



Oct. 15, 2013

The Honorable Scott Walker
Governor, State of Wisconsin
115 East-State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Gov. Walker:

Please find attached the 2011-2013 biennial report from the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD). The report details our Board's mission, membership, goals, accomplishments, and budget.

BPDD was established to advocate on behalf of individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD), foster welcoming and inclusive communities, and improve disability and overall community systems and supports, with an ultimate goal of improving the independence, productivity, and integration of people with developmental disabilities.

This biennial report covers outcomes from the first and second years of our federally-required five-year state plan. The five-year plan includes these goal areas:

- 1) People of all ages make choices about their lives, and are actively engaged in planning their services and supports.
- 2) People with I/DD will be employed in integrated jobs of their choosing in the community.
- 3) People with I/DD and their families will be effective advocates and leaders resulting in systems change on issues they feel are most important to them.

Also, during the past two years, BPDD has successfully added two part-time positions that have been filled by individuals with I/DD. In addition, the seven full-time staff have flexible start/end times during the day, providing maximum office/program coverage throughout the work week.

If you have questions or comments regarding this report or about BPDD, please contact me at 608-266-1166 or beth.swedeen@wisconsin.gov. Additional information, including our five-year plan for 2012-2016, is located on our website, www.wi-bpdd.org.

Best regards,

Beth Swedeen, Executive Director
Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities



WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

2011-2013

BIENNIAL REPORT





WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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About BPDD

The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities was established to advocate on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities, foster welcoming and inclusive communities, and improve the disability service system. The Governor-appointed Board is committed to helping people with developmental disabilities become independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life. Two-thirds of the Board's members live with disability, either as a self-advocate or family member.

Mission

The Board is dedicated to improving the independence, productivity, and integration of people with developmental disabilities.

- Independence means having choices available, being able to choose, and exercising control over one's own life.
- Productivity means making a contribution to one's own household, neighborhood, and community. It means working in the community and earning a living.
- Integration means being present in the community, participating in the life of the community, and being valued as a person, friend, family member, and neighbor.

Population Served

The Board advocates for the independence and inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in Wisconsin.

What is a developmental disability?

Under Wisconsin State Law, a developmental disability is defined as a list of conditions: brain injury, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, Prader-Willi syndrome, intellectual disability, or another neurological condition closely associated to an intellectual disability. The condition must be severe and permanent.

BPDD State Plan, 2012-2016

BPDD's current work focuses primarily in three areas: self-determination, employment, and self-advocacy.

- BPDD's self-determination work increases opportunities for people with developmental disabilities of all ages to make informed choices about their lives, which includes active engagement in planning their services and supports.
- BPDD's employment efforts increase the number of individuals with developmental disabilities who obtain and keep community-integrated jobs in Wisconsin.
- BPDD also works so that people with I/DD and their families are effective advocates and leaders, resulting in systems change on issues that impact their lives.

The Board is dedicated to improving the independence, productivity, and integration of people with developmental disabilities.

Current Board Members

KEVIN FECH

Chairperson
Parent
Cudahy

BARBARA BECKERT

Disability Rights Wisconsin
Milwaukee

ALIZA CLAIRE BIBLE

Self-Advocate
Madison

DAN BIER

Waisman Center
Madison

LYNN CARUS

Self-Advocate
Milwaukee

ELSA DIAZ-BAUTISTA

Parent
Whitefish Bay

WENDY GAHN-ACKLEY

Parent
Hartland

ANDREW GERBITZ

Self-Advocate
Oconomowoc

DEBRA GLOVER

Self-Advocate
Milwaukee

MICHAEL GRECO

Department of Workforce
Development
Madison

ROBERT KUHR

Self-Advocate
Menasha

RAMSEY LEE

Self-Advocate
Hudson

NATHANIEL LENTZ

Self-Advocate
Whitewater

PAM MALIN

Service Provider
DePere

KATHERINE PERHACH

Parent
Whitefish Bay

DAVID PINNO

Self-Advocate
New London

JUDITH QUIGLEY

Parent
Elm Grove

LYNN STANSBERRY-BRUSNAHAN

Parent
Shorewood

CAROLE STUEBE

Service Provider
Port Washington

SHEILA THORNTON

Parent
Tomah

CAROLYN STANFORD-TAYLOR

(Designee: Suzan Van Beaver)
Department of Public Instruction
Madison

BRIAN SHOUP

(Designee: Beth Wroblewski)
Department of Health Services
Madison

PATRICK YOUNG

Self-Advocate
Germantown

CINDY ZELLNER-EHLERS

Service Provider
Baileys Harbor

Individuals and families with I/DD must have choice and control of their public funds to support their needs, including the use of paid and unpaid supports. Self-directed supports (SDS) offer the greatest flexibility to individuals and families in the long-term care system. SDS can also create cost efficiencies for their public dollars. Individuals and families engaged in developing a person/family-centered, self-directed service plan are able choose services and supports outside the service system. BPDD's goals include increasing by 1,000 the number of individuals with I/DD of all ages participating in SDS, and increasing by 450 the number of youth transitioning from high school to adult supports using SDS. BPDD also aims to increase by 50% the use of natural/community supports by people with I/DD.

Self-Determination

Wisconsin Self-Determination Conference

The Wisconsin Self-Determination Conference works to empower people with disabilities in Wisconsin to have more control over their lives. Self-determination is strong in Wisconsin and SDS is one of the most creative tools available for individuals with disabilities to get the support they need to get the life they want. More than 400 people each year participate in the conference to learn more about self-determination and self-directed supports so they can live independently, be members of their communities, and use public funds efficiently. The conference participants include people with disabilities and their family members, direct care providers, and professionals from Wisconsin's disability community.



In a follow up survey, more than half of respondents indicated that they participate in their community as a result of attending the conference. One participant said, "Every year that I attend the SD Conference, my confidence in our ability to support one another grows. It's an annual reaffirmation for me that the work we do to help one another make their goals and dreams a reality is really working and so worthwhile."

"This conference has changed my life. It's given me hope and I feel like my life can get better."

- Conference participant

95% said they will take action to increase self-direction.

Community Connections

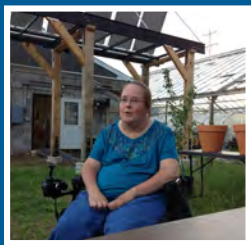
A group of Winneconne youth with disabilities and their families have developed a Time Bank so people in their community can share their gifts and talents. An initial planning meeting drew more than 60 community members. Time Banks use units of time instead of money to buy and sell goods and services. An individual who performs a service earns a unit of time to be used on any other good or service in the Time Bank. Parents reported being surprised by how many people were willing to get involved and take an interest in the success of the youth.

In Door County, people with disabilities came together to learn how to identify and share their gifts and interests within their community. The group of 25 people with disabilities established a local People First chapter. As a result, people in the group reported that they planned to be more active in the community and more likely to volunteer. One of the participants in the group said, **"I now have a support system and I am now a self-advocate in my community."**

SPARKS Grants

SPARKS Grants lead to innovative methods that ignite systems change that improve the lives of people with disabilities in Wisconsin. Some of the grants help people with disabilities explore innovative ways to use self-directed supports and participate more fully in their communities.

In Stevens Point, a SPARKS Grant helped make Sorenson's Greenhouse accessible to people with disabilities, and allowed them to have input on how to best use the



space. The greenhouse serves as a place for people to learn about and practice growing food and composting. The site also features a community kitchen where people can learn about food preparation and preservation processes. The greenhouse

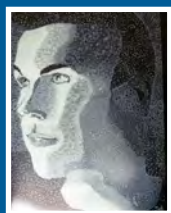
brings together people with and without disabilities to develop the next generation of local food businesses.

"We hope that this would help...any other person who uses a wheelchair or is frail to be able to go to the community functions held at the greenhouse building," said one of the project organizers.

Another SPARKS Grant focused on community supported living. Individuals with disabilities and their families receiving Family Care or IRIS support learned how to use their long-term care services in ways that allow them to manage and control their supports, while receiving administrative support from an agency.

Mosaic Art Contest

The Mosaic Art Contest allows self-advocates to express what self-determination means to them through their art. Themes like being a participant in the community, working in an integrated job, and having control over one's own life are all depicted in the artwork that is created by people with disabilities. In the contest's first year, almost 50 self-advocates from around the state submitted



their artwork, and Awards were presented at the 2012 Wisconsin Self-Determination Conference.

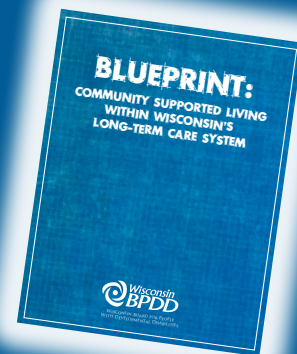
Community Supported Living Initiative

Increasingly, more people with disabilities in Wisconsin are participating in Community Supported Living instead of facility-based residential services. As this movement grows, there is a need to educate people about the options, tools, and strategies that help them live in their own home. BPDD's Community Supported Living Initiative worked to address these needs.

A work group developed strategies to make participation in Community Supported Living easier for people enrolled in Family Care and IRIS. The group also aimed to increase the effectiveness of the program. Recommendations were sent to the Department of Health Services, including administrative actions that would enable Community Supported Living to be more flexible and cost effective.

A Self-Directed Supports Network event provided technical guidance regarding how service agencies can transition from facility-based services to supporting people to live in their own homes, in their own communities. Almost 200 people attended the event to learn from agencies that already successfully provide Community Supported Living services in Wisconsin. BPDD held two additional events to teach practical skills so attendees could enhance their ability to assist a person with a disability to participate in Community Supported Living.

BPDD also published *Blueprint: Community Supported Living within Wisconsin's Long-Term Care System*. This publication details the development of Community Supported Living in Wisconsin, explains the different ways people can receive support, and provides real-life examples of how it can work in different situations.



Fewer than 2,000 people with disabilities in Wisconsin's long-term care system are working in integrated jobs in the community. In Family Care, only 8% of working-age individuals have a community job at minimum wage or higher. In IRIS, the rate is only 4%. Yet nationally, more than 80% of people with disabilities who are unemployed say they want to work. BPDD's goal is to double the number of individuals in Wisconsin's long-term care system who have jobs at minimum wage or higher in the community within five years.

Integrated Employment

Wisconsin Employment First Initiative

BPDD partners with Wisconsin APSE on the Wisconsin Employment First Initiative, an effort to promote Integrated Employment (IE) in the general workforce for people with disabilities and double the integrated employment rate in Wisconsin in five years. The initiative combines the work of grassroots groups with statewide policy and legislative efforts.

The kick-off Employment Summit brought together more than 300 key stakeholders and resulted in a statewide strategic plan for the effort. Since then, marketing and public information resources have been distributed to all of the initiative's key audiences: people with disabilities and their families, managed care providers, employers, policy-makers, and the general public. More than 100 people and 20 organizations, including Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce, have signed on to participate in the initiative.

It was encouraging to see other legislators...attend to learn more about this innovative program to help individuals with developmental disabilities learn job skills to help them find jobs.

- Sen. Joseph Leibham after participating in a Jobs First! Manitowoc event (pictured below)

BPDD also funds four Community Action Teams (CATs), designed to pilot innovative grassroots efforts to expand Employment First practices at the local level. CATs in Hudson, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, and Waukesha have developed



partnerships that include businesses, chambers of commerce, people with disabilities, schools, and long-term care providers. To elevate the local importance

of IE, CATs are holding community conversations and other learning events to promote the message that people with disabilities can and want to work.

SPARKS Grant

A SPARKS grant helped Employment Partnerships, Inc. to team up with the Farm to Pantry Project to create the Kickapoo Harvest: Gleaning for Healthy Communities Project.



The project increases community-integrated employment for people with disabilities while providing healthy food to people in the community. Weekly "gleaning" parties – which include people with and without disabilities

– harvest the left over vegetables from the fields of small organic farms.

I'm impressed with the way these people with disabilities, who have little or no farming experience, have taken up this work so wholeheartedly. Everybody worked hard and everybody worked together as a team. Their future employability will only increase as they get more experience.

- Daniel Chotzen, Employment Partnerships, Inc.

Wisconsin Think College

Research shows that when individuals with intellectual disabilities have at least some college experience, their employment outcomes significantly improve. The Wisconsin Think College Initiative increases opportunities for inclusive post-secondary education for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through the initiative, six colleges statewide have identified interest in offering Think College opportunities and are getting support from the Think College program on how they can involve and include people with intellectual disabilities in a variety of campus life experiences, including coursework, extra-curriculars, peer mentors, and work experiences like internships.

LET'S GET TO WORK



Let's Get to Work

Let's Get to Work is a five-year Project of National Significance from the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disability focusing on developing and implementing policies and practices that raise community expectations and reduce systems barriers that can lead to higher employment outcomes for youth in transition who have significant intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The project provides funding and coaching to nine school sites around the state that are implementing a package of promising and effective practices. Results from the schools are used to develop and disseminate policy changes at the local, state, and federal level that can result in higher employment rates nationwide.



BPDD partners on this project with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Health Services, the Department of Public Instruction, as well as Disability Rights Wisconsin and the Waisman Center – University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities. A consortium of more than 60 stakeholders identifies policies designed to increase the number of youth with I/DD working in competitive, community-based jobs.

School sites include: Grafton, Holmen, Kewaunee County, Manitowoc, New Auburn, Oconomowoc, Rhineland, Stoughton, and West Allis. So far, businesses in the communities that have pilot sites are more engaged and parents are more educated about IE and the transition process. More youth with I/DD want to work, are independent, and have increased self-advocacy skills. In the first year of the project, **the employment rate among youth in the project tripled.**

Take Your Legislator to Work Campaign

BPDD created the Take Your Legislator to Work Campaign to raise awareness among policymakers about the importance of community-integrated employment for people with disabilities in Wisconsin. Conducted each year in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month (October), the campaign highlights how everyone wins when people with disabilities have community-integrated jobs at a competitive wage. During a visit, an individual with a disability provides a tour of his or her workplace to a legislator, introduces the legislator to co-workers and the boss, and talks about why the job is important to them.

In the first year of the campaign, 35 legislators visited 48 people with disabilities who have community-integrated jobs; in the second year, 40 legislators visited 62 people. Governor Scott Walker has participated in the campaign both years.

Of people with disabilities who participate in the campaign, 84% rate their visit with their legislator as "very successful." Also, **nearly 80% of participants report that they feel more engaged in the legislative process as a result of the visit.**



"I think it's a good win-win situation where you can place people who can do a job that matches with their abilities...I think it's really good, and it helps everybody."

- Sen. Frank Lasee after participating in the 2012 campaign

Individuals with disabilities and their families must be at the table when programs, services or changes in the community are occurring that will have a direct effect on their lives. This includes changes in local, statewide, and federal policies and practices. In order for individuals to be involved with change, they need to have the tools to make the change. BPDD's advocacy goals include helping establish 30 effective advocacy groups engaging in advocacy and organizing activities of their choice; establishing a statewide self-advocacy organization that is led by an individual with an intellectual disability; and building a network of at least 3,000 individuals and organizations that are connected through Disability Advocates: Wisconsin Network (DAWN) and act on opportunities for systemic change.

Advocacy

Wisconsin Partners in Policymaking

Wisconsin Partners in Policymaking is an advocacy and systems change training program designed to develop the next generation of leaders in the disability advocacy movement. During the program, every participant meets with an elected official at least once and 72% of graduates report that they will be more connected with their legislators. Since 2011, 54 people from around the state have graduated from the Partners program.



95% of graduates say they will be a stronger advocate and be more actively involved in issues that affect people with disabilities.

Graduates of the program go on to make an impact in their community, including being appointed to state and local school boards, starting local advocacy organizations, testifying at hearings, developing ongoing relationships with their state legislators and Congressional representatives, and running for elected office. One graduate reported, "This project made me realize that I don't have to simply accept what society tells me about myself. I can rise above..."

“I now have the confidence that my voice matters and that others have similar philosophies as me.”

- Partners Graduate

People First Wisconsin

BPDD supports the statewide self-advocacy organization, People First Wisconsin. Members of the organization have increasingly taken on more leadership roles within the organization, which has more than 20 local chapters throughout Wisconsin. People First has been active in policy and legislative issues, providing testimony and contacting legislators. People First contributed to the passage of laws ending the "R-word," lifting the caps on long-term care programs, and prohibiting the use of seclusion and restraint in public schools.



BPDD and People First Wisconsin conducted a statewide Self-Advocate Survey, identifying issues self-advocates wanted addressed in the 2013-2015 State Budget. Almost 300 self-advocates completed the survey and the results were used to create the **2013-2015 Wisconsin Self-Advocate State Budget**. This tool helped self-advocates communicate state budget priorities and recommendations to their legislators so as to improve the lives of people with disabilities in Wisconsin.



Disability Advocacy Day

Disability Advocacy Day connects disability advocates from around the state with their legislators at the State Capitol. The day includes a briefing about current disability issues, a rally, and meetings between disability advocates and their legislators. Nearly 400 people participate in the event, and almost 90% of state legislators receive a visit from a



constituent. Disability Advocacy Day is coordinated by the Survival Coalition of more than 30 Wisconsin disability organizations, of which BPDD is a member.

Of the disability advocates who participated in Disability Advocacy Day, **more than 80% said that their experience increased the likelihood that they will participate in other advocacy activities** and nearly 62% said they plan to follow up with their legislator about their issues.

Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition

The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition (WDVC) is a non-partisan effort to increase voter turnout and participation in the electoral process among members of Wisconsin's disability community. WDVC works to educate people with disabilities about voting rights and produced 10 videos that cover topics like the election schedule, accessibility and voting, absentee voting, and more. In an effort to increase the accessibility of voting sites in Wisconsin, the coalition worked with the Government Accountability Board to ensure every polling place was assessed for accessibility on election day. WDVC also sponsored a State Superintendent of Public Instruction candidate forum on special education issues.

Disability Advocates: Wisconsin Network

Disability Advocates: Wisconsin Network (DAWN) helps people stay informed about disability issues and provides the information and tools necessary so disability advocates can have a voice and improve the lives of people with disabilities in Wisconsin. DAWN sends email and text alerts about advocacy opportunities related to state and federal policy. Alerts also keep people informed about opportunities to advocate at events like town hall meetings and public hearings. DAWN features a dashboard that helps its 1,500 members contact – and develop a relationship with – their legislators. One member reported, **“I like that you keep us up to date on legislation and how or what we should do to try and help to make a change.”**

Disability Policy Partnership

The Disability Policy Partnership (DPP) coordinates policy work among BPDD, Disability Rights Wisconsin, and the Waisman Center to work on joint high-priority issues, including Family Care/IRIS quality and statewide expansion, expanding Integrated Employment, special education quality/general education access, health care reform, and Medicaid quality and access.

Long-term goals of the DPP include the implementation of policies that support people with disabilities to live and work in their communities, and increase participation and informed decision-making by people with disabilities in key policy decisions.

DPP recommendations were incorporated into five budget amendments considered by the Joint Finance Committee during budget deliberations, and the DPP-or-



ganized grassroots Stop Special Needs Voucher statewide parent group successfully defeated the special needs vouchers in the biennial budget proposal. Also, an estimated 100 self-advocates, family

members, and students made their first visit with a state or federal level policymaker as a result of a training or support from a DPP partner.

State Budget Trainings & Hearings

To ensure disability advocates can effectively advocate on state budget issues, BPDD conducted a series of trainings around the state. The series, “From Info to Action: State Budget Trainings for Disability Advocates,” provided information and tools so advocates could take part in and impact the state budget. Participants learned what the state budget would affect, and how to talk to legislators. Participants also received an Advocacy Toolkit, including fact sheets about disability issues, a legislative directory, tips about how to contact their legislator, and more. Trainings in Eau Claire, Grafton, Hudson, La Crosse, Oshkosh, and Sheboygan reached more than 150 disability advocates. **Almost all (94%) planned on taking action to try to influence the state budget as a result of these trainings.** After attending, many also testified at Joint Finance Committee Hearings throughout the state and followed up with individuals calls and visits to their legislators.

Cindy Bentley School Tour

Self-advocate Cindy Bentley is one of Wisconsin's most inspirational leaders. After spending most of her childhood living in an institution for people with I/DD, Cindy learned the skills necessary to live on her own. She has achieved much since then, from being chosen as a Global Messenger for Special Olympics International to helping to start People First Wisconsin. For the Cindy Bentley School Tour, Cindy Bentley and Bob Kann presented 14 assembly programs to fourth and fifth-grade students in Wisconsin during the 2011-12 school year, highlighting the themes of self-determination, resiliency, and inclusion. Prior to the presentation, students read the biography "Cindy Bentley: Spirit of a Champion," and classes were encouraged to discuss the book.



Bentley and Bob Kann presented 14 assembly programs to fourth and fifth-grade students in Wisconsin during the 2011-12 school year, highlighting the themes of self-determination, resiliency, and inclusion. Prior to the presentation, students read the biography "Cindy Bentley: Spirit of a Champion," and classes were encouraged to discuss the book.

After Cindy Bentley's visit, 71% of teachers noticed a change in students' behavior and attitudes toward students with disabilities.

Teachers completed a survey about how the book and presentation affected their school. After Cindy Bentley's visit, 71% of respondents noticed a change in students' behavior and attitudes toward students with disabilities, and 55% reported an increase in interaction between students with and without disabilities. Also, after the visit, 46% reported that school staff had higher expectations regarding the capability of students with I/DD and 62% reported that their personal expectations for students with I/DD were higher.

“My students have a new appreciation and respect for people with disabilities and I believe that has been reflected in their interactions at school, which has created a ripple effect within the school community.”

- A teacher after Cindy Bentley visited their class

Better Together

People with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) are great friends, family members, neighbors, co-workers, and community volunteers. Yet, they face a host of barriers that stop them from sharing their gifts and abilities in their communities. Low expectations by schools, employers, service systems, and communities continue to hinder progress toward achieving lives of dignity, self-direction, and contribution.

The BPDD Better Together campaign is reaching all sectors of Wisconsin society, demonstrating through stories and examples how people with I/DD strengthen



communities, contribute to community life, and enrich others. The campaign's goal is to gather more than 500 stories statewide from Wisconsin residents whose lives have been touched by people with disabilities. The stories will be used with the media,

as part of local and regional trainings, and in other community events to elevate awareness of the value and importance of including people with disabilities in community life and actively encouraging the public to get involved in supporting the full participation of people with I/DD in all sectors of society.

“She taught me resiliency, improvisation, adaptability, toughness, humility, perseverance in the wake of all odds, and true commitment to a goal or task. Most of all, I learned never to say “I can't.” I received all this from a very, very special mother indeed.”

- Ken F., whose mother had a disability as a result of a brain injury

Budget



- Employment (\$283,331)
- Self-Determination (\$307,188)
- Advocacy (\$390,419)
- General Board Management (\$301,300)
- Let's Get to Work Project in Employment (\$365,000)



- Employment (\$303,331)
- Self-Determination (\$307,188)
- Advocacy (\$425,419)
- General Board Management (\$301,300)
- Let's Get to Work Project in Employment (\$365,000)

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