

FAMILY SUPPORT & RESPITE HAPPENINGS

The State of Our State

Advocates for the choice of community-based services have been working for years to make community inclusion a truly accessible option for people with developmental disabilities in Illinois. So where are we today?

The report titled The State of the States in Developmental Disabilities is based on research completed annually by the Coleman Institute for Cognitive Disabilities at the University of Colorado. The report provides national rankings of states' spending patterns for disability services. It is commonly referred to as the **Braddock Report**.

How did Illinois do this year?

In the category spending for people with developmental disabilities living in small group home settings of 1 to 6 people, Illinois is currently in last place nationally. Including the District of Columbia, Illinois ranks 51st out of 51.

On the other hand, when it comes to ranking our spending for institutional care, we are 9th nationally out of 51.

Illinois is 47th nationally in spending per capita for Home and Community Based Services waivers. These waivers are programs designed to support people in their own homes. Examples in Illinois include the Home Services Program, administered by the Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Home Based Support Services Program for adults, and the new Children's Waiver. All of these programs provide true choice and control for people enrolled in the supports they need to be included in their own communities. Yet, as a state, Illinois at the bottom in funding these critical programs.

This is one of the reasons why it is so important to get on the state database for needed services. The database is known as PUNS, an acronym for Prioritization of Unmet Need for Services. This database makes clear in identifiable numbers the levels of service needed to accommodate the need for community services. Once known, we can work on advocating for funding to support the need.

Special Parents for Special Kids support group

There is a new support group meeting in the Joliet area for parents. Machell Klee, the parent of a daughter with special needs, began the group as a way for other parents to get together, support each other, and network.

This group meets the second Thursday of every month from 7 to 8 P.M. at Crossroads Christian Church which is located at 805 Barthelme Avenue in Joliet.

Respite is provided on site when needed.

If you would like more information, including a flier with contact information for Machell, please call Stephanie Bergner at (815) 744-3500, extension 209.

Consumer Stipend Funds

Has cost become a prohibitive factor in attending national or local conferences?

If so, you may be eligible for the Consumer Stipend Fund to help pay for the cost of conference registration, childcare, meals, transportation, hotel bills, or personal attendant services.

This fund is made available through the Arc of Illinois so that people with developmental disabilities and their family members can attend the conferences of interest. Conferences must be directly

related to developmental disability issues. They can be local or involve travel to another state.

The fund will pay up to \$300 per person or \$500 per family to help with expenses associated with attendance.

Information and an application can be found at www.thearcofil.org.

Submitted by Stephanie Bergner, Director of Family Support and Respite

SPORTSMEN FOR UCP

On April 5th, more than 460 people crowded into the IBEW Hall in Joliet to celebrate the Sportsmen for Charities' 10th Annual Dinner, featuring a variety of raffles and auctions. Over the past ten years, the organization has raised more than \$600,000 for UCP! These funds have been a fantastic boost for UCP to be able to retire the mortgage on its' Reed Street building, as well as provide tens of thousands of dollars to assist with programs, services and equipment for the Reedswood School Program and UCP's Adult Services. Our sincere gratitude and congratulations is extended to all the attendees of the dinners and events throughout the years, with our special thanks and best regards to the outstanding men and women who make up the Sportsmen's Board of Directors: Jack Riley, Tony DeAngelis, Keith Roseland, Jim Confer, Kerry DeAngelis, Kay Riley, Frank Cortina, Sheldon Sobol, John Galloway, Ken Ballenger, Frank Schmitt, Rich Lodewgen, and Dave Udstuen.