Indiana’s University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

2009

MISSION:

The mission of the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community is to work with communities to welcome, value, and support the meaningful participation of people of all ages and abilities through research, education, and service.

"To work with communities"

The Institute collaborates with community agencies, schools, advocacy organizations, government, institutions of higher education, and other community partners to effect improvements in quality of life.

"to welcome, value, and support the meaningful participation for people of all ages and abilities"

This is the core of our mission. It defines outcomes for diverse individuals, including people with disabilities, in all life spaces: schools, employment, home, and community settings.

"through research, education, and service."

Research means investigation and inquiry into ideas and practices in order to develop knowledge that will benefit people of all ages and abilities.

Education means teaching approaches, concepts, and new knowledge to students and community members in schools, institutions of higher education, and in community settings. Service means putting research and new knowledge into practice in educational and community settings. Service means collaborations and partnerships to promote inclusive communities. Services means participation in local, state, national, and international, and higher education committees, councils, and association activities and governance.

OVERVIEW:

Founded in 1970, the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Indiana’s University Center for Excellence on Disabilities, is committed to providing Hoosiers with disability-related information and services that touch the entire life span, from birth through older adulthood. The Institute’s faculty and staff support this mission and activities through a shared set of values.
People with disabilities are full, participating and contributing members of their communities — in school, work, home, neighborhood, spiritual, and recreational settings. People with disabilities exercise choice and control over their futures. People with disabilities have dignity and are treated with respect. People with disabilities and their families are involved in the design and implementation of services and supports.

Additionally, shared values are complemented by guiding principles that define the manner in which the Indiana Institute operates. These principles encompass the following ideals:

- Life span focus;
- Emphasis on community;
- Systems change;
- Unique partnerships; and
- Strengthening connections between university and community.

**Organizational Structure:**

The Institute works to build community capacity through its collaborative efforts with institutions of higher education, state and local government agencies, community service providers, persons with disabilities and their families, and advocacy organizations. The work of the Indiana Institute is carried out in Centers which address the following issues:

- Early intervention and education;
- School improvement and inclusion;
- Transition, employment, and careers;
- Aging-related change;
- Planning and policy studies;
- Disability information and referral;
- Autism spectrum disorders; and
- Individual and family perspectives.

The daily business of the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community is conducted by a Management Team that consists of the Director, seven Center Directors, the Chair of the Institute’s Family and Individual Resource and Support Team (FIRST), and key administrative staff. In the spring of 2002, the Institute created an organizational plan focused on:

- Investing in community issues;
- Building unique collaborations and partnerships;
- Expanding university roles;
- Investing in our work culture;
- Diversifying funding; and
- Ongoing planning and evaluation of impact.

**Core Functions:**

The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community is in a unique position to foster the flow of disability-related information between communities in Indiana and institutions of higher education. The Institute accomplishes this through its focus on building community capacity through a set of core functions. They include:
INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAINING:

The faculty and staff of the Indiana Institute train and educate the next generation of leaders in disability-related research, training, service delivery, and policy advocacy. In 2007-2008, the Institute’s Interdisciplinary Training Program supported 24 students, representing 11 disciplines, involved in various projects and programs across its seven centers.

Also in 2007-2008, faculty and staff of the Institute provided course instruction to 758 university students through 27 individual courses taught at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis, and Ivy Tech State College. Nearly 1,923 student credit hours were generated.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION:

The Institute generates and disseminates a wide array of materials designed to improve policies and services that pertain to individual with disabilities, their families, professionals in the field, and policy makers. In 2007-2008, over 61,000 copies of products were disseminated across the Institute’s seven Centers.

RESEARCH:

The Institute conducts basic or applied research, evaluation, and public policy analysis in areas that affect individuals with disabilities and their families. In 2007-2008, the Indiana Institute engaged in 21 research projects across its five areas of emphasis.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Indiana Institute-sponsored training events include conferences, workshops, summer institutes, distance education classes, and seminars that target a wide range of topics and participants. Needs assessments, requests from the field, and training evaluations guide presentations of best practice in disability. Last year, Indiana Institute faculty and staff conducted 1,060 events that reached over 88,000 individuals.

The Institute’s technical assistance activities are more intensive problem-solving responses to identified needs. Technical assistance is provided at the systems change level that is focused on building community across the life span. Last year, Institute faculty and staff provided over 11,500 hours of technical assistance across Indiana.

FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL RESOURCE AND SUPPORT TEAM (FIRST):

The Institute recognizes the importance of family in our communities. In the mid-90s, the Indiana Institute established a Family and Individual Resource and Support Team (FIRST) that promotes the perspectives of families and persons with disabilities across the goals of the Institute and serves as a resource to communities in Indiana.

FUNDING AND AFFILIATIONS:

The Indiana Institute pursues its mission with support from Indiana University as well as through federal resources, state grants, and foundations. The Institute reports to the Trustees of Indiana University and the Office of the Vice President for Research and is located on the Bloomington campus of Indiana University.
Since its inception, the Institute has been an active member of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD). AUCD is a national organization linking a network of interdisciplinary Centers that work to advance policy and practice for, and with, individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families, and communities.

The Indiana Institute partners with Indiana’s Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities (www.in.gov/gpcpd/) and the Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services (www.in.gov/ipas/) to ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of, and have access to, culturally competent services, supports, and other assistance and opportunities that promote independence, productivity, and inclusion into the community. Each of these organizations receive funding through the Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

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