

**Promoting conceptually coherent policy for integrated life in the community for individuals with developmental disabilities and the people who support them**



## **Community Integration for People with Disabilities: Key Principles**

### **General Principles**

Individuals with disabilities should have the opportunity to live like people without disabilities. They should have the opportunity to be employed, have a place to call home, and be engaged in the community with family and friends.

Individuals with disabilities should have control over their own day, including which job, or educational or leisure activities they pursue.

Individuals with disabilities should have control over where and how they live, including the opportunity to live in their own apartment or home. Living situations that require conformity to a collective schedule or that restrict personal activities limit the right to choose.

### **Employment**

Individuals with disabilities should have the opportunity to be employed in non-segregated, regular workplaces. Virtually all individuals with disabilities can be employed and earn the same wages as people without disabilities. When needed for such employment, they should have access to supported or customized employment. They should be afforded options other than sheltered work, day treatment, clubhouses and other segregated programs.

### **Housing**

Virtually all individuals with disabilities can live in their own

home with supports. Like people without disabilities, they should get to decide where they live, with whom they live, when and what they eat, who visits and when, etc.

To this end, individuals with disabilities should have access to housing other than group homes, other congregate arrangements and multi-unit buildings or complexes that are primarily for people with disabilities. They should have access to scattered-site housing with ownership or control of a lease. Housing should not be conditioned on compliance with treatment or with a service plan.

### **Choice**

Individuals with disabilities should have the opportunity to make informed choices. They must have full and accurate information about their options, including what services and financial support are available in integrated settings. They should have the opportunity to visit integrated settings, and to talk to individuals with similar disabilities working and living in integrated settings. Their concerns about integrated settings should be explored and addressed.

### **Public Funding**

Government funding for services should support implementation of these principles. Currently, public funding has a bias toward institutionalization, forcing individuals to overcome myriad barriers if they wish to age in place and remain in their communities.

## Year 2 of Our Five-Year Plan

**The GCDD's strategic goal for Public Policy covering FY 2011 to FY 2016 is:** Promote Public Policy that supports communities that welcome all people and better serves the interest of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, promotes revisions in the systems that provide services and supports that result in authentic choice, opportunities for self-direction and enhanced capacity for the care-giving efforts of families.

**Since we often work with other partners, The GCDD assigns legislative activities to one of 5 tiers:**

- Tier I: Council Initiates, is the lead agency
- Tier II: Other agency is the lead, but Council assists
- Tier III: Council allows use of name, but otherwise, no action
- Tier IV: Council has neutral position, won't fight or support
- Tier V: Council opposes, fights against

We organize the Public Policy Activities in the REAL AREAS that the GCDD promotes for integrated life in the community. Within each REAL area below, we list the legislative, budget or policy issues that will engage us over the next five years.

### Real Learning

**Goal: In Georgia, young adults with disabilities graduating from school will have the skills and knowledge to be engaged in their community.**

**TIER I:** Establish policy that enables each High School graduate to earn One Diploma that enables them to continue their education, join the military, or be eligible to work or train for a job.

### Real Homes

**Goal: To promote policies that ensure resources are in place to help Georgians with disabilities acquire accessible and affordable housing.**

**TIER II: New Home Access Legislation:** increase accessibility in all new single family homes on slabs by requiring at least one zero-step entrance, 32" wide interior doorways, and blocking to support grab bars in the bathroom. (Concrete Change, SOPOS Housing Coalition)

### Real Supports: Budget

**Goal: People with Developmental Disabilities and their families will be able to access services and supports.**

**TIER I:** Unlock the Waiting Lists: Support Appropriations to implement US v Georgia Settlement Agreement:

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|--|--------------------|
| • 150 COMP waivers annualized in the FY 2013 Amended budget                  |                    |
| • 100 NOW waivers annualized in the FY 2013 Amended Budget                   | \$7,450,534        |
| • 150 new COMP waivers in the FY 2014 Budget (hospital transition)           |                    |
| • 100 new NOW waivers in the FY 2014 Budget (wait list)                      | \$6,041,578        |
| • Services for 500 new families in state-funded family support               | \$1,872,000        |
| • Mobile Crisis, Crisis Respite and Nursing Services                         | \$3,842,222        |
| • Fund 100 ICWP waivers for people in the community waiting for support      | \$1,620,202        |
| • Fund 20 housing supplements @ 400.00 per person per month                  | \$98,000           |
| • Restore Reductions to non-Medicaid and non-ADA settlement spending         | 9,409,552          |
| • Support additional appropriations for individuals at risk in the community | See Moving Forward |

## Real Support: Legislation

**Goal: People with Developmental Disabilities and their families will be able to access services and supports.**

- TIER I:** Pass state **Individual Development Account Legislation** that enables an individual with disabilities to save toward an accessible vehicle, assistive technology, communication devices or home modifications. (Cfii, Asset Alliance)
- TIER II:** Support passage of **The Family Care Act**, enabling parents with paid sick leave to use it to care for sick children or aging parents (Job Family Coalition, Atlanta 9 to 5, Co-age, AARP and others)

## Real Careers: Policy

**Goal: All People Shall Be Afforded Full, Unrestricted Opportunities To Pursue Gainful Employment Regardless of Level of Disability.**

- TIER II:** Work with Federal Network Partners, The Department of BHDD, DHS/ Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Education to craft and establish an “Employment First Policy” for people with disabilities receiving services, to make employment the first priority for their funding and support.

## Real Influence

**Goal: Promote necessary changes in Georgia’s public policy that better serve the interests of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and identify needed revisions in systems that provide services and support that encourages choice, self-direction and strengthens and supports the care-giving efforts of families.**

- TIER II:** Continue to **advocate for the complete implementation** of the federal Medicaid **Early, Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT)** Mandate covering all children receiving Medicaid under the age of 21.

**Advocate for implementation of the Olmstead Plan**, now in the Governor’s Office.

**Provide guidance and input on Legislation or budget items related to Managed Care for Aged, Blind and Disabled, and Medicaid redesign. Propose and advocate** for the use of best practices for implementation of state proposals to bring Georgia’s foster children into a managed care system.

**Advocate for statewide expansion of Medicaid** under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.



## Mission Statement:

The mission of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities is to bring about social and policy changes that promote opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities and their families to live, learn, work, play and worship in Georgia communities.

## Values

1. **We value** people with developmental disabilities with their own gifts and talents, and as independent contributors to a collaborative community.
2. **We value** available, accessible, flexible, and responsive services, which enhance people's participation in the community.
3. **We value** a diverse Council with informed, motivated and active members who disseminate accurate information.
4. **We value** a knowledgeable, diverse, and well-supported staff, which share open and honest communication with Council members.
5. **We value** educated and supported families who make significant contributions to caring for and assisting people with developmental disabilities in preparing for their futures
6. **We value** public policy founded on sound research, accurate information, and best practices in alignment with the principles of the Developmental Disabilities Act.
7. **We value** public advocacy that is founded on the development of relationships with stakeholders and the legislative community.
8. **We value** communities, which are designed to be inclusive, allowing for full participation by all people, physically, economically, organizationally, and environmentally. We value communities that educate, respect, promote, and protect the rights of people, thus offering a wealth of opportunities, and have the capacity to find solutions.



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Please also visit:  
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