



May 15, 2009
Number 16

The Stakeholders say ...

a newsletter to help with strategic planning

STAFF MEMBERS IN DD PROGRAM ADULT PROGRAMS TALK ABOUT PEOPLE'S NEEDS AND GOOD SUPPORTS

Staff members in the Adult Services division of the Butler County DD Program responded, either singly or in small groups, to questions similar to those posed in "café conversations." Here's a summary of their thoughts.

Pressing needs of people with dev. disabilities

- Development of daily life skills
- Option of a "real retirement"
- Availability of community employment and other work opportunities
- Friends who aren't paid to be their friends
- Interesting community experiences
- Better residential options
- To be LISTENED TO more—people need to be heard

Likely influences on the Butler County DD Program over the next several years:

- The economy and its effect on state funds (cuts) and the local budget
- Competition with other—especially private—programs, and the stance the agency takes toward competitors
- Referrals of people who may be more challenging to support
- Whether we develop better teamwork within the Program, so staff members worry about the individuals and not fear about their jobs.

What the agency could do to make life better for people with disabilities

- Customize day programming for high school grads...stop thinking of our programs as a "safety net." We offer so much more than other programs out there.
- Public transportation—work on this!
- Take a more active role in supported employment—provide vocational training again
- Pass a levy
- Maintain and enhance what we already have—continue to hold high standards for ourselves
- Home staff—assure that the people hired have experience and competence.
- Power and ability to intervene when people's needs are not being met, especially at home
- Keep on educating the public (taxpayers) about the importance of what the Program does.
- Create networks of support for families in need, with a focus on aging parents.

OTHER DD PROGRAM STAFF IDEAS

THOUGHTS FROM STAFF MEMBERS OF THE DD PROGRAM'S "TRANSPORTATION AND SITE SERVICES"

Things that make us proud to be working with the Butler County DD Program include:

- Early intervention services—their importance to families and how hard folks work
- Educational sessions with parents (e.g., Transition Series)
- Hard-working and engaged employees who have strong relationships with the people who use services

Things that need improvement so we can help people with disabilities better:

- Better match between the individual person's life and needs and the programs that are offered
- More things like the Art program, which people really seem to enjoy
- Better training for direct staff about working as educators—better understanding of how to TEACH people.
- Don't stifle the employees' relationships with the people we support—that's one of the main contributors to better morale
- Confusion and change work against morale—be lots more thoughtful about moving and changing things—pay more attention to the effects of this. Moves and changes cost money too, and perhaps this isn't necessary.

UPCOMING EVENTS

*Strategic Planning Search Conference, May 18-19, 2009

Wilks Conference Ctr. Hamilton

Please take a look at the summary of responses to "Talk to Us, Please," the survey questionnaire that some DD Program staff members and citizens completed and returned to the agency. The summary is attached to the same e-mail message that brought you this issue of "The Stakeholders Say."
Jack Pealer