

Several advocacy training curricula have been developed and continue to operate through the Council; its federal partners, the Center for Interdisciplinary Learning and Leadership and the Oklahoma Disability Law Center; or other state agencies; among these programs are:

- Partners in Policymaking,
- Community Leadership Solutions,
- Oklahoma Aging Advocacy Leadership Academy,
- Partners in Education Advocacy, and
- Youth Leadership Forum.

The Council is also the lead sponsor of the Governor's Conference on Developmental Disabilities, the oldest and largest state conference of its kind.

More information about past, present and future Council projects is available through the Council's Web site, www.okddc.ok.gov.



What are Developmental Disabilities?

Developmental Disabilities are severe disabilities, originating any time from birth through age 21, that are expected to last a lifetime. Developmental disabilities may be cognitive, physical, or a combination of both. While not always visible, these disabilities can result in serious limitations in everyday activities of life, including self-care, communication, learning, mobility, or being able to work or live independently. Such disabilities may require a combination of specialized, interdisciplinary, or generic services, and assistance for an extended duration.

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OKLAHOMA DEVELOPMENTAL



DISABILITIES COUNCIL



**“If we are to achieve a richer culture ... we must weave one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place.”
— Margaret Mead, 1935**

The Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council promotes quality

services and programs that enable persons with developmental disabilities to realize increased independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in the community. Though not a provider of direct services, the Council has assisted thousands of Oklahomans to live, work, play, learn and worship in their own homes and in their own neighborhoods.

Authorized by an Executive Order

of Governor David Hall in 1973, as provided by the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, the Council accomplishes its goals through the funding of innovative projects designed to promote systemic change, community capacity building and advocacy for the more than 60,000 Oklahomans with developmental disabilities.

The Council is composed of persons with developmental disabilities, their family members, state agency representatives, and other advocates, all of whom are appointed

by the Governor and serve as volunteers. The Council's planned activities are set forth in a State Plan, written with the input of stakeholders across the state and in consultation with the Governor's Office and the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, the Council's designated state agency. To implement the State Plan, the Council has a paid staff and a federal allotment from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities. Councils on Developmental Disabilities operate in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and four U.S. Territories.

Under the current reauthorization of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, Councils use their funding to provide systems change in the following areas of influence: **Education and Early Intervention, Child Care, Employment, Health, Housing, Transportation, Recreation, and Quality Assurance.** Since its inception,

the Council has invested millions of dollars in Oklahoma to create communities where people with disabilities and their families are naturally included and where they can enjoy the same civil liberties and quality of life as everyone else. As examples:

The "Learning Together At Home" curriculum developed by Idabel Public Schools has been offered free of charge to Head Start agencies statewide; this

curriculum fosters parent involvement in school preparation for children considered at-risk for placement in segregated special education services;

Child care workers statewide have access to training in the care of children with

disabilities through Special Care Inc. in Oklahoma City; this training is offered through the DHS "Reach for the Stars" program;

Tech Now, Oklahoma's High School / High Tech program, provides

students with disabilities exposure to careers in technology-based industries while promoting the hiring of persons with disabilities to local businesses;

Through Sooner SUCCESS, children with disabilities and their families have coordinated medical, educational, mental health and social services. Sooner SUCCESS works directly with families to overcome agency barriers and improve outcomes for children;

Persons with disabilities and their families receive home-buyer education and financial planning assistance toward home ownership through Affordable Home Ownership Options for Persons with Disabilities, administered by the Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies;

A transportation program administered by Oklahomans for Independent Living in McAlester has been operational for years with the financial support of the City of McAlester and other civic organizations; this project is a replicable model for other Oklahoma communities without public transportation;

Children and youth with disabilities enjoy accessible playgrounds in Yukon and Duncan;

