

DDS North Region  
Advisory & Planning Council  
10/21/09  
Meeting Minutes

Present: Carlos Colon, with Kellie Guerrin, Support Staff; Sara Glad; Deb Godsell; Florence Guite; Susan Miller; John Mullooly; Lorraine Mullooly; Kathleen Perrier; John Houchin

Absent: Nancy Bilyak; Bernice Lazdauskas; Patti Silva; Linda Angelica

Guests: Robin Wood; Claudia Neumann

**Meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.**

**Presentation by Robin Wood, Self Determination Director – Employment Initiatives**

Robin Wood began by explaining that an event was held in the Spring which focused on employment initiatives to explore “Real Jobs for Real Pay” for people with disabilities. There is now a nationwide movement focusing on increasing employment initiatives. Another follow-up event was held in June. Funding was obtained for the initiative through the organization “Connect-Ability”. Two videos have been created, one in 2008 and one in 2009, called “Employment Idol” which highlights a few individuals who were chosen to share their work experiences. These videos are now being reviewed to possibly be used as part of a nationwide campaign to promote awareness of employing people with disabilities. Training is also being provided to private providers.

Also trying to put into place having IP’s reviewed to ensure that employment goals are included in the IP, and also following up on the IP’s to see if goals are being met and employment is occurring. A new program is just beginning called IP Buddies where 20 individuals were trained to help individuals with being able to attend their IP meetings. The hope is that if the process is changed and it is made a requirement to have the discussion include employment opportunities as part of the IP process, it will begin to open more discussion and opportunities for everyone; would like to do more “customized employment”.

An RFP has been written about trying to move individuals from group employment to individual employment.

Robin also reported that they will be receiving \$500,000 for this program and will be getting another \$500,000 next year to support this effort.

“Employment Idol” video was shown.

A suggestion was made to possibly have a meeting and invite Special Education teachers to attend which was done approximately three years ago.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Kathleen reminded members that ideas are needed to begin planning for the Legislative Breakfast.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Regional Director's Updates:**

- Dr. Houchin reported that there is no new money for any placements; focus will be on emergencies and people who are currently under-served.
- School grads did get funded for nine months.
- People should know that they must stay on Medicaid and must do the re-determination each year. Also, John asked that people not start day programs until we get approval.
- 24 people are requesting Voluntary Services currently and are on the waiting list.
- Birth-3 will be increasing rates.
- The Governor did veto the Bill regarding the ability to go forward with the conversion homes, however, the Legislature did not adjourn their session so no final decision has been made at this time.
- Approval has been given to hire specific positions only, i.e. nurses, psychologists, and some case managers.

John asked members to please share the dates for the upcoming Family Forums as we were not able to send out a mailing. The dates are tomorrow, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6:00-8:00pm in Enfield, Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-8:00pm in Willimantic, and Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-8:00pm in Unionville. New IFS HelpLine will be explained and new Regional management staff will be introduced.

John also reported that the Respite Center in Newington will be moved to a home in the community (also located in Newington). Eventually, the Putnam Respite Center will also be relocated.

**OTHER AGENDA:**

Meeting Schedule for 2010: The meeting schedule for the upcoming year must be posted by November 1<sup>st</sup>. After discussion, it was agreed that meetings will continue to be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month and moved to the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday if there is inclement weather.

Motion was made to accept meeting schedule on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month; motion seconded; passed unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Neumann  
Administrative Assistant