

Council Focus Outcomes for FY2008 Grant Cycle:

(Numbering refers to Council's 2007-11 State Plan)

2. Non-traditional work options for Individuals with developmental disabilities are explored, tested and readily available

Premise:

Supported employment has been in place for almost thirty years and yet the unemployment rate for people with severe disabilities has not changed. Some data indicates the number of people successfully employed through SE has actually gone down. Customized employment has entered the scene as one alternative, yet employment and personal income management remain elusive for most people with developmental disabilities.

This outcome seeks projects which demonstrate innovative and creative employment options leading to successful, long-term employment in meaningful jobs for people with developmental disabilities. It asks that the applicant describe, design, and put into place an employment effort that demonstrates positive long-term outcomes for people with severe developmental disabilities where they can generate and sustain adequate income levels, preferably with benefits.

7. Students with developmental disabilities receive appropriate education and training for in-demand work skills, appropriate social skills and active preparation for adult life and independence.

Premise:

IDEA requires, among other things, that students with disabilities receive the most appropriate education in the most appropriate setting. Studies and national reports indicate that the education system, in general, has been less-than-successful in bringing students with or without disabilities to standards required by employers. This disparity between educational outcomes and employer/business needs has affected people with developmental disabilities far more seriously than the general population.

This outcome seeks applicants who will explore and demonstrate, for students with developmental disabilities, effective long-range school-to-employment strategies which are likely to result in meaningful social, work, higher education and career opportunities upon graduation from high school. Applicants should have links, activities and partnerships in place to be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the methodology or program.

9. The Council initiates a project similar to the *EasyLiving Home Effort* in Georgia.

Premise:

Housing availability in NJ is critical for many low-income families, including people with developmental disabilities. The affordability of housing is in a crisis, as is the availability of housing which is accessible or visitable.

The outcome seeks, among other things, to increase the availability of *Section 8* Housing and other vouchers at the local level and/or develop other approaches by which to increase the availability of affordable and accessible housing for people with developmental disabilities within existing housing stock.

This outcome also seeks projects which incorporate a housing design philosophy for home builders and developers in New Jersey similar to *EasyLiving Home* [<http://www.easylivinghome.org>]. The project would seek to build an effective and mutually beneficial collaboration between housing developers and people/families with developmental disabilities. It would seek to have universal design features beyond the requirements of *Section 504* incorporated into all or most housing construction.

The project would not simply add to the existing housing offered through State of NJ programs or otherwise supplement existing programs or services.

21. Individuals with disabilities have access to health promotion and wellness programs and are active participants in them.

Premise:

The definition of wellness is the highest level of physical, mental and social health possible for an individual. In 2005, the Surgeon General issued a *Call to Action* to Improve the Health & Wellness of Persons with Disabilities which stated that people with disabilities need health care and wellness programs just like everyone else, to remain as healthy as possible, to stay active and to participate in their communities.

In a study entitled: Health Warriors, focus group participants with disabilities described health and wellness as:

- 1) being able to function and having the chance to do what you want to do;
- 2) being independent, having self-determination regarding choices, opportunities, activities;
- 3) having physical and emotional states of well-being; and
- 4) not being held back by pain.

This outcome seeks a project which develops and demonstrates successful integration of people with developmental disabilities into generally available health and wellness programs, targeted specifically to preventing secondary conditions and eliminating disparities between people with and without disabilities.

23. Where transportation is unavailable or inadequate for Individuals with developmental disabilities, feeder and local transportation businesses are initiated, tested and supported.

Premise:

Transportation consistently rates as a high need among people with developmental disabilities. The Council has tested and demonstrated a collaborative public transportation model which would open fixed route services for many people. In some areas, this is not economically feasible. Individuals are still unable to avail themselves of generic community resources because of transportation barriers or issues.

This outcome seeks design and demonstration of one or more ways in which people with developmental disabilities and their families, alone or with others, can establish community-based transportation services which are (or become) self-sustaining and which open access to the community for others with developmental disabilities.

48. Services and supports for aging individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and caregivers are available.

Premise:

As the general population ages so do family, caretakers and persons with developmental disabilities. As this population ages their service needs change quite radically. Collaboration between aging, disability and other community resources is required to effectively serve this group.

This outcomes seeks a two stage proposal to a)develop an effective process to locate aging caregivers of persons with developmental disabilities (or caregivers with aging persons with disabilities in the household) and, b) to inform and educate those persons about services and supports within the various systems.

It also seeks a proposal to design and put into place a collaborative system for delivering services based on overall family need rather than on agency criteria.

49. Individuals with developmental disabilities who choose to retire have access to retirement supports.

Premise:

People with developmental disabilities age and retire from work and daily activity, as do others in our society. People without developmental disabilities have assorted resources, strategies and tools at their disposal to make their retirement meaningful and productive. People with developmental disabilities often have no outside activity once they stop working other than day programs with limited age-appropriate activity.

This outcomes seeks a proposal to explore and develop resources and supports (preferably generic) which will offer community alternatives to employment or 'day program' for individuals and serve to make a choice to retire practical for people with developmental disabilities.