

50

YEARS



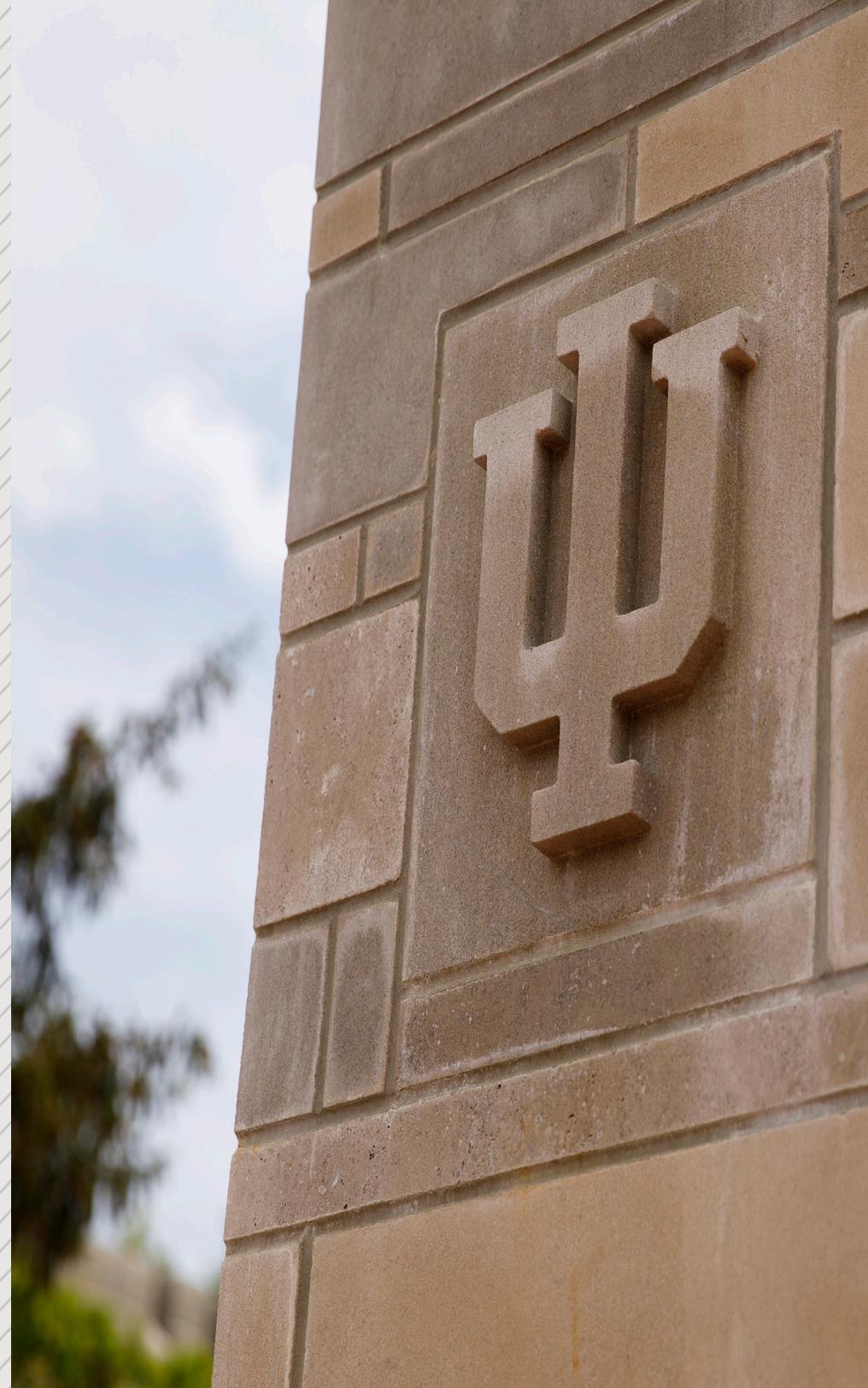
**INDIANA INSTITUTE
ON DISABILITY AND COMMUNITY**

1970–2020

HONORING THE IU BICENTENNIAL

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating 50 years of
visionary solutions in
disability and community
through research,
education, and service



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From Our Director

Friends and Colleagues:

As we close out the fiscal year, our nation is reeling. The coronavirus has sickened millions of Americans, many of whom have died. Our daily lives have been tossed in disarray as our families, workplaces, schools, and communities take measures to ensure health and safety, while limiting community spread of the virus. During this same time, Black and Brown people across the country continue to face racist acts of suppression, violence and murder, resulting in national and international protests.

In these challenging times the Institute has responded. We know that the coronavirus has disproportionate effects on people with disabilities. This is why, within days of the coronavirus gaining its global pandemic title, the Institute faculty and staff entirely revamped internal and external operations to ensure we could meet our mission and obligations – even from a distance and at home. This nimbleness and fortitude exemplify the passion and dedication of the Institute faculty and staff.

We also know that Black and Brown people with disabilities continue to face extreme marginalization and our work is critical in addressing this problem. This is why the Institute has worked internally and through our funded projects to increase our capacity to more effectively address issues of systemic racism experienced by Black and Brown communities. As we continue to engage with systems of early education, K-12 education, health and human services, and beyond, the Institute remains committed to addressing inequality and supporting our partners in implementing equitable practices.



As the Institute begins its 50th year of research, education, and service, our work remains at the forefront. It is also expanding. As announced in a February press release (<https://go.iu.edu/2RF5>), beginning on July 1 the Institute will make the Eppley Institute for Public Parks and Lands its seventh research center. With a portfolio of work that aims to improve access to recreational resources, this move expands the Institute's footprint into a critical area. I'd like to welcome the Eppley team to the Institute.

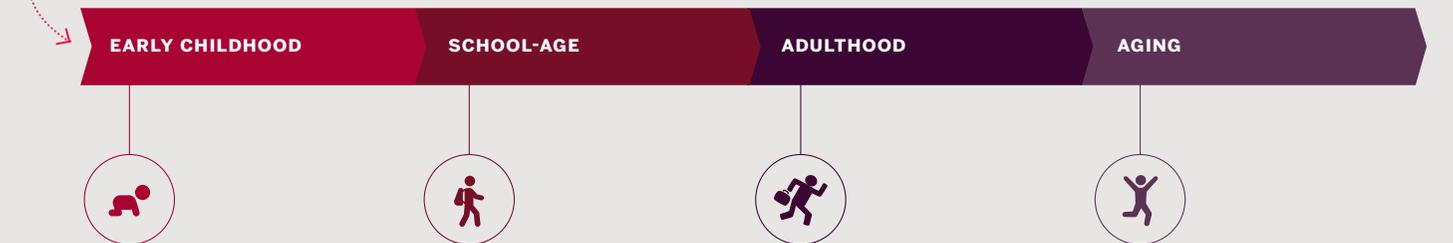
Now, I invite you to learn more about our work and achievements in this 2020 Annual Report and our newly redesigned website (iidc.indiana.edu).

Sincerely,

Derek Nord, Ph.D.
Director

A LIFESPAN APPROACH TO DISABILITIES

IMAGINE COMMUNITIES THAT FACILITATE AND SUPPORT EQUITABLE ACCESS TO A DESIRABLE LIFE FOR ALL PEOPLE



Where family-community partnerships provide all families the supports they need to nurture, teach, and advocate for their children.

Where the capacity of educational systems and universally designed services meet the needs of all students.

Where access is improved and expanded to provide opportunities for competitive integrated employment and community living.

Where individuals participate in all facets of community life and have choice and control over their health and independence.



RESEARCH CENTERS AT THE INDIANA INSTITUTE

- Early Childhood Center
- Center on Education and Lifelong Learning
- Center on Community Living and Careers
- Center for Health Equity
- Center for Collaborative Systems Change
- Indiana Resource Center for Autism

INSTITUTE STAFF ADVANCE IMPROVEMENT IN POLICY AND PRACTICES IN DISABILITY THROUGH...

- Advocacy
- Coalition Development
- Family Engagement
- Information Dissemination
- Pre-Service Education and Preparation
- Research, Evaluation and Policy Analysis
- Training & Technical Assistance

A COMMUNITY WHERE YOU BELONG



Visionary Solutions in Disability

Construction began on the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, then known as the Developmental Training Center (DTC), in December of 1967. Funding for construction was authorized through a Public Services grant approved by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Completed in 1970, at a time when institutionalization and sheltered workshops were the norm for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the purpose of the DTC was to “educate children with disabilities for life in a community.”

This was the vision of Dr. Delton C. Beir, then director of the Psychological Clinic and Graduate Training Program in Clinical Psychology at Indiana University and “father” of the design of the DTC as a residence center. Thus began, what is now a 50-year journey, of VISIONARY and practical solutions in disability through research, education, and service in Indiana. The Indiana Institute works to put good ideas into everyday practice in schools and community settings to improve choices and quality of life for people with disabilities and their families.

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.

54,975
PEOPLE IMPACTED

9,727
HOURS OF TRAINING PROVIDED

161
BOARDS & COMMITTEES

4
NATIONAL AWARDS

RESEARCH



48
projects ranging in topics
across the lifespan

- 29 Early intervention and education focused projects
- 10 Employment focused projects
- 7 Health promotion and equity projects
- 6 Self-advocacy focused projects

SERVICE



54,975
people impacted at
598 events

- 29,726 Professionals/paraprofessionals
- 12,818 People with disabilities
- 10,428 Family members/care-givers
- 1,480 Students
- 428 General public
- 95 Legislators/policymakers

SCHOLARSHIP



143
products produced by
Institute professionals

- 41 Academic courses and distance learning modules
- 34 Reports and monographs
- 31 Newsletters, pamphlets, brochures, fact sheets
- 14 Book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles
- 12 Electronic and web-based products
- 8 Conference presentations
- 2 Dissertations
- 1 Press communications

EDUCATION



179
university students
impacted by the Institute

- 292 Credit hours generated by IU students
- 150 Students taught during academic courses in 2019-2020
- 20 Undergraduate, masters and doctoral level students mentored or advised
- 9 Interdisciplinary trainees
- 8 Academic courses taught

Thanks to our IIDC Advisory Council members: Dawn Adams, Sylvia Brantley, David Carter, Amanda Circle, Christine Dahlberg, Frank Epperson, Shawn Fulton, Sharon Hauss, Stacey Heath, Sarah Hurwitz, Leah Helvering, Melissa Keyes, MaryAnn Lapenta, Kate McQueen, Cori Mitchell, Chris Myers, Cynthia Nassim, Derek Nord, Amber O’Haver, Chris Strogiludis, and Karen Vaughn.

Where family-community partnerships provide all families the supports they need to nurture, teach, and advocate for their children.



EARLY CHILDHOOD

BRIDGING RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community's Early Childhood Center (ECC) partners with community programs to bring research to practice through high-quality professional development and technical assistance. Such partnerships involve generating collaborative plans to achieve goals by using evidence-based practices, making data-informed decisions, and addressing challenges. Examples of these partnerships, and the evidence-based practices they focused on, include Center work with the South-Central Community Action Program (SCAAP) regarding the Pyramid Model practices to address challenging behavior and work with the Community Foundations in Wabash and Monroe counties in Indiana concerning the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) practices to increase high-quality adult-child interactions.

These partnerships began by coordinating meetings with organization administrators to identify priorities and jointly design technical assistance to be delivered by ECC staff. All three projects included preliminary orientation training on either Pyramid Model or CLASS practices to build awareness and familiarize practitioners with the TA process. Because high-quality professional development requires more than just a single training to impact practices, follow-up coaching elements were also included. Data informed decisions were critical to high-assessments collected during the orientation trainings and formal pre-observations using the identified tool's assessment instruments. Programs also incorporated post-observations into their plans as a way to measure impact.

SCAPP and the Monroe County Community Foundation both elected to include the evidence-based Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) model in their technical assistance. PBC support was provided both in person and virtually utilizing the online meeting application Zoom. When requested, administrators were regularly informed of their teachers' coaching goals and plans via email and meetings with the ECC coach periodically to share successes and address challenges. As we know, the best laid plans can go awry and when this happened, ECC staff met with organization administrators to problem-solve, address challenges, and successfully modify the technical assistance plans as needed.

The Community Program of Preschool and Parent Education (PREPARE) was established in the early 1970s. PREPARE provided an early intervention model program for infants and toddlers as part of the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP).



PROGRAM
PREPARE

EARLY CHILDHOOD UNIT

DEVELOPMENTAL TRAINING
CENTER
INDIANA UNIVERSITY

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

EVIDENCE-BASED HOME-VISITING MODEL

Indiana's Part C early intervention program, First Steps, has adopted an evidence-based home-visiting model. First Steps recognized that adopting an evidence-based model with fidelity will increase the consistency of family-centered practices and improve child and family outcomes. To begin this multi-year effort, First Steps sought guidance from the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). The ICC worked with the Early Childhood Center (ECC) to identify three models using an implementation science evaluation rubric. A literature review was conducted, interviews with the models' authors took place, and early intervention directors in other states who had implemented the model were sought for input. After careful consideration, the ICC adopted the Dr. Juliann Woods' Family Guided Routines Based Intervention (FGRBI) model. ECC staff is currently collaborating with the First Steps state team and Dr. Woods to design a plan for introducing and implementing the model over the next several years.

IDOE PRESCHOOL ROADSHOW

The Early Childhood Center (ECC) participated in the first Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) Preschool Roadshow traveling to four regions of the state. Staffers traveled 923 miles to four locations reaching 163 early childhood professionals. This collaborative effort brought together six colleagues from IDOE and ECC to showcase information and leadership to regional members of the Indiana Council of Administrators of Special Education (ICASE). IDOE specialists addressed topics that included transition, early learning foundations, and pre-k expansion. ECC staff highlighted data-informed decision-making featuring district data dashboards and accurate coding of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Additionally, the exemplary inclusion work of Indiana districts was highlighted focusing on the Indiana Directory of Preschool Models and the Division of Early Childhood Recommended Practices website of resources to improve inclusive practice that increase child outcomes.

INDIANA PRESCHOOL INCLUSION STUDY

Currently, Indiana provides less than one in three preschool children with disabilities which is below the national average of 30%. The Indiana Department of Education Special Education Office asked the Early Childhood Center (ECC) to conduct an initial inclusion study to gather and analyze data to better understand preschool inclusion in Indiana, what corporations are doing and why. Staff analyzed preschool placement and impact data to find corporations providing inclusion. A survey was developed and interview format embedded with evidence-based practices to collect data from over 60 administrators and practitioners about service models, classroom practices, and challenges they faced in implementing preschool inclusion. Samples of reported evidence-based practices included special education services delivered within classroom routines and activities and weekly collaboration between general and special education practitioners. Reported challenges included funding and locating qualified special education practitioners.

PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT

The state of Indiana Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning (OECOSL) received a large federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) intended to strengthen Indiana's early childcare and education system. The Early Childhood Center (ECC) and the Center on Collaborative Systems Change (CCSC) worked with the OECOSL to develop the performance evaluation framework and process included in the original grant application. Staff from the two Institute centers and PDG stakeholders worked together to ensure that the evaluation plan is responsive to and aligned with Indiana's vision. Currently, eight of the 22 PDG projects are developing important models or practices for improving access to or quality of early childcare and education, such as Kindergarten Transition and Transition to Teaching. A final report to state decision makers will be developed that includes summative Teamwork data, details of the evaluation process, and final recommendations regarding the adoption of the PDG projects' models and practices.

Where the capacity of educational systems and universally designed services meet the needs of all students.



SCHOOL-AGE

INDICATOR 14: WHAT'S NEXT?

Last year, nearly 1,700 students with disabilities who had Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) left Indiana high schools to begin the next phase of their lives. That next phase can include job training, postsecondary education, employment, and community life and participation. But a year after they've left school, what specifically are these young adults doing and how successful was their transition in preparing them for adulthood?

Those are the questions IIDC's Center on Community Living and Careers (CCLC) is seeking to answer as it takes on the task of data collection to fulfill the federal Indicator 14 requirement. Indicator 14 is one of a series of regulations mandated by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. It requires states to collect information about students one year after they've left school. The data is used to determine how successful a state's transition programming is, to identify trends and needs, and to find out just how many students with IEPs are, for instance, taking college classes or earning a paycheck.

The challenge to obtaining this useful data is that students and their families don't always remain in contact with their high schools. Email addresses change, students move, last names may change. In the past, that's meant that the percentage of students responding to the Indicator 14 surveys has been much lower than what the Indiana Department of Education would like to see.

To improve on those numbers this year CCLC created a new outreach campaign called "What's Next?" Through campaign, the center is asking students and their families to stay in touch by subscribing to a monthly "What's Next?" newsletter, featuring transition tips, resources, and next steps for that first year after school. By remaining engaged with the center, students and families will not only receive valuable information, they may also be more likely to follow-up and complete the end-of-year survey. "What's Next?" campaign staff use mail, email, and phone calls to reach out to students and can provide materials and the survey in other languages as needed.

A primary focus of the Developmental Training Center in the 1970s was to address the need for assessment and the case management of children with developmental disabilities.



dtc
Developmental Training Center
Indiana University

Assessment Program



2853 E. 10th St.
Bloomington Ind. 47401
812-337-6508

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

INDIANA DISPROPORTIONALITY RESOURCE CENTER

In 2018, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) implemented a Results Driven Accountability and Differentiated Support (RDA) system that included three elements: Compliance, Results, and Data Timeliness. The Indiana Disproportionality Resource Center (IDRC) at the Center on Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL), provides technical assistance to IDOE in defining and identifying disproportionality in special education. IDRC tracks Indicators 4A, 4B, 9, and 10, which focus on discipline and identification and placement of special education students. IDRC shares findings with school corporations in an effort to address disproportionality and inequity and implement new policies and practices to create long-term change. Additionally, IDRC makes monitoring tools, resources, and technical assistance available to LEAs as they address sources of inequality. These resources address specific issues related to culturally responsive change, and offer practical, evidence-based solutions that LEAs can implement for long-term change.

AUTISM TEAM TRAINING

With the increasing prevalence of autism spectrum disorders in Indiana, the Indiana Resource Center for Autism (IRCA) has been building local district capacity to implement proactive and positive programming that is evidence-based for students across the autism spectrum. Since 1995, 484 school district teams and community mental health centers have attended IRCA-led training sessions focusing on supporting strategies that support initiatives around PBIS, RTI, and MTSS (multi-tiered system of support). District commitment to effectively educate students on the autism spectrum remains strong in Indiana with autism leaders identified in almost every school district in Indiana. To date, there are over 200 autism leaders that are supported through IRCA via ongoing meetings, listservs, and repository of resources.

SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Beginning in the early 1980s, the School of Education (SOE) at Indiana University and now, the Center on Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL), has offered a 21-credit hour program in Special Education Leadership. This certificate program is open to those interested in a leadership role in exceptional needs at the school and district level and results in a license for director of special education.

Cohort courses are taught by the director of CELL. Non-cohort courses are taught by full-time faculty from SOE who have worked as teachers, principals, superintendents, lawyers, and have published widely in their areas of expertise. Several faculty members have been school and district administrators in Indiana and/or other states as well. To date, over 100 students have completed the course. According to U.S. News and World Report, the program is ranked as the 13th ranked Educational Leadership Program in the U.S. and the highest ranked program in the state of Indiana.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

The Center on Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL) recognizes the need to assist educators in moving beyond prescriptive curriculum which often relegates Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as something that happens at a certain time on a certain day. This is accomplished by deepening educators' understanding of Applied Educational Neuroscience, including the impact of early childhood adversity and toxic stress. The Center works with two school districts to coordinate their efforts with SEL that includes training, coaching, and technical assistance to school-based leadership. Staff facilitate collaborative inquiry regarding the implications of embracing SEL as a domain for school, particularly the implications for discipline and academic instruction. Educators from various school buildings within each school district are also involved with voluntary book studies, exploring brain-based discipline and reframing challenging behavior.

Where access is improved and expanded to provide opportunities for competitive integrated employment and community living.



ADULTHOOD

A NEW ONLINE LEARNING BUSINESS VENTURE FOR DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC) has entered into a business venture with the Strategic Indiana Provider Network (SIPN), a group of nine non-profit agencies providing services to individuals with disabilities, children and families in more than 70 counties across Indiana. SIPN incorporated in 2008 to jointly plan and accomplish mutually beneficial projects and activities. Their goal is to improve, enhance, or increase the service delivery system in Indiana.

Training needs for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) was amplified through the Lt. Governor's "Task Force for Assessment of Services and Supports for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities" that has been meeting since 2018. The partnership between IIDC and SIPN emerged after lengthy conversations about the training needs of organizations throughout Indiana. The goal was to deliver an affordable web-based, easy access, and state endorsed training programs to all organizations.

The competency-based training meets all regulatory requirements for organizations. Building upon SIPN's past efforts, this project is in the midst of revising over 60 modules/courses to ensure best practices and accessibility for online learning. Each of the courses are mapped to state standards, policies, and national standards for accreditation. The courses align within five curricula – Annual Training as required by the State of Indiana; Direct Support Onboarding; Direct Support Enrichment; Employment Supports Orientation; and Employment Supports Enrichment.

Staff at Indiana Institute provide the overall coordination and administration of the partnership and the Learning Management System (LMS). Staff provide technical assistance to each of the nine provider training coordinators. The provider training coordinators are part of the feedback loop for content, course development, LMS issues, and training needs. Currently, the partnership is focused on marketing and outreach materials to expand to other organizations. Ultimately, the partnership is to encourage staff development and growth to improve the quality of services provided to individuals with disabilities and their families.

Since its inception, the DTC was, and is, an active member of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), then known as University Associated Facilities (UAF). AUCD is a national organization linking a network of interdisciplinary center working to advance policy and practice for individuals with disabilities and their families.



Indiana University DEVELOPMENTAL TRAINING CENTER



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ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

FACILITATING PRISON LITERACY

In a project supported by the New Frontiers of Creativity and Scholarship Fellowship at Indiana University, the Center on Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL) began a new initiative called Writing Out Resilience, a hybrid creative writing project and qualitative research study on the topic of trauma-informed care. This project was born out of a prison literacy program for all learners of all ages in Indiana titled the Power of a Sentence. Writing Out Resilience participants read and discuss poetry written by survivors of abuse that explore difficult themes including addiction, domestic violence, household dysfunction, and mental health. The curriculum is embedded with Educational Neuroscience activities and serves to help writers living with trauma learn how to write about their experiences in healthy ways. Participants in the class are invited to respond to readings by creating their own poems about critical topics, which will be compiled into an archive to help the greater public understand the relationship between trauma and the criminal justice system.

BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF RECOVERY

Mobilizing resources to increase the prevalence and quality of long-term recovery support from substance and addiction is the focus of a funded project at the Center for Collaborative Systems Change (CCSC). Partnering with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, One Community One Family, and 1Voice, the Center works with Dearborn County in Indiana to support the development, enhancement, and delivery of recovery support services (RSS), specifically supports via certified peer-recovery support specialists. The project advances the promotion of, and education about, addiction science and recovery governed by people in recovery. The CCSC research team will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the project including the collection and reporting of all required performance measures.

BENEFITS INFORMATION NETWORK

Funded by Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation and administered by the Center on Community Living and Careers, the Benefits Information Network (BIN) supports Hoosiers with disabilities by providing an informed, efficient network of benefits information counselors throughout Indiana. These certified BIN liaisons advise individuals and families on how employment and earnings can impact Social Security, SNAP/TANF, and Medicaid or other state benefits. BIN liaisons receive extensive training in Social Security's work incentive programs, which help workers maintain or extend their benefits while earning and saving more of their paychecks. The BIN training curriculum includes validation of basic knowledge standards, provides updates focused on federal and state work incentives, and delivers ongoing training and technical assistance to 149 BIN liaisons, who work with community service providers and organizations around the state.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The Center on Community Living and Careers (CCLC), in partnership with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation, has developed 38 online, professional development training courses for Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) personnel. The Vocational Rehabilitation Leadership Academy (VRLA) consists of a series of modules or trainings (units) in a specific area of study. These include orientation, core, and specialty courses that align with VR policy and procedures, federal legislation and state rules, and evidence-based practices. CCLC ensures that all trainings and courses online are inter-active and accessible to all participants. Course evaluations, embedded learner feedback, and pre/post test results are components of all courses. Between July 1, 2019, and June 29, 2020, there were a total of 449 VRLA enrollments, and VR staff have completed 242 courses thus far.

Where individuals participate in all facets of community life and have choice and control over their health and independence.



AGING

IIDC'S INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM

Having a firm grasp of evidence-based practices in disability services, supports, and policy are critical for future leaders. The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community's (IIDC) Interdisciplinary Education Training Program (IETP) is a leadership development program for students working at the IIDC. The IETP trainee experience includes engagement in research, field-based training, technical assistance, and/or curriculum and materials development in community settings.

Former interdisciplinary trainee Mackenzie Jones, now a health education specialist for the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Bureau, recounts her experiences as part of the IETP program. Jones was a graduate student pursuing her Masters of Public Health degree in 2018-2019. "With so many opportunities throughout IIDC, I was also able to complete my capstone for my Master's program," said Jones. "However, it was the focus on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) that was especially helpful for me in my current position in Montana. Before working at IIDC, my research focused on communication disorders, specifically, the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (D/HH) communities, but IIDC helped me expand my knowledge of people with IDD.

"I did much research on supported decision-making, guardianship, and self-determination of people with IDD. I also had the pleasure of working with, and learning from, my friend/colleague, Adria Nassim, who identifies as having Autism and a processing disorder. As a result, I gained great respect for the IDD community and the need to elevate their voices! This has been extremely valuable in Montana too. Last fall, I hosted six listening sessions with people with IDD eliciting their ideas, suggestions, and questions on a video that taught the audience about how to take care of diabetes. Without my experience at IIDC, I would not have felt as confident or comfortable in this role. I will always be grateful for the time I spent at Institute and the amazing people who mentored and encouraged me along the way!"

In 1987, the DTC refocused to reflect changes at the national level regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities into the Least Restrictive Environment. As a result, the DTC, no longer a residential facility, changed its name to the Institute for the Study of Developmental Disabilities (ISDD). In 1999, the ISDD was renamed the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community (IIDC).



The Institute for the Study
of Developmental Disabilities

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS

LIVING WELL INITIATIVE

In a collaborative between the Indiana Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS) and the Center for Collaborative Systems Change (CCSC), Living Well is an initiative that engages and empowers self-advocates, families, and other key stakeholders to build capacity around community supports. Living Well aims to enhance current systems for monitoring the safety, health, and well-being of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities to promote independence, community integration, and access to quality Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). Project deliverables include toolkits for providers, individuals, and their families to improve monitoring of safety, health, and well-being, reduce risk factors for abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and identify and implement an innovative approach to build the capacity of community supports through paid and non-paid community services and supports.

INDIANA DISABILITY AND HEALTH PROJECT

Since 2012, the Center on Health Equity (CHE) has received funding support from the Indiana State Department of Health, Division of Chronic Disease, Primary Care and Rural Health (ISDH/CDPC) to address health disparities for people with disabilities in the Hoosier state. For 2019, the Indiana Disability and Health Project activities focused on the priority area of improving health outcomes through the reduction of chronic diseases and health disparities in alignment with Indiana's State Health Assessment and Improvement Plan (2018-2021). Project work included facilitating the meeting of the Indiana Disability and Health Workgroup which is made up of representatives from disability organizations, state agencies, and other health-related organizations. The Workgroup provided insights from a disability perspective to state initiatives addressing chronic diseases and health risks such as tobacco use and lack of physical activity. Additionally, project staff planned and hosted three workshops on optimal health for professionals in health care, health education, and health promotion. The combined attendance for all three workshops was 60 participants.

JAIL CHEMICAL ADDICTION PROGRAM

For several decades, drug use has shaped the criminal justice system, and drug offenders often move through the system in a prescribed pattern: arrest, prosecution, conviction, incarceration, and release. The Dearborn County Court Services in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, aims to improve community safety by reducing repetitive criminal behavior and encouraging rehabilitation through evidence-based practices. With funding through Indiana's Office of the Attorney General, the Center for Collaborative Systems Change (CCSC) is the evaluator of Dearborn County's Jail Chemical Addictions Program. The program also includes two problem solving courts focused on breaking the cycle of criminality as it relates to alcohol and drug abuse. In exchange for successful completion of one or more of these programs, the courts may dismiss participants' original criminal charge or reduce it when appropriate, returning individuals to productive functioning in their family, workplace, and community.

SEXUAL HEALTH LITERACY AND ADVOCACY SKILLS PROJECT

Lack of formal sexual health education can make individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) vulnerable. This can lead to unsafe sexual practices, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and sexual abuse and exploitation. This is a serious problem for people with disabilities in general, but it can be more pronounced for individuals with IDD. The Center for Health Equity's (CHE) Sexual Health and Literacy Skills Project aims to improve health and wellbeing of women with IDD in Indiana by enhancing their sexual health literacy and advocacy skills through evidence-based sexual health education. Project objectives include identifying the current landscape of sexual health for adult women through literature reviews, key informant interviews, and focus groups; and development of pilot sexual health education curriculum for the target audience. Project outcomes will lay the foundation for future efforts in Indiana regarding sexual health literacy and advocacy skills for women with IDD to improve their sexual health.



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