



CURRENT INITIATIVES

ADVOCACY

Enhancing Self-Advocacy and Public Policy Work *People On the Go of Maryland (POG)*

POG, a group of advocates with developmental disabilities, is supported by the Council and the Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities (MCDD). The group advocates for people with developmental disabilities and educates people with developmental disabilities through leadership trainings and mentoring opportunities, and provides support and training to local self-advocacy groups. The group is a driving force behind legislative changes in the state to ensure people with disabilities have equal rights and opportunities.

Expectations Matter: “My Life, My Plan, My Choice” *Shared Support Maryland, Inc.*

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) has instituted a new Person-Centered Planning (PCP) process, utilizing new approaches and tools. The Council and DDA believe that people with developmental disabilities and their family members’ must be informed and engaged fully in their own planning and to do this effectively they must understand PCP concepts, process, and tools. Funding for this two-year initiative supports development of two standardized PCP training modules, development of a user-friendly written guide to accompany the training, and development of a trainer’s guide that prepares others to provide PCP training to individuals with developmental disabilities and family members.

CHILD CARE

Roots of Inclusion: Building Capacity through Leadership Development *Abilities Network/Project ACT*

This project funds development of a three module training series designed to support directors, owners, and other leaders in the child care community in designing, implementing, and sustaining inclusive early childhood programs in Baltimore, Cecil, and Harford Counties. The training series will meet the Maryland State Department of Education’s Office of Child Care’s Core of Knowledge (COK) hourly training requirements. Final versions will be shared with the Maryland Child Care Resource Network (MCCRN) to become part of the training catalog available to the Child Care Resource Centers (CCRCs) and will be available statewide.



COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

Assistive Technology Supports for Students

The Parents' Place of Maryland

The COVID-19 pandemic closed schools and students are engaged in virtual learning. In partnership with the Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services (DEI/SES) at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), this time-limited demonstration project will identify strategies to support the assistive technology needs of students with developmental disabilities and their families, including the purchase of assistive technology devices, to help students learn and succeed at home.

Coronavirus Public Awareness Campaign

The Arc Maryland

The Arc Maryland, in partnership with the Maryland Association of Community Services and People on the Go of Maryland, will create a public relations campaign to broaden public awareness of the needs of people with developmental disabilities, their Direct Support Professional Caregivers, and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign will also address expected budget cuts at the state and local level that could place community services for people with developmental disabilities in jeopardy.

Addressing the Technology Needs of People with Developmental Disabilities

Service Providers throughout Maryland

The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting all Marylanders, including people with developmental disabilities supported by the Council's Transforming and Improving Practices (TIP) grants. This time-limited demonstration project protects the Council's current investment in round 4 TIP grants, by addressing the urgent technology needs of people with developmental disabilities seeking virtual employment and meaningful day services.

Leading Forward: Training Self-Advocate Educators for First Responders Program

Loyola University of Maryland

This projects funds stipends for individuals with developmental disabilities for the Leading Forward: Training Self-Advocate Educators for First Responders Program, administered by the Maryland Department of Disabilities and implemented by Loyola University of Maryland. The program prepares and supports individuals with developmental disabilities to serve in training roles to educate law enforcement and other first responders on how to effectively interact with people with ID/DD. This approach utilizes individuals with developmental disabilities to increase understanding of the ID/DD population, reducing stigma to ensure safety and facilitating community integration.



Online LEAD Program Regional Pilot for Fire/EMS
Loyola University of Maryland

This project will expand the existing LEAD program model to an online regional pilot. People with developmental disabilities will be trained as Self-Advocate Educators (SAEs) to provide training to Fire and EMS personnel in Howard and Montgomery counties on how to effectively interact with people with developmental disabilities. The online regional pilot will inform future efforts to expand the training to more Fire and EMS personnel statewide.

Technical Assistance Hub for Postsecondary Education Opportunities
Center for Transition and Career Innovation, University of Maryland – College Park

This project funds a statewide Hub for Postsecondary Education Opportunities. The Hub will connect, support, and train colleges and universities to develop or improve inclusive higher education programs; coordinate with other colleges and universities; and support expansion of inclusive, dual enrollment programs for students with disabilities age 18-21. As a result, more people with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have access to high quality, inclusive higher education options across Maryland improving employment opportunities and increasing overall quality of life.

EMPLOYMENT

Transforming and Improving Practices through Customized Technical Assistance (TIP grants)
Service Providers throughout Maryland

TIP grants provide funding to improve employment outcomes of people with developmental disabilities by funding customized technical assistance for community service providers licensed by the Developmental Disabilities Administration. The grants allow providers to improve the way services are provided, building their capacity so that more people with developmental disabilities are supported to obtain and keep the meaningful work they want in their communities and to have meaningful days when not working. The Council has funded four rounds of TIP grants for a total of 41 organizations.

Currently funded organizations include: Chesapeake Center, Chesterwye Center, CHI Center, Harford Center, St. Peter’s Adult Learning Center, Scott Key Center, and Star Community.



Eastern Shore Provider Transformation Community of Practice United Needs and Abilities, Inc.

This project funds a subject matter expert to provide technical assistance to the Eastern Shore Provider Transformation Community of Practice (CoP), a group of 12 community service providers supporting people with developmental disabilities in all 9 counties on the Shore. Technical assistance will help provider leadership address barriers to transportation, recruitment and retention of direct support professionals, and improve and enhance stakeholder buy-in and support. The providers will improve the success of Employment First initiatives, share their efforts, and receive mutual support, through a learning community. As a result, more people with developmental disabilities will be supported to get and keep the meaningful work they want in their communities, and have meaningful days when they are not working.

Employment Publication: What Matters *In-house initiative*

What Matters tells the stories of nine people with developmental disabilities who work and have meaningful days in their communities. Their stories illustrate the success that is possible when the right planning, support, and expectations are in place.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Partners in Policymaking® *The Arc Maryland*

Through a series of nine sessions and related hands-on activities, The Partners in Policymaking® program (Partners) trains individuals with developmental disabilities and family members to become effective advocates for long-term change. The Council is working closely with The Arc Maryland to conduct Partners, the most prominent leadership development program for individuals with disabilities and their families in the country.

Serving on Groups That Make Decisions: A Guide for Families *The Parents' Place of Maryland*

Serving on Groups that make Decisions: A Guide for Families, is a tool to help build leadership skills in families and other individuals who are interested in, or are currently serving on decision - making groups. This project funds leadership training to Special Education Citizens Advisory Committees (SECACs) and Local Interagency Coordinating Councils (LICCs) in Maryland. These advisory groups play a crucial role in advising local school systems, and improving outcomes for children with disabilities.



LEADers Hybrid for Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore ***The Parents' Place of Maryland***

This project funds the development and implementation of hybrid leadership training in Western Maryland for parents of children with developmental disabilities. It also includes follow-up activities with LEADers on the Eastern Shore to ensure ongoing engagement in advocacy and leadership, specifically targeting parents of children with developmental disabilities in Spanish-speaking and Haitian communities.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Raising Expectations ***In-house initiative***

The purpose of this initiative is to identify challenges and create strategic messaging to increase the expectations of people with developmental disabilities. Using the think tank conclusions, the Council worked with a designer/communications professional to develop and implement a campaign to raise awareness of how expectations of people with developmental disabilities matter.

Planning Now ***In-house initiative***

The Planning Now guide is a comprehensive, easy to use futures and estate planning guide for families of children and adults with developmental disabilities. Future and estates planning includes envisioning a desired future for your child. Topics covered include financial and healthcare benefits, wills, trusts, tax considerations, financial planning, and others. This publication is available in English and Spanish on our website. Limited hard copies are also available in English.

Developmental Disabilities Administration Informational Sheets ***In-house initiative***

These four informational sheets provide easy-to-understand explanations of key aspects of the Developmental Disabilities Administration's (DDA) service system. These documents are available in English and Spanish on our website. Hard copies are also available in English and Spanish.



User Friendly ABLE Guide
Creative Words and Visions, contractor

This user-friendly guide will help people with disabilities and their families understand Maryland ABLE. Maryland ABLE is a savings and investment program that offers eligible people with disabilities the opportunity to save money for disability-related expenses without jeopardizing access to federal and state means-tested benefits.

What's Possible: 9 Stories of Changed Lives
In-house initiative

Nine people who used to live at Rosewood Center, a residential facility for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and who now call the community home, told their stories for this publication. Their stories exemplify what is possible when people are given new opportunities and the community supports they need.