

COUNTY GUIDE TO ACHIEVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY ADMINISTRATION'S GUIDING VALUES

*“The most urgent task at hand is to build
from a hundred cultures, one culture which
does what no other culture has done
before... gives a place to every human gift.”*

Margaret Mead

**WASHINGTON STATE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
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COUNTY GUIDELINES

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INTRODUCTION

The decision of many families to raise their sons and daughters with disabilities at home rather than request a place for them in state facilities, together with the State's decision to return people living in institutions to their communities, has resulted in many people with disabilities living and working in communities all over Washington. They are contributing much to the economy, diversity, and enrichment of the communities in which they live. While on the surface it would appear great strides have been made in supporting the presence of individuals with disabilities in local communities, the truth is that few of these individuals have solid, reciprocal connections and support networks. Many of these individuals are in fact more like visitors to communities than true community members.

Supporting people with disabilities to be a part of their community was never intended to be the role of the "service systems." Protection rather than connections was the focus. We have come a long way since the establishment of those first services on behalf of people with disabilities. The "special" services that were created for people living at home as well as those living in State facilities were designed to get people "ready" to live and work in their community. These experiences have taught us that when people are separated through services we systematically exclude individuals with developmental disabilities as well as community members the opportunity to know and care for each other.

"...The problem arises when services take over the life of someone they're supposed to be supporting. When this happens, people and their families lose the freedom to control their lives – even lose the basic belief in their ability to do so. They also lose the relationships with other human beings that are basic building blocks of life. Instead they become surrounded by people who are paid to be with them, to organize, manage, direct and oversee their lives. At that point the social service system assumes a measure of control that most of the rest of us would find intolerable and it isolates them from other people outside the system, from the community..."

(Taken from The Gift of Hospitality, by Mary O'Connell, 1988

In Washington State alone, there are currently over 2,000 people eligible for support services from the Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities but who receive no limited state services. These individuals make up the growing numbers of people considered "unserved" in the community. Efforts to include people with disabilities into community life as well as efforts to eliminate the list of people waiting for opportunities will require a major shift in the way we think about the issue. This is not just an issue for people with developmental disabilities, their families, and social service industry professionals. This is a community issue requiring community solutions. Just doing more of the same will not get us there. It seems that when we create unnatural environments for people with developmental disabilities we further separate and segregate people from community citizens and the natural, typical places community members go. Based on what we have learned in the past, the emphasis for the 1990s is to change from a contracting for "service systems" to finding ways of opening doors, building bridges, making introductions and supporting relationships. In other words, our new role is to create and support opportunities for people with disabilities and other community citizens to come together and share common experiences.

There are many things service systems can do to support the inclusion of people into the community, for example;

- Getting to know a person and the talents and gifts they have to offer;
- Supporting people to maintain their relationships;
- Supporting people to develop new relationships;

- Supporting people to learn how to do things they need or want to know;
- Supporting people to participate in community activities based on their interests and cultural connections;
- Providing assistance and support to be healthy and safe; and
- Insuring back-up to a person when asked

However, we need to constantly remind ourselves that our role is to support the inclusion of people into their community, not to be their community.

For these reasons it is important to begin to see the role of counties differently – not only as brokers of contracted services, but also as promoters of community connections and opportunities. Any supports counties offer must be based on the premise that segregation, isolation, and poverty are unacceptable and that the role of services is to support the inclusion of people with disabilities into their communities.

People with disabilities, their families, friends, and allies are teaching us much about the importance and value of listening to and being guided by people who experience the “services” or supports, since they are in the best position to know how it works and feels for them. We are learning that the needs of people with developmental disabilities have little to do with their disability and much to do with where they live, work, and play.

Supports need to take into consideration cultural/ethnic background of people as well as their preferences. By addressing individual needs and shifting away from specialized services, we reduce the risk of segregating people and the services that they receive, from the larger community of all people who need and offer support. We also reduce the risk of poverty for individuals with developmental disabilities by offering employment opportunities in community businesses. Historically we have used the funds set aside for people with developmental disabilities to fund a separate service. Our challenge is to use those same funds in ways that stop setting people aside and instead place them in the mainstream of the community. Thoughtful and creative planning will be required by state and county staff and boards to become more generic in a way that helps people achieve community inclusion.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities, individuals with disabilities and their families, counties and vendors recognize the need to offer services and resources to individuals in ways that meet needs and promote activities, routines, and relationships common to most citizens.

The following are the basic interdependent benefits of quality living that form the core of the County Guidelines. These are the same benefits that drive and direct residential services in Washington State.

- Power and Choice – Making our own choices and directing our own lives.
- Relationships – Having people in our lives whom we love and care about and who love and care about us.
- Status/Contribution – Feeling good about ourselves and having others recognize us for what we contribute to others and our community.
- Integration – Being a part of our community, through active involvement. This means doing things we enjoy as well as new and interesting things.
- Competence – Learning to do things on our own or be supported to do things for our self.
- Health and Safety – Feeling safe and secure, and being healthy.

The importance of these basic benefits of community life is not unique to people with developmental disabilities nor are they unique to residential services. They are important to all of us in all phases of our lives.

DEFINITION OF BENEFITS

Power and Choice

Power and choice is each person having maximum control over his/her own destiny. Experiencing power, control, and ownership of our personal affairs are essential elements that help us gain autonomy, be self-governing, and pursue our own interests and goals. Power is control, influence and authority over oneself and others. Choice is the power, right or liberty to select from among several options.

Supports should be offered in ways that provide encouragement to grow and develop. Positive actions needs to be taken by individuals offering support in ways that promote the dignity, privacy, legal rights, autonomy, and individuality of each person receiving support.

Some examples of things that promote individual power and choice are opportunities to:

- Express our own unique preferences
- Identify what we want and know how to get it
- Take risks in pursuit of our own important objectives
- Engage and involve others for support and encouragement
- Develop skills and competencies
- Have financial security
- Participate in leadership roles
- Have dignity, privacy, and legal rights
- Exercise individuality which is based on personal preferences, choices and back-up when needed
- Be included as members of organizations based on interest
- Spend time with people we care about and who care about us
- Have options and opportunities regarding work, recreation, relationships, etc.
- Have respect for our cultural ties

Relationships

Relationships lead to a sense of belonging, love, inclusion, continuity, and meaning to life. Friends and family offer essential support and protection and open doors to new opportunities and experiences. Most people find that they value their relationships more highly than anything else in their lives. People with disabilities are often deprived of both the quantity and quality of relationships that non-disabled people experience.

Sometimes people with developmental disabilities may need support to maintain and build relationships with family and friends as well as encouragement to develop new friendships and acquaintances. This assistance must be given in dignified, respectful ways that promote a positive image of the person being supported.

Some examples of things that promote relationships are:

- Having opportunities to have contact with people in the community, including people and organizations with cultural and ethnic traditions in common.
- Building bridges between with disabilities and the community by assisting to re-establish previous contacts, by supporting people to maintain previous relationships, and by assisting in building closer friendships from acquaintances.
- Effective means of communication to others in the community.
- Discovering what people have in common.
- Welcoming the friends whom a person with a disability chooses. A support person needs to respectfully negotiate if the choice of a particular friend puts a person's health or safety at risk.
- Opportunities where common interests and routines can be shared between people with disabilities and other community members.
- Natural supports between people with disabilities, co-workers, and other community members.
- Availability of transportation an individual may need to visit family and friends.
- Opportunities for reciprocity between people with disabilities and their family and friends.

Status/Contribution

Status is valued perception by self and others. Such positive recognition is important to all people and is influenced by factors such as where we work and live; our role as a community member; managing daily activities, our personal appearance and style; managing money; learning a job; making a purchase; meeting new people; maintaining personal relationships; pursuing personal interests, etc.

The way that supports are offered affect a person's status, reputation, and positive recognition by influencing the way we see ourselves and/or the way others see us. Support should be offered in ways that promote individual status, respect and credibility as well as in ways that are typical to other community citizens.

Some examples of things that promote status are:

- Opportunities for valued roles such as co-worker, student, customer, and taxpayer.
- Membership and participation in clubs and organizations.
- Recognition of competencies, talents, and gifts.
- Friendships and reciprocal relationships i.e., good neighbor, volunteer, good friend/son/daughter/sister/brother.
- Participation in decision making roles such as voter, jury duty, board member, etc.
- Respect for the contribution each person can make.
- Financial resources.
- Participation in community activities i.e., ballet, opera, theater, sporting events, bingo, movies, bird watching, cultural activities, etc.
- Ownership of home and material possessions i.e., television, VCR, CD player, furniture, etc.
- Attire that is fashionable and attractive.
- Control over decisions that affect our lives.
- Looking and feeling good!

Integration

Integration is being present and participating in the community using the same resources and doing the same activities as other citizens. Living in a community means experiencing diversity. Most of us live, work, and recreate in places that offer us opportunities to meet and participate with a wide range of people in a wide range of activities.

The supports that are provided need to focus on inclusion into the community and into common, everyday activities and memberships. Many people with disabilities have experienced segregation and isolation from typical community members and activities. Individuals who work with and care about the person will need to focus their efforts on redirecting to redirect activities into communities and away from specialized activities.

Some examples of things that promote integration are:

- Education in neighborhood schools with regular students.
- Housing in areas convenient to a range of places to shop, bank, eat, worship, learn, make friends, and otherwise participate in community life.
- Accessible, affordable, and convenient transportation that enables people to go where they want, when they want.
- Employment opportunities in typical businesses, working side by side with other community members.
- Community building activities that focuses on welcoming people into the community.
- Opportunities to participate in activities of interest in the community, as well as opportunities to do new and interesting things.
- Relationships with typical community members and neighbors.
- Advocacy to end services which segregate adults and children with developmental disabilities from natural, typical, age-appropriate activities available to other community members.
- Opportunities to participate in cultural events and celebrations.

Competence

Competence is the capacity to do what you need and want to do. There are two ways to be competent. You may be self-reliant and able to do things for yourself and/or have the power to identify and obtain the help you need from others.

Sometimes people with developmental disabilities may need support to do what they need and want to do. This may mean assistance for people to learn the things they need to know to be self-reliant. Whenever possible, the assistance should be provided in natural, typical ways by people most closely involved with the activity being learned.

Some examples of things that promote competence are:

- Opportunities to work in the community.
- Identifying needed and desired supports.
- Learning things of interest that are chosen by the persons and are relevant to everyday life.
- Support, if necessary, from paid as well as non-paid people.
- Opportunities to take reasonable risk.
- Availability of back-up help when needed.
- Opportunities to use the skills learned, including skills of defining, negotiating, and directing the help they need.
- Activities or adapting activities in environments that are important to the person and relevant to the activities.

Health and Safety

Health is defined as a condition of well-being, a soundness of mind and body. Safety is the maintenance of that well-being. People should live and work safely in environments common to other citizens with reasonable supports offered to simultaneously protect their health and safety while promoting inclusion in the community.

People are more likely to be healthier and remain safe if they:

- Have a large support group of people in the community who care about them so that vulnerability to abuse and neglect is lessened.
- Have access to quality health care and have the means to pay for that care.
- Express a choice in selecting their professional and personal support. Develop skills and competencies to care for themselves and have access to assistance when needed.
- Work and live in safe places.
- Have friends, family, co-workers and neighbors who add to their feeling of self-worth and well-being.
- Realize that health includes a soundness of mind as well as body and that people need to be included in the community to promote personal well-being.
- Receive education and information on A.I.D.S. and other sexually transmitted diseases, birth control, etc.

PURPOSE

These guidelines provide a vision for promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities into community life and establishing a framework for partnerships between citizens with disabilities and their families, the State, Counties, and local communities. The guidelines also provide a foundation for the planning each county is required to do as part of its state contract. Finally, the guidelines provide strategies for using state and local dedicated funds

and personal influence to achieve the desired benefits. The six-month benefits described in the County Guidelines are currently being implemented in residential services throughout Washington State and represent a holistic approach to providing supports that build on individual interests, gifts, and preferences.

The guidelines also represent a change in how services/supports are determined, developed, and provided. Previous guidelines have described the services that counties could purchase, suggested an approach to developing such services and advocated for a process of evaluating contracted services. They focused on the county's responsibility for employment, community access and children's services. While these services continue to be important in the state and county contracting process, the developing, purchasing and evaluating of segregated services for people with disabilities will not achieve the benefits of community inclusion. Services and programs can no longer be designed exclusively for people with developmental disabilities. Supports must be designed in ways that include communities. Supports need to be tailored to individuals in a manner that will encourage cultural connections, community participation in promoting choices, opportunities and experience in communities.

These guidelines further recognize the important and pioneering contribution that people with disabilities and their families make in guiding counties to the community and acknowledge that we have underrated people's desire for common experiences and the willingness and hospitality of the community to include them. Their county role now seems to be one that supports both the individual and the community's relationships, rather than substituting natural experiences with segregated services. While communities vary greatly throughout Washington and have different capacities to support the inclusion of community members with diverse interests and needs, the fact is all people, regardless of their situation, belong to their community and to the citizens of that community, and their communities belong to them.

With a growing number of people considered "unserved," it is critical that counties begin looking at different ways of offering support and assistance and including communities in finding solutions. Counties, as local planning bodies, are in the position to begin identifying "who" needs to come together to address this issue and to determine plans for alleviating the injustices being experienced by many people who find themselves in this situation.

"Picture a world where people with all types of labels are truly connected with people who do not have labels. Visualize and dream about a world that is not overregulated, over-professionalized, over-serviced and overbuilt."

Colleen Wieck and Jeff Strully

County Boards and Coordinators play a major role in local communities. They are in a unique position to:

1. Encourage and support the ability of communities to include people with disabilities;
2. Influence the direction of “generic services” by participation in local planning and contracting efforts;
3. Determine the direction of contracted “services” based on the Guidelines.

Some examples of ways Counties can begin addressing the above for all people, including individuals who are unserved are by:

- Advocating for accessible, affordable housing and transportation
- Advocating and supporting integrated recreational opportunities;
- Becoming involved with local schools and school districts to advocate for integrate neighborhood schools;
- Promoting employment opportunities in the public and private sector;
- Educating and advocating for equitable, affordable medical services;
- Including people with disabilities and their families on committees and in other decision making roles;
- Spending time with people with disabilities and introducing people who share common interests;
- Inviting neighborhood and ethnic associations and groups to become involved;
- Prioritizing funding for those “supports” that focus on community connections and participation, etc.

County developmental disability boards and staff are critical to the development and delivery of community services that meet the needs of people with disabilities, this includes addressing the issue of individuals who are currently unserved and waiting for support services. As representatives of the community, county board members have an advocacy responsibility on behalf of people with disabilities and their families. Board members are also in a unique position to share information with other community members. They are also responsible for gathering information and deciding the direction and need for services.

Active community boards and staff are influencing the direction of state contracted community services. They are also shaping generic community services by offering information and suggestions during local planning and decision-making efforts. Most important, boards are beginning to influence and change the ability of communities to support and welcome people with developmental disabilities. To increase effectiveness, counties should take their guidance from people with disabilities and their families to increase people’s experience and presence in communities.

Included in this document are examples of strategies and quality indicators that may help counties and county service providers in planning toward supporting people to experience the six benefits described in these Guidelines. These benefits form the philosophical base of this document and are the core of how the service system is defined. Services and accomplishment must be measured against the same goals and values that most community members identify as important in their lives.

This document is not intended to explain contractual requirements. It's not a detailed guide to the development of community services nor is it a cookbook for designing service evaluation tools. Rather, it lays out a vision and philosophical framework for promoting the full inclusion of all people into the community. There is no one "roadmap" to implementing these benefits.

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVING BENEFITS & QUALITY REVIEW

True integration will be achieved by true neighbors who are willingly obedient to unenforceable obligations.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Overview

Over the years, the primary responsibility of county boards has been to work in partnership with the Division of Developmental Disabilities to identify individual's needs and to administer state funds and purchase services to enhance the lives of local citizens with developmental disabilities. As leaders, county boards are in a powerful position to determine, develop, influence and assess the way communities include all citizens into community life. This includes listening to people with disabilities and their allies; using county and State funds in ways that promote community members and leaders in owning the solution; and influencing and promoting valued, accessible, and integrated opportunities for all community members.

The following are areas that impact the integration of individuals into community life. How counties support, define, and promote opportunities will determine how effective counties will be in achieving the benefits of relationships, power and choice, status, integration, competence, and health and safety on behalf of all citizens in your communities.

Under each area there are outcomes/quality indicators, strategies, and review questions that County boards may want to ask themselves and others to determine whether the benefits are being experienced. These outcomes/quality indicators and review questions could form the foundation for the evaluation/review process that each county will need to do. This review process is two fold, the first is a way to determine how service providers are doing in supporting people to experience the benefits described and the second is for counties to have a way to self-assess their effectiveness in contracting, influencing, and supporting the benefits on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities living in the community.

(1) ROLE OF COUNTY BOARD/STAFF

Overview

Washington's Laws and Administrative Codes (RCW 71A.10 through 71A.22 and RCW 71A.14.50) recognize the authority and need of counties to appoint a local board to plan for persons with developmental disabilities. The law and codes even recommend that boards include representatives of local governmental units, and citizens of public, private, or voluntary agencies, and citizens knowledgeable about developmental disabilities or interested in services to persons with developmental disabilities in the community.

Effective planning provides the tools that county coordinators, staff, and contractors need to initiate change. No community is exempt from change. Whether internally or externally originated, change is part of community life. Planning helps an organization gain mastery over change, rather than become victimized by it. Planning also enables an organization to set program priorities, define tasks so that objectives can be met and facilitate allocation of scarce resources. Planning is at the heart of effective community services. Within this planning effort, attention needs to be paid to people who are currently unserved and in need of support.

Quality Indicators:

The following are some of the outcomes county boards may want to review themselves against on behalf of supporting the benefits for individuals with developmental disabilities.

- Clear mission statement based on the benefits of relationships, status, power and choice, integration, competence and health and safety.
- Board members and staff that support the values of the benefits for all people, including individuals who are currently unserved.
- Board members that represent cultural and ethnic diversity in the community.
- Planning and contracting that promotes the integration of all people into the community.
- Planning that solicits input from people with disabilities, families, and community members.
- Funding decisions that reflect the mission and values.
- Advocacy around the benefits with other "systems" on behalf of people with disabilities.
- Contracts with organizations based on the benefits.
- Evaluation systems based on the benefits.

"Cheshire Puss... would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where-," said Alice.

"Then it doesn't much matter which way you go," said the Cat.

Lewis Carroll

Alice's Adventure in Wonderland

Strategies:

Planning is one of the primary responsibilities of local developmental disability boards. Clearly defined goals based on the organization's mission can provide the framework necessary to develop and ensure quality services. The following are some strategies for community planning.

- Clearly define the mission and basic objectives of the organization and build in opportunities to periodically re-evaluate and renew the mission and objectives.
- Define the activities needed to achieve the stated objectives.
- Identify existing strengths of current board members and match those to key activities.
- Include people with disabilities on the county advisory board.
- Solicit information from people with disabilities and their families.
- Keep public officials and community planners aware of board activities and evolving changes in services for people with disabilities, including the needs of people unserved.
- Continually work to find interested people to assist with meeting organizational objectives and provide the training necessary to make people effective.
- Let prospective board members know exactly what is expected of them in terms of time and responsibility.
- In every move, in every decision, in every policy, the board needs to start out by asking... Will this advance our mission?
- Engage in a planning process that gives organizational direction.
- Establish selection criteria and clearly state the role and responsibilities of board volunteers and staff.
- Evaluate contractors and establish policy based on the mission. Follow up on the results.
- Function openly so that each board member understands how the board plans and operates.
- Establish a clear understanding of the difference in roles between the board and paid staff.
- Establish and clearly state how board volunteers are recruited, appointed, oriented, trained, and performance monitored.
- Ensure representation by family members as well as minority and ethnic community members.

- Include the issue of people who are unserved in your planning process.
- Develop cooperative and collaborative relationships with local staff of the Division of Developmental Disabilities.
- Utilize the energy, contribution and commitment of family members.
- Organize forums that bring people together and build support for families.
- Review of the CHRIS data (wage and outcome data) to evaluate how programs and people are doing.
- Review literature and studies, at a state and national level, to find out what others are doing that may offer better or additional options.
- Determine whether current committees reflect the areas identified in the Guidelines (contracted services; community infra-structure; local communities).

The mission should be the ultimate objective of the county board, and it should guide management decisions in the planning, implementation, and maintenance phases. This purpose is distinctly different from time-limited annual and bi-annual objectives. The mission serves as long-range target for organizational performance. It should reflect the dominant values of the members and clearly commit the board to using the service technology that best fits those values.

The mission of the board should provide a constancy of purpose for improvement of services for people with developmental disabilities. To maintain an atmosphere of constantly improving services, the board should continuously revisit its mission and evaluate policies, programs, and actions against that mission to determine overall progress.

Quality Review:

The following questions are offered as a beginning to an organizational evaluation of overall board effectiveness:

- Is the board made up of effective individuals who can supplement one another's talents?
- Is the board large enough to carry all necessary responsibilities but small enough to act as a deliberate group?
- Are roles and responsibilities clearly defined and understood by individual board members and county staff?
- Is there an effective working relationship between the board and county staff?
- Does each board member understand the mission of the organization and how that mission is achieved through its actions?
- Is the local community aware of the boards role and activities?

- Does the board collectively formulate specific goals to guide its work?
- Does the organization seek and use community input during its planning process?
- Is the mission clearly stated and written in a way that the general public understands the purpose of the county board?
- If the board is a multi-purpose board, what assurances are there that the interests of people with disabilities are well represented? Is there broad knowledge and expertise in the area of developmental disabilities represented on the board, which includes both people with disabilities, family members, and social service industry professionals?
- Is the county developing services based on objective information from the whole community rather than the special interest of a few?
- Is the board diverse in its make-up i.e., are there people of color and with different ethnic backgrounds represented in the board?
- Is the board planning on behalf of all people with disabilities living in the community, including people who are unserved?
- Are people with disabilities benefiting from county support?
- Is there cooperation and collaboration between the County and the local Field Services office?

(2) ROLE OF EMPLOYMENT

Overview

Employment programs are in a state of constant change. While change is difficult, the changes in employment support have resulted in improved quality, increased options and choices for people with disabilities, and a major vehicle for inclusion into regular community life. Employment offers all people, with or without disabilities, access to other community citizens, a path out of poverty, and independence from service systems.

Counties have learned many things from the experiences of people with disabilities. They have learned that people can, with competent support; learn to do very complex tasks. They have learned that acquiring a skill is not a prerequisite to obtaining and keeping a job in the community. Also, they have learned that people perform better when the skills they need are learned on the job. Counties, through their contractors, have also demonstrated success in finding employers who are interested in having diversity in their work place.

Employment services need to complete the transition from separate and segregated services to supporting people in regular jobs. These jobs should offer each person the opportunity for full-time, stable and rewarding careers with support based on individual need and offered in ways that promote choice, interdependence, productivity, financial security, benefits and opportunities for advancement. In the past ten years, dramatic changes have taken place in employment services. While we should not forget the several thousand people who are currently unemployed and need support to find and maintain a job, we also need to celebrate the fact that more than half the people in vocational service in Washington State are in supported employment, which has proven to be an effective mechanism for finding and maintaining employment.

The challenge for supported employment is to become more effective and efficient by fostering co-worker support and promoting leadership from the business community. A partnership with business that combines the resources of supported employment with the internal resources of the business will help counties achieve the ultimate goal of assisting co-workers and employers to assume the responsibility for training and supporting their employees with disabilities.

Quality Indicators:

The following are some of the outcomes counties would want to see people experiencing in employment services:

- Employment in businesses that:
 - ✓ Offer status in the community
 - ✓ Are typical businesses in the community
 - ✓ Offer opportunities for an increase in natural supports
 - ✓ Offer benefits, including vacation, health insurance, retirement, etc.
 - ✓ Offer the opportunity for wages that support economic self-sufficiency

- Jobs that contain elements of upward mobility, including:
 - ✓ Opportunity for advancement
 - ✓ Increased wages
 - ✓ Opportunities for new employment

- Choices for individuals in:
 - ✓ The work they do
 - ✓ Who provides the support
 - ✓ Location of the job
 - ✓ Hours worked
- Opportunities for relationships and support from co-workers who are not labeled disabled.
- Supports that provide culturally competent services to individuals and their families, and demonstrate a value for diversity.
- Opportunities for everyone that wants a job to have a job.

Strategies:

Rather than establish guidelines and standards for each type of employment service, this section will provide strategies and quality guides with a focus on meeting the support needs of employers as well as the individual support needs of citizens with disabilities.

- Establish a philosophy and mission statement that reflects the perspective that people with disabilities have a right to integrated community jobs.
- Ask people with disabilities what they want and plan around their interest.
- Actively seek information and encourage participation from families, employers and community members.
- Develop flexible contracting policies and procedures that encourage community employment and employer involvement in the training and support of individuals.
- Make consistent investments that support your mission based on the County Guidelines. Use new money to meet that mission and plan for the transition of employment services and resources to supporting people in individual jobs.
- Evaluate financial policies to determine if procedures encourage the use of a variety of community resources and funding agencies to support people in their jobs.
- Review process to determine if contracted services promote the development of supports based on individual need.
- Develop training seminars and forums to share information with families, schools, and community members.
- Review the policies and procedures of organizations related to their commitment to supporting people with diverse needs and cultures.
- Develop a community awareness plan that portrays individuals as valued citizens who are beneficial to community life.

- Determine what percentage of the funding received goes to integrated employment opportunities versus the amount in segregated services and plan for incremental increases in integrated opportunities.
- Review the variety of employment opportunities people have to choose from, including jobs in minority owned businesses. Plan for an increase in these options.
- Ask your Regional Planning Office what the median wage is in your community and compare that with the average wage earned by the people with disabilities being supported on jobs in the community.
- Review how much money goes into the services versus how much money people bring home.
- Are there a range of non-traditional jobs available from which to choose?
- Actively encourage school programs to graduate students with a job and a resume.
- Identify the work incentives that are available and use them, i.e. Social Security, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Services for the Blind, etc.
- Advocate for increased funding from the legislature for people who are unemployed.

Quality Review:

The following questions are offered as a beginning to an overall evaluation of employment services:

- Does the employment service offer results that are consistent with the county's stated mission?
- Do purchased services offer integrated employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities?
- Are resources being used in a way that is consistent with the objectives derived from the mission statement?
- Does the employment service offer opportunities for full employment?
- Does the employment service seek jobs that offer advancement potential, benefits, wage increases and the opportunity to change jobs?
- How are minority owned businesses including people with disabilities in their companies?
- Does the employment service support people in regular jobs where most of the co-workers are not labeled disabled?

- Does the employment service offer individual choice with regard to job selection, support structure and job location?
- Does the employment service make vocational decisions based on the strengths, capacities, skills and preferences of the individual?
- Does the employment service seek and encourage employer participation in the process of developing jobs and individualized support strategies?
- Does the employment service seek and encourage co-worker involvement in the process of supporting individuals?
- Do existing policies and procedures promote innovation and the development of natural employment supports?
- Are existing policies and procedures foster and promote collaboration?
- Are community resources used to supplement state resources or are state resources seen to be the only available resource for supporting people in the community?
- Are people of color and other ethnic backgrounds included in the agency, both as staff as well as participants?
- Do employers and people with disabilities play a significant role in the decision making process with regard to employment services?
- Does the county have a process of eliciting input and feedback from a broad segment of the community?

(3) ROLE OF CHILDREN’S SERVICES

Overview

Children’s services are designed to assist with a child’s development by offering support to children, birth to three and their families. These services may include specialized therapy and/or educational services to increase participation in events typically experienced by children without disabilities. Children’s services are important to the development of a child

with disabilities and should assist in preparing for entrance into the public school system. Quality services assume that children, their families and others will benefit most from services when they are offered in the family home and in generic community environments.

Early intervention has proven to be highly successful in supporting families through challenging times and in helping children achieve significant strides in their development. These achievements, while at times requiring specialized therapies of a physical nature, also need to be addressed in the context of typical settings where children with and without disabilities have opportunities to discover and learn from one another.

Collaboration and community partnerships, which include representation from ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and their families, formal systems, and other community citizens, are critical to insuring that resources are available and tailored to the diverse needs of children and their families.

Quality Indicators:

The following are some of the outcomes for children and families receiving this service:

- Leadership by families in planning the support each child needs.
- Opportunities for children to be with other children without disabilities.
- Increased ability of generic day care centers to support children with disabilities.
- Agency support and training shared with generic day care centers.
- Specialized therapy being provided and incorporated into the daily routine of the child and family needing these supports.
- Families have the supports they need to successfully raise their children with disabilities.
- Families have current information and understanding of the services available for their child and family.
- Families are recognized as competent.

“It is a birthright of children to be safe, nurtured and supported as they grow into adulthood. Children also have the right – including those with special needs – to live in their community and have the most normal childhood possible...”

Children’s Statewide Action Plan

- Support for the cultural and ethnic diversity of families and communities.

Strategies:

The following strategies are offered as a guide to defining service expectations:

- Include families in the planning of the children's services.
- Develop services that consider individual family interests, abilities, cultural and ethnic status, routines, and preferences.
- Provide services that are culturally competent and demonstrate a value for diversity.
- Develop policies and procedures that promote the use of community resources and services typically available to other children.
- Maximize the use of other funding resources, i.e., E.P.S.D.T. (Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment), public schools, private insurance, CHAMPUS (military insurance), United Way, Elks, C.C.S. (Coordinated Children's Services), etc.
- Inform at the time of identification and on a regular basis, families of children with developmental disabilities of services available for their child and family.
- Enhance parent networking, support, training, and family coping skills.
- Provide on-going training to staff working with children and families.
- Contract with specialists, therapists and private practitioners to provide services in generic day care centers and private homes.
- Reach out to people of color and other ethnic populations and take direction from them on how supports can be consistent with the beliefs and lifestyles of families.

Quality Review:

These questions are offered as a starting point to an overall review of service effectiveness:

- How does the service provider get to know the interests, capacities, ethnic background, and preferences of the child and family?
- Is the family directing the ongoing decision making process of services for their son or daughter?
- Does the service provider have knowledge of community resources and activities that are typically available to other children?
- Does the service provider use generic community resources to support families in their attempts to achieve their goals for their children?

- Do the purchased services promote independence from the program and interdependence within the community by supporting the family in developing relationships with other community resources?
- Are contracting procedures and funding methods flexible enough to allow for individual differences and evolving needs?
- Do purchased services subtly segregate children and their families because of a disability?
- Do purchased services promote a smooth transition to generic services and public schools?
- Is there a coordinated, collaborative effort between organizations concerned with young children? Potential participants might include: Interagency Coordinating Councils; school districts; health department; child care agencies; hospitals; RSN (regional Support Networks); private practitioners; child development agencies; tribal representatives; parent support groups; CPS (Child Protective Services); DCFS (Division of Children and Family Services); DDD (Division of Developmental Disabilities), etc.
- Is resource information readily available to new families provided for by the services and supports located in their community?
- How well informed are families regarding community resources for their child and family?
- Does the service provider coordinate and collaborate on services delivery for families with other community agencies?
- Is the provider's funding source flexible and responsive to the identified needs of family?

(4) ROLE OF COMMUNITY ACCESS

Overview

The purposes of community access
Services are to:

- Provide the support necessary to build and strengthen relationships between family members and members of the local community who are not paid to be with person.
- Find places where an individual's interest, culture, talent, and gifts can be contributed and shared with others with similar interests.
- Provide opportunities for people to do things they enjoy as well as new and interesting things.
- Support participation in clubs, association, and organizations as members and in decision-making capacities.

When thinking of doing anything in the community, think small, think face to face.

John McKnight

Therefore, these services should focus on identifying individual interests and developing strategies to connect people based on mutual interests. People engaged in the delivery of these services should create and support opportunities that bring people together around mutual interests.

Encouraging people with disabilities to access local communities should be everyone's goal and responsibility. Providers responsible for employment, residential and community access services are in a unique position to offer the opportunities that can bring people together to explore things they have in common. Local county boards have a responsibility to plan and develop services that promote relationships among all community members.

While these services are typically offered to individual who are not receiving employment services or who are unemployed, it is extremely important to understand that participants in these services does not imply that a person is unable to work or that people who work may not need support to be involved in their community.

Quality Indicators:

The following are some of the outcomes you would want to see for individuals receiving community access:

- Relationships with a variety of individuals.
- Reciprocal relationships with family members, friends, and others in the community.
- Opportunities for a wide variety of activities based on personal preferences. This includes opportunities to do new and interesting things.

- Membership/leadership in clubs and associations based on interest and culture.
- Opportunities to contribute to the community through volunteering, being a good neighbor, campaigning for a candidate, voting, etc.
- Less reliance on paid people and more in a variety of individuals in the community who are not paid to be with the person.
- Increased ability by the person to direct their activities and identify places and people of interest.
- Connections with people from the past who were friends and acquaintances.
- Anyone wanting and needing this support is receiving the support.

Strategies:

Clearly defined expectations based on the shared values as expressed in the planning process are essential to achieving quality results from purchased services. The following strategies are offered as a guide to defining service expectations:

- Develop policies and processes that encourage creativity and services based on individual interests and support needs.
- Establish flexible funding strategies to encourage innovation.
- Identify and clearly define desired outcomes.
- Seek family and community participation.
- Sponsor informational forums to increase community awareness and interest in people with developmental disabilities,
- Develop partnerships with school districts in planning post school transition activities.
- Facilitate “circles of support” that include people the person identifies as important.
- Identify activities through planning with the person that focus on the strengths, gifts, and capacities of the person.
- Identify reciprocal opportunities where the talents of people can be shared with others.
- Market with civic organizations that already exist, i.e., Rotary, Eagles, etc.
- Ensure that training and technical assistance support is available to organizations.
- Utilize the experiences of people with disabilities in teaching others.

- Bring people together to identify alternative ways of obtaining support and funding.

Quality Review:

The following questions are offered as a starting point to overall review of service effectiveness:

- How does the county encourage innovation through its contracting procedures?
- Does the county funding method promote the implementation of community access services that are individualized rather than group directed?
- Does the contracting process promote opportunities for relationships, both long term and casual association?
- How will people's lives be changed as a result of these services, i.e., will people have increased competence; will people's status be improved; will people have opportunities for more people in their life; will people have opportunities to do things they enjoy as well as new and interesting things, etc.?
- Do these services enhance the public image of the person with a disability?
- Do the supports offered teach the person to use the community and community resources with and without agency staff?
- Are these supports advocated for all people who need and want them, including people who are currently unserved?

(5) ROLE OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Overview

The term “community infra-structure” refers to those public services available to all citizens; for example, public housing and transportation, local park and recreation activities, educational opportunities, medical services and communication systems.

Infra.struc.ture (in'fra struk'char) n.
[INFRA. + STRUC. TURE] a substructure or underlying foundation; esp. the installations and facilities on which the continuance and growth of a community, state, etc., depend, as roads, schools, power plants, transportation and communications systems, etc.

Webster's New World Dictionary

The opportunities to live in a home, have a job, move around the community using public transportation, participate in local recreational activities and celebrate cultural events, are things we all take for granted. However, for many individuals with disabilities, including the people who are unserved, these basic human rights are limited. There is much counties can do to affect and/or influence the availability of these resources on behalf if individuals with disabilities. Partnerships and participation with local agencies that control theses resources are critical to ensuring presence and participation into local communities for people with developmental disabilities.

Quality Indicators:

The following are some of the outcomes you would want to see available for individuals accessing generic service system:

- Housing that is:
 - ✓ Integrated
 - ✓ Safe
 - ✓ Affordable
 - ✓ Attractive
 - ✓ Physically accessible
 - ✓ Close to jobs, community resources, transportation, etc.

- Transportation that is:
 - ✓ Available
 - ✓ Accessible both physically and convenient by location and schedule
 - ✓ Affordable
 - ✓ Safe
 - ✓ Integrated

- Recreation that is:
 - ✓ Available to all people, not specialized and just for people with disabilities
 - ✓ Affordable
 - ✓ Accessible
 - ✓ Integrated

- Medical Support that is:
 - ✓ Available to all people
 - ✓ Affordable
 - ✓ Provided in competent and respectful ways

- Public Education that:
 - ✓ Integrates children and young adults with and without disabilities.
 - ✓ Offers employment opportunities
 - ✓ Graduates students with a job
 - ✓ Supports children birth to three
 - ✓ Offers training at vocational technical schools, community colleges, and universities.
 - ✓ Focuses on capabilities
 - ✓ Supports families' competence

Strategies:

The following are offered as initial strategies for influencing and directing the way local agencies plan for and support individuals with developmental disabilities:

- Learn about community services and ethnic organizations and share information about the needs of people with developmental disabilities.
- Include people who are knowledgeable about local services on the county advisory board.
- Work with specific agency decision makers and planners.
- Work to include and support people with disabilities on community decision-making boards.
- Work with the local decision makers to develop a plan to meet the needs of people with disabilities through programs available to everyone.
- Inform those responsible for the development and delivery of local services of the specific needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Fund, if necessary, the supports that may be required for a person with a disability to participate.
- Advocate for the use of language that is dignified and respectful.

Quality Review:

These questions are offered as initial strategies for influencing and directing the way local agencies plan for and support individuals with developmental disabilities:

- Learn about community services and ethnic organizations and share information about the needs of people with developmental disabilities.
- Include people who are knowledgeable about local services on the county advisory board.

- Work with specific agency decision makers and planners.
- Work to include and support people with disabilities on community decision-making boards.
- Work with the local decision makers to develop a plan to meet the needs of people with disabilities through programs available to everyone.
- Inform those responsible for the development and delivery of local services of the specific needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Fund, if necessary, the supports that may be required for a person with a disability to participate.
- Advocate for the use of language that is dignified and respectful.

Quality Review:

These questions are offered as a starting point for a review of generic community services. In addition to questions related to generic services, county boards should ask themselves the following: (1) is the board influencing the direction of generic services? And, (2) Are people with disabilities benefiting from this influence?

Transportation

- Do people with developmental disabilities have access to public transportation?
- Do people with disabilities use available public transportation? Is it convenient?
- What barriers does the transportation system present?
- Is training available for people to learn how to use the transportation system?
- Is training available to public transportation employees?

Housing

- Is a variety of affordable housing available to people with disabilities?
- Is the housing safe, attractive, and affordable?
- Do people with disabilities have a choice in where they live?
- How much of a choice does a person with disabilities have with regard to roommates?
- Are people with disabilities congregated with other people with disabilities?
- Is housing near or accessible to public transportation, jobs, shopping, schools, neighbors, and services?

Medical/Dental Services

- Are appropriate medical and dental services available within the community to support people who live there?
- Do people with disabilities have access to local medical/dental services?
- Are medical/dental services delivered with respect?
- Do people with disabilities use available medical/dental services?
- Do citizens with disabilities participate in generic exercise programs and other generic prevention programs?
- Are public health services, including mental health, available to assist with health needs?
- What are the barriers to appropriate medical/dental services?

Recreation/Leisure

- Do people with disabilities participate in local events typically attended by other citizens from the community?
- Are special recreation events and activities created specifically for people with disabilities?
- Does participation in local recreation and leisure activities promote community integration and the development of relationships?
- Is physical accessibility a barrier to recreation and leisure activities?

Education

- Do school personnel participate in the planning of community services?
- Do local school districts encourage integration in the classrooms?
- Do educational services appear age appropriate?
- Do schools prepare students with disabilities for jobs in the community?
- Do students with disabilities graduate from school with a job?
- Are integrated adult education experiences available through technical schools, community colleges, or other institutions?

- Has each local school district considered their option of including 0-3 year olds in their school district program?
- Has each local school district claimed available SPI (Superintendent of Public Instruction) funding for children birth to three?
- Do service providers and school personnel plan together with the family for educational needs of the child?

(6) ROLE OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Overview

Community members, organizations and associations have much to offer and learn from people with disabilities. While contracted services and generic services can provide opportunities for people to be a part of their community, only community members can offer true inclusion through memberships, friendships, and other valued roles. County boards and staff can not only help educate but also learn from community groups what it will take to have people with disabilities be more included in local communities.

...Community... is the free space where people think for themselves, dream their dreams, and come together to create and celebrate their common humanity.

Mary O'Connell

As counties move toward more natural support it is critical that relationships be developed between county boards and community members and leaders.

Quality Indicators:

The following are some of the outcomes for people experiencing their community:

- Belonging to clubs and organizations based on individual interests and cultural ties.
- Contributing to the betterment of the community through a variety of means i.e., volunteering, helping a neighbor, voting, serving on boards and committees, etc.
- Having relationships with a variety of people in the community, both long term relationships as well as acquaintances.
- Participating in a variety of community activities with other community members.
- Participation in ethnic and cultural organizations and events.

Strategies:

The following are offered as initial community building strategies for county boards and staff:

- Identify and make contact with community leaders and key community people. These may include business people, church leaders, heads of neighborhood and ethnic associations, etc.
- Ask community leaders/members what they think it will take to increase the participation of citizens with disabilities in communities.
- Find and make contact with community groups that have a mission that is compatible with inclusions of all people into community life, i.e., church groups, neighborhood organizations, clubs, ethnic groups, etc.

- Participate in information sharing forums with community organizations around issues of diversity, housing needs, etc., and use this time to educate community people on the talents and gifts that individuals with disabilities have to offer.
- Educate community leaders and members about the issues facing people with disabilities and their families. Include people with disabilities and their families in this education. This could include community forums.
- Invite community leaders and members to come together to share the responsibility and form a partnership to work on issues affecting the inclusion of people in the community.
- Work with advocacy organizations, such as People First, to share with community leaders and members their goals and dreams of what “community” should be for all people.
- Use the media to share stories of contributions that people with disabilities are making in their neighborhood and communities, i.e., employee, volunteer, good neighbor, etc.
- Be pro-active in electing county/city officials – shaping their platform. Influence elected officials through the political process and begin developing relationships with officials.
- Join groups working on community issues, (i.e., housing, transportation and poverty) and bring in perspectives for people with disabilities.
- Develop community groups/organizations, if none exist, around specific issues affecting inclusion of people into communities.
- Introduce individuals with disabilities to other individuals in the community.

Quality Review:

How will county boards know if community-building strategies are actually benefiting individuals with disabilities and the communities they live in? The following are some suggested quality indicators counties might look for to determine whether their efforts were successful:

- Are people with disabilities being included in organizations, associations, clubs, churches, etc.?
- Are the issues affecting people with disabilities included on the agenda of neighborhood groups?
- Do people with disabilities have more relationships as a result of these new connections?
- Are stories being printed and told in local media that reflect positive contributions being made by people with disabilities?
- Are community members and leaders participating with county boards in identifying solutions to community challenges such as inclusion of people, jobs, housing, etc.?

- Are people with disabilities participating in local events with other community citizens?
- Are the gifts and talents of people with disabilities being recognized, through art shows, poetry readings, musical recitals, dance, comedy, etc.?
- Are community members advocating and supporting people to achieve their dreams and goals?
- Do people have roles of influence in neighborhood groups and associations?
- Do people have opportunities to meet a range and variety of new people?
- Are people participating in activities they have chosen and have an interest in?
- Do leaders of the ethnic communities participate in planning community services?
- Are ethnic communities encouraged to include people with disabilities in their memberships?
- Are people with cultural ties encouraged to be members of ethnic clubs and associations?
- Do people with disabilities participate in events and celebrations associated with their heritage?
- Are diversity workshops and education offered to service providers and community members, including people with disabilities and their families?

CONCLUSION

Citizens of the state of Washington, through these Guidelines and Guidelines of the past, continue to demonstrate an ability to struggle with important questions and to work toward a vision of inclusion on behalf of all its citizens.

The benefits described in this document of:

- Power and choice
- Relationships
- Status
- Integration
- Competence
- Health and safety

Will require that each of us do the following:

- Strive to build and support relationships
- Utilize natural supports as much as possible
- Stress community involvement
- Support active participation
- Use non-intrusive, natural interventions
- Be sensitive to individual rights – particularly privacy, personal decision making, and personal space
- Maintain natural routines
- Be conscious of age appropriateness
- Recognize the right of the person to make real choices
- Maintain good health, safety, and medical practices
- Utilize the power of modeling in your own behavior
- Be conscious of subtle images, postures and language which can devalue people
- Promote status, competencies, and personal growth
- Know the individual well
- Respect and support the cultural ties an individual may have
- Keep people who are unemployed and underemployed in mind as decisions are made

We have much work to do before our vision of total inclusion into community for all people will be realized. These Guidelines represent another step toward that goal and will require partnerships and collaboration on a level never before attempted

“...this work must not be an extension of the formal system, but be located in the civic sector – the place where people come together as citizens – provides a broader perspective, access to people who are not functioning as paid professionals but as neighbors and citizens, and the fundamental condition of informality.”

(Community Building in Logan Square, May O’Connell, 1990)
