



# The Stakeholders say ...

a newsletter to help with strategic planning

May 6, 2009  
Number 12

## UPCOMING EVENTS

\*Listening  
Session at  
"Transition  
Series"  
May 6, 2009  
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.  
Janet Clemmons  
Center, Hamilton

\*Community  
Café  
Conversation,  
May 12, 2009  
5:00-7:00 p.m.,  
Hamilton High School,  
Hamilton

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

Wilks Conference  
Ctr.  
Hamilton

## SUMMARY OF CONVERSATION WITH DD BOARD'S "QUALITY ASSURANCE" STAFF

"Quality Assurance" includes folks who do formal monitoring of services, who respond to problems, and who formally look into the bad things (i.e., "unusual incidents") that happen to people with developmental disabilities. Here's a list of some of their major ideas for the future.

1. Much attention has to be paid to supporting those who do the main supports for people—i.e., direct support workers. Those workers, especially in supported living, can be "out on a limb"—in a vulnerable position without adequate assistance and training (and being poorly paid as well). Often, worker turnover rates are high, which is not good for people who rely on these workers. Workers sometimes lack the training and experience needed in order to make the kind of on-the-spot decisions that are called for.

2. We need to figure out ways to get agencies (including our own) to better assist people toward REAL JOBS with real income. Many adults are now stagnating in some places during the daytime—also perhaps at home—and this needs to change.

3. People who are "on the fringes" of the DD system—that is, people who may only use occasional support or who come to our attention only in "crisis" times—are often exposed to serious risk. We need to stick with such folks and learn more about how to be of effective help to them.

4. Currently, families ask for informal respite support but don't know that providers are available or how to learn about them. The DD Program needs to help families make good connections around informal respite.

5. The real wishes/choices and needs of people tend to get lost in the complexity of the formal plans that are developed and that are intended to spell out how support ought to be delivered. The LONG and complex plans both obscure people's hopes and dreams and increase the paperwork load on those whose time would be better spent in actually being supportive to people.

## FAMILIES & DD PROFESSIONALS COMMENT

### FAMILIES OF PARTICIPANTS AT LIBERTY AND MIDDLETOWN CENTERS OFFER THEIR IDEAS. THEMES INCLUDED:

\*It's important for adults to have their own place to live—safe, well supported.

\*We want adults we care about to be as independent as they can be, so that they can help themselves successfully.

\*Daytime programs need to involve meaningful activity plus formal assistance (e.g., therapy) as needed

\*DD Program needs to keep staff turnover low and build up staff morale; also important to keep the buildings in good shape.

\*We're worried about the current state of the economy and its effect on the need to pass future levies.

\*There's dissatisfaction with the lack of production work—and the resulting worker boredom—in the contracted production facility. The DD Program should provide more oversight about this issue.

\*People with developmental disabilities need to learn important life-skills, and the DD Program should provide ways for them to do that.

\*We hope that adults will have lots of opportunities to access their communities, to enjoy life.

\*Even better communication with families is desirable. More meetings like this one would be a good vehicle. Families especially need to know when individuals' benefits are changing.

\*We'd like to see better publicity about our adult day programs so that the public understands what's happening and will be more willing to support the Program.