

Skagit County Department of Public Health and Community Services

Developmental Disabilities



Comprehensive Five Year Plan

July 1, 2014-June 30, 2019

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Community Services
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**Approved by: The Skagit County Developmental Disabilities
Advisory Board on 8 July, 2014.**

Acknowledgements

This plan represents the culmination of months of work and dedication by professionals, community volunteers, and advocates. **Skagit County DD Advisory Board** members and regular guests dedicate much time and careful consideration on an ongoing basis to increase the quality and strength of our service delivery system.

Their thoughtful planning and dedication to strategic planning is greatly appreciated:

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Megan Burr, DDA, Social & Health Program Consultant
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Kristen Ekstran, County DD Program Coordinator
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Introduction

The Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board in Skagit County is comprised of voting members and guests from the DD service delivery system who are committed to improving opportunities and the lives of fellow citizens with DD in our community. They serve as an information and referral agency within the community about developmental disabilities and prepare comprehensive plans for present and future development of services. The Board also ensures reasonable progress toward the coordination of all local services to persons with developmental disabilities.

The DD Advisory Board's strategic planning over the course of Fiscal Year 2014 has led to the following Vision and Mission that forms the basis of this comprehensive plan.

DD Advisory Board Vision

Vision:

The Skagit County DD Advisory Board envisions a future with a clear, compassionate accessible service system that is committed to community acceptance, well-being, independence and inclusion of all individuals with developmental disabilities.

Mission:

Our mission is to promote prosperity and community inclusion through advocacy. Our visible presence in the community promotes Pride, Hope, Independence, and Respect for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

We Achieve Our Mission by Actively:

- Identifying families and partnering on intervention services at each age phase from birth through aging adults
- Educating businesses and the public about the benefits of supported employment, including competitive work opportunities and wages
- Developing creative solutions for community employment that leverage and expand local resources such as transportation, housing and medical services
- Encouraging and promoting inclusive recreation and leisure activities that build personal relationships through our communities
- Educating community professionals such as medical, firefighters, police and emergency staff regarding communication needs and styles that benefit individuals with developmental disabilities

- Information and educating families about available service that are timely and effective at each phase of life
- Partnering with self-advocates to promote training and leadership opportunities
- Being accountable to obtainable, measureable and productive outcomes for clients, families, business partners and the community as a whole

Through communicating, mentoring and leading, we facilitate and oversee the delivery of programming which supports inclusion of individuals with Developmental Disabilities into the economic and social fabric of our community.

County Plan

The County Plan is updated and reviewed by the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board and members of the community on a five year cycle to confirm underlying principles and to define our vision and mission.

The 2014-2019 plan was informed by:

- 1) A community Needs Assessment conducted in the fall of 2013 facilitated by Tim Corey of Colibri Facilitation,
- 2) Monthly Advisory Board discussions on goals and strategies to help us achieve the ideals of the Vision/Mission statement,
- 3) Priorities, plans and strategies of the Association of County Human Services Developmental Disabilities Section.

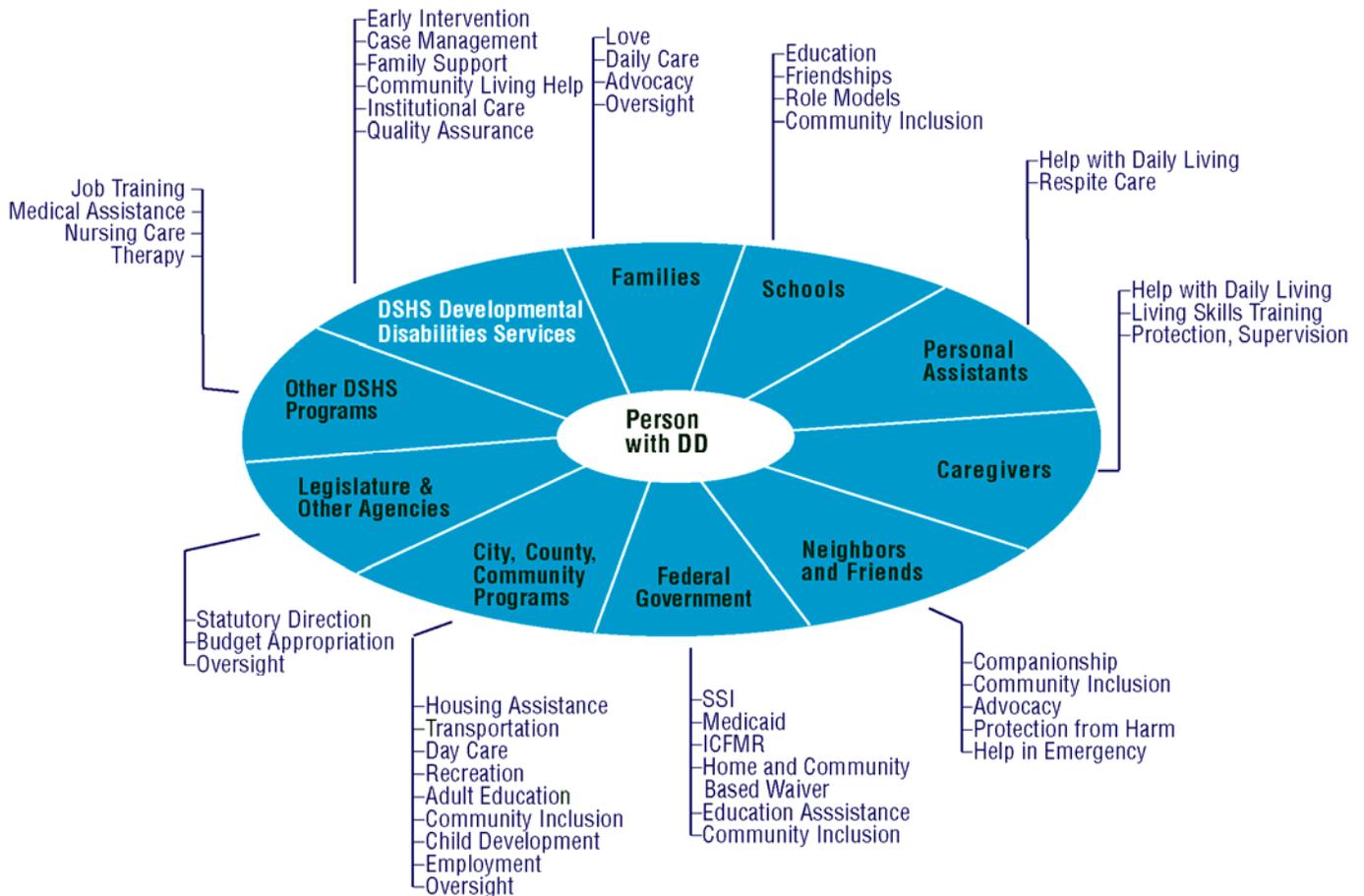
It is divided into the following areas of focus:

- Children and Families
- High School Transition
- Pathways to Employment
- Community Access
- Community Information, Education and Advocacy

System Overview

The formal service delivery system for people with developmental disabilities is a shared role between Washington State and Skagit County. The State Department of Social and Health Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) is mandated to provide or fund day services and supports for eligible children and adults with developmental disabilities through counties. Services are based on individual preference, capabilities, needs, and are designed to promote everyday activities, routines, and relationships that all individuals enjoy. These services are provided to the degree that funding is available through state legislative appropriations and local designated dollars.

As families well know, county and state services are a sub-set of a much larger service delivery system that people with disabilities access in order to live healthy, quality lives; to be and belong in their community; and to develop and reach personal goals. The services and supports outlined in the following diagram illustrate the myriad of formal and informal resources and available to meet individual needs.



Source of diagram: DDD presentation Overview of Residential services, slide 5

RCW 71.A charges counties with the following responsibilities:

“To coordinate and provide services to people with developmental disabilities and their families and provide the following indirect services to the community;

- 1) Serve as an information and referral agency within the community for persons with developmental disabilities and their families;
- 2) Coordinate all local services for persons with developmental disabilities and their families to insure the maximum utilization of all available services;
- 3) Prepare comprehensive plans for present and future development of services and for reasonable progress toward the coordination of all local services to persons with developmental disabilities.”

The state determines program eligibility and provides the following services based on client need and funding availability:

- Eligibility determination
- State institution services
- Medicaid Personal Care (MPC)
- Management and oversight of residential services
- Case management services
- Family support services
- Home and Community based “waiver” services (the “Waiver” allows individuals to receive services in their home communities who might otherwise live in an institutional setting)

The State contracts with Skagit County to provide the following:

- Early intervention services for children ages 0-3
- Pathway to employment services for adults 21 and older
- Community Access for individuals of retirement age or no longer pursuing employment
- Information and education to the community
- Comprehensive planning for the development of future services

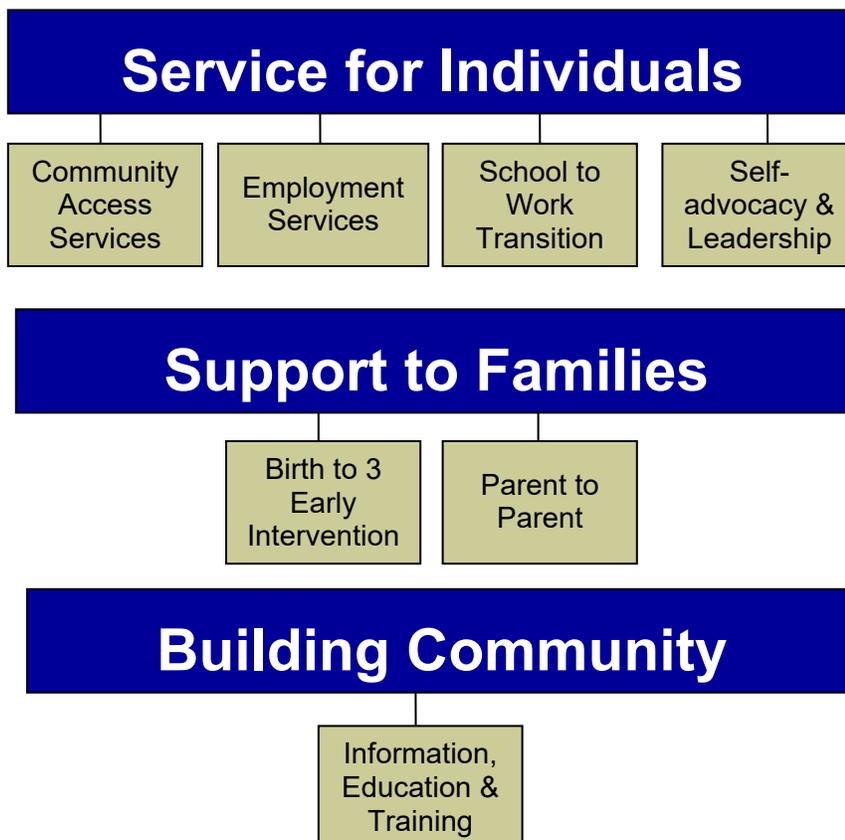
In addition, the Skagit County DD program receives dedicated local County property tax or “millage” funds. These funds are prioritized by the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board.

Skagit County DD Program Services Overview

State Developmental Disabilities Administration County Guidelines

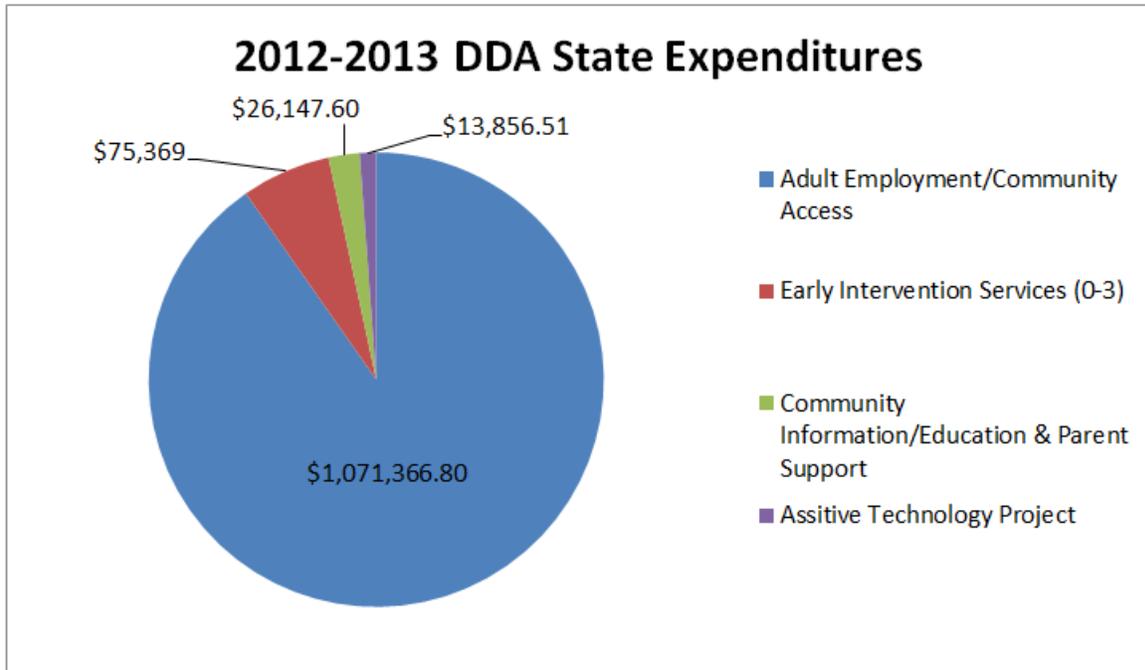
All programming and funding is based on the values outlined in the 1992 document known as the County Guidelines. It promotes the idea that the role of government and the service delivery system is to support the inclusion of people into their communities. The following benefits of quality living, common to everyone, form the core values of how counties deliver services:

- **Power and choice:** Making our own choices and directing our own lives.
- **Relationships:** Having people in our lives whom we love and care about and who love and care about us.
- **Status and Contribution:** Feeling good about ourselves and having others recognize us for what we contribute to others and our community.
- **Integration:** Being part of our community through active involvement. This means doing things we enjoy as well as new and interesting things in groups and activities common to those without developmental disabilities.
- **Competence;** Learning to do things on our own or being supported to do things for ourselves.
- **Health and Safety:** Feeling safe and secure and being healthy

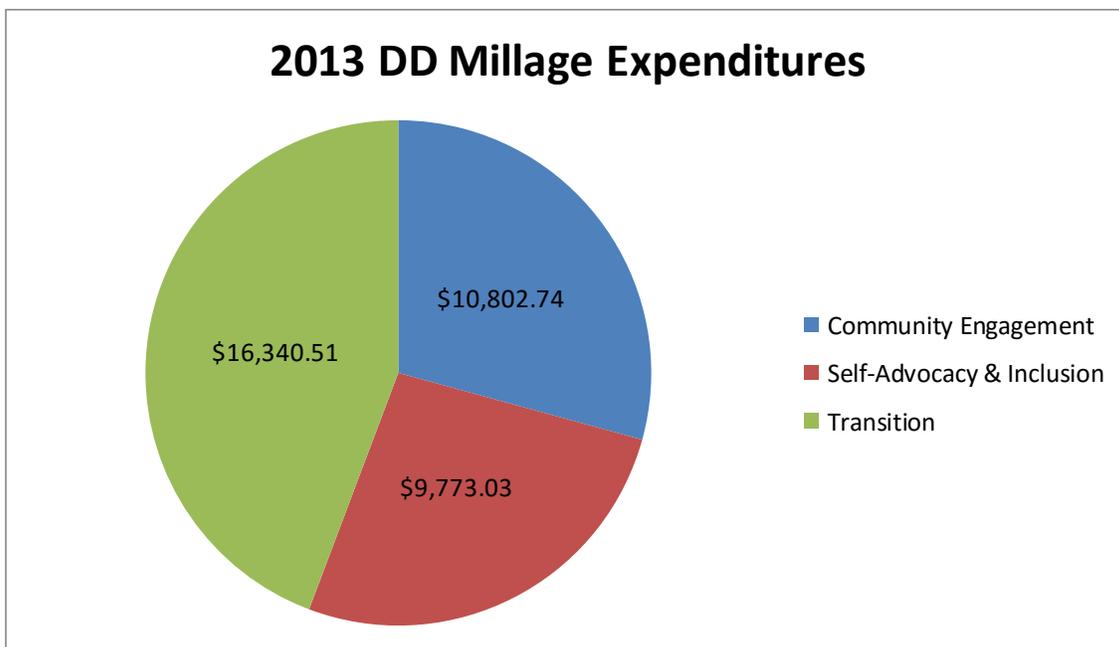


Funding Overview

Services are provided to the degree that funding is available through state legislative appropriations and local designated dollars.

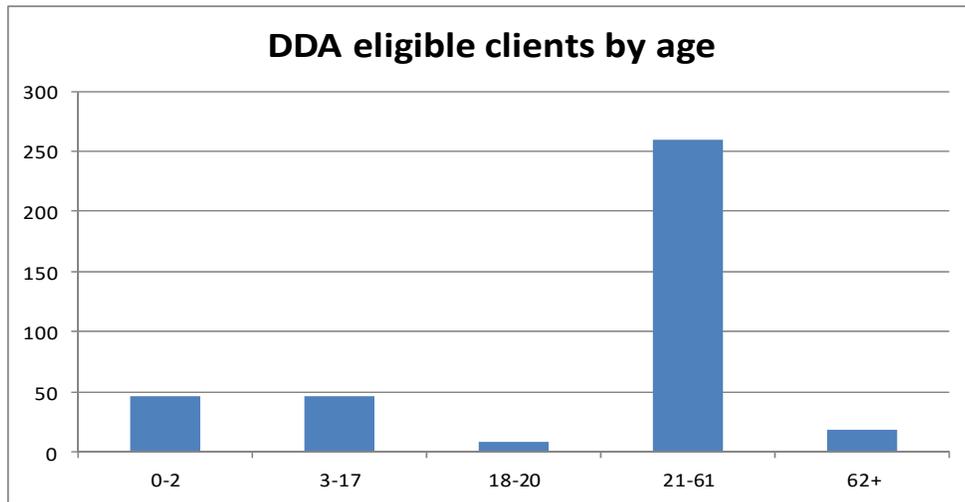


Local Skagit County Property Tax Dollars, or 'Millage' is what makes up the balance of funding for the Skagit County DD Program.



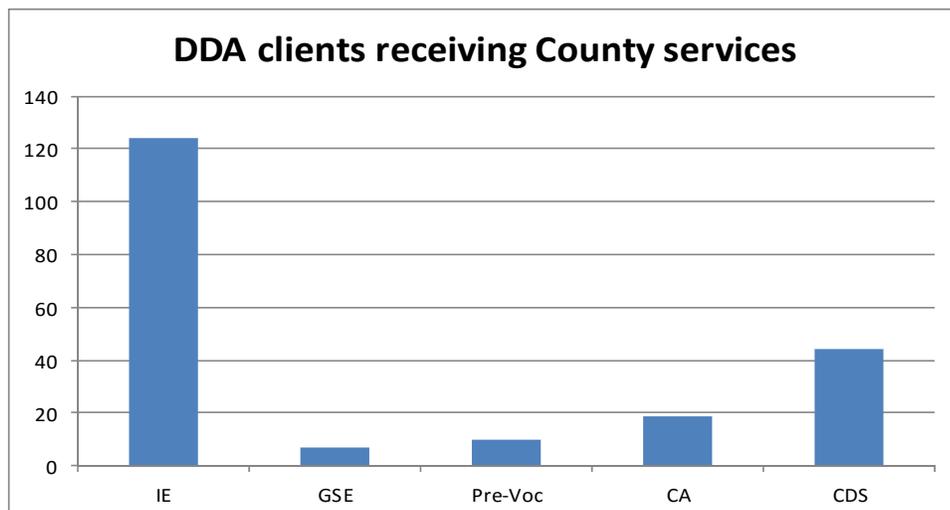
Skagit County Community Profile

- Skagit County, Washington State's 11th largest county, had an estimated population of 118,837 in 2013 (United States Census Bureau).
- It is estimated that 1,461 Skagit County residents have a developmental disability.*
- There were 534 individuals eligible for DDA services as of 2012.
- There are 149 individuals on the No Paid Service queue, meaning that they are not receiving any services from the State. This is about 28% of the total number of individuals enrolled with DDA.

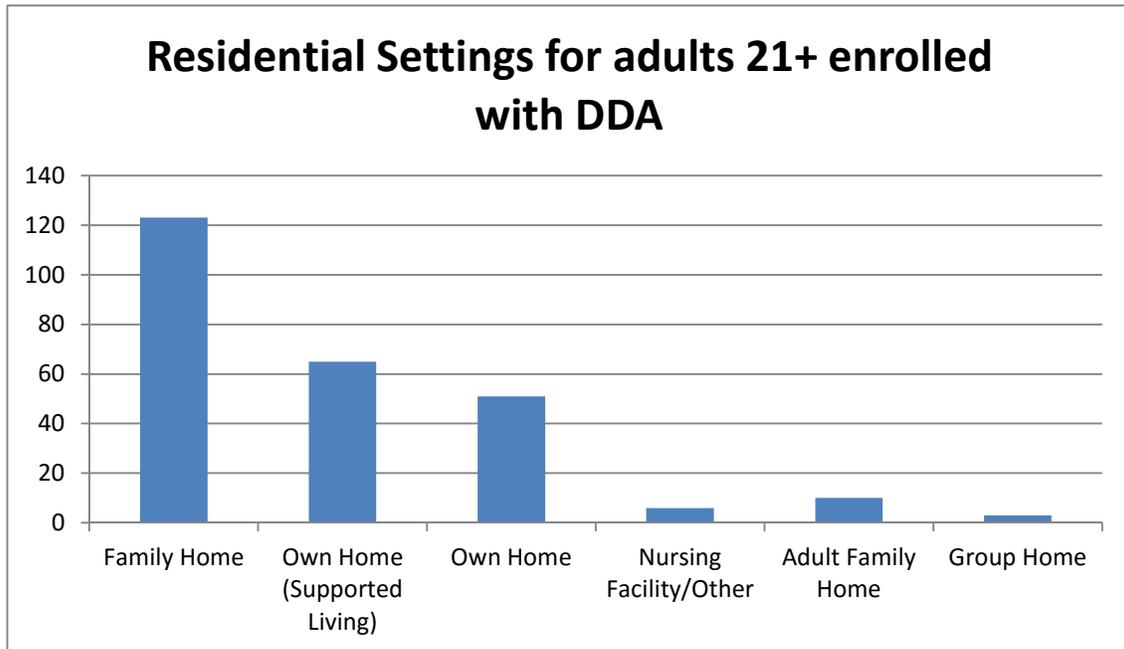


- There are 204 individuals currently receiving County services through DDA:
 - 160 adults
 - 44 children (Birth to 3)

**1.2% is used by the State DDA to determine portion of the population that may have a developmental disability*



Residential Settings for adults 21+ enrolled with DDA



Residential definitions:

Family Home: An individual living with their parent and/or legal guardian or relative.

Own Home (Supported Living): An individual living in their own home, supported by an agency tasked with meeting their needs for personal care, behavioral support and leisure. The level of support is based on the client's needs

Own Home: An individual living independently in the community.

Nursing Facility: Living in a skilled nursing home that provides 24 hour nursing services.

Adult Family Home: Living in a home serving no more than 6 people that provides assistance, room and board.

Children and Families



Families are the primary support for both children and adults with developmental disabilities. It was clear in the community needs assessment conversations that families were often overwhelmed by the responsibility to not only care their child or loved one but to navigate a complex service system. Therefore, we must invest in children and services to families so that they can maximize their child's ability to grow, learn and become independent in the community.

Goals

- Identify families and partner with them on services that are timely and meet the needs at each phase of life
- Inform and educate families about available resources

Strategies

- **Design, develop and support a coordinated referral and resource service:** Utilizing knowledgeable partners already working in the system, create a single point of entry into services. A coordinated resource and referral line would provide families a crucial information hub and community hotline.
- **Provide opportunities for parent connection and support:** Personal support from another parent who has a child with similar needs can be helpful in coping with the grief and learning associated with a new diagnosis.
- **Make it easy for families to access information:** Families are busy and often can't squeeze more time out of hectic schedules for information and educational activities. Build outreach, information and follow-up systems that reach families where they already are in the community.
 - Outreach to schools, private schools, home-school networks
 - Utilize electronic lifestyle to connect with parents
 - Attend community activities and provide programming in integrated settings
- **Partner with School districts to provide consistent messages about inclusion and employment:** Parents, teachers, administrators and service providers all need to reiterate and share the message of inclusion. Together we can work toward increased opportunities for youth to have skill-building opportunities that will lead to employment potential upon graduation.
- **Provide culturally competent services which respect the diversity and beliefs of families.** The ability to understand, respond to and value individuals of

all backgrounds helps ensure that all families who have a child with a disability are effectively included in our community.

Measures

- *Single point of entry system running, receiving referrals, and making referrals to needed resources*
- *A healthy P2P organization making monthly parent matches*
- *Resources and meetings offered in Spanish and other languages when possible*

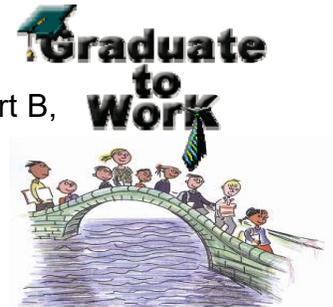
Key Partnerships

- SPARC
- Parent-to-Parent
- Skagit County Autism Partnership
- Skagit County Public Health and community Services – Children with Special Health Care Needs
- School Districts
- Medical community
- Developmental Disabilities Administration

2013 Outcomes

- An average of 25 children monthly received early intervention services in their home or other community setting. Skagit County enrollment meets the targets set by the state based on prevalence rates of disability and delay in the general population.
- 33 % of toddlers exiting Early Intervention Services in Washington State did not qualify for Special Education at age 3.
- 91 parents attended support groups.
- 152 parents and family members attended trainings and 151 attended educational events.
- 71 trained “helping parents” were available to provide mentorship and support to families of children with developmental disabilities and delays.
- 26% of parent contacts were to Spanish-speaking families. The 2012 census estimated that 17.3% of Skagit County’s population identified as Hispanic or Latino and 14.4% of Skagit County residents report speaking a language other than English at home.

High School Transition



Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) part B, districts must begin planning for the transition from school to adult no later than age 16. Transition goals within the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) focus on what the student needs to continue their education, get a job, and increase their independence within the community after school has ended.

Students with developmental disabilities are typically eligible for district services until age 21 but current percentages of DDA-eligible students remaining in school until age 21 has dropped from 91% in 2013 to 33.3% for those graduating in 2015.

Goals

- Families are knowledgeable, empowered and know their rights regarding transition and employment services. They are also connected to resources in the community.
- Students with developmental disabilities are provided opportunities for individualized skill-development and community-based work experience before they leave school.
- Students connect with adult services necessary to achieve their post-graduate goals related to continuing education, independent living and employment before they leave school.

Strategies

- **Partner with families, districts and adult service providers to coordinate the timely and effective transition from school to work:** Building on-going relationships and holding frequent conversations with partners about current trends, challenges and needs will help us be flexible to adapt and change programming as Transition outcomes steadily increase in Skagit County.
- **Build transition opportunities for students including easily accessible transition programs and community-based school to work activities:** Support and encourage county-wide as well as individual district activities. Design and fund school to work activities that fulfill the current needs and address gaps in the system.
- **Educate families about the social and financial benefits of employment and planning for life after high school:** Back-to-school nights, IEP planning materials, iMovies and speakers bureaus are all methods for reaching families

regarding possibilities for and planning around integrated employment and community engagement.

- **Provide training and support to educators related to best practices in transition and the adult service world they connect to:** Helping parents and educators understand the current laws, regulations and services in the adult service world will provide opportunities for a more seamless transition.

Measures

- *Increased percentage of students staying in school until 21.*
- *Increased numbers of school districts providing community-based assessment and getting students connected to DVR.*
- *New special education PTA at MVHS is tested and lessons applied to other parent groups for possible expansion.*

Key Partnerships

- School Districts
- Families and Caregivers
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Tribal DVR
- Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
- Employment Agencies – Chinook, Service Alternatives and Washington Vocational Services
- Social Security Administration
- Skagit Transit
- Parent-to-Parent transition program
- Housing Authority

2012-2013 Outcomes

- 42% of eligible graduating students received system navigation support to connect with adult service providers.
- Held 1st annual Transition Resource Fair that provided training, resources and community connections to 150 students, parents and educators.
- 44 students at Burlington, LaConner and Concrete High schools participated in the Eye on Jobs curriculum and field trips.
- 50% of eligible graduates were connected with DVR and were pursuing employment by the time they exited school.
- Eight Transition teachers were sponsored on a day-long best practices tour and three teachers were provided stipends to attend the Community Summit in Ellensburg.

Employment



Employment offers all people, with or without disabilities, prosperity, self-worth and social connections. Employment is the focus of County services for adults 21 and older with developmental disabilities.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is the primary resource for short-term vocational assessment, job placement, and training. The County may provide long term employment supports for eligible individuals still needing support to maintain their job or pursue employment after DVR services have ended.

Employment services in Skagit County focus on utilizing business model tools that treat employees with developmental disabilities like their peers: we strive for a direct relationship between employee and employer, we expect that employers will set benchmarks for production, and that employee and employer will track that production.

Goals

- Educate business community and the public about the benefits of supported employment for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Develop creative solutions for community employment that leverage and expand local resources.

Strategies

- **Expand Partnership for Employment Success and utilize successful partner experiences to provide information and education to other businesses in Skagit County:** Continue outreach to mid-large size companies who would benefit from streamlined approach and support of Partnership for Employment Success model for employing individuals with developmental disabilities.
- **Educate local businesses and industry about the benefits of hiring individuals with developmental disabilities:** Utilizing iMovies, successful employment histories of agencies in Skagit County and business peer mentoring, continue to promote importance of diverse workforce and business rationale for employment of individuals with developmental disabilities.
- **Ensure that vocational providers have the skill and training to support individuals with more complex needs to work in the community:** Create strategies for agencies to continue skill-building after successful training programs and utilize county resources for additional skills to serve complex needs.

- **Focus efforts on utilizing business model tools so that employment agencies are speaking the same language to businesses about working with employees with developmental disabilities.**
- **Create opportunities for the Board and employment agencies to educate city planning departments and mayors on relationship between housing, transportation and other local resources on link between local resources and ability of residents with DD to participate in workforce:** Utilize monthly board meetings to discuss issues with outside agencies and personnel and attend other community boards to present on the needs of citizens with developmental disabilities.

Measures

- *Growth in numbers of local businesses employing individuals with developmental disabilities and utilizing business model tools.*
- *Number of staff in agencies trained by Jennifer White and Val Morgan. Agencies implement management/tracking structures for carrying through with principles.*
- *Increase in total wages earned and percentage in employment services who earn wages each month.*

Key Partnerships

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Tribal DVR
- Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
- Employment Agencies – Chinook, Service Alternatives and Washington Vocational Services
- School Districts
- Individuals and Families

2013 Outcomes

- 163 adults received County funded employment services (monthly average). This represents approximately 63% of DDA eligible adults ages 21-62
- \$463,379.13 total wages earned in individual community jobs
- 90 businesses employed individuals with DD in Skagit County
- 55.21 % of adults enrolled in County employment programs earned wages each month.

Community Access

Skagit County contracts with community agencies to assist adults with developmental disabilities of retirement age (typically 62 or older) to access the community in ways typical to their age group.



Following the Washington State Working age Adults Policy, individuals of working age (21-61) must first pursue employment. If after nine months of service without a job placement the individual wishes to no longer pursue employment, Community Access services may be requested.

Goals

- Seniors with developmental disabilities have welcoming community spaces that offer opportunities for socialization and activity just as their typical peers do. Opportunities exist to contribute to the community.
- Community members and agencies providing senior services receive training or resources to support their work with seniors with developmental disabilities.

Strategies

- **Assist individuals to participate in activities, events and organization in the local community in ways similar to others of a similar age.**
- **Provide opportunities for individuals to participate in clubs, associations, and organizations as members and to do things they enjoy as well as new and interesting activities.**
- **Provide information and outreach to seniors of all ages about Abilities, integration, and importance of social networks in order to build an open, welcoming approach in the community:** Agency staff, seniors and county staff will collaboratively design a training model regarding the values and benefits of inclusion and addressing typical seniors concerns.
- **Build upon existing programs and activities in Skagit County's Senior Centers, as well as other organizations (libraries, religious groups, etc) to increase participation of seniors in existing programs and opportunities.**

Measures

- *Community Access agencies report easier access for clients to participate in community activities.*
- *Seniors experiencing developmental disabilities are surveyed about their ability to access community activities and their perception of the community's inclusion of them.*

Key Partnerships

- Community Access Providers: Rehabco, Chinook, Washington Vocational Services
- Skagit County Senior Centers and Meals on Wheels
- Northwest Regional Council – Aging and Disability Resources Program
- Community resources (libraries, religious institutions)
- Individuals and Families

2013 Outcomes

- 26 Adults received community access services (monthly average). This number represents the County focus on employment for individuals of working age.
- 73% were individuals of retirement age (62+)
- 100% of participants were supported to participate in integrated inclusive community activities of their choice.

Community Information, Education and Advocacy

Accessing up-to-date and accurate information is critical for families caring for loved ones, for businesses employing staff with developmental disabilities, and agencies supporting individuals in our community. Providing relevant and frequent information to the community and creating opportunities for discussion amongst key partners who can help further community resources is a critical function of the Board and the service delivery system.

Goals

- Encourage and promote inclusive recreation and leisure activities that build personal relationships throughout our communities.
- Partner with self-advocates to promote training and leadership opportunities.
- Develop awareness and openness to individuals with developmental disabilities in the community.

Strategies

- **Raise awareness of disability issues and needs:** Plan and carry out a community inclusion campaign based on work developed by a group of public health students at WWU.
- **Encourage partnership between People First and Aktion Club as well as expand Aktion Club to other communities:** Self-advocacy goes hand-in hand with community partnership and engagement. Self-advocacy organizations thrive and expand when member have opportunities to sit on committees, plan activities and work with others.
- **Encourage self-advocacy training and leadership opportunities in schools, Transition programs, and community organizations:** Work with self-advocacy groups to extend reach to youth in the community.
- **Encourage integration of programs such as recreation, the arts and music and drama amongst community organizations.**

Measures

- *Addition of opportunities for self-advocates to give back to the community through service projects and leadership.*
- *A leadership curriculum that self-advocates present to schools, families and community groups is developed and presented on an on-going basis.*
- *Increased number, visibility and penetration of disability messages in the community.*

Key Partnerships

- Parent-to-Parent
- People First of Skagit County and Chinook Enterprises
- Center for Independence “Out and About”
- Aktion Club/Kiwanis clubs
- DDA
- Parks and Recreation Programs
- Community members, businesses and organizations
- School Districts

2013 Outcomes

- 1,365 individuals received a monthly newsletter providing information on disability resources and parent education
- 98 people received on-going information on trainings, resources and activities
- 130 Individuals participated in self-advocacy groups on a monthly basis