Visionary solutions in disability and community through research, education, and service in Indiana since 1970.
From Our Director

Friends and Colleagues:

The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC) has long been a leader in bringing disability-related research to practice across our Indiana communities. Today, more than ever, these talents are needed to develop and expand inclusive practices and improve complex systems. The focus of our work, per our federal mandate as a University Center for Excellence (UCE), has always been and continues to be cross-lifespan.

Last year marked a turning point for the IIDC – in both how we envision our work internally and how we respond to challenges externally. In the fall of 2017, the Institute began its engagement in an ongoing strategic planning and asset mapping process. Emerging from this effort is a new framework (see page five) from which we, as a collective, seek to organize our work to solve some of the biggest issues facing people with disabilities in Indiana and beyond.

We know that everybody, including people with disabilities, face inflection points in life – trajectory-setting time periods that can change one’s future for the better or worse. What is not clear are the antecedents for later life outcomes. For example, does inclusive pre-kindergarten lead to inclusive schooling and employment later in life? Or, does access to college and a career lead to a better retirement? These complex stories, and many more, remain untold. As a UCE, it is our responsibility to understand these inflection points and how they affect people throughout their lives. It is also our responsibility to develop and implement new, cross-lifespan strategies that can bend trajectories toward a more desirable life.

This evolution of the IIDC is a natural response to our exceedingly complex and interconnected environment, where isolated solutions result in limited impact. Additionally, we know that to be successful, we must maximize our strengths and work collaboratively, within and outside of the Institute and Indiana University. This annual report is a reflective snapshot of our work for 2017-18. For a more comprehensive exploration of our research to practice activities, please visit our website at www.iidc.indiana.edu. I invite you to join us as we break new ground.

Sincerely,

Derek Nord, Ph.D.
Director
A Foundation of Excellence

The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC) Indiana’s University Center for Excellence in Disabilities, has fostered a foundation of excellence for community investment in developmental disabilities since 1970. Our mission 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. Our work crosses the lifespan and is conducted across six centers and an Indiana University disability-focused library accessible to all state residents.

Advancing Improvement in Policy and Practices in Disability

The Indiana Institute is a bridge that connects the university to the broader community through the sharing of ideas and innovations to improve communities and lives. The Institute’s work achieves this through:

- **Advocacy:** Advancing effective policy and best practices by informing and educating decision makers.
- **Coalition Development:** Developing collaborative solutions by connecting and convening diverse community stakeholders.
- **Family Engagement:** Supporting families through partnerships among educators and human service providers to strengthen learning, independence, and community connections.
- **Information Dissemination:** Communicating and sharing information and research findings with broad constituencies over various mediums.
- **Pre-Service Education and Preparation:** Supporting the training of professionals to become leaders and prepare future practitioners to implement best practices in the field.
- **Research, Evaluation and Policy Analysis:** Conducting disciplined inquiry to test and improve policies, programs, and practices.
- **Training and Technical Assistance:** Building capacity to support community members and professionals in applying specific skills and best practices.

By the Numbers

The Institute’s research to practice initiatives support the advancement of applied research, evaluation, and public policy; outreach that is community oriented and state wide; technical assistance activities that are collaborative, systematic, and results driven; and educational preparation that supports the pre-service and in-service training of professionals to become leaders in the field.

![By the Numbers](https://iidc.indiana.edu)

**RESEARCH**

- **projects ranging in topics across the lifespan**
  - 50

**SERVICE**

- **people impacted at 444 events**
  - 65,443

**SCHOLARSHIP**

- **products produced by Institute professionals**
  - 175

**EDUCATION**

- **university students impacted by the Institute**
  - 150

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IIDC Annual Report 2017-18

iidc.indiana.edu
Early Childhood

Indiana Center on Teacher Quality (ICTQ)
The Indiana Center on Teacher Quality (ICTQ) is a five-year federally funded grant awarded to the Indiana Department of Education and staffed through the Center on Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL). ICTQ seeks to improve educational outcomes for students with and without disabilities by ensuring their access to Pre-K-12 continuum of instruction from high quality teachers. ICTQ targets support regionally across the state with the intensive work taking place in five high needs districts. ICTQ uses Implementation Science as a framework for building capacity at the universal, targeted, and intensive levels. ICTQ district work entails the recruitment and retention of teachers through residency programs.

Because three of the five high need districts target preschool and kindergarten teachers, CELL recruited staff from the Indiana Institute’s Early Childhood Center (ECC) to work with the ICTQ team in each component of the work. The cross-center collaboration adds the early education lens to the ICTQ content.

ICTQ uses Implementation Science to build capacity in five school districts in Indiana.

Additional Projects

Early Childhood Inclusion
Indiana serves the majority of its preschool children with disabilities in classroom settings away from their same-age peers. Opportunities to learn alongside their peers and develop important friendships and connections are less likely to occur for many of these children. The Early Childhood Center (ECC) works with the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) to increase the number of preschoolers with disabilities receiving special education services in typical community preschool classrooms. ECC aims to expand its collaborative efforts with districts seeking to improve their efforts to provide high-quality education to preschoolers in common, inclusive classrooms.

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program
In the Hoosier state, risk factors for healthy childhood development initiatives, improved access to high-quality care, and enhanced coordination across child-serving systems. Project LAUNCH, an early childhood public health program and evaluation initiative of the Center for Collaborative Systems Change (CCSC), seeks to ensure the wellness of young children and families in an eight-county region in Southeastern Indiana. Implementation strategies include prevention and mental health promotion, awareness building, workforce development initiatives, improved access to high-quality care, and enhanced coordination across child-serving systems. Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children’s Health), is a collaborative between CCSC, the Indiana State Department of Health, and the non-profit One Family.

Kindergarten Discontinuity
In Indiana, kindergarten students experiencing discontinuity (suspension, expulsion, and grade retention) are less likely to pass state standards testing in third grade domains of reading, math, and English language arts. This conclusion is part of a data share agreement between the Early Childhood Center (ECC) and the Indiana Department of Education. The Center measured the impact of high quality early education by examining essential school readiness skills associated with successful kindergarten entry and performance. Study results revealed the need for additional research around school readiness skills as potentially important indicators for the risk of discontinuity in kindergarten.

Child Disruptive Behavior
Rural Indiana families are experiencing poor health/mental health outcomes at concerning rates. Families of children ages zero to eight are especially at risk. Project LAUNCH, an early childhood public health program and evaluation initiative of the Center for Collaborative Systems Change (CCSC), seeks to ensure the wellness of young children and families in an eight-county region in Southeastern Indiana. Implementation strategies include prevention and mental health promotion, awareness building, workforce development initiatives, improved access to high-quality care, and enhanced coordination across child-serving systems. Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children’s Health), is a collaborative between CCSC, the Indiana State Department of Health, and the non-profit One Community One Family.
School-Age

Study to Determine Indiana Teacher Perceptions and Current Practices in the Delivery of Sexuality Education to Students with Disabilities

In an effort to support collaborative, cross-center research and development, the Indiana Institute held an internal grant competition to develop new cross-disciplinary knowledge and solutions to problems facing people with disabilities. The Center for Health Equity (CHE), in collaboration with the Indiana Resource Center for Autism (IRCA), will undertake a project to increase the capacity of Indiana’s education teachers to advance sexual health literacy of their students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) starting summer 2018. The work of CHE is to eliminate avoidable and unfair differences in health and health care. IRCA’s focus is on building internal grant competition to develop new cross-lifespan knowledge and solutions to problems facing people with disabilities. The literature demonstrates that students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) have limited access to formal and parental sexuality education. Widely held beliefs about the sexuality of individuals with disabilities are based upon myths of their asexuality and lack of need for physical intimacy, among other misconceptions. However, research shows that young individuals with disabilities are sexually active and that they are at high risk for unsafe sexual practices. Americans with disabilities are more than three times as likely to be the victim of rape/sexual assault than those without disabilities, with individuals who have cognitive disabilities bearing the highest level of risk. Inadequate access to sexuality education, coupled with erroneous assumptions of teachers and caregivers, puts students with IDD at a greater risk for unsafe sexual practices and sexual abuse. This collaborative will examine current practices implemented in schools as well as teachers’ perceptions of the need for preparation in sexuality education for students with disabilities in order to enhance students’ sexual health literacy and advocacy. Study findings will be used to inform the cultivation of school culture for more comprehensive sexuality education for students with disabilities and form the basis for the development of an effective sexuality training for students in collaboration with teachers and parents.

PBIS Indiana supports 772 coaches statewide and conducts two PBIS Coaches Forums annually. Additional Projects

**Applied Improvisation**

Youth with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) often struggle to communicate and interact socially. In addition, many educators lack confidence in their ability to teach students on the spectrum in general education settings. The Center on Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL) and the Indiana Resource Center for Autism (IRCA) co-sponsor a summer camp for teens with autism and educators that focuses on improving their social skills, communication and restorative practices. The Center on Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL) and the Indiana Resource Center for Autism (IRCA) co-sponsor a summer camp for teens with autism and educators that focuses on improving their social skills, communication and restorative practices.

**Indiana Secondary Transition Resource Center (INSTRC)**

Youth with disabilities transitioning from high school face substantially higher levels of unemployment and underemployment, economic instability, and lower levels of participation in post-secondary education and training programs. The Center on Community Living and Careers (CLOC) works with the Indiana Department of Education to improve transition education services and outcomes through professional development and coaching. A network of seven statewide cadres of transition leaders are supported by CLOC to work collaboratively focusing on implementing promising practices and creating innovative strategies. Additional Projects

**Indiana School Mental Health Initiative**

Indiana is ranked third of 30 states when it comes to the percentage of high school students (23.8 percent) who have contemplated suicide and second (17 percent) for those who have made a plan. By 2030 the World Health Organization states that depression will be the number one global health risk. The Indiana Resource Center for Autism (IRCA) School Mental Health Initiative focuses on providing resources and training for support schools and community partners to address the social, emotional, behavioral, mental health, and addiction needs of Indiana’s students. Project initiatives include a behavior consultants network addressing the needs of students with the most challenging behaviors and educator training in the areas of neuroscience of behavior, creating a positive learning environment, and providing coping and calming strategies.

**Indianapolis International School**

Indianapolis International School is an independent, college preparatory school located in Indianapolis, Indiana. The school is situated on the campus of Butler University and offers a rigorous academic curriculum that prepares students for success in college and beyond. The school is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and has a student body of approximately 700 students in grades K-12. The school’s mission is to provide an education that challenges and inspires all students to become leaders in their communities and the world.

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Adulthood

Training to Improve Outcomes: Professionals, Caregivers, and Self-Advocates

People with disabilities experience poorer adult outcomes compared to the general population. They have lower employment rates, worse outcomes on most health indicators, and experience higher rates of poverty. Such outcomes hinder one’s ability to fully contribute to their communities. In an effort to improve lives of adults, the Institute conducts a wide variety of training interventions.

Across two centers, the Institute deploys two innovative approaches to respond to these challenges. In partnership with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services, the Center on Community Living and Careers (CCLC) provides curriculum development, logistic support, and training to state VR staff through the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Training and Leadership Academy. The Leadership Academy includes 14 modules within a state-specific orientation, 10 core courses, and five specialized courses. This model, which can be replicated to other states, prepares VR counselors and case coordinators to effectively support a diverse group of job seekers.

Additionally, through a collaborative effort with Special Olympics Indiana (SOI), the staff of the Center for Health Equity (CHE) piloted two educational workshops designed to improve adult outcomes in health and wellness. My Healthy Life workshops focused on reducing health disparities by building the capacity of family caregivers, paid staff, and individuals with disabilities by addressing issues around accessing health care systems, working effectively with health care professionals, and developing health advocacy skills.

The Institute deploys two innovative approaches to respond to complex issues, the Institute is able to lead. These adult-focused training initiatives, among others, are key contributors to achieving the Institute’s mission to support communities to include everyone. By developing innovative approaches and strong partnerships to respond to complex issues, the Institute is able to lead. Where access is improved and expanded to provide opportunities for competitive integrated employment and community living.

DESOS collects data and publishes an annual report on information from 70 disability service providers caring for over 14,000 individuals in Indiana. Additional Projects

Benefits Information Network

For persons with disabilities and families, navigating the ‘services system’ for available resources can be daunting. The Center on Community Living and Career’s (CCLC) Indiana Benefits Information Network (BIN) trains and coordinates a statewide network of professional benefits information liaisons. These liaisons provide accurate and up-to-date information to assist those with disabilities and their family members to better understand how Social Security, Medicaid, work incentives, and other resources can support them as they gradually work their way off of benefits. CCLC administers BIN Liaison Training in collaboration with the Social Security Administration.

Day and Employment Services Outcome System Evaluation Report

There continues to be a steady increase in non-employment programs over the past five years, from 19% to 23% according to the 2017 Day and Employment Services Outcome System Evaluation Report (DESOS). The DESOS report, compiled by the IIDC for the Indiana Bureau of Rehabilitation Services and the state’s Family and Social Services Administration, is an annual statistical documentation of the types of work or alternatives to work in which those with disabilities are engaged across Indiana. DESOS state administrators, legislators, and providers a data ‘snapshot’ which assists policy makers in answering questions about where thousands of individuals throughout Indiana are spending the majority of their day; what types of work they may be doing; and the outcomes they are achieving related to employment, specifically wages earned and hours worked.

Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Collaborative Learning Project

Providing staff development and training is critical to effective service delivery for those with disabilities to live as independently as possible in their communities. The Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services’ (BDDS) Collaborative Learning Curriculum is a series of online training modules for current and new BDDS service coordinators. Modules are designed to provide training and professional development to BDDS staff in their daily roles. The Collaborative Learning Project was developed through a partnership with the BDDS, Indiana’s Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS) within Indiana’s Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Public Consulting Group (PCG), and the Indiana Institute.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services Training and Technical Assistance

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) regularly reports that the percentage of working-age people with disabilities in the labor force is about one-third that of persons with no disability. The Center on Community Living and Careers (CCLC) provides training and technical assistance to employment service providers and Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services staff to improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities of working age. Professionals are supported in the field and participate in state-level work groups to ensure a collaborative and comprehensive approach to professional development in employment services in Indiana.
Aging

Change Agent in Disability

As a change agent in disability, the Indiana Institute seeks to create a more desirable life for those with disabilities and their families. In 2017-18, the Indiana Institute expanded our work scope to include a focus on promoting healthcare access and equity across the lifespan through our Center for Health Equity (CHE). Additionally, we reorganized around advancing and supporting complex systems change to more effectively achieve outcomes and serve those with disabilities and their families through the Center for Collaborative Systems Change (CCSC).

In Indiana, a state where the health and wellness of all Hoosiers is markedly lower than the United States average on many indicators (Indiana Business Research Center, 2017), people with disabilities tend to fare worse than the state’s general population. CHE works to ensure that individuals of all ages and abilities have a fair and just opportunity to live a healthy and meaningful life in the community. While health equity is the center’s primary focus, CHE also promotes ADA implementation, disability awareness, and advocacy building and supports around age- and ability-friendly communities.

Understanding how community entities collaborate, how coalitions develop, and how both work to achieve and retain their goals are the keys to successful local capacity building that lasts: lasting, sustainable change. CCSC works to support communities in making decisions that are data driven to identify when and where to improve services and outcomes for the people they serve. Center initiatives include coalition building aimed at preventing substance abuse, agencies working to better support families with young children, and preservation of memories and experiences of Hoosiers with disabilities. Through a large collection of oral history videos, transcripts, and photographs, the project website documents the Indiana Disability History Project, an online initiative that collects first-hand accounts of the disability rights movement and the experiences of Hoosiers with disabilities. Through a large collection of oral history videos, transcripts, and photographs, the project website documents and preserves the memories and experiences of people with disabilities, family members, professional service providers, educators, and public officials.

Since 1995, ADA-Indiana has provided over $100,000 in funding support to 83 organizations to implement ADA-related projects in Indiana.

Indiana Disability and Health Project

In 2013, the Center for Disease Control released its second report on Health Disparities and Inequities. The report indicated that health disparities among people with disabilities demonstrate significant differences between the general population in chronic illnesses such as diabetes, cardiovascular health, smoking, obesity, and access to public health programs and health care. To this end, the Center on Health Equity’s (CHE) Indiana Disability and Health Project brings together people with disabilities, disability organizations, health care and health promotion professionals, and state employees to achieve greater awareness and inclusion of people with disabilities in community-based health promotion and health care programs. This work is a collaborative between the center and the Indiana State Department of Health, Division of Chronic Disease, Primary Care and Rural Health (ISDH/CDPH).

Additional Projects

ADA Indiana

Restrictive access to life opportunities, including employment, transportation, public accommodation, etc. have contributed to barriers that have limited opportunities for people with disabilities. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, the Center for Health Equity’s (CHE) ADA-Indiana project works to serve as a statewide ADA resource for Hoosiers with disabilities. The project supports the continuing need for information, training, and implementation on the ADA at the local level. ADA Indiana identifies needs and gaps in implementation and addresses them through training, advocacy, public relations, policy-related data gathering, and collaboration with other Indiana entities.

Applied Improvisation: The Improv for Alzheimer’s Support

The Alzheimer’s Association defines Alzheimer’s disease as a progressive brain disorder that damages and eventually destroys brain cells, leading to memory loss and changes in thinking and other brain functions. The Center on Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL) has partnered with the Alzheimer’s Resource Service of IU Health Bloomington to offer improv workshops for individuals living with dementia, their families, and professional caregivers. A three-workshop series was piloted successfully in fall 2017 and a second series held in spring 2018. Evaluation findings from the two pilots will be used to develop a workshop curriculum that can be replicated focusing on dealing with change, decreasing stress, improving brain plasticity, and strengthening relationships.