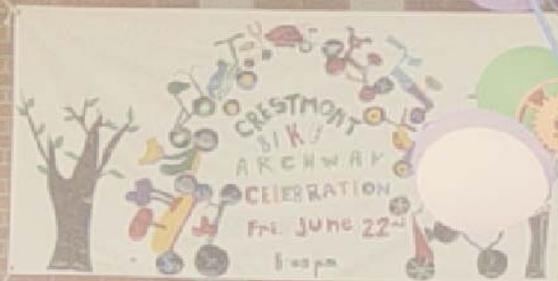


2006-2007 *Annual Report*

Crestmont Boys and Girls Club
"Bicycle Archway Sculpture"
Spring 2007 Dedication



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

*Indiana Institute
on Disability and Community*

Research, Education, and Service

Indiana's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABOUT THE COVER

The “Bicycle Archway Sculpture,” spring 2007 dedication, is the result of a three-year learning process in which children of the Crestmont Boys and Girls Club of Bloomington, Indiana, partnered with the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, service-learning students enrolled in Indiana University’s Departments of Anthropology and Folklore, and local artist Joe LaMantia, to build a welcoming arch as a way to provide opportunities for kids to connect with their neighborhood, be exposed to the concept of public art, explore aspects of personal identity, and engage in meaningful and concrete social action. Major funding for the Crestmont Community Project is through the National Endowment for the Arts.



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Indiana’s University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

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This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

In Our Indiana Communities

This annual report highlights some of the work of the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at Indiana University. We are pleased to present this report of our work with communities “to welcome, value and support the meaningful participation of people of all ages and abilities through research, education and service.”



Our cover highlights an image of community representing an important effort with youth here in Bloomington. In this report we also highlight media releases from the last year. These include services for pre-kindergarten children, service learning involving young adults and veterans, recent publications on employment and community life, a leadership series for Self-Advocates, an Indiana health care and disability poll, and a research study about social skills and autism. We are also reinvesting in our library, the Center for Disability Information and Referral, and have begun a new outreach effort in Bloomington, Monroe County, and across Indiana.

We welcome your comments about our work, about issues we might help address in the future, and ideas about strengthening communities for all citizens.

Best,

INDIANA INSTITUTE OVERVIEW

The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Indiana’s University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, puts new ideas and research results into everyday practice in schools, employment settings, and communities in order to provide choices designed to improve the quality of life of individuals with disabilities, their families, and those who provide support services.

The Indiana Institute was established in 1970 as a residence facility for people with disabilities, and was funded through the enactment of P.L. 88-164, the Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act of 1963. Since that time, the Institute has expanded its programs and changed its focus to include seven research and training Centers that provide Hoosiers with best practice in disability across the life span.

The work of the Institute, fostering the flow of information between institutions of higher education, community providers, state and local governments, and those with disabilities and their families, is accomplished through:

- ✦ Unique collaborations and partnerships;
- ✦ Investments in new ideas and initiatives that encompasses advocacy, civic involvement, community resource development, employment, prevention; and
- ✦ Expansion of our university roles through increased student involvement, university governance, and research activities.

Mission

The Indiana Institute mission statement, reviewed and revised in 2006, reflects the Institute's commitment to inclusive communities and provides a foundation for evaluating outcomes.

The mission of the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community is to work with communities to welcome, value, and support the meaningful participation of people of all ages and abilities through research, education, and service.

"To work with communities"

The Institute collaborates with community agencies, schools, advocacy organizations, government, institutions of higher education, and other community partners to effect improvements in quality of life.

"to welcome, value, and support the meaningful participation for people of all ages and abilities"

This is the core of our mission. It defines outcomes for diverse individuals, including people with disabilities, in all life spaces: schools, employment, home, and community settings.

"through research, education, and service."

Research means investigation and inquiry into ideas and practices in order to develop knowledge that will benefit people of all ages and abilities.

Education means teaching approaches, concepts, and new knowledge to students and community members in schools, institutions of higher education, and in community settings.

Service means putting research and new knowledge into practice in educational and community settings. Service means collaborations and partnerships to promote inclusive communities. Service means participation in local, state, national, international, and higher education committees, councils, association activities, and governance.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS ACROSS CORE FUNCTION

The faculty and staff of the Indiana Institute emphasize collaborative linkages between its seven Centers and key stakeholders in Indiana through a set of goals and objectives organized around five areas of emphasis. These emphasis areas are addressed through a set of core functions which are federally-mandated.

Areas of Emphasis

- Early Intervention and Child Care
- Inclusive Education and Transition Services
 - Employment
 - Community Living
 - Community Supports

Core Functions

- Interdisciplinary Preservice Preparation
 - Applied Research
- Training or Technical Assistance
- Information Dissemination

MEDIA RELEASE

Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

In Our Indiana Communities - Early Childhood Education: A statewide prekindergarten program is critical if Indiana is serious about closing its achievement gap and ensuring that all students have the skills they need for college and work success, Indiana University education experts say.

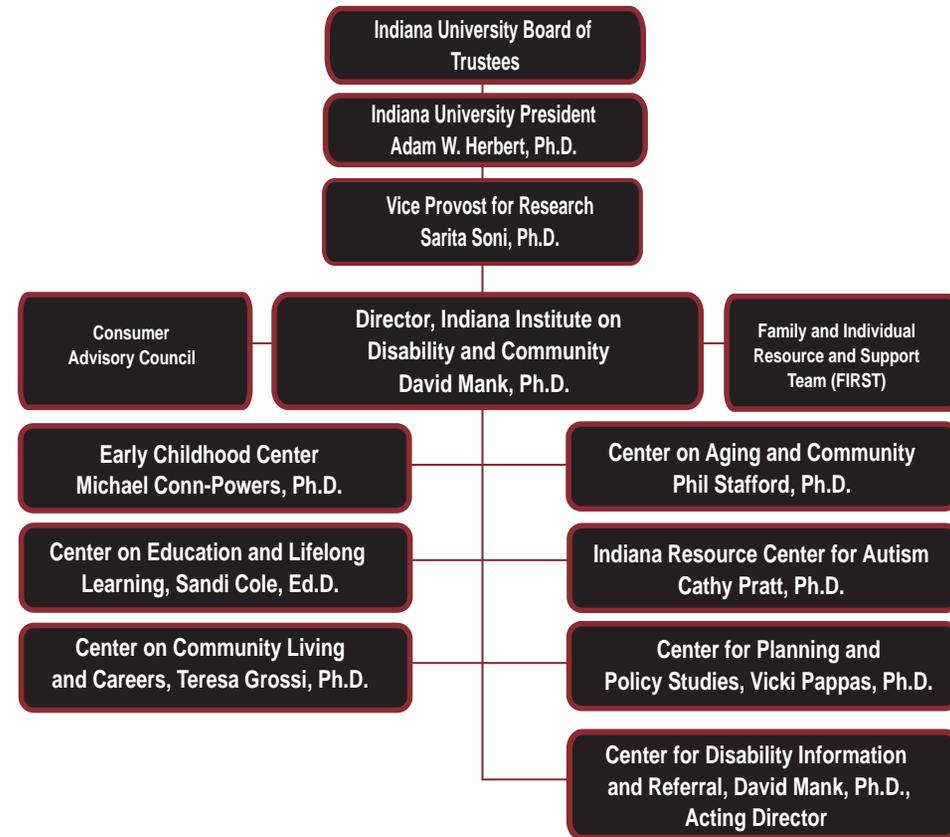
“Much of what we have done is aimed at fixing learning problems long after they have been identified. Why wait for children to fail before we do something?,” said Michael Conn-Powers, Director of the Early Childhood Center at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, and lead author of a policy brief issued from Indiana University.

Despite the initiatives already underway to reform Indiana high schools and keep more students in school, many students will fail because their learning needs were not met at the start of their education, Conn-Powers said. While there are early education efforts happening at the local level, there is little oversight and no funding from the state to ensure high-quality programs are available for all children who need them.

“Our review of the research, and of what many other states are doing, point to the need to create a statewide prekindergarten program.

(Continued on page 4)

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CORE FUNCTIONS CHART



Media Release - Early Childhood Education

FUNDING AND AFFILIATIONS

The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community pursues its mission with support from Indiana University, Bloomington, in the form of capital and non-capital assets, federal resources, state grants, and foundation monies. The Indiana Institute reports to the Vice Provost for Research and the Trustees of Indiana University.

Federal

- Social Security Administration
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

State

- Generated Income
- State of Indiana

State Grants and Contracts

- Child Care Health Consultant Services
- Indiana Department of Education
- Indiana Department of Education, Division of Exceptional Learners

The reality is if we want to be serious in addressing poor high school graduation rates, then we need to start earlier in children's lives," Conn-Powers said. "That means providing the high-quality services during children's preschool years to prevent problems before they begin and before they cost us more."

Conn-Powers addresses the issue in the report, "Closing the Achievement Gap Series: Part I - Is Indiana Ready for State-Sponsored Prekindergarten Programs?," the latest publication in the IU Center for Evaluation and Education Policy's (CEEP) Education Policy Brief series. CEEP and the Indiana Institute have partnered for a three-part series addressing the achievement gap in Indiana. The brief provides an overview of the research demonstrating the positive benefits of early learning programs, and it tackles major policy questions regarding publicly-funded prekindergarten programs.

A prekindergarten program educates preschool-aged children (typically 3- and 4-year-olds) with the explicit goal of improving school readiness. In 2004, 38 states offered publicly-funded prekindergarten programs, in part to address the same challenges that Indiana faces. Indiana is one of a handful of states that does not offer any funding for prekindergarten. States typically operate prekindergarten through their state education agency, even though public schools or private early care and education programs may provide the local prekindergarten services. The requirement that districts offer the programs is generally optional, not mandatory, in most states. Terry Spradlin, Associate Director for education policy at CEEP, believes Indiana is waiting too long for student failure before taking action. "Addressing Indiana's achievement gap only at the high school level is a shortsighted strategy," he said.

Prekindergarten programs have been extensively evaluated for their quality and impact. Research studies and program evaluations have demonstrated numerous short- and long-term educational, social and economic outcomes, especially for children in poverty-stricken families. IU's research indicates the return on investment for prekindergarten programs range from \$4 to \$12.90 in public savings for every \$1 spent.

"Looking at the research, the message is invest now or face having to pay the higher costs associated with later intensive school remediation, social services, and higher rates of crime and delinquency. Early education and prekindergarten is really a wise investment," Conn-Powers said.

Below are some recommendations that, according to the policy brief, are starting points for Indiana's policy makers to explore the feasibility of publicly-funded prekindergarten:

- ✦ Identify and agree upon the purpose, goals and desired outcomes of a publicly-funded prekindergarten program.
- ✦ Link the level of funding for a statewide prekindergarten program with the desired program goals and outcomes.
- ✦ Identify a funding source that is stable and continuous.
- ✦ Determine and commit to a state and local governance system for prekindergarten programs.

- Indiana Family and Social Services Administration
- Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services
- Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services
- Indiana State Department of Health
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services

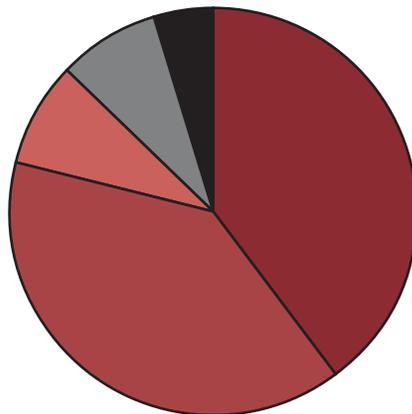
Other Sources

- Bartholomew Consolidated Schools
- Community Foundation of Monroe County
- Corporation for National and Community Services
- Ohio Department of Health
- University of Illinois at Chicago

University Support

- Capital and Non-Capital Assets

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



■ State Grants and Contracts = 39.9%
■ Income/State Appropriations = 39%
■ Federal Grants = 8.2%
■ Other Sources = 8.1%
■ University Support (estimated) = 4.8%

Consumer Advisory Council

The Indiana Institute’s Consumer Advisory Council consists of individuals who are active in Indiana’s disability movement. They include persons with disabilities, family members, various state partners, and Institute faculty and staff. The task of the Council is to assist in planning and promote dialog regarding the role of the Institute in supporting full community participation of individuals with disabilities. Over the course of this past year, the Council has provided direction in developing Institute priorities concerning the Administration on Developmental Disabilities’ five-year plan. Their guidance has been consistent and clear. Areas of focus included:

- ✦ Attracting and retaining quality direct care staff;
- ✦ Choice in living arrangements;
- ✦ Disability awareness and community attitudes;
- ✦ Employment (career tracks);
- ✦ Self-advocacy training;
- ✦ Systems integration; and
- ✦ Teacher preparation.

Association of University Centers on Disabilities

Nationally, the Indiana Institute is an active member of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) since 1970.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), AUCD (www.aucd.org) is a network of independent, yet interlinked, Centers representing a national resource for addressing issues relevant to people with disabilities and their families. AUCD has grown to include 67 members over the course of this past year.

Indiana’s Developmental Disabilities Network

The Indiana Institute partners with Indiana’s Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities (www.in.gov/gpcpd/) and the Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services (www.in.gov/ipas/) to ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of, and have access to, culturally competent services, supports, and other assistance and opportunities that promote independence, productivity, and inclusion into the community. Each of these organizations receive funding through the Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

The Executive Directors of each organization meet quarterly to review activities, map strategies for state policy, and identify collaborative projects. Last year, this partnership worked together to cosponsor the Indiana Self-Advocates Conference held in Bloomington, Indiana.

MEDIA RELEASE

*Indiana Institute
on Disability and Community*



In Our Indiana Communities - Service Learning for Students with Disabilities: The Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at Indiana University received a \$1.3 million grant to engage youth with disabilities in community service opportunities, including collecting oral histories from veterans with disabilities for the national Veterans History Project.

The Indiana Institute received the grant from the corporation for National and Community Service. The new programs will target youth ages 14 to 21 in Indiana and two other states to be designated by the Institute. The programs will involve schools, and implementation will begin this fall.

Project Co-Director Sandi Cole, who also is Director of the Indiana Institute's Center on Education and Lifelong Learning, said service learning programs are greatly beneficial to students with disabilities, who may have limited access to early work experiences and opportunities in their community. Such experiences are crucial in helping students identify career options and transition to adult life, she said.

“...pairing youth and veterans with disabilities will provide exceptional mentoring opportunities.”

“These programs will help youth with disabilities to feel engaged in their community and to build a reciprocal relationship that has a measurable impact on community life,” Cole said. “Involving youth in the Veterans History Project will empower them to capture part of history through the voices of those who lived it.”

Project Co-Director Teresa Grossi, who is Director of the Indiana Institute's Center on Community Living and Careers, said pairing youth and veterans with disabilities will provide exceptional mentoring opportunities.

“Youth will have the opportunity to learn from veterans who have dealt with similar issues that they face as they finish school and enter the work force. Self-determination and self-advocacy will be a strong component of the programs, and this type of mentoring can help students develop these abilities, in addition to greater communication skills,” she said.

Other components of the project include enabling youth to match their interests with service opportunities in areas such as education and public safety, and providing college-level curriculum for older participants. Youth will also be involved in planning the program through advisory boards and state-level teams, Cole said.

This new project builds on ongoing efforts by the Indiana Institute to promote collaborative service learning opportunities for youth with mental or physical impairments.

Additionally, a pilot series was put into practice designed to build leadership and advocacy skills in persons with disabilities, implemented a Customer Satisfaction Research Project for Indiana's Protection and Advocacy Services, and disseminated a state-wide disability survey to assess state priorities for Indiana's State Disability Plan.

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

The **Early Childhood Center** works to link research and practice in advancing the field of early education. Its current focus is the universal design of early education that helps all children and families enter school successfully.

✦ The **Early Childhood Meeting Place** website is a collaborative effort to post, in one central location, all events, research activities, and professional development initiatives that exist in the early childhood field in Indiana. An expansion of the site is planned to provide parents and family members of young children access to family resource information available in their communities.

✦ **The Indiana Child Care Health Consultant Program** works to increase the level of health and safety in out-of-home child care settings across Indiana through technical assistance and training for child care providers. This collaboration with state, regional, and local organizations and agencies supplying services to providers of child care enhances the quality of services in the child care field. The documentation and analysis of requests from child care providers for health and safety technical assistance and training and the provision of services are major components of this program.

✦ Through a contract with the Ohio Department of Health and its Part C Program, **The Ohio Help Me Grow Evaluation Project**, assists the state agency in the design and implementation of a statewide process for collecting child outcome data. Data collected will be used to complete its 2007 federal reporting requirements.

✦ **Indiana's Unified Training System (UTS)** provides a mechanism for the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Division of Family and Children (DFC), Bureau of Child Development (BCD)/ First Steps, and the Department of Education(DOE), Division of Exceptional Learners, to coordinate their training efforts into a comprehensive system of technical assistance to families and providers supporting children with special needs.

The UTS supports statewide coordination of training opportunities related to young children, and provides greater access to learning opportunities for families and service providers. In addition, the UTS supports the training needs of service providers of Head Start and community childcare settings. The Unified Training System enhances capacity at the local level, and utilizes the expertise of the teachers, service providers, and families of children with disabilities.

The **Center on Education and Lifelong Learning** works with schools and communities to welcome, include, educate, and support all learners.

“to work with schools and communities”

It is our belief that improved schools result in improved communities and improved communities result in improved schools. We understand the interdependent relationship. Therefore, we see a responsibility to collaborate and connect with community partners if we are to see our mission realized.

“to welcome, include, educate and support”

This is the core of our mission; it defines the outcomes that we individually and collectively value.

✦ **Monroe County CAPE** establishes initiatives with Monroe County, Indiana, designed to ensure that all Monroe County children enter school ready to learn, stay in school, and graduate with the skills to assume a job or to pursue further education, and acquire the life skills and dispositions to be lifelong learners and good citizens.

✦ **Service Learning Initiative** provides training, technical assistance, and consultation to Learn and Serve and Homeland Security K-12 schools in Indiana and supports transition of sustainability plans for three STAR schools.

✦ The **Indiana Education Project** is a collaborative effort with local directors of special education, general educators, and organizations representing families, state education agencies, and community agencies to address global restructuring efforts and to implement effective programs in school inclusion, positive behavior supports, and transitions to support all students.

The **Center on Community Living and Careers** promotes partnerships between people with disabilities, their families, and their communities to build capacity and effect systems change through research, education, and service.

The Center focuses on improving transition and adult services through person-directed approaches, career development, community living, and community membership.

MEDIA RELEASE

*Indiana Institute
on Disability and Community*

In Our Indiana Communities - Community Living and Careers: A new book by Indiana University education professor Patricia Rogan and Pamela Walker of Syracuse University offers an in-depth guide to promoting active, rewarding, and meaningful lifestyles for adults with disabilities. Tackling such issues as employment, transition from school to adult life, postsecondary education, and social relationships, *Make the Day Matter! Promoting Typical Lifestyles for Adults with*

Significant Disabilities (Brookes, 2007) compiles the most current best practices into a guidebook for supporting fulfilling lives for all adults. The book is intended as a resource for service providers working with adults with significant disabilities. Rogan, Professor and Chair of Secondary Education and Area Coordinator of Special Education at IU's School of Education in Indianapolis, said there is a wide gap between what researchers know about supporting adults with disabilities and what is actually being implemented.

"Unfortunately, many adults with disabilities in our society have been denied typical lifestyles due to segregation, negative attitudes toward them, and lack of access to community opportunities," she said. "For example, adults with disabilities are largely unemployed, enroll in postsecondary education at a rate of approximately 40 percent below that of the general population, and often report being lonely and disconnected. It is our hope that this book will offer practical guidelines and examples for promoting quality lifestyles for our fellow citizens with disabilities."

The book begins with a historical background on approaches to disability in the U.S., explaining the different movements and laws that have shaped the present status of adults with disabilities. It then looks at the most current research to identify what works in creating opportunities for full citizenship and community participation.

A number of researchers from Indiana University's Indiana Institute on Disability and Community in Bloomington contributed their expertise in different areas:

- ✦ Transitioning to adulthood. Teresa Grossi, Director of the Center on Community Living and Careers, discusses ways to best utilize formal education as a means of preparing for adulthood in "Preparing for Meaningful Adult Lives through School and Transition Experiences."
- ✦ Old age and retirement. Jennie Todd, Research Associate at the Center on Aging and Community, writes about transitioning into older adulthood in "Promoting a Good Old Age: Strategies for Identifying Interests and Developing Community Connections."
- ✦ A brighter future. David Mank, Director of the Institute, helps to create a vision of the future in the concluding section entitled "Toward Meaningful Lives: A Convergence of Events, Problems, and Possibilities."

- ✦ **AmeriCorps State Inclusion Program** supports capacity-building of a training infrastructure that creates materials that are universally-designed to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities within the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) grantee programs. Materials development includes a needs assessment and accompanying analysis support, fact sheets, success stories, and subsequent information dissemination support. A final evaluation on the disability training needs for OFBCI initiatives also will be conducted.

- ✦ The **Benefits Information Network (BIN)** creates a network between all Indiana benefits counselors and providers to improve capacity in using federal and state work incentives. Activities include the preparation and dissemination of a training curriculum, the training and evaluation of personnel regarding their knowledge and understanding of the programs, the development of a listserv for ongoing information dissemination. Additionally, ongoing support and information dissemination to BIN personnel and Indiana work incentive coordinators on work incentives and community resources will be provided.

- ✦ As Indiana transitioned more and more of its residents with disabilities into community-based settings over the past five years, the need for more and better training to direct support professionals became a priority. The **Direct Support Professional Career Ladder Program** is designed to develop a system of education and training that, when complete, will improve the dilemmas faced in Indiana around the lack of direct support professionals, the high turnover, and systemic training needs.
- ✦ The **Indiana Works-Benefits Planning, Assistance, and Outreach Program for Southern Indiana** provides SSDI and SSI beneficiaries and recipients with benefits planning, assistance, and outreach to increase the number of beneficiaries and recipients who return to work and achieve self-sufficiency. Indiana Works supports five benefits specialists to provide benefits planning, assistance, and outreach to southern Indiana.
- ✦ **Vocational Rehabilitation Services** supports the development and enhancement of community-based employment services for persons with disabilities. Additionally, the Project assists in the development and enhancement of transition (school to work) services and the development of policy and training needs of Indiana's Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Two specific areas of concentration are 1) A leadership academy is being developed for Vocational Rehabilitation Services personnel and community providers; and 2) A statewide replication and implementation of Project SEARCH, a business approach to job development and placement.

The **Center on Aging and Community** provides self-determination and social integration of aging adults with disabilities through participatory research, planning, and advocacy. The Center develops and disseminates information and provides training and technical assistance on self-advocacy, empowerment, adaptive housing, and the creation of communities for all ages.

- ✦ **Empowerment through Knowledge/ Building Leadership Series** is a five-year collaborative effort between members of the Indiana Developmental Disabilities Network to develop and pilot a statewide leadership program for individuals with developmental disabilities focusing on person-centered planning, choice, and self-determination and self-advocacy.
- ✦ **Indiana Partnership for Life Span Communities** creates a comprehensive, collaborative, and data driven initiative to create a state plan on aging that will test the effectiveness of the AdvantAge Initiative planning model statewide and explore the potential application of the plan nationally.

MEDIA RELEASE

*Indiana Institute
on Disability and Community* 

In Our Indiana Communities - Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination: How do people learn to make choices? What does it take to make a good decision? The process is more complex than it seems, said Jennie Todd, whose annual series of workshops for adults with developmental disabilities is devoted to addressing such questions.

"The idea of making choices starts with having enough experience and information to draw from so that you know what your options are. Additionally, you need to know what your rights are and have an understanding that with those rights come responsibilities. You also need to feel confident that you can make those individual choices and have them respected," she said. Todd, a Research Associate with the Center on Aging and Community at IU's Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, said these learning experiences are often not typical for people with developmental disabilities.

"If you live in a group home and work in a sheltered work environment, you don't get a lot of opportunities to just go explore a variety of things life has to offer," she said. "I worked in an agency that provided day services for adults with disabilities and I know we had the best intentions, but you can get lost in the day-to-day and forget to encourage that exploration unless you make it a focused effort."

(Continued on page 10)

✦ **Putting Memory in Place** supports an interdisciplinary conference and working retreat that will explore the relationships between memory and place. The potential use of new information technologies to enable citizens to associate memory with lost places as an aid to community and futures planning will also be investigated.

The Center for Disability Information and Referral provides access to disability-related information through print, non-print, and human resources. Information is available designed to:

- Empower people with disabilities and their families to advocate for better services and quality of life;
- Foster best practices for preservice and practicing professionals; and
- Inform decision makers about current trends and policies.

✦ An extensive **Reference Collection** comprised of electronic and print materials is available to assist in the Institute's response to requests for disability-related information. Resources can be accessed by Indiana residents in person, via a toll-free 1-800 number, electronically through e-mail, and by text telephone (TTY).

The Center for Planning and Policy Studies serves as a resource for disability planning for state and community organizations and conducts studies to inform policy issues that affect people with disabilities. The Center accomplishes this by facilitating collaborative planning events and by advocating policies that result in full participation of people with disabilities in community life.

✦ The Institute serves as designated fiscal agent for **ADA-Indiana**, Indiana's State ADA Steering Committee for implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. ADA-Indiana is one of six state steering committees funded by the Great Lakes ADA and Accessible IT Center (DBTAC). ADA-Indiana serves as a centralized and statewide vehicle through which all those interested in promoting the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act provide direction throughout the state.

We often assume that given the opportunity, people do speak up and ask for what they want, but this is not always true for people with developmental disabilities."

The Building Leadership Series, consisting of three two-day workshops, offers such opportunities to 20 individuals with disabilities from across Indiana. Through presentations, discussions, and interactive activities, participants develop skills involved in identifying and communicating their desires and preferences. For many participants, these skills build toward greater independence and community leadership.



"We explore choice options such as where a person may want to work or live, who—if anyone—they may want as a roommate, and what they can do to demonstrate they can handle the responsibilities of those choices. With a job, that might mean having a plan for developing or learning the skills the job requires, or with getting an apartment, it might mean focusing on helping the person make their case to persuade the family or support staff that they can make it work." Todd said.

"Last year, upon completion of the series, each participant identified a personal goal that they wished to achieve in six months, such as making a presentation about what they learned, speaking up and advocating for themselves and others, moving into an apartment, or participating in a new activity," Todd said. "What people bring back home is a much stronger voice," she said. "We hope they will be more active and speak up on their own behalf. So far, the feedback from participants has been that they are speaking up more, seeing a brighter future, making new friends, and participating in community activities. That is something we really hope will come out of the workshop - community involvement."

✦ The **IPAS Customer Satisfaction Study** provides for a year-long series of interviews of former service recipients of Indiana’s Protection and Advocacy Services to identify levels of consumer satisfaction with the agency’s services and outcomes as a result of those services.

✦ **Indiana’s Accessible Education-Related Information Technology Project**, funded by the Great Lakes Center and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), provides training, technical assistance, and policy research designed to promote the use of accessible education-related information technology to Indiana’s institutions of higher education and other identified post-secondary systems.

The **Indiana Resource Center for Autism** conducts outreach training and consultations, engages in research, and develops and disseminates information on behalf of individuals across the autism spectrum, including autism, Asperger’s syndrome, and other pervasive developmental disorders. Efforts are focused on providing communities, organizations, agencies, and families with the knowledge and skills to support children and adults in typical early intervention, school, community, work, and home settings.

✦ The **Autism Advocates of Indiana Project** trains law enforcement personnel, firefighters, and EMTs to recognize the characteristics of autism spectrum disorders in critical situations and react accordingly. Additionally, kits will be provided to school-based autism and parent group leaders to train responders in their local communities.

✦ The **Autism Training Project** provides persons with autism spectrum disorders and their families with training and materials dissemination designed to increase their knowledge on autism spectrum disorders.

PRODUCTIVITY

Interdisciplinary Training

The Institute’s Interdisciplinary Training Program emphasizes individual leadership and advocacy skills in best practice settings. Trainees engage in research, field-based training, technical assistance, and/or curriculum and materials development in community settings.

In 2006-2007, 24 undergraduate and graduate students representing 11 disciplines were supported in the Institute’s Interdisciplinary Training Program across its seven Centers. Discipline areas included:

- Anthropology
- Business
- Educational Psychology
- Elementary Education
- Geography
- History
- Informatics
- Library and Information Science
- Social Work
- Sociology
- Special Education

Additionally, 13 Institute faculty and staff provided academic instruction to 35 Masters and Doctoral level students last year. Moreover, course instruction was provided to 758 Indiana University students through 27 individual courses generating 1,923 credit hours.

Research

The Institute’s research agenda includes statewide needs assessments and policy-related surveys, studies relating to inclusive school practices and employment outcomes, case studies of client interventions, program evaluations, trainee follow-up surveys, and policy analysis. Applied research helps to identify effectiveness of exemplary services and support their replication. Institute faculty and staff were involved in studies that used both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Practitioners, persons with disabilities, and families are involved in the design, data collection, analysis, and reporting of Indiana Institute research projects. In 2006-07, the Institute engaged in 21 research projects (see Research 2006-2007 chart on p. 12).

Training or Technical Assistance

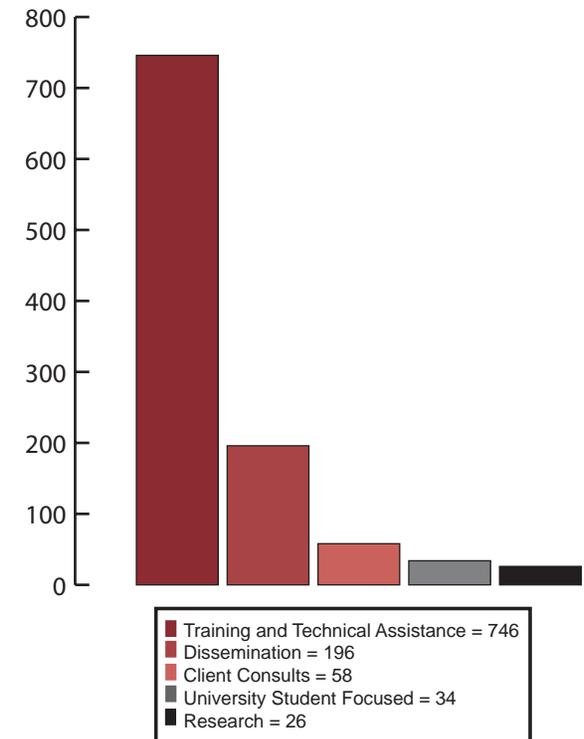
The Institute’s training events target a wide range of participants. Needs assessments, field requests, and training evaluations guide presentations of state-of-the-art information on awareness, knowledge, and skill-building.

RESEARCH 2006-2007

Areas	Projects
Early Intervention and Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Evaluation of the First Steps Early Intervention System — Evaluation of the Indiana Child Care Health Consultant Program — Increasing Social Engagement of Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Using Video Self-Modeling
Inclusive Education and Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Serving Young Children in General Early Care and Educational Settings — Evaluating the Autism Team Training Program — Transition Practices Collaboration Survey — Program Evaluation: Autism Team Training
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Results-Based Funding Evaluation — Day and Employment Services Outcomes System
Community Living/ Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Follow-Up of Individuals Who Have Left the State Developmental Center in 2001 - 2004
Community Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Elder Friendly Communities — Evaluation of the Self-Determination Effects of the Roundtable Region — The Use of Group Decision Support Technology in Same Sex and Mixed Gender Groups — Literacy and Autism — 2006 Family Needs Assessment — Validation of the Autism Social Skills Profile — Development of Social Anxiety in Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders — A Meta-Analysis of Video-Modeling and Video Self-Modeling Interventions for Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders — Stories of Muscatatuck — Indiana Partners for Life Span Communities: State Government Study — Customer Satisfaction Surveys for the Indiana Protection and Advocacy System

Training topics covered the life span including education, employment, community living and current issues related to self-determination, family support, and self-advocacy. Training teams are interdisciplinary and include family members and persons with disabilities as co-instructors. Last year, Institute faculty and staff conducted 1,060 events that reached 89,456 persons with disabilities, family members, and professionals.

OUTREACH EVENTS BY CORE FUNCTION



MEDIA RELEASE

*Indiana Institute
on Disability and Community*

In Our Indiana Communities - Planning and Policy: A recent Indiana survey identified top health care problems and needs for people with disabilities. Respondents said choice of health care providers was the most important feature to include in health care reform legislation, followed by coverage for specialists, low co-pays, dental coverage and preventive care. Coverage of prescription drugs and mental health services were also top issues for people with disabilities.

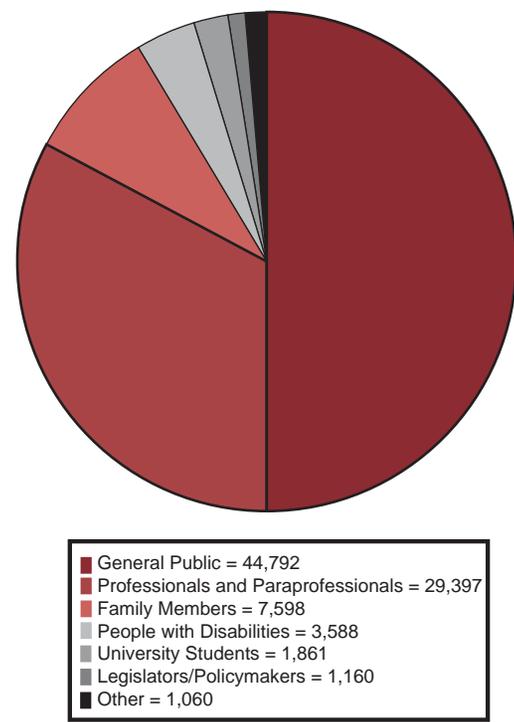
“The respondents spoke out loud and clear that the current healthcare system is broken, not unlike how the general populations feels,” said Vicki Pappas, Director of the Center for Planning and Policy Studies at Indiana University’s Indiana Institute on Disability and Community. “People with disabilities hope to have their voices heard and want to help shape the coming debates about how to reform healthcare.”

The project, “2007 Indiana Disability Poll,” was a joint effort in collaboration with the Indiana Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities and Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services. A total of 651 surveys were completed either by people with disabilities or their families and advocates. Results were released late last month.

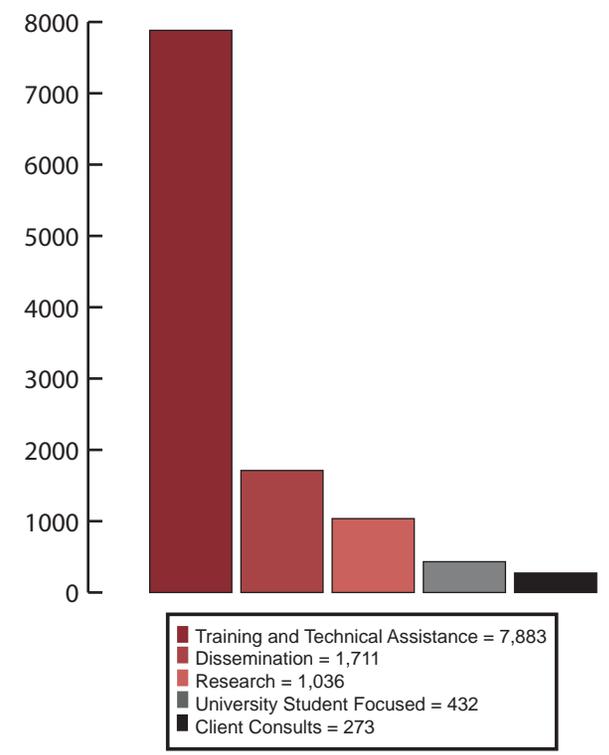
(Continued on page 14)

The Institute’s technical assistance focus is collaborative in nature and is a problem-solving response to identified needs. Technical assistance is individual or agency-focused and provides more intensive interactions than training events. In providing technical assistance, the Institute builds capacity in schools, state and local agencies, and consumer organizations. In 2006-2007, over 11,000 hours of technical assistance were provided across Indiana.

OUTREACH BY TYPE OF PARTICIPANT



OUTREACH HOURS BY CORE FUNCTION



Dissemination

Over the course of this past year, the Institute has emphasized increasing the visibility of our work to audiences in Indiana, nationally, and internationally. In addition to traditional dissemination activities, the Institute has partnered with Indiana University’s Office of Media Relations to promote visibility associated with our research, education, and service activities. Last year, 46 major media pieces including press releases and features were developed and disseminated through news and national wire services.

Media Release - Planning and Policy

Additionally, the Indiana Institute publishes four specialty newsletters that are disseminated via print, fax, e-newsletters, alternative formats, and posted on the Institute's Web sites.

✦ The FYI Weekly Newsletter is the Indiana Institute's primary information dissemination vehicle and provides weekly updates on training events sponsored by the Institute and other state entities, our work as it relates to our seven Centers, and new acquisitions of disability-related materials in our Library.

The FYI is disseminated via e-mail, fax, and U.S. mail and is available at no charge. Last year, 38 editions were published reaching over 47,500 recipients.

✦ The Early Childhood Center's e-mail newsletter, ECC Program Highlights, is disseminated at no charge to Indiana's early childhood communities. It features abstracts on the Center's research efforts, training activities, and resources, with links to detailed information on the Center's website. Its purpose is to update early childhood professionals and families of children with special needs regarding resources available to them. Disseminated bi-monthly, ECC Program Highlights reaches 4,500 early childhood parents and professionals per edition or 27,000 per year.

✦ The Indiana Resource Center for Autism Reporter is disseminated to an audience of nearly 12,000 family members and professionals. The newsletter is distributed three times annually and covers topics including services in Indiana, behavioral and educational strategies, and other forms of techniques for supporting and educating individuals across the autism spectrum.

✦ In a new effort, the Institute's Center for Disability Information and Referral has developed a new dissemination vehicle entitled CeDIR Citings.

"Choice of doctor is a top issue for a number of reasons, including accessible offices and equipment, physician's knowledge of specific disabilities and how they affect medical needs, and having to start over every time with a new office in educating the staff about accommodations," Pappas said.

"With dental care, generally it is not covered by health insurance, and it is often difficult to find a dentist who accepts Medicaid or Medicare. Another thing that is problematic in the current system, is a lack of coverage for durable equipment like wheel chairs, hearing aids, eyeglasses and walkers. Many adults with disabilities have a low income, and find it difficult to purchase these items with their own funds given their other needs," she said.

The survey did reveal some good news, Pappas said. "I was pleasantly surprised to see that people are getting regular check-ups. Seven out of 10 respondents said they had an annual exam within the last year."

Among the survey's findings:

- ✦ More coverage, less red tape. The top three desired improvements to the current system were increasing coverage (such as for medical equipment and devices, mental health services, vision and dental treatment, and prescription drugs), streamlining administration and paperwork, and decreasing costs for co-pays and insurance premiums.
- ✦ Income disparities. In households of incomes greater than \$50,000, 75 percent of respondents rated the quality of their healthcare as good, very good or excellent. In households of incomes lower than \$25,000, that number dropped to 50 percent. Lower-income respondents were also more likely to use emergency rooms for care. Although 57 percent of respondents with household incomes greater than \$50,000 report receiving all the health care they need, only 38 percent of respondents in households with incomes less than \$25,000 report receiving sufficient health care. "What is postponed is dental work, filling prescriptions and getting needed care and tests," Pappas said. "Families also report postponing needed therapies for their children."
- ✦ Specialist and mental health services hard to access. More than half (51 percent) of all respondents report having difficulty receiving mental health services and specialist care.
- ✦ Autism a common stumbling block. Although the survey did not ask specifically about autism, many respondents wrote in open response sections about their difficulties accessing care for the treatment of autism.

CeDIR Citings is disseminated each year in March and October and provides updates on Library policies and services, focused bibliographies on select subjects, book reviews, and highlights relevant information tools. CeDIR Citings is disseminated via e-mail and U.S. Mail and is available at no charge.

The Institute has a comprehensive World Wide Web site that encompasses the work of the Institute's seven Centers. Over one million visits were logged over the course of last year. Institute web visits have increased by more than 150 percent over the last five years. The Center for Disability Information and Referral, the Institute's Library, has experienced a four fold increase over the number of visits five years ago. Additionally, the Library offers on-line access to the over 12,000 holdings targeting university and statewide patrons. Finally, the Institute's community capacity initiatives are furthered through the use of an interactive distance learning infrastructure.

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Media Release

Indiana Institute on Disability and Community

In Our Indiana Communities - Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders: A meta-analysis of 55 published research studies reveals programs designed to teach social skills to children with autism are failing to meet their goals. The study, conducted at Indiana University, found that outcomes for social skills training were poor overall, but programs held in normal classroom settings were more likely to result in positive changes than programs held in other environments.

"The results of the meta-analysis are certainly hard to swallow, but they do shed some light on factors that lead to more beneficial social outcomes for children with autism," said lead researcher Scott Bellini, Assistant Center Director of IU's Indiana Resource Center for Autism at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community and Assistant Professor in the School of Education. "These results underscore the critical need for researchers and practitioners to develop more effective social skills programming."

The reviewed studies included a total of 147 students with an autism spectrum disorder, with students ranging in age from preschool to secondary school. The programs aimed to address skills such as group play, joint attention and language usage, or to improve performance of social behaviors, such as initiating interactions, responding to communication and maintaining interactions.

(Continued on page 17)

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Overall, the programs resulted in little change in the targeted behaviors, and students did not apply the skills outside the programs.

However, students receiving social skills programming in their usual classrooms had substantially more favorable outcomes than students who received services in a pull-out setting. Students in classroom-based programs were more likely to engage the targeted skills during the program, and showed a greater tendency to maintain changes in behaviors and to utilize these skills in other settings.

“This finding has important implications for school-based social skill interventions. Teachers and other school personnel should place a premium on selecting social skill interventions that can be reasonably implemented within naturalistic settings,” Bellini said.

The study revealed additional potential improvements in the design and implementation of the programs:

- ✦ Increase dosage. The programs in the studies failed to provide sufficient amounts of programming, based on current research recommendations. Implementing services more intensely and frequently may lead to better outcomes, Bellini said.
- ✦ Match programs to skill deficits. All but one of the 55 studies failed to distinguish between “performance deficits,” which refer to skills that are present but not performed, and “skill acquisition deficits,” which refer to the absence of a skill or behavior. Targeting the types of skill deficits exhibited by the participants could lead to more successful programs, Bellini said.
- ✦ Ensure proper implementation. Only 14 of the studies in the meta-analysis measured whether the program was implemented as designed. “This makes it extremely difficult to conclude whether a social skills program was ineffective because of an ineffectual strategy or because the strategy was implemented poorly,” Bellini said.

The study, “A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Social Skills Interventions for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders,” was published in the *Journal of Remedial and Special Education*. Coauthors included Jessica Peters, Lauren Benner, and Andrea Hopf, all doctoral students in the School Psychology program at Indiana University.

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