providers drop out of the program. A Workgroup has come up recommendations for strategies needed to sustain Florida's Part C Early Steps. A report on these recommendations will be featured in the next Council newsletter.

Guardianship Workshops

At the four guardianship workshops held statewide during August 2010, individuals with disabilities and their families learned about options for providing decision-making assistance other than guardian advocacy and guardianship. Workshops included information on Special Needs Trusts, how to access low-cost legal services and other legal resources, as well as federal and state laws that protect the civil rights of persons with disabilities. Everyone attending the workshops received a copy of **"Lighting the Way to Guardianship and Other Decision-Making Alternatives"**, a document that provides accurate and timely information regarding guardianship and alternatives to guardianship for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. To download a copy of this curriculum guide, go to www.fddc.org/publications. Or call the Council Toll Free at 1-800-580-7801 or TDD Toll Free at 888-488-8633 and request a copy.



Sara Romine, recently appointed to the Council by Governor Crist, speaks at a Guardianship Workshop held in Fort Walton Beach in August 2010.

Early Childhood and Special Education Survey

The Children's Forum conducted a survey of both providers and families in 2000-2001. Since that was eight years ago and childcare facilities can be transient and there have been efforts throughout the state to increase the number of children with disabilities in typical childcare settings, a new study was needed. This survey assisted in taking an accurate count of the number of children with disabilities, birth to five years of age, in childcare settings throughout Florida. The outcome of this survey was for the Child Development and Education task force to be better informed about the needs related to childhood screening and inclusion in order to determine what next steps are needed throughout the state. The results of this survey showed that about 50% of the child care centers that responded do not do annual screening for possible disabilities. The Council's Health Care Task Force is developing a project to address this need.

Help Stop FASD

The Council is waging a battle against alcohol consumption by pregnant women. If a woman drinks while she is pregnant, the odds are very good that her child will suffer from the negative effects of those drinks, negative effects which can include physical, mental, behavioral, and learning disabilities, known as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, or FSASD.

FASD affects one in every 750 infants born in the U.S. Problems resulting from FASD can last a lifetime and cost society about \$6 billion annually.

On October 21, the Council sponsored a "Florida Fights FASD" Summit in Tallahassee. The goal of the summit was to educate those attending the Summit, or watching the webcast, about the dangers of alcohol consumption during pregnancy and to spread that message to all Floridians.

And at the end of the day, everyone attending the summit promised to carry the Florida Fights FASD message back to their home communities.

If you would like to join us in stopping the spread of FASD, please go to <http://www.fasd-fl.org/> for more information, or call Holly Hohmeister at 850-488-4180. Together, we can wipe out FASD.

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