

Vision | 2007 Progress Report



VALUE PEOPLE

*Illinois Council on
Developmental Disabilities*

INVEST IN SUCCESS

Vision

“Vision without action is a dream. Action without vision is simply passing the time. Action with Vision is making a positive difference.”

Joel Barker, Independent Scholar and Futurist

Vision inspires motivation in those who believe in making a difference. It governs the direction and the ability to achieve change. People with developmental disabilities are no different – they also have a vision. Often times, their vision may be to be understood, to accomplish life goals or to have a life filled with freedom and choice. The Council understands the need for change and through our vision, we can empower others to work together towards desired outcomes.

Over the past few years, the Council has used its Progress Report as a means to highlight some of its accomplishments from the previous year. The overall theme for each year represented the Council’s role in systems change.

This year, the Council will step away from simply highlighting the results of projects. This Progress Report, instead, will introduce you to several projects that are just beginning. These new partnerships represent a “vision” of what is possible and will focus on helping people with developmental disabilities attain their dreams through hard work, desire and determination. As we launch these new projects, our goal is to achieve the same measures of success as in past years, while building a future of respect and commitment.

On the following pages, you will see that the future belongs to those who reach their great potential through great vision...

A bright future begins with a clear vision...



Who We Are

The Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICDD) is administered by the Federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities, and was created under a federal mandate in 1974 as an amendment to the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act.

Our Mission

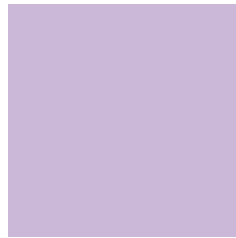
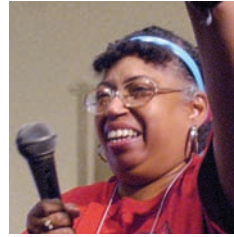
The Council is proud to announce its new mission statement, which represents a collaboration of our voices:

“We help lead change in Illinois so all people with developmental disabilities exercise their right to equal opportunity and freedom.”

ICDD members are diverse and include people with developmental disabilities and their families, representatives from various government agencies, service providers and advocates. Council members oversee a variety of initiatives that help ensure people with developmental disabilities have the right to choose and receive the community supports they need.

We work hard to amplify the voices of individuals with disabilities and their families – because the decisions we make here have a direct impact on their lives. The Council accomplishes this mission by helping to recognize and promote the capabilities of people living with developmental disabilities.

The Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities invests in people and the organizations that serve people with developmental disabilities throughout the state of Illinois. We support the rights of these individuals as equal citizens of Illinois and assist those who need the Council’s support for quality services and opportunities.



From the Director

Dear Friends,

Last year we asked you to listen to and help strengthen one of our most powerful resources – the voices of advocates from all corners of the state, speaking out in support of people with developmental disabilities in Illinois. Thanks to your help, we're beginning to see change. From the workplace to inclusion in the classroom, we're focusing on the capabilities of people with developmental disabilities.

This year, the Council would like to challenge you to take your support one step further. This year, let's look to the future and envision ways to help people with developmental disabilities receive the supports and respect they deserve, but still may not be receiving.

The Council envisions equal opportunity, freedom and choice for people with developmental disabilities in Illinois and is investing funds in dozens of initiatives to make our visions for the future, realities. We need to ensure that choices, from transportation to housing and support services, are available for people with developmental disabilities.

The Council continues to leverage new partnerships with advocates and organizations across the state to help create a platform from which all service systems for people with developmental disabilities can be modeled.

We encourage you to help support the programs that make the power of vision – the vision for an ideal world, an ideal home, an ideal life – come true.

We hope that as you read the following pages, you too will recognize the importance of vision. With perseverance and determination, we can and will make dreams come true.

Sincerely,

Sheila T. Romano

Sheila T. Romano, Ed. D.
Executive Director

Chairperson's Corner

Dear Friends,

People with developmental disabilities in Illinois, their parents and supporters are beginning to demand something new in our state. They are seeking fundamental freedoms that all Americans enjoy...freedom from the control of others, freedom to pursue their own happiness, and the freedom to act, speak and live according to their own choice.

Securing individual freedoms for people with developmental disabilities, particularly those with significant disabilities, require that certain tools be made available to them. These tools often come in the form of supports and services that need to be flexible, non-invasive and tailored to an individual's needs, goals and desires to ensure that personal freedoms are honored and maintained.

Changes in the Illinois system are occurring and the Council sees more changes on the horizon. However, change for change's sake is not good enough. In order to satisfy the demand for freedom and choice from people with developmental disabilities, their parents and supporters, future systemic change needs to be well thought out and well planned. That is why the Council is investing in the projects highlighted in this report.

As you read this report, I encourage you to think of ways to become involved in positive change for people with developmental disabilities in Illinois. Together, I hope we can achieve our vision and make a difference for a better future.

Sincerely,

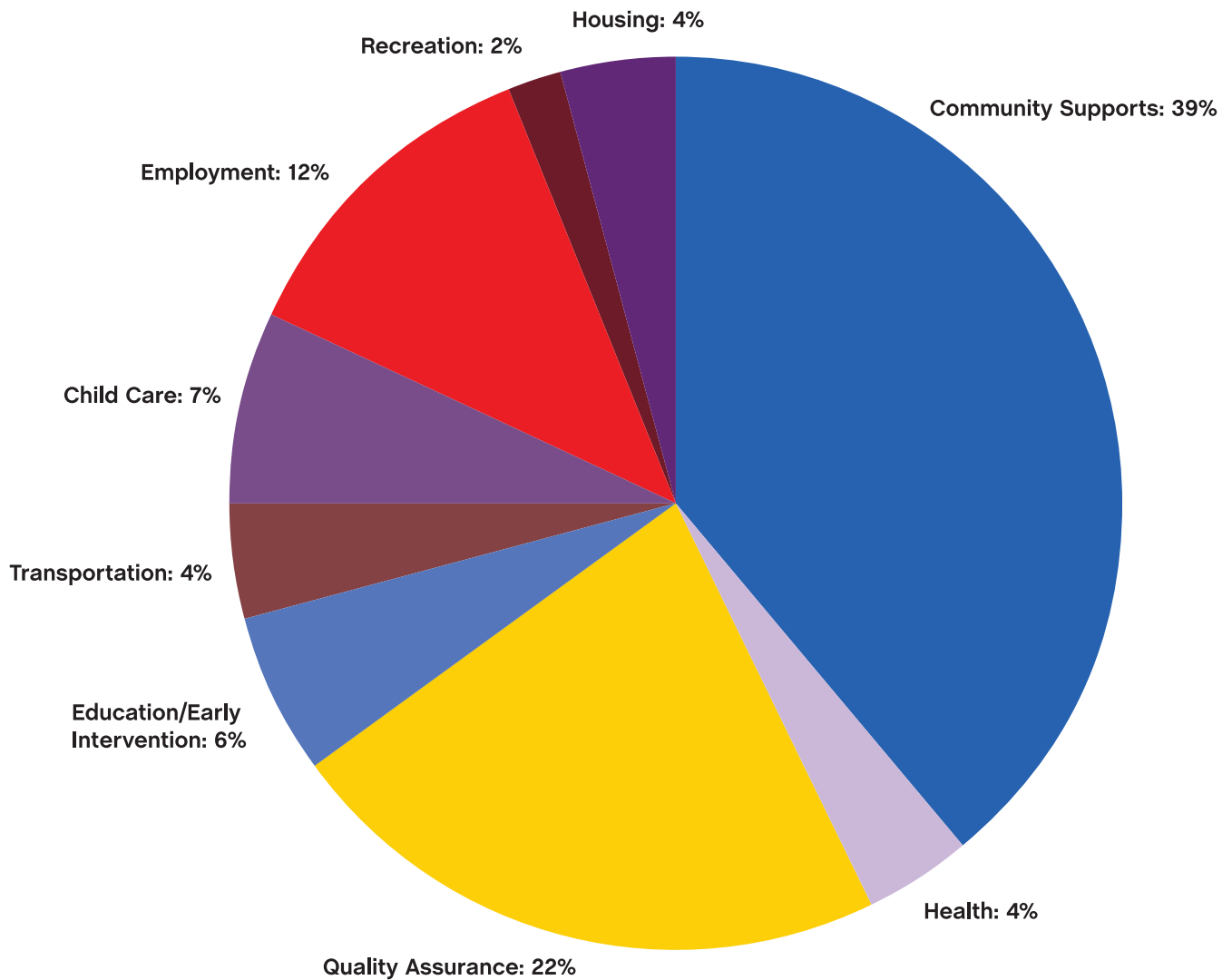
Lester T. Pritchard

Lester T. Pritchard
Chairperson

Initiative Investment

Every Five-Year State Plan outlines the Council's projects and goals and must be submitted to our federal funding entity for their approval. Each investment chosen by the Council must directly correlate to the goals outlined in the Five-Year State Plan. Through these initiative investments, the Council can direct its resources and focus toward a wide range of programs: Programs that help improve the lives and meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities.

In 2007, the Council made investments in the following areas of emphasis: Child Care, Community Supports, Education/Early Intervention, Employment, Health, Housing, Quality Assurance, Recreation and Transportation.



2007 Budget: \$2,744,695.69

The Council envisions a better future for individuals with developmental disabilities and our full support is behind these areas that directly impact the lives of those living with developmental disabilities.



Child Care

“There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in.” – Deepak Chopra

Parents of children with developmental disabilities depend on properly trained childcare providers to educate and assist with the development of their child. The Council continues to support parents of children with developmental disabilities to find the resources they need with a level of comfort that provides peace of mind, but more importantly, tangible options for their child.



Education/Early Intervention

“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.” – John Dewey

In Illinois, full inclusion in school classrooms is still a work in progress. Individuals with developmental disabilities are capable of succeeding in school, but they need to receive the opportunity to do so. The Council envisions a future where together, school districts and universities provide an education with countless opportunities for all individuals.



Health

“The groundwork of all happiness is health.” – Leigh Hunt

Finding good quality health care remains a challenge for individuals with developmental disabilities. The Council reaches out to key organizations and leaders in the health care profession to ensure that the best possible health care is available for people with developmental disabilities now and in the future.



Quality Assurance

“Doing what you love is the cornerstone of having abundance in your life.” – Wayne Dyer

Individuals with developmental disabilities want the option to choose their future and improve their quality of life. The Council believes that in order to break through the barriers, self-advocacy and leadership can help mobilize people with developmental disabilities to achieve success.



Community Supports

“We don’t accomplish anything in this world alone...and whatever happens is the result of the whole tapestry of one’s life and all the weavings of individual threads from one to another that creates something.” – Sandra Day O’Connor

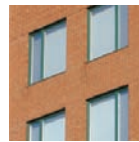
Our future is dependent upon the relationships we form with our family, friends and community. The Council continues to push for a future of inclusion for people with developmental disabilities in communities throughout Illinois.



Employment

“All the beautiful things, all the useful things, come from labor, and it is labor that has made the world a fit habitation for the human race.” – Robert Ingersoll

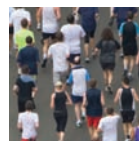
Individuals with developmental disabilities should be given the opportunity to excel in the workplace. The Council's vision for the future includes a workplace where organizations help connect motivated individuals to businesses that recognize the benefits of hiring people with disabilities.



Housing

“A house is made of walls and beams; a home is built with love and dreams.” – Anonymous

Thousands of individuals with developmental disabilities dream about living in their own apartment or owning their own home. The Council believes that every person with a developmental disability has the right to decide where to live and with whom, and envisions a future where these decisions can be made freely.



Recreation

“Just living is not enough. One must have sunshine, freedom and a little flower.” – Hans Christian Anderson

Countless studies demonstrate that using free time to experience enjoyable activities is healthy for the mind and body. The Council supports and envisions a future where individuals with developmental disabilities are not relegated to the sidelines, but rather asked to partake in enjoyable, recreational activities in their communities.



Transportation

“True individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence.” – Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Reliable and convenient transportation continues to be a major obstacle, especially for people with developmental disabilities. The Council envisions more accessible transportation options statewide through the help of various funding projects.

The New Visions Project

I would love to be a cowboy. Dog-walking is my dream job. I envision getting married to the love of my life. I want to join the YMCA. I've always wanted to visit Millennium Park.

These are the desires and dreams of just five individuals with developmental disabilities which were accomplished through their own perseverance and the support of the New Visions Dream Team. In Illinois in 2006 and 2007, nearly 500 individuals with developmental disabilities made their dreams come true through the New Visions Project.

The New Visions Project was created by a partnership between Illinois Voices, a statewide self-advocacy initiative designed to empower people with developmental disabilities and the Center for Independent Futures (CIF). The CIF is a not-for-profit organization that creates programs to provide individuals with disabilities and their families the skills and opportunities to identify and accomplish their aspirations.

The New Visions Project consists of three initiatives: The Full Life Future Planning program and the Dare to Dream and Dreaming New Visions workshops.



The Full Life Future Planning program empowers individuals with developmental disabilities to envision, express and realize their dreams throughout five sessions. Individuals choose their own Dream Team to help them create a step-by-step plan to accomplish their goals. Dream Teams are made up of family members, friends and advocates in the community.

The Dare to Dream workshops transform a person's negative attitude into an optimistic and goal-oriented mindset in just three hours. Throughout the workshops, individuals with developmental disabilities begin to ask questions like, "Why didn't anyone ever tell me I can have dreams and achieve them?"

Families of individuals with developmental disabilities also are supported through the Dreaming New Visions workshops. These workshops give families counsel and advice, so they can also be a part in making their son's or daughter's dreams come true. After realizing their own potential, individuals can stand tall and smile with their newfound confidence.

Hard work and dedication from families and advocates enabled the dreams of those first five individuals to come true. He received cowboy boots and a trip to a dude ranch in Wyoming. She started her very own dog-walking business. Two individuals were united in marriage. She is now a member of her local YMCA. He took his trip to Millennium Park on a sunny day.

The New Visions Project dares individuals with developmental disabilities, their friends and families to dream and carry their visions with them for the rest of their lives.

Illinois Self-Advocates in the Lead (I-SAIL)

Illinois Self-Advocates in the Lead (I-SAIL) is an ICDD initiative designed to create a consensus-based action plan to support the needs of people living with developmental disabilities in Illinois. I-SAIL is built on a vision that reflects the issues most important to people with developmental disabilities, using the collective voices of self advocates from across the state as a framework for its master design.

The 16-member I-SAIL planning team ventured to every corner of Illinois to talk with more than 800 individuals about their visions of a perfect supports and services system. While a variety of issues were discussed, the most common concerns included the availability of transportation, personal income and options for choosing care services that reflected individual needs.

Now that the people have spoken, I-SAIL is gearing up to construct an action plan that encompasses the many opinions, needs and dreams of people living with developmental disabilities across Illinois. Once the plan is drafted and the people rallied, I-SAIL will create one statewide self-advocacy organization managed by those whose desires and voices were the blueprint and catalyst behind the initiative.

Managing the Art of Living

Managing the Art of Living is a two-year project that will give people with developmental disabilities the opportunity to supervise individualized services and supports through the use of Microboards and/or Human Cooperatives in Illinois. This is a project about vision – one that encourages people with developmental disabilities to reach their goals. For many, this project will help fulfill dreams of independent living.

To get this important project underway, Managing the Art of Living collaborated with three panels of experts: Experts in a person-centered planning process called Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (**PATH**), those with expertise in establishing Microboards and experts in creating Human Services Cooperatives. Together, they created a community-building and PATH facilitation training workshop.

PATH is a process that people with developmental disabilities go through to identify how they want their life to be...In essence, they establish their vision. They then determine the steps needed to meet their goals and establish a list of those within their community or circle of family and friends who can help them realize their vision.

After going through the PATH process, Managing the Art of Living participants will have the opportunity to develop **Microboards** and/or create **Human Cooperatives**.

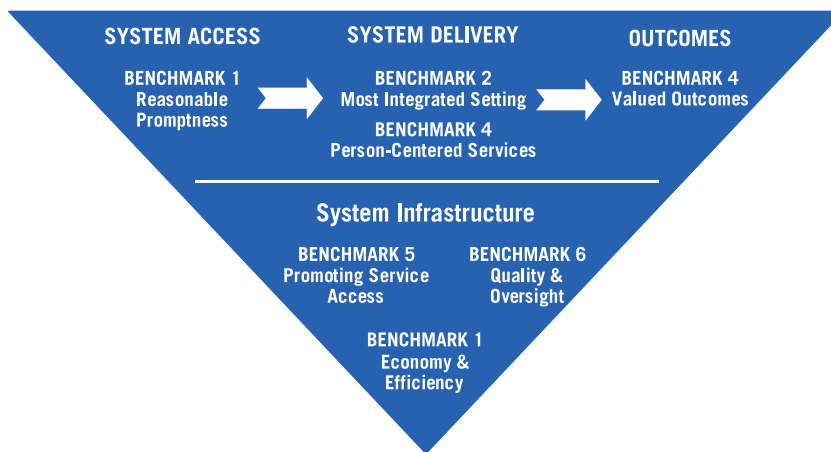
Microboards serve as individualized, consumer-governed structures that enable people with developmental disabilities to create their own personal board of directors, consisting of family members and friends as a support group. Human Cooperatives are entities that give the governing authority and responsibility to the member/owner, allowing the individual to manage their own “corporation” and personal representatives.

Both legal structures empower individuals with developmental disabilities to take control of their lives, their choices, personal funding and human services through a quality person-centered plan. Together, they help people with developmental disabilities develop a customized plan through the help of a personal support network while encouraging them to apply their skills to positively impact their lives.

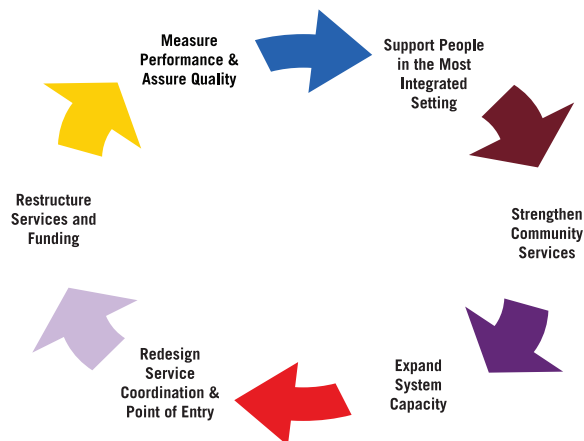
Human Services Research Institute Blueprint

The Council engaged the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) to help develop a plan to reduce Illinois' dependency on using institutional settings as a means to serve people with developmental disabilities. The plan they designed, called the Blueprint for Systems Change, helps map the route for people with developmental disabilities, giving them better access to quality community supports and the opportunity to choose the services they receive.

The Blueprint outlines a seven-year call-to-action to restructure the current support systems in Illinois, effectively allowing people with developmental disabilities and their families the opportunity to utilize the resources they desire. ICDD and HSRI constructed seven fundamental performance benchmarks that represent the framework for the Blueprint's vision of a better system.



To achieve such inclusion in society, multiple steps must be taken. ICDD and HSRI determined six system redesign action areas, or building blocks, to help lead the path to change:



The Council's vision to enact the Blueprint and help Illinois develop a long-term plan requires that the voices of people with developmental disabilities, their friends, families and other advocates from across the state be heard.

Shifting Gears: A Blueprint for Retooling Employment Options

“People with disabilities want the same things we do: An interesting and meaningful daily life, close relationships with others, opportunities to socialize, a chance to realize their dreams, be a part of their communities and to feel that they are valuable and important.”

Bill Alexander

Shrink-wrapping packages or shredding paper is a job few would choose. However, it is the reality many people with developmental disabilities face – a fact that limits personal freedom and the chance to pursue a career of their choice. These hardships, including low wages and segregation, are affecting individuals with developmental disabilities in a number of ways.

Many people with developmental disabilities in Illinois are placed in sheltered workshops – programs structured to provide both job training and opportunities for integration, responsibility, socialization and financial support for people with disabilities. Although these workshops were designed with good intentions, the reality is that they segregate individuals with developmental disabilities, making it difficult for them to grow, feel personal satisfaction, enhance their self-esteem and believe they are contributing equally to the community. In addition, workshops prevent people with developmental disabilities from being compensated on a pay scale equaling that of employees without disabilities – compensation that would allow them to better support life in the community.

Because of such difficulties, the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities has joined forces with Public Policy Impacts of Washington, D.C. (PPIWDC) to recommend proven strategies for systems change in Illinois. Through the *Shifting Gears: State’s Blueprint for Retooling Employment Options*, the Council hopes to change the state’s approach to individually supported, community-based work. The goal of this partnership is to identify barriers and plan strategies for change to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of work, recreation, self-esteem and social activity.

The Council envisions a future of integrated environments where people with developmental disabilities can receive the proper support, training and skill sets required to live a life of independence and choice. With PPIWDC, they hope to map a plan for Illinois to expand supported employment services so that society can be enriched by the presence and participation of people with developmental disabilities in diverse work environments across our state and the nation.

Partners

Arc of Illinois
Arc of Rock Island County
CKPR
Easter Seals of Metro Chicago
The Hope School
Human Services Research Institute
Human Support Services
Illinois State University
Little City Foundation
Macon Resources, Inc.
National Association of State Directors of
Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS)
Niles Township District 219
Northern Illinois University
Public Policy Impacts of Washington D.C.
Schiller Park School District 81
Support Development Associates
South Suburban Training and Rehabilitation Services
Tony Records & Associates
University of Colorado
University of Illinois at Chicago –
Department of Disability and Human Development
University of Minnesota
West Suburban Chamber of Commerce & Industry Fund

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Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services
Illinois Department Human Services –
Community Health & Prevention
Illinois Department Human Services –
Division of Developmental Disabilities
Illinois Department Human Services –
Division of Rehabilitation Services
Illinois Department on Aging
Illinois Governor's Office of Management & Budget
Illinois State Board of Education
University of Illinois Chicago –
Department of Disability and Human Development



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