

Leadership

Leadership is a weekly newsletter for ND families who are interested in leadership in accessing systems and systems change. Leadership is prepared by staff from the ND Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University. If you are interested in receiving a copy, contact Cathy Haarstad at haarstad@minotstateu.edu with your email address.

Leadership Teams

Leadership teams will be meeting in the next few weeks to make a plan for sharing information about leadership in accessing systems and system change with other families in their region. So far teams who have done some initial planning have decided to:

1. Use information from the curricula in newsletters to local families
2. Invite Stella Hegg from Family to Family to a region to present modules on Leadership in Accessing Systems to local families
3. Invite other local families to join a leadership team
4. Provide families with information on how to start a local support network.
5. Participate in Legislative Working Groups

Medicaid Are you interested in learning more about this important program that pays for much of the therapy that children with disabilities in ND receive? It also pays for much of the respite care or in-home support that families receive. An excellent article about Medicaid written in family-friendly terms can be found at the National Center for Family Support Human Service Resource Institute at: http://www.familysupport-hsri.org/resources/policy_6.html

Before You Decide Staff from the Family Support Project are collecting brief statements or stories about topics that families want legislators to be aware of before the legislator decides on important legislation. The topics are:

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|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Heroes | 2. Families | 3. Connections |
| 4. Education | 5. Health Care | 6. Budgets |
| 7. Family Support | 8. Taxpayers | 9. Vision |

Each week a short paragraph about the topic will appear in this newsletter. Please take 10 minutes to sit down and comment on the topic. It is not necessary to write out a full story. Just a few minutes each week will help the project collect the information it needs. Don't worry about making your comments match the sample. We want to hear from YOU. Sending in your comments before the holidays may be a special gift to yourself. To submit comments, just reply to the newsletter or send an email to Cathy Haarstad at haarstad@minotstateu.edu

Connections: Families who are raising children with disabilities are deeply rooted in their communities. One or both parents are usually employed, and often volunteer at schools, churches or through service organizations. Although many families have left North Dakota, parents with children who have disabilities tend to stay. This is partly because of the quality of services available in our state and partly because it is difficult for families to leave the circle of support they have carved out within their community. If it is true that there are six degrees of separation between any two people then policy makers in North Dakota may often be related to the family of a child with special needs. Families want policymakers to understand how strong and how fragile the connections are that keep them going.

Connections are a funny thing. Last week we hit a deer on the road to our house. Within two minutes a patrolman from the sheriff's office stopped to help. He followed us home. While writing up the report he noticed our address printed in large block letters on a card taped on the backside of the door to the garage. He commented. We explained that we were helping our daughter with a disability memorize her address in case she ever got lost. He chatted with us about his interest in children with special needs and the work his wife – a North Dakota teacher - does. Our daughter was very impressed with his smile and uniform. Some day his wife might have our daughter in her classroom. I hope that both the officer and his wife can earn a decent salary. We are connected and we might need both of them some day.

Legislative Session

Plans for the **Medicaid Buy-In** were NOT included in the Governor's budget. As a result, staff from the ND Medicaid Buy-In Project, along with consumers from across the state will be coordinating a grass roots effort to have legislation introduced in the session. If you wish to learn more about the Medicaid Buy-In Project contact Dr. John Uppal at 1-800-233-1737.

Legislative Working Groups were identified as one step people can take to get involved and to have an impact on systems. By participating, spreading the word, becoming a "partner" with others participating, you can provide the leadership that would help ensure that the Legislative Working Group in your community was a great success. So, please take the time to get involved, be a leader and help change the system.

<u>City</u>	Williston
<u>Time</u>	Saturday 10:00 a.m.
<u>First Meeting</u>	Jan. 4 th
<u>Location</u>	The Club 212 Second St.

Contact Janelle Olson, P&A jfolson@state.nd.us

<u>City</u>	Minot
<u>Time</u>	Friday 4:00 p.m.

First Meeting Jan. 3rd
Location **Minot Public Library**
Contact Laurie Davis, Independence life@minot.ndak.net

| City **Grand Forks**
Time **Friday 3:00 p.m.**
First Meeting Jan. 10th
Location **Options CIL 318 3rd Street N.W.**
Contact Petra Clemens, Options petraclemens@yahoo.com

| City Fargo
Time Friday, 4:00 p.m.
First Meeting Jan 3rd
Location **Freedom CIL 2701 9th Ave. SW**
Contact Chuck Stebbins Freedom CIL guthrie@fargocity.com

| City Jamestown
Time Friday noon
First Meeting January 3rd
Location **Protection & Advocacy Project 311 1st Ave S**
Contact Donene Feist, Family Voices & Freedom DCIL feist@daktel.com

| City Bismarck
Time **Saturday 10:00 a.m.**
First Meeting Jan. 4th
Location **Solheim School 325 Munich Dr. – meeting in the school library**
Contact Teresa Larsen, P&A tlarsen@state.nd.us

| City Dickinson
Time **Friday 1:00 p.m.**
First Meeting Dec. 27th
Location **Dakota CIL 40 First Ave. West - #203**
Contact Nancy Klatt, Dakota CIL klatt@ndsupernet.com
dcil@ndsupernet.com

Next Newsletter:

In upcoming newsletter, we will be including information about family contributions to ND and data about the benefits of family support. Also be on the alert after the new year for a simple on-line survey you can complete to identify the benefits of family support. The next edition of this newsletter will come out in January, 2003