

Kentucky Council on Developmental Disabilities Position Statements

Education and Early Intervention - The KCDD believes all children and young adults with developmental disabilities have the right to participate fully in this country's early intervention and education systems. Policy makers should actively monitor and enforce the mandates of IDEA specifically:

- Guarantee that all children and young adults with developmental disabilities are educated with appropriate supports and services in an age-appropriate setting with peers who do not have developmental disabilities.
- Provide early intervention, educational programs, Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Individual Family Plans (IFPs) that:
 - Provide readily available and widely publicized screening and early diagnosis
 - Enhance the overall well-being and development of children who have or are at risk for developmental disabilities.
 - Provide appropriate coordination of services and supports to ease transitions between early intervention and public education
 - Meet the student's developmental needs and offer the necessary supports to maximize the educational experience.
 - Are sensitive to linguistic, cultural, gender, and socioeconomic differences as well as individual family circumstances.
 - Provide access to age-appropriate regular curricula and extracurricular services and experiences with peers without disabilities,
 - Provide students the opportunity to participate in all general assessments and evaluations. For those students unable to do so, even with appropriate accommodations, alternative assessments and evaluations must be provided. We strongly believe that children and young adults with developmental disabilities should be included in Kentucky's Assessment and Accountability System.
 - Extend or modify the school year when necessary to ensure continuing educational success in an IEP for specific students.
 - Includes a transition plan developed by the student, family and providers.
 - Provide necessary and appropriately trained and supported staff, as well as, the necessary and appropriate related services and supports, including technical supports
 - Include transition into employment; i.e. job coaching and pre-vocational, or post-secondary education.
 - Be adequately funded to meet identified needs of eligible children
 - Ensure the educational process
 - Involve students, family members, and guardians in designing and monitoring the educational program.
 - Make students, family members, and guardians aware of resources that help them understand their rights.
 - Afford due process to students and their families.
 - Support peer-to-peer interaction and tutoring.

Employment - The KCDD believes people with developmental disabilities should have the opportunity to work, based on their own preferences, interests and strengths, to support themselves and to meet their own needs. State and local officials should:

- Ensure that all people with developmental disabilities are able to make informed choices about their work and careers and have the resources and supports available to seek, obtain, retain or change their employment in the community.
- Ensure every person with a developmental disability has the right to equal access to productive employment in a vocation they have chosen, receive wages and benefits on par with those people without disabilities and move into management positions when qualified.
- Remove disincentives in existing public policies, such as the fear of losing Social Security, Supplementary Security Income, Medicaid, and Medicare benefits and other rights, to enable individuals with developmental disabilities to obtain employment and increase earnings and benefits.
- Implement and adequately fund the Ticket to Work and adopt Medicaid Works.
- Provide adequate funding and mandate collaboration among various agencies involved in employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Ensure sufficient funding for adult education and supported employment programs, especially funding for ongoing, long-term supports.
- Provide workers access to necessary supports to be successful, including but not limited to adapting the workplace, having accessible public transportation, or hiring a support person.

Health - The KCDD believes that all individuals with developmental disabilities should be treated with respect and have access to accessible and affordable health in their community. Public officials should:

- Prevent discrimination in health care programs, such as Medicaid and high-risk pools, against individuals with developmental and other disabilities.
- Enable people with disabilities of all ages and their families to fully participate in the nation's health care system.
- Ensure access to a comprehensive array of health, rehabilitation, personal, and support services across all service categories and sites of service delivery.
- Provide comprehensive health, rehabilitation, personal, and support services on the basis of individual need, preference, and choice.
- Eliminate the burden of disproportionate costs.
- Support the development of a health care system that provides the most appropriate effective quality services with the least amount of administrative waste.
- Develop policies to ensure that health professionals receive specialized training to assure maximum health and to prevent secondary conditions.
- Design reimbursement rates to avoid providing a disincentive for healthcare professionals to provide services.
- Recognize the right of individuals with disabilities to make a decision about health care unless the individual does not have the legal capacity to give consent.

Transportation - The KCDD believes that all individuals with developmental disabilities should have access to accessible, affordable, accountable, available, and appropriate transportation in their community. Public officials should:

- Foster increasing flexibility and growth in available transportation options throughout Kentucky including rural areas.
- Adequately fund and provide public transportation to ensure full community access.
- Ensure that public transportation is accessible, safe, dependable, available in a timely manner, and equipped to suit the physical, sensory, and/or cognitive needs of all people.
- Make available Paratransit (e.g., door to door service) systems at comparable cost and funded as an alternative to mass transportation.
- Eliminate policies that prevent individuals with disabilities from ownership and/or operation of vehicles.
- Hold brokers and service providers in the Kentucky Human Services Transportation Delivery Program accountable through performance based contracts.
- Develop policies to ensure that transportation service providers are adequately trained to provide safe, appropriate service.
- Strongly enforce the transportation provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its regulations, including the Accessibility Guidelines for Transportation Vehicles.
- Increase awareness, offer evaluation and support training in order for individuals to realize that they may have the ability and option to acquire a driver's license.

Quality Assurance-The KCDD believes in the principle of self-determination. We believe that people must have access to the information, skills, opportunities, and support to live free of abuse, neglect, financial and sexual exploitation, and violation of their human and legal rights. Policy makers should:

- Support quality assurance systems that contribute to and protect self-determination.
- Continuously reinforce public agencies and private organizations that improve the quality of their services and are responsible and accountable to individuals and their families.
- Ensure that service providers are responsible and accountable to individuals and their families, continuously improve their efforts to support individuals in leading meaningful lives, and receive recognition when they make meaningful contributions to the quality of life for individuals.
- Replace service providers who fail to make meaningful contributions to quality of life for individuals.
- Guarantee a comprehensive and viable program of ongoing monitoring, independent of the service system, to ensure desired outcomes and the satisfaction of the people served and their families.
- Recognize service and support providers when they make meaningful contributions such as results, self-improvement goals, improve overall effectiveness and capabilities, and strive toward promising practices when working with individuals.

Formal and Informal Community Supports - KCDD believes that formal supports, including choice, authority, responsibility, and control of one's own life and informal supports such as friends, families,

and peer groups are beneficial and must be encouraged consistent with the principle of self-determination. Policy makers should adopt policies to ensure that individuals with disabilities can:

- Receive the support, encouragement, opportunity and resources to explore and define how they want to live their lives.
- Choose and receive the services and supports that will help them live meaningful lives.
- Direct the services and supports they receive.
- Have their rights, dignity and privacy protected.
- Take risks in their choices.
- Enjoy health and safety.
- Determine whether family members assist in care through either a formal paid role or as an in-formal support role.