



Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities



#WOXETEKIWI



July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2021 Annual Report





September 10th, 2021

The Honorable Tony Evers
Governor, State of Wisconsin
115 East-State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers:

Please find attached the 2019-2021 biennial report from the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD). The report details our Board's mission, membership, goals, accomplishments, and budget.

Our federal charge in the Developmental Disabilities Act is identifying the most pressing needs of people with developmental disabilities and developing innovative and cost-effective ways to meet these needs in a manner that upholds human and civil value. Councils (Boards) must include, at minimum, 60% people with developmental disabilities and their family members.

BPDD had made changes to the way we operate with our COVID-19 response since March 2020. As we work through the tough times, we have reached out to many people throughout the state virtually. BPDD has seen a significant increase in reaching people throughout the state who may not have been able to participate at in-person events.

A few highlights include:

- 1. Live Gatherings:** While in-person gatherings have drawn a large amount of people over the years, after the pandemic came around, we prioritized virtual interactions for our work. We were able to transfer most of our events to virtual and we even connected with many people who couldn't participate in our in-person events previously due to childcare, transportation or a lack of personal care attendants.
- 2. Outreach:** BPDD has been working with WI Disability Vote Coalition, People First Wisconsin, among other groups to keep people in Wisconsin up to date with changes everyday life that could impact them and their family.
- 3. Policy Actions:** BPDD has been a crucial organization for many, in helping to navigate through the pandemic and everyday living for people with disabilities and their families.

Our previous 5-year state plan and our current plan has made diversity and equity a priority in all aspects of our board. As a Governor-appointed Board, BPDD is committed to apply cultural competence

in all that we do. The Board strives to increase the number of people in Wisconsin with I/DD to become more independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life.

If you have questions or comments regarding this report or about BPDD, please contact BPDD at 608-266-1166. Additional information, including our five-year plan for 2021-2026, is located on our website, www.wi-bpdd.org.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregory Meyer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gregory Meyer, Board Chair
Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

Current Board Members



Greg Meyer
Chair
Self-Advocate
Monico



Cheryl Funmaker
Parent
Wisconsin Dells



Amy Whitehead
Waisman Center
Madison



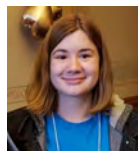
George Zaske
Vice Chair
Parent
River Falls



Desi Kluth
Self-Advocate
Pewaukee



Chris Wood
Self-Advocate
Eau Claire



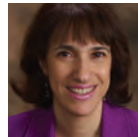
Sydney Badeau
Self-Advocate
Brodhead



Ashley Mathy
Self-Advocate
Lake Tomahawk



Houa Yang
Parent
Madison



Barbara Beckert
Disability Rights WI
Milwaukee



Stephenie Mlodzik
Self-Advocate
Appleton



Gail Bovy
Parent
Middleton



Daniel Parker
Dept. Public Instruction
Madison



Kedibonye Carpenter
Parent
LaCrosse



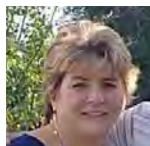
Hector Portillo
Parent
Madison



Kevin Coughlin *Dept.*
Health Services
Madison



Nathan Ruffolo
Service Provider
Appleton



Pam Delap
Parent
Oshkosh



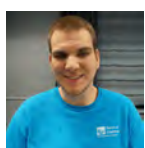
Andy Thain
Self-Advocate
Thorp



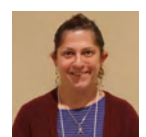
Meredith Dressell
Dept. Workforce
Development
Madison



Tricia Thompson
Parent
Menomonie



Patrick Friedrich
Self-Advocate
Milwaukee



Kelly Weyer
Self-Advocate
Mukwonago

About the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

BPDD is Wisconsin's state developmental disabilities council, authorized under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act). Every state and territory have a state Developmental Disabilities Council.

Federal law outlines a unique role for state Councils that includes:



Serving as an independent advisor to the Governor and legislature on public policy issues that impact people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD)



Charging councils with advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and **integration and inclusion in all facets of community life** for people with I/DD.



Engaging with people with disabilities and their allies to understand pressing needs and identify emerging issues impacting the state's I/DD community.



Funding innovative and pilot projects—based on data driven strategic planning—that test best practices and inform state and federal policies and practices leading to greater independence and self-sufficiency for people with I/DD



Encouraging citizen engagement and participation so that the voices of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are part of policy decisions.

The Governor appoints BPDD's board members. 60% of BPDD's board are people with I/DD and family members from across the state. BPDD's work is driven by a five-year state plan, which is created based on statewide input from the disability community. 70% of BPDD's federal funding is spent on local projects in accordance with needs identified in the state plan.

BPDD's Unique Role



The role of state councils is to seek continuous improvement across all systems—**education, transportation, health care, employment**, etc.—that touch the lives of people with disabilities. Our work requires us to have a long-term vision of public policy that not only sees current systems as they are, but how these systems could be made better for current and future generations of people with disabilities.

BPDD has relationships with people with disabilities and their families across the state. We routinely host community conversations, outreach to diverse communities, fund local initiatives, and provide information and training to empower citizens to be more engaged on issues affecting people with I/DD.

BPDD is an independent state agency and is available as a resource to Wisconsin's executive, legislative, and judicial branches on disability and disability policy issues. BPDD is also connected and can draw upon a national network of disability experts and data sets to understand how federal actions may impact Wisconsin, and other states' approaches to disability issues.

BPDD's federal charge to improve the lives of people with I/DD cont.

In keeping with other federal laws and policy—including the Americans with Disabilities Act—our charge is to work towards people with disabilities having the same rights and responsibilities as people without disabilities.

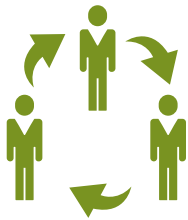
BPDD's federal charge includes advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life for people with developmental disabilities. What do these terms mean?



Self-determination means freedom for people with I/DD to: explore their interests; develop skills; have new experiences—including making and learning from mistakes; make decisions about their lives; have relationships; and choose support staff and others they want to support them.



Independence means maximizing the control people with I/DD have over their lives, including: managing their money; living independently; choosing where to live and with whom; being able to get where they need to go on their schedule; and having a job in the community that matches their skills and interests.



Productivity means having full or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities.



Integration and Inclusion means having the same expectations and opportunities for people with disabilities as people without disabilities. People with disabilities need the same access to and preparation for education, community participation, and community employment as people without disabilities; outcomes and expectations for people with disabilities include independence, decision-making, living and social skills.

What does BPDD do to advance advocacy, capacity building, and systems change?

The federal DD Act charges BPDD and other DD Councils with outreach, training, technical assistance, supporting and educating communities, interagency collaboration and coordination, barrier elimination, system design and redesign, coalition development and citizen participation, informing policymakers, and demonstration of new approaches to services and supports.



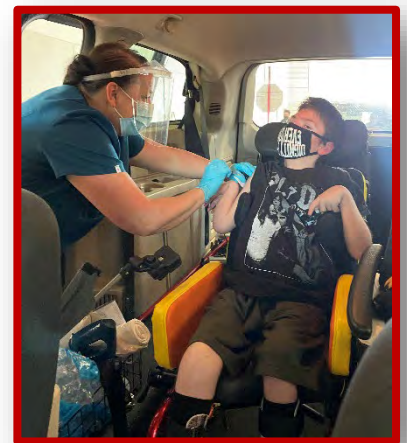
Developmental Disability Councils play a crucial role in ensuring that people with disabilities, their families and their support networks are not left behind during COVID-19. Wisconsin's Board for People with Developmental Disabilities has shifted much of our work to shape COVID-19 related state policies and support communities around the state to promote the health, safety, and connections of people with disabilities who are at increased risk of infection, serious complications, and heightened health and safety risks created by isolation and lack of supports.

Resources

■ BPDD partnered with the Department of Health Services (DHS) to ensure that the COVID-19 page for members had plain language resources vetted by people with disabilities.

■ BPDD received federal funds to aide in getting people with disabilities and their families vaccinated. BPDD awarded \$60,000 in COVID vaccination grants to community groups educating and vaccinating people with disabilities in historically oppressed, diverse, or underserved communities. The grantees include Parent University in Northern Milwaukee, ALAS, Padres e Hijos en Accion in Dane County, the Sokagon Chippewa Health Clinic, and the LOV, inc working with the HoChunk Nation.

■ BPDD and the Living Well Project developed a [COVID-19 Toolkit](#) with plain language resources for staying Healthy, Safe, and Connected during the COVID-19 pandemic. BPDD also worked with DHS to develop flyers and [resources on where and how to get the COVID-19 vaccine](#) and answer frequently asked questions about the vaccine.



Outreach

BPDD has utilized virtual platforms to continue supporting people with disabilities, providing resources and sharing information across Wisconsin.

- VIRTUAL Conferences: BPDD transitioned the conferences and in-person gatherings to a virtual format to connect thousands of people with disabilities, their families and supporters during the pandemic, including a virtual Self-Determination Conference, a virtual Disability Advocacy Day, and a virtual Employment First conference
- BPDD has developed a databank with close to 10,000 contacts and an active social media presence that allows us to quickly get information and resources into the hands of the disability community.
- BPDD and the Living Well Project hosted weekly [Living Well Wednesday presentations](#) live on Zoom and Facebook Live on topics ranging from COVID-19 and the vaccine, changes to the Medicaid Purchase Plan, how to have healthy relationships, and tips for reducing stress. The presentations have been viewed more than times.
- BPDD's [Self-Determination You Tube Channel](#), which features 4 dynamic self-advocates co-hosting segments that feature other self-advocates.

"Thank you for the great information about COVID-19 and the vaccine. Very much appreciated!"

- Tricia

Increasing Civic Engagement and Advocacy

The Board is sought out by state agency and state policymakers for its I/DD perspective. We are frequently asked how public policies—budget decisions, legislation, administrative rules, and changes to or implementation of state agency programs—will affect people with I/DD and their families. We are also consulted for recommendations on ways to improve programs and public policy for people with I/DD and are a valued stakeholder in a wide variety of public policy arenas (health care, long term care, transportation, and education).

BPDD works in collaboration with Survival Coalition—a cross disability group of 30 organizations—and with the three DD Act partners—Disability Rights Wisconsin, the Waisman Center, and People First Wisconsin—on high priority public policy issues affecting people with I/DD and their families including expanding integrated employment, increasing transportation options and access, improving special education quality and general education access, and improving Medicaid and long term care quality and access.

BPDD collaborates as a joint partner in the Disability Vote Coalition, a non-partisan effort to increase voter turnout and participation in the electoral process by Wisconsin voters with disabilities.



“ I am thinking of getting involved in my local government. Maybe working on a commission on veterans issues. 6 months ago I would not even have thought about this.

- Partner in Policymaking Graduate ”

Empowering advocates with information:

- BPDD collaborates with Survival Coalition of Wisconsin during Disability Advocacy Day. This event connects disability advocates from around the state with their legislators at the State Capitol. The annual event includes a briefing about current disability issues and meetings between disability advocates and their legislators. Both the 2020 and 2021 events were held virtually with around 200 people participating.
- BPDD maintains an active legislative alerts email service which allows us to send about 200 alerts a year. BPDD maintains an overall list of more than 8,000 members. In 2019-2021 more than 1,300 subscribers were added to the list.
- BPDD, in partnership with Disability Rights Wisconsin and The Arc, trained over 400 people statewide on disability-specific issues in Governor Evers 2019-21 Biennial Budget to help them advocate for their needs. Two trainings were offered in Spanish along with translated materials. About 25 people took advantage of these trainings.
- The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition worked to ensure 6 voting bills that would make it harder for people with disabilities to vote were vetoed by the Governor.
- Provided trainings, social media posts, emails, press releases and policy updates to increase the number of voters with disabilities.

Partners in Policymaking

Partners in Policymaking is an advocacy program for adults with I/DD and family members of children with disabilities under the age of 21 to become seasoned leaders across the state. Graduates work to improve policies and practices that lead to better lives for people with disabilities by improving the quality of supports, developing cost efficiencies, and learning how to use community supports to maximize independence. Partners provided programming in a virtual format this year allowing many participants to participate for the first time because barriers like transportation and childcare were no longer in the way.



“My biggest a-ha was realizing that the disability community is more powerful when it bands together than being in silos. There are so many common goals.”

- Partners Graduate ”

100% of graduates said they would be more connected with their legislator.

Partners gets results:

- 100% of Partner graduates say they will be a stronger advocate and be more actively involved in issues that affect people with disabilities.
- 73% of 2021 graduates said Partners influenced them to be part of a board/committee or to run for office.
- “Because of Partners, I shared my perspective for the state budget proposal, attended a local rally and met my legislators. I was also inspired to submit a proposal for our school district’s use of rescue funding, participate in our PTO and in local parent groups. Because of more participation from families with disabilities, our PTO allocated funds for children’s books that are inclusive of people with disabilities.”
- “Zoom removed barriers that formerly would have prevented in-person advocacy such as lack of transportation, childcare and physical accommodations turned out not to be obstacles. We were able to coordinate and organize on social media and attend meetings and advocacy opportunities remotely.”
- More than 200 Partner graduates are now a network of community leaders and decision- makers serving on policymaking committees, commissions, and boards at local, state and national levels.

SPARKS Grants

Small grants of \$5,000 or less to “SPARK” local communities into action have led to big changes at the local level. The purpose of SPARKS Grants is to organize local grassroots groups that make changes in their communities resulting in a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities. Grassroots community organizing means local people working for positive community change with people with disabilities on issues that are important to them.



“David said writing his Legacy Journal was “relaxing and peaceful.” His support staff say it’s hard for him to find things that make him relaxed.”

Participant of the ODC Legacy Journal Project

Communities best know what they need:

- eClusion is an innovative project to improve social connections of people with disabilities by providing adaptive gaming equipment.
- 13 African American and Hispanic families in the Milwaukee area who have children with disabilities have participated in Yoga in the Garden and the Family Cooking and Reading program led by a parent from the community. Families get to know each other while focusing on health and wellness. Families also receive free books that go with a cooking project, free food from a community garden and yoga mats.
- LOV, Inc worked with diverse families to find better strategies to engage them in culturally responsive ways. Their input was used to write a job description for a Bridge Builder (family navigator) position to work with culturally diverse families. Hiring is underway!
- Opportunity Development Centers, Inc. worked with 8 people with disabilities on Legacy Journals. The journals allow them to tell their story in their own words. ODC will include time for writing in the journals every day and are sharing the concept with other organizations to empower people with disabilities.
- Racine’s Disrupting the School to Prison Pipeline for Students of Color project worked to increase employment and independence for young adults of color through a mentoring program. Regular meetings with working adults with disabilities introduced young adults to the many possibilities for their own future.

5 SPARKS grants were awarded in 2020.

Employment First Initiative

Wisconsin Employment First promotes competitive integrated employment—jobs in typical business settings at minimum wage or higher—in the general workforce for people with disabilities. The initiative combines the work of grassroots groups with statewide policy and legislative efforts. The Employment First Partners project provides mini-grants of \$2,000 to local groups to create big changes in their communities. Each grantee supports two Employment First Ambassadors, people with disabilities working in the community, to share their perspective about the value of work. The Employment First Conference focuses on sharing strategies and brainstorming ideas to support people with disabilities to have meaningful lives in the community that include work, connections, recreation, and contribution. In 2021 the virtual conference focused on person-centered thinking and services with sessions from national experts on informed choice, taking risks, and customized employment.



“All things need to be person or student led. These [self-advocacy] skills need to be taught early in life for there to be success.”

- Employment First Partner

As a result of one Employment First Partner event, two people with disabilities got jobs.

Grassroots efforts create opportunities:

- 9 statewide grassroots groups worked with local businesses and communities to increase employment at competitive wages for people with the most significant disabilities.
- 7 Employment First Ambassadors, people with disabilities working in the community who advocate with Employment First Partners about the importance of competitive integrated employment, presented at events, building self-confidence while educating 260 people, including 30 employers.
- Over 300 professionals, self-advocates, and families attended the virtual Wisconsin Employment First Conference in May 2021.

Changes to MAPP Go Into Effect

BPDD and other partners advocated in recent years for changes to the work incentive MAPP, or Medicaid Purchase Plan. In August 2020 these changes went into effect and greatly improved MAPP. One change lowers the monthly premiums which make MAPP much more affordable. To increase awareness about these changes so that more people participate in MAPP and maintain their health insurance while working, BPDD partnered with Employment Resources Inc. to deliver live webinar trainings. Over 160 participated with many reporting that they planned to share the information with others.

Public Policy



BPDD works with the state legislature, state agencies, and Governor's office to consult and advise on public policy issues that impact people with I/DD and their families.

This year, BPDD worked with legislative members on several proactive legislative ideas including, required training for guardians, improving family caregiving support, access to ABLE accounts, improving transportation options for non-drivers, and policy changes to prevent and respond to abuse and neglect of people with disabilities.

The 2021-23 State Budget included items BPDD discussed with the Governor and the legislature's budget writing committee including: small increases in special education categorical aid, increases to the Medicaid Personal Care Services rate and Family Care direct funding supplement; small increases to specialized transit, and paratransit funding; and increases in Medicaid Dental reimbursement rates.

Legislative Advocacy:

- Successful establishment of Department of Transportation non-driver advisory committee, BPDD staff one of co-chairs of statewide group.
- Introduction of Guardian Training bill (passed Senate).
- Introduction of bill to require abuse and neglect reports of people with disabilities to be treated the same as older adult populations.
- Introduction of ABLE Account bill.
- Governor included Caregiver Taskforce recommendations to support paid workers and family caregivers providing in-home support and services to people with disabilities and older adults in priorities for federal COVID-19 relief funding.
- Continued training on Supported Decision-Making agreements for professionals, parents, and self advocates
- BPDD has also submitted numerous public comments on federal administrative rules and policies that outlined how proposed changes would impact Wisconsin and its residents living with I/DD.

Increasing Advocacy and Leadership Skills

The Board supports the statewide self-advocacy organization, People First Wisconsin. Members of the organization work to increase advocacy and leadership skills for people with disabilities.



The Wisconsin Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a week-long leadership training and career awareness program for high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors with disabilities. Each summer, 25-30 students with disabilities participate.

“ *I loved this week. ... it was the first week I felt like I was not alone in my disability.*
- Youth Leadership Forum Participant ”

People First Wisconsin:

- People First supports 19 local People First Chapters around the state. People First members work on state and local issues to improve full participation in their communities and access to the services and supports they need including: expanding transportation, increasing integrated employment, voting education, self-directing their long-term care services and COVID reopening guidance.
- People First provided training and support to local chapters on how to use technology to stay connected and continue to provide the support and information to members through weekly zoom meetings to share information on COVID and address member concerns.
- People First works to ensure people with disabilities are represented on committees and Boards that oversee issues that are important to them.
- People First mobilized and gave testimony on voter bills that would create barriers for people with disabilities to vote. People First also provided testimony on an abuse and neglect bill.

Youth Leadership Forum:

- Due to COVID-19 both the 2020 and 2021 YLF sessions were canceled.

Self-Determination Conference

The Board is dedicated to improving the independence, productivity, and integration of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The Self-Determination Conference helps to educate individuals with disabilities, their families and the people who support and provide services. The conference is an opportunity to gain skills, tools, and information that they can take back and implement for themselves; either in their own lives or in their professional role.



“

I have the right to make my own decisions.

-Self Determination Conference participant

“

As with every [BPDD] conference, I come away with an appreciation of the importance for my daughter with an intellectual disability to be heard - both by me and by others. I just need to remember to listen, so she can be the one to make decisions about the life she leads. Thank you for the reminder.

- Self-Determination Attendee

Improving Independence, productivity, and integration:

- More than 1300 people attended our first virtual theSelf-Determination Conference in 2020.
- Over 24 Classrooms participated in the virtual Conference. Reaching more students with disabilities, a population that historically not able to attend the conference.
- Over 40 organizations attended to provide resources at virtual exhibitor tables.
- 22 Micro-businesses exhibited and sold their crafts, art, jewelry etc. through our new All Abilities Market artist portal. allAmarket.org
- We asked participants what their experience was like at the conference and here is what one participant said:
 - I can achieve my goals with support from my community. The online microenterprise market, in particular, drew my attention. I have been doing art over the past several years for my own self-care and therapy, most recently rock painting. I will work towards a business plan...

Family-Led Network Grants

Goal: *People with disabilities and their families make choices about their lives and are actively engaged in planning their services and supports.*

Individuals with disabilities and their families must have adequate information, resources and supports to create opportunities for an inclusive and meaningful life in their communities. Many families are uncertain about what they were looking for other than they want the best possible life for their loved ones. When families support each other, they are empowered to think creatively to meet the needs of their individual with a disability.



One family with a 14 year old lost health insurance due to moving and needed help to pay for seizure medication until new insurance kicked in, was able to find a patient assistance program from the pharmacy company and got them connected to have most of the cost covered.

Changes in people's lives (2019 - 2021):

There are currently 4 family groups supported through a technical assistance grant with LOV Inc:

- Mukwonago with over 20 families in total.
- A transition group for Padres e Hijos en Acción to support Spanish speaking families in the Dane County area
- a SPARRK Group of families from Mineral Point, a very rural area.
- Tribal families who have members with disabilities from the Ho-Chunk Nation.

In 2020 four Family Navigators were hired to support families during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Navigators assist families to address their most pressing needs. Helping them in obtain services and resources they needed. (CLTS (Children's Long-Term Supports), food assistance, transportation, unemployment insurance, energy assistance, COVID information, virtual technology and virtual IEPs.)

Supported Decision-Making

Supported Decision-Making is an alternative to guardianship through which people with disabilities get help from trusted family members, friends and professionals to help them understand the situations and choices they face, so they can make their own decisions. Supported Decision-Making enables people with disabilities to ask for support where and when they need it.

Supported Decision-Making Agreements can be used for many kinds of decisions including medical, financial, housing and other life matters. Powers of attorney, representative payees and simple release of information forms can also help families provide the needed supports and safeguards without going to court and imposing guardianship restrictions.



Supporting Individuals to Live Full Lives Keeping Them in Charge:

- BPDD has been accepted into a Community of Practice (CoP) from the Center for Youth Voice/Youth Choice (CYVYC). The CYVYC is committed to working to promote the use of Supported Decision-Making and alternatives to guardianship for transition aged youth. Wisconsin team is part of a larger learning community that will put youth with IDD in leadership roles in promoting these alternatives in our states and nationally.
- BPDD collaborates with DPI to provide information and training on Supported Decision Making and alternatives to Guardianship in the Post-secondary transition planning.
- We are seeing continued indications that the numbers of guardianships in WI are going down but don't have definitive info on that.
- BPDD is on the WI WINGS Steering committee: WINGS stands for Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders. WINGS is part of a national movement for improving guardianship and conservatorship practices.
- Over 7000 booklets and tool kits distributed statewide

“I know there are famous stars that have to come out, but it's people that live in the disability community that have to experience this every day,” said Jordan Anderson, Co-Lead and Youth Ambassador for Wisconsin Supported Decision-Making Team. (speaking of the national conversation about the Britney Spears Conservatorship)



BUILDING FULL LIVES

Creating BIG CHANGE for People with Disabilities

Building Full Lives provides coaching and business planning expertise to disability service providers working with hundreds of people around the state with the most significant disabilities and their families to more flexibly support people with disabilities in the community. Through the initiative, service providers are learning to create individualized supports that lead to better employment outcomes, build skills and independence.



Building Full Lives is looking at the whole person and what is meaningful for them. For Jim that meant moving into his own apartment and getting a job he loves.

-Building Full Lives Mentor

Leads to increased independence and connections in the community, resulting in a decrease in the need for paid supports.

Building FULL Lives service model increases choice, independence and community participation:

- Fourteen service provider organizations receive technical assistance to expand community-based services to support people to safely, explore, connect, and contribute to their communities while developing specific life skills.
- BPDD expanded a mentoring component to build capacity and expertise in Wisconsin. Service providers farther along in their service transformation mentor others at earlier stages.
- The mentoring agencies worked with BPDD to host a five-part virtual learning series for any interested service provider. The series caught the attention of agencies outside of the state. The team was asked to present on the Building Full Lives model for the National Expansion of Employment Opportunities Network.
- While going through Value-Stream Mapping, a component of the initiative, a service provider decided to eliminate a facility-based service because it no longer benefited their clients or the agency's mission to connect people to their community.



Wisconsin's Living Well project aims to increase the health, safety, independence, and well-being of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in the community. This 5-year federal grant from the Administration on Community Living develops and tests new approaches for improving home and community-based services (HCBS) for people with developmental disabilities focused on building capacity for home and community-based services and improving community monitoring to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation. In addition, the project's policy and evaluation teams work together to use findings to change programs and policies statewide.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Convened 3 stakeholder meetings attended by more than 60 stakeholders each meeting. The stakeholders discussed capacity building to support people with disabilities, focusing on social isolation, abuse and neglect reporting systems, and rights education.

Wrote and coordinated a letter from 40 disability organizations to the State Disaster Medical Committee recommending adults and children using long-term care be included in Phase 1b for vaccination.

9 service providers participated in a virtual services evaluation of 349 individuals' experience with over 45 different offerings.

Peer Education and Network

Piloted the COVID-19 Toolkit with 120 people with disabilities receiving services from 5 managed care organizations, 1 IRIS agency, and 7 service providers.

Self-advocate leaders delivered the Safe and Free peer instruction to 87 individuals across seven provider agencies.

Self-advocate leaders presented at state and national conferences on the safe and free curriculum and the COVID-19 toolkit.

Family Education and Network

Engaged over 7000 people with Living Well Wednesdays via Zoom and Facebook. Presentations focused on health, safety, independence, and well-being.

Hosted a webinar for over 50 families, guardians, and self-advocates to inform on available virtual services, the advantages, and how to access technology.

Quality Home and Community-Based Services

Met and coordinated with state agencies at the Department of Health Services and the Department of Justice to review the current abuse and neglect incident reporting systems and provided recommendations for improvement.

Developed a "Let's Talk about Rights" booklet with the Council on Quality and Leadership to train direct service professionals on the rights of people with disabilities and partnered a four-part webinar series focusing on rights. A self-advocate version and a family/guardian version of the "Let's talk About Rights" were also developed as companions to the provider version.

Partners with Business Annual Report to the Legislature, July 2020 – June 2021

The Wisconsin Legislature established the Partners with Business initiative to assist businesses interested in hiring and employing people with disabilities using an evidenced based coaching model. During the past state fiscal year, Partners with Business provided grant funds and coaching to ten grantees.¹

According to a report published by the Kessler Foundation, employment rates for people with disabilities fell by 20% due to the pandemic, while rates for workers without disabilities fell by 14%.² The impacts of COVID were even greater on people with disabilities in Wisconsin’s Medicaid funded long-term care programs. Wisconsin Department of Health Services data indicates approximately 50% of people in long-term care lost jobs during the pandemic.



Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the Partners with Business initiative was able to demonstrate cost savings in Medicaid funded job coaching support through stronger partnerships with employers, influence positive systems change, and develop best practice guides for employers and employment service providers.

Cost Savings through Stronger Partnerships with Employers

The initiative collected employment data from 9 participants with disabilities to determine the impact on Medicaid savings when service providers invest in creating stronger partnerships with employers.

Before Partners with Business		After Partners with Business	
Average Hours per Week Employee with a Disability Received Medicaid Funded Job Coaching Support	Average Annual Cost to Medicaid System to Support this Person on the Job	Average Hours per Week Employee with a Disability Received Medicaid Funded Job Coaching Support	Average Annual Cost to Medicaid System to Support this Person on the Job
6.8 hours/week	\$8,840	4.6 hours/week	\$5,980

The Partners with Business investment resulted in a 32% reduction in the number of Medicaid funded job coaching support hours. This saved the Medicaid system on average \$2,860 annually per person or about \$25,740 total per year for the 9 participants with disabilities in this year’s Partners with Business cohort.

¹ Inclusa, Lakeland Care District, Headwaters, Goodwill of North Central Wisconsin, Lakeside Packaging Plus, Aspiro, Rangam SourceAble, Wisconsin Association of People Supporting Employment First (WI APSE), Ascend Services and Disability:IN Wisconsin.

² Kessler Foundation. (May 20, 2020). May 2020 Special Report: Workers with Disabilities in the COVID-19 Economy. <https://kesslerfoundation.org/press-release/ntide-may-2020-special-report-workers-disabilities-covideconomy>

Systems Change: DVR Promotes Partners with Business in response to COVID-19

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) decided to promote Partners with Business strategies so that more employees with disabilities could be supported by co-workers. This decreases the need for outside job coaches to come into the business to provide support. It also provides an incentive to businesses to rely less on outside job coaches and utilize a more cost-effective model for supporting workers with disabilities on the job. Three businesses have taken advantage of this new option, resulting in 6.5% savings for DVR funded workplace supports. This cost savings will continue to increase over time as the individuals working with these businesses transition from DVR funded support to Medicaid funded supports in the long-term care system.

Partners with Business Capacity Building:



Ensure good job matches between employers and job seekers with disabilities;



Empower employers to directly train and supervise their employees with disabilities;



Cultivate workplace inclusion and natural supports;



Maximize independence on the job for workers with disabilities; and



Reimburse employers for the costs of providing formal support above and beyond the “natural supports” typically found in the workplace to their employees with disabilities, rather than relying on outside job coaches provided by a vocational agency.

Partnership with Disability:IN Wisconsin to Create Best Practice Guide for Employers

Many large businesses and corporations want to diversify their staff and create an inclusive culture. However, many do not know where to start. To support interested businesses in their efforts, the Partners with Business initiative partnered with Disability:IN Wisconsin to develop a best practice guide for employers on recruiting, hiring and supporting workers with disabilities.

Disability:IN Wisconsin, a business-to-business association, is a state chapter of the United States Disability:IN. Disability:IN Wisconsin offers participating employers resources for recruiting candidates with disabilities, information on disability issues/topics, recognition for best disability employment practices, and exposure to an untapped market for goods and services. This newly developed guide will be distributed widely throughout Wisconsin.

Partnership with Wisconsin APSE to Create Best Practice Guide for Service Providers

When employment service professionals use best practices to support people with disabilities on the job, there are reductions in Medicaid spending. To increase the number of professionals using these best practices, the Partners with Business initiative partnered with APSE (or Association for People Supporting Employment First), a national and state membership organization that focuses exclusively on improving and advancing integrated employment opportunities, outcomes, and services for people with disabilities. WI APSE developed a best practice guide for agencies that provide employment services and supports to people with disabilities. The newly developed guide will be distributed widely to employment service providers throughout Wisconsin.

Partnership with Rangam SourceAble

A private sector business, Rangam, joined the Partners with Business initiative this year to support more large businesses to hire people with disabilities. Rangam is an international staffing agency that has developed a service called SourceAble. SourceAble leverages the latest technologies, workforce expertise, and strong ties to the disability community to deliver an integrated solution for attracting and hiring qualified talent with unique abilities. Through innovation and collaboration, SourceAble helps employers build a culture of inclusion, create a better brand, and drive sustainable results.

With support from the Partners with Business initiative, Rangam presented its SourceAble service to four businesses and is moving forward with Cargill to expand their efforts to hire people with disabilities. For more information about SourceAble, visit: <https://www.sourceabled.com/>

Partners with Business Success Story

Mitchell started his job as a laundry attendant at Fox Hills Resort in Mishicot, WI in March 2021. Mitchell worked with an Employment Specialist named Logan from Ascend Services to find his job. Because Logan made the extra time and effort to find the right job match, Mitchell caught onto the job quickly. He also has a coworker, Linda, who teamed up with him through his shift. With Linda's support, Ascend Services was able to fade back Mitchell's publicly funded job coaching support significantly.

Mitchell is a very social 22-year-old powerlifter who has a goal to move out into his own apartment soon. "We like him a lot. He fits right in," says Mitchell's boss, Alissa, who spoke about her experiences with Mitchell at a Legislative Mixer event about employing people with disabilities hosted by Ascend Services in August 2021. Mitchell plans to pick up more hours at work so he can start saving for his future apartment.

For more information about Partners with Business visit: <https://wi-bpdd.org/index.php/partners-with-business/>

“ We like him a lot.
He fits right in.”

Mitchell's boss, Alissa



Mitchell, his coworker Linda and his Employment Specialist, Logan, at Mitchell's job



The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) mission is to help people with developmental disabilities become independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life.

Financial Information

Budget Summary by Funding Source

	FY20	FY21
FEDERAL CORE GRANT		
Programming	\$1,623,090	\$1,168,415
Board Operations	\$203,919	\$137,077
	Subtotal:	Subtotal:
	\$1,827,009	\$1,305,492
FEDERAL GRANTS AND CONTRACTS		
Living Well	\$435,000	\$435,000
WI GENERAL PURPOSE REVENUE		
Partners with Business	<u>\$44,200</u>	\$45,000
	\$75,000	\$75,000
TOTALS – ANNUAL	\$2,381,209	\$1,860,492

Additional Financial Notes

BPDD has seven full-time permanent employees. Official office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Staff can choose their start and stop times within a 2-hour range, starting between 7 and 9, and ending between 3:30 and 5:30. Staff with positive performance reviews also can elect to work up to one day per week from a remote location. Staff who work extra or outside hours (e.g. nights, weekends) earn comp time. This serves as the agency's report on the success or failure in developing and creating flexible-time work schedules; additional, permanent part-time positions; and other alternative work patterns as required by s. 230.215(4), Wisconsin Statutes.

If you have questions or comments regarding financial information in this report or about BPDD, please contact Beth Swedeen, Executive Director, BPDD (contact information listed on Staff page). Additional information, including our five-year plan for 2017-2021, is located on our website, www.wi-bpdd.org.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2020 AND 2021 GOALS AND ACTUALS

Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2020	Actual 2020	Goal 2021	Actual 2021
1.	Number of people with developmental disability in long-term care programs participating in integrated employment.	5,337	*	5,720	**
1.	Number of people with developmental disabilities who report they who report they make choices about their everyday lives.	25,928	*	27,010	**
1.	Number of people with a developmental disability in long-term care programs participating in self-directed supports.	10,065	10,873	10,486	10,730
1.	Number of people with developmental disabilities who report they have a way to get where they want to go.	24,402	*	25,421	**
1.	Number of people with developmental disabilities who report that they have a network of community members (outside of paid supports) they can rely on.	24,402	*	25,421	**
1.	Number of people with developmental disability who participate in a state self-advocacy organization led by people I/DD.	240	154	250	165
1.	Number of people with developmental disability and their families who participate in leadership training and practice their leadership skills	339	181	365	258
	Number of individuals who are signed up for electronic alerts through the Board's content management/action alert system.	7,500	7,748	8,000	8,674
	Number of improved policies and practices that increase community participation, decision making and full inclusion	5 per year	25	5 per year	17

Note: Based on fiscal year.

Note: The measures are established by the federally required five-year State Plan, which covers the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2021.

*Data not available: the data for these measures are based on the statewide National Core Indicators. The Department of Health Services reported that due to COVID-19 data was not fully collected and will not be reported out.

** Data for 2021 not yet available from the Department of Health Services; these measures are based on statewide National Core Indicators data which will be released in early/mid 2022.

2022, 2023 AND 2024 GOALS

Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2022	Goal 2023	Goal 2024
1.1	Number of self-advocates and family members who report that BPDD materials are easy to understand and take action on	40	40	40
1.1	Number of people with disabilities and family members who say they understand the services and supports available	10	10	10
1.2	Number of families of children of color with developmental disabilities who report they know about and are using services, programs, and programs they want and need	10	10	10
1.3	Number of improved policies and practices that increase community participation, decisionmaking and full inclusion	5	5	5
2.1	Number of people with developmental disabilities who report making at least one new connection to expand their social network or natural supports	60	60	60
2.2	Number of people with a developmental disability in long-term care programs participating in self-directed supports.	11,000	11,250	11,500
2.2	Number of people with developmental disabilities and their families can identify the rights of people with disabilities.	50 people with disabilities; 30 families	50 people with disabilities; 30 families	50 people with disabilities; 30 families
2.2	Increased number of people with developmental disabilities recognize signs of abuse and know someone to whom they could report abuse	75	75	75
2.3	Number of people with developmental disability who say their advocacy skills have improved as a result of participating in our statewide self-advocacy organization	200	200	2--
2.4	Number of people with developmental disability and their families who participate in leadership training and practice their leadership skills	250	250	250

Note: The measures are established by the federally required five-year State Plan, which covers the period October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2026.

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WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) is charged under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act with advocacy, capacity building, and systems change to improve self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life for people with developmental disabilities in Wisconsin.

To Find Out More about WI-BPDD

The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD)

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