

**DSP Workforce Initiative
Steering and Advisory Committee Meeting
Chicago, IL
December 4, 2006**

In attendance:

Bob Atkinson, *Oak/Leyden Developmental Services*; Rosa Baez-Lopez, *Clearbrook*; Anni Braverman, *AAIDD-IL*; Pamela Bruce, *Ray Graham Association*; Chris Burnett, *IARF*; Kathy Carmody, *Ray Graham Association*; Donald Dew, *Habilitative Systems*; Harry Dispensa, *US Dept of Labor*; Eileen Durkin, *Neumann Association*; Tina Fogerty, *Neumann Association*; Vanessa Hoffeditz, *Gateway Services*; Anne Irving, *AFSCME Council 31*; Anu Khetarpal, *AAIDD-IL*; Tim Knapp, *New Hope Center*; Beth Lacey, *Community Support Services*; Carl LaMell, *Clearbrook*; Maria Lara, *Seguin Services*; Jessica Madsen, *Gateway Services*; Julie Marcionetti, *Seguin Services*; Lorraine McCormick, *Community Support Services*; Michelle McHaney, *Habilitative Systems*; Stacey Mecum, *Gateway Services*; Susan Murphy, *Cornerstone Services*; Amie Norris, *Oak/Leyden Developmental Services*; Tony Paulauski, *Arc of Illinois*; Mike Perry, *AFSCME Council 31*; Kyle Rick, *Arc of Rock Island County*; Donna Robinson, *Seguin Services*; Sheila Romano, *Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities*; Jack Ryan, *Little Friends*; Jeremy Schroeder, *SEIU Local 880*; Ginny Seaworth, *Gateway Services*; Paulette Stark, *New Hope Center*; Lou Ellen Strong, *Arc of Iroquois County*; Al Taylor, *Northpointe Resources*; Paula Vanier, *Self-Advocate*; John Voit, *Seguin Services*; Annamarie Whitehouse, *Community Support Services*; Tracy Winiecki, *Clearbrook*; Mary Woodson, *Seguin Services*

Project staff:

Institute on Disability and Human Development: Tamar Heller, Kristen Ball, Katie Keiling, Dale Mitchell
Institute on Community Integration: Sherri Larson, John Sauer
Human Services Research Institute: Marianne Taylor
Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities: Margie Harkness

Welcome and Introductions

- Sheila Romano gave a welcome from the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities

Workgroup Reports

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Goal 1: Conduct annual and on-going legislative advocacy campaigns to increase the wages and benefits of direct support professionals and frontline supervisors by not less than \$3.00 per hour.

- The Steering and Advisory Committee agreed to sign on to a letter encouraging the use of lock box funding to go toward a 3% COLA
- Beth Lacey has connected with the Council on Women Legislators (COWL) and is setting a meeting to present information to try to get on their legislative agenda
- Contact Katie if you would like support in connecting with your legislators—she can pair people with mentors for visiting legislators and sharing your message

Training Outreach Committee

- This group developed from merging two groups: Recruitment & Retention Strategies Workgroup (specifically Goal 3) and the Mentoring & Supervision Workgroup. The group was initially called the Supervisory Training Committee.

- This group is holding a strategic planning meeting with all the previous attendees of the Train-the-trainer sessions. The purpose of this meeting is to identify ways to disseminate training around the state for frontline supervisors on retention strategies for DSPs.

Education, Training, and Career Development

Goal: Building on existing DHS competencies for DSPs, develop intermediate and advanced education opportunities that bear college credit and that lead to voluntary, specialized credentialing.

- The survey on DSP competencies is about to be disseminated around the state. Each Executive Director will receive a letter encouraging them to support their DSPs in taking the online survey, which should take about 15 minutes to complete. This information will be useful in identifying the gaps in competency for DSPs where training can be enhanced.
- The group decided to pilot the NADSP Credentialing with three organizations: Community Support Services, Oak/Leyden Development Services, and Seguin Services.

Data, Wages, and Statistics

Goal 1: Convene stakeholders to identify statewide data needed regarding the community services DSP workforce supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in Illinois, inventory existing and potential sources of that data, and make recommendations about ongoing data collection, evaluation, and reporting strategies.

Goal 2: Report annually on the extent to which an adequate supply of DSPs is available to provide community based supports and services for citizens with developmental disabilities.

- The current data findings were reviewed. The following proposed steps for consideration were presented:
 - A. Re-evaluate all current “needed” data elements and ensure that all are actually needed to be collected on an ongoing basis

Due to the difficulty of identifying current public resources for the data elements, it makes sense to ensure that only those elements that are essential for post-project evaluation are included in the list, to conserve the cost of post-project resources needed to collect this data. For this reason, it makes sense to re-examine the list of data elements to ensure all are “essential” or needed.
 - B. For the data elements determined to be “needed”, consider implementing some or all of the following steps:
 1. Recruit staff from community agencies participating in the current project to serve as members of the Data workgroup
 2. Work with the Executive Directors of agencies participating in this project and with IARF staff to develop a pilot survey that would supplement the current IARF wage survey and collect wage and turnover data by setting size. The key is to develop a supplement survey that would not jeopardize the return rate of IARF’s main survey and would be “tolerable” to the participating agencies.
 3. Gather wage and turnover data on DSPs working directly for individuals with disabilities or their families by work with family agency groups and assisting them to annually survey a representative sample of their members.
 4. Work with the Illinois Bureau of Economic Security (IBES) to encourage them to collect or publish wage and turnover data that is broken down by setting size—they had initially indicated that this might be a possibility but have subsequently discouraged this possibility. Given the current situation, re-opening discussions with IBES staff seems worthwhile.

5. If it was decided to use any of the national or state data as DSP proxy data, it would be advisable to write a protocol that would detail how to collect publicly available data on DSP wages and turnover on an ongoing basis. It took me some time and consultation to maneuver the various web sites and datasets to “pick out” the data was relevant to the DSPs.
6. Work with the new DD director in IDHS to access current IDHS data regarding DSP wages and turnover they might have in their database.
7. Fund an entity post-project to annually survey and/or collect the data that is desired on an ongoing basis

Status and Awareness

Goal 1: Develop and provide support to an Illinois chapter of the National Association of Direct Support Professionals run by and for DSPs.

- The group met in person on October 17th in Princeton at Gateway Services. They developed a mission statement and committee structure.
- They asked that all 14 organization support DSPs in their agency to become involved in the developing chapter.

Executive Director Meeting Report

- The Executive Directors are committed to this initiative and the sustainability.
- They would like to meet again and talk about specific ways to sustain the initiative.
- Present them with a concrete proposal for their next meeting including what they would need to commit to support continued work of the initiative.

Sustaining the Initiative

- As the initiative funding comes to an end on September 30, 2007 the group discussed ways to sustain key pieces of the initiative
- The group needs to start thinking about this not as a project, but as laying the foundation for infusing best practices throughout the state. We need to keep the momentum going.
- CDS long-term
 - Working with DHS. Start with the survey results from DSP competencies and use this to inform the process going forward.
 - Address training and credentialing
 - Look into getting community colleges and universities to incorporate curriculum to get credit for the training.
- Need an entity to spear head the effort
- How far are organizations willing to commit after funding ends? Ask for Executive Director support of specific areas (such as staff time for meetings, etc.)
- Execs committed to meet again around March and concrete ideas should be shared with them at this meeting
 - Workgroups need to think about what activities they want to continue and what support they would need
- Need political will created to get funding—see if the Council on Women Legislators takes hold of the wage increase
- Keep DSPs central to the plan for sustainability. Need to support developing chapter of NADSP. DSPs face challenges due to the fact that they are all so spread out and many do not have access to email—communication is important, but difficult among this group. They are asking for time so they can work on this so it is not on their personal time.
- Maybe partner with ASHA and AARP.
- Look into funds—maybe Arc, DHS, etc

- Community colleges could be potential sites for meetings
- Start project sustainability by looking back at what organizations originally committed—remind Execs of this commitment
- Need leadership team, not just UIC & UMN—leadership needs to expand
- This Coalition has a lot of power, but minimum support. There is potential with the diversity of group networking.

Spotlight on Organizations

- Lorraine McCormick and Annamarie Whitehouse of Community Support Services presented on the ways this initiative have impacted their organization.

Project Updates:

Toolkit for Individuals and Families

- The Toolkit to find, choose, and keep great DSPs is ready! Each organization receives a hard copy of both versions, one for individuals with disabilities and another for family members or support people.
- The Toolkit can be downloaded from the project website and additional copies can be requested: www.ildspinitiative.com

Trainings

- Administrative Training
 - Half of the organizations have received the Administrative Training of the CDS. This allows organizations to identify one main administrator who has the ability to add new learners to the CDS, assign training and track the status of training. It has many features such as the ability to survey employees, run reports, developed customized training, announce meetings or in class trainings, and more. Let Katie know if your organization wants this training and she will set something up by phone.
- Individual/Family Training & Policy Forum
 - Training for individuals and families is being developed on how they can use the Toolkit to find, choose, and keep great DSPs. Representatives from DHS are being invited to hold an open dialogue with the individuals and families.

Evaluation Year 2 for Organizations

- Sherri Larson presented the Year 2 data report. For more details see the powerpoint slides.

Future Meetings:

March 19th, 2007; 10am-3pm

- **Springfield, IL**

June 18th, 2007; 10am-3pm

- **Chicago, IL**

Direct Support Professional Workforce Initiative

Steering and Advisory Committee

December 4, 2006

Chicago, IL



Agenda

- 10:00 am—11:30am
 - Workgroups & Executive Directors meet
- 11:30 am-12pm—LUNCH
- 12pm-3pm--Steering & Advisory Committee
 - Workgroup Reports
 - Executive Director meeting report
 - Sustaining the Initiative
 - Spotlight on Organizations: Community Support Services
 - Project Updates

Welcome from

The Illinois Council on
Developmental Disabilities



Meeting Reports

- Recruitment and Retention Strategies
 - Training Outreach Committee
 - Education, Training, and Career Dev.
 - Data, Wages, and Statistics
 - Status and Awareness
 - Executive Director meeting
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Future Sustainability

- Translating this from a project to best practice in Illinois
 - How can the statewide activities be sustained beyond the end of the project?
 - What can you do to move this project forward within your organizations?

Sustaining the Initiative



Spotlight on Organizations

Community Support Services





***Direct Workforce
Initiative***

Who are we?

- Provider of customized home and community based services
- Support 600 people each year
- Provided 309,000 service hours last year in 60 suburban communities
- 275 employees of which 225 are DSP's

How are we different than most?

- No large programs
- Majority of DSP's are part time
- Of the 225 DSP's, only 17 are full time



Unique challenges

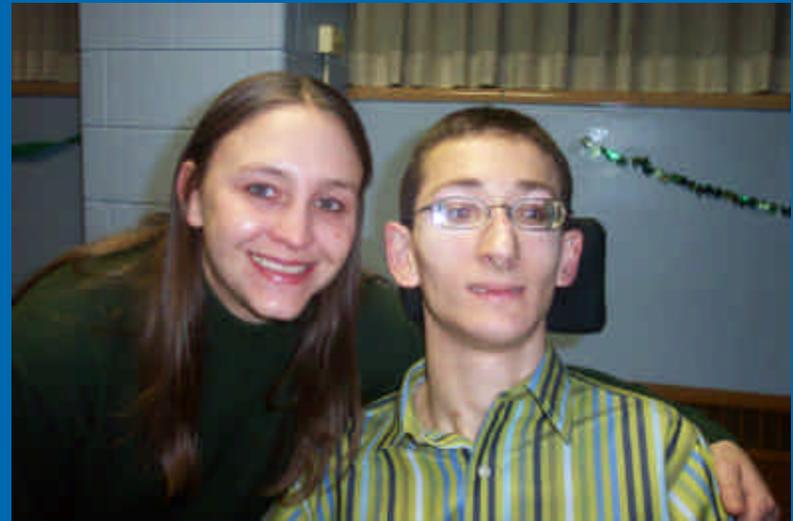
- Responding to the flexible needs of families while staying in alignment with rules and regulations
- Supporting families who choose DSP's with whom they have a personal relationship
- Communicating with workforce not in the same building, working variety of hours
- Workforce is diverse in education, experience, and career paths
- Growing immigrant population who do not speak English

Who's the boss?

- FLS are challenged to establish professional work relationships with DSP's
- Sometimes, DSP's are caught in between families and agency requirements

Year One

- Established WISC
- Goals:
 - Change job titles
 - Establish wage levels
 - Utilize RJP



Proud to be a DSP!

- Held training series to enhance professionalism
- Assessed employee satisfaction
 - Asked the right questions
 - Listened to perspectives
 - Responded to issues/concerns
 - Kept doing what we do right

Realistic Job Preview

- Developed introductory letter
- FLS asked follow up questions
- Presented to all applicants
- Utilized at Job Fairs



What do applicants say?

- “That’s not what I thought this job would be.”
 - “Wow! This shows exactly what the work is like! I recognize people I know.”
 - “This is good, but what is respite like?”
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Year Two

- Developed customized RJP
- Still trying to fund those wage levels!
- Engaged everyone in hiring
- Establishing the Illinois Chapter of the NADSP
- Began supervisor's training series

Customiz

- Power point
 - Use families' input
 - Photographs
- Videotaping DSP's



What I'm looking for in a DSP

- List 5 things that you want a DSP to know about your son/daughter:
- List 5 qualities that the ideal person must have to be successful with your son/daughter:
- The successful DSP will be able to do/know the following:
- My child enjoys:
- This is how my child communicates:

What I'm looking for...

- This is what you'll be expected to do with my child during respite:
- It is necessary for my child to avoid the following things to be happy:
- Make a statement about any important things that a DSP should know about your family:

Interviews with all Stakeholders

- Supervisor
- People served and/or families
- Direct Support Professionals
- Manager



ILADSP

- Illinois Association of Direct Support Professionals
- Established Status & Awareness Committee
- Led by Annamarie Whitehouse, CSS DSP

Supervisor Training

- Asked what people want to know or didn't know
 - *Supertreat* kickoff
 - Continued series; quarterly
 - Performance appraisals
 - Selecting the best
 - Motivating staff
 - Conflict resolution
 - Strategic planning
 - Teamwork
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What have we accomplished?

- Identified qualities of a successful DSP for recruitment and placement
 - # hired has decreased, but quality and efficiency has been enhanced
- Enhanced the process to match DSP talents to individual and family needs
- Raised the expectations of the profession 

Year Three

- Supervisor training
- Initiated pilot DSP incentive program
- Assembling database to match DSP talents and skills to individual needs & interests

PROUD TO BE A DSP



Project Updates

- Toolkit for Individuals and Families
- Trainings
- College of Direct Support
- Evaluation Year 2 for Organizations

2006 Year 2 Report

Illinois Direct Support Professional Workforce Initiative

A project of the Illinois DD Council



In Person Training

- Overview of Intervention Strategies
 - 2 days in 2004, 1 day in 2006
 - 45 people
- Workforce Intervention Strategies (CFSM plus classroom)
 - 4 sessions in 2004-2005
 - 61 people from 15 organizations
- Train-the-Trainer on Workforce Intervention curriculum
 - 2 sessions, July 2005, November 2006
 - 30 people from 14 organizations

Online Training

- College of Frontline Supervision and Management (CFSM)
 - 124 learners have completed 802 lessons
- College of Direct Support
 - 17 organizations have completed 411 lessons
- Administrative Training of the CDS
 - 7 organizations

Products

- A Realistic Job Preview video customized for Illinois
- Illinois customization of the CDS
- A Workforce Development Plan to implement statewide
- Customizing targeted marketing plans and recruitment materials
- Toolkit for Individuals and Families to help find, choose, and keep DSPs

Organizational Interventions

Intervention	Orgs	People
Revised DSP training	8	210
Realistic Job Preview video	8	825
Customized RJP	7	439
Support and train supervisors including CFMS	7	221
Structured interviewing	6	361
Orientation or socialization	6	236
Participatory management	6	216
Study workforce challenges	4	83
Improved employee recognition	4	145
Marketing toolkit	4	75
IL NADSP chapter	3	23
Mentoring program	3	54

Biggest Concerns for Employers

Concern	2004	2005	2006
Turnover of DSPs	50%	50%	80%
Finding qualified DSPs to hire	58%	75%	60%
DSP wages/benefits	42%	58%	30%
Staffing patterns/scheduling issues	25%	25%	30%
Supervisors are not well trained	42%	50%	20%

Major Impacts/Benefits of Project

- New vision of defining the problem and a sense of satisfaction in knowing that we are proactively addressing it.
 - Networking with other providers
 - Recognition throughout the state
 - Staff have been very responsive to focus groups and are pleased that their suggestions and concerns were acted upon.
 - Better communication between DSPs and managers
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Most Significant Challenges

- Getting buy in from staff, senior management
 - Time to work on the project and implement the changes
 - Difficulty narrowing our focus to a few strategies
 - Turnover among supervisors
 - Reconciling CDS with the Illinois curriculum
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Best Part of Participating

- Gaining useful information from other organizations and the College of Frontline Supervision.
- Networking with experts and other professionals in the field
- DSPs being involved with management to make changes at the agency
- Feeling as if I am part of the solution
- Recognizing that we are not alone in facing challenges
- Excellent resources

What else should we know?

- We need increased buy in for resources and travel expenses.
- While it is easy to make internal changes at the agency, more concentrated efforts need to occur at the state level.
- We want Illinois to purchase the College of Direct Support and CFSM.
- Three years isn't long enough.

Advice for Future Participants

- Don't underestimate the power of simply bringing professionals together to work on common problems.
 - The success we have experienced could not have been possible without the support of leadership in the agency.
 - Concentrate on things within your power as an agency to change. Work on the little things – they add up.
 - This project needs support from Executive Directors, involvement of Human Resource Directors and key members of the management team.
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DSP Outcomes: Organizational Participants

Outcome	2004	2005	2006
Average DSP Wage	\$10.02	\$9.99	\$10.17
Number of DSPs	2,140	2,111	1,989
% of DSPs who are full-time	69%	68%	69%
% of budget on overtime	3%	6%	6%
DSP Turnover	30%	29%	38%
DSP Vacancy rate	8%	10%	10%
DSP Early Leavers	34%	31%	36%

FLS Outcomes: Organizational Participants

Outcome	2004	2005	2006
N Frontline Supervisors	299	268	311
FLS Average Salary	\$29,280	\$30,359	\$30,939
FLS Turnover	18%	25%	38%
FLS Vacancy Rate	4%	7%	3%

Future Meetings

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 - Springfield, IL
- June 18th, 2007; 10am-3pm
 - Chicago, IL