Dartmouth Supported Employment
Providing support to individuals with mental illness who want to work

The Division of Behavioral Health in partnership with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation was awarded a four year grant from Johnson & Johnson-Dartmouth Community Mental Health Program to implement evidence based supported employment services for adults with serious mental illness. Kentucky is the twelfth state to receive this grant.

Employment is an essential part of the recovery process. According to Dartmouth University, 70% of people with mental illness say they would like to work, yet less than 15% are actually working. In Kentucky, according to data from 2009, only 9.65% of people with mental illness who are receiving services through community mental health centers are actually employed.

The aim of the grant is to offer high quality supported employment services to adults with serious mental illness or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders throughout the commonwealth, and to improve the overall employment rate of people with mental illness who want to work.

DSEP began implementation in 2010 with four community mental health centers in Kentucky, Northkey in Covington, Four Rivers in Paducah, Comprehend in Maysville, and Communicare in Elizabethtown. Three of the four sites have expanded in to new counties to provide supported employment services. DSEP currently has 40 people working in full and part time jobs such as bookkeeper, housekeeping, production worker, and fork lift driver. Each site works with a Vocational Rehabilitation liaison/s. Implementation has also begun with a new site in Louisville, Seven Counties.

Services are driven by a set of core principles, which include eligibility based on consumer choice, integrating supported employment with the mental health treatment team, realizing that consumer preferences are important, and beginning job searches soon after the consumer expresses interest. With the goal of finding competitive jobs in mind, supports are continuous and benefits planning is also offered.

“To me, work means being more active, more positive, and doing something about your problems instead of just wishing they would go away.”

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Greetings from the Human Development Institute!

First of all, we at HDI wish all of those with whom we work a very prosperous and blessed New Year! We have tried to focus our winter issue on just a few of our projects that are working to make 2012 a better year for many individuals with disabilities and their families throughout our Commonwealth. Our major theme in this issue is that of employment, an area in which individuals with disabilities, and especially those with significant disabilities, have continued to struggle. Both national and Kentucky data suggest that employment rates for individuals with disabilities lag far behind those of individuals without disabilities, despite the fact that most individuals with disabilities truly want to work.

In this issue we highlight our two supported employment projects— the KY Supported Employment Training Project, which works with Supported Employment agencies throughout the state in improving their services (and outcomes) for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities. This is a huge need in our state; for example, for recipients of Kentucky’s residential waiver for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (the Supports for Community Living Waiver), the employment rate in integrated settings is only about 11%. We also highlight our Dartmouth Supported Employment Project, developed to support individuals with mental illness who have expressed a desire to work. This project is currently working with five sites across Kentucky; virtually every week, there are new job successes as individuals find meaningful employment that enriches their lives.

Of course, HDI is a life-span Institute, embracing the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families of all ages. This issue also highlights our early childhood Training into Practice Project, which provides training and support at multiple levels to early childhood workers, administrators, and professional development providers. We also note a major transition in our Mid-South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC), serving nine states in implementing their special education and infant/toddler programs. MSRRC welcomes its new Director, Dr. Mike Abell. Finally, read about the exciting work of our Consumer Advisory Council, and its continuing impact upon our services!

Harold Kleinert
Director, Human Development Institute
Creating the drive to succeed
Driver Rehabilitation Services now available at the Human Development Institute

HDI has forged a new partnership with the University of Kentucky Occupational Therapy Department on an important initiative. Our Driver Rehabilitation Services program provides high quality driver evaluation and training services for people with disabilities who have a desire to become independent and self-sufficient through employment. Referrals are made through the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Skilled UK occupational therapists who are also Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialists provide clinical and behind the wheel evaluations that assess what kind of rehabilitation technology and training are needed for someone to drive safely. Following an evaluation, consumers may return for subsequent training to effectively use the equipment they need. Ultimately, the goal is for consumers to complete their training using their own personal vehicles.

Cars and vans with a variety of technology options are used in the process. The individualized technology ranges from relatively low tech solutions, to very high end technologies that alleviate the limitations to driving that may have been present for a person with a disability. For example, hand controls take away the need to use one’s feet to operate an accelerator and/or brake pedal. Joystick driving systems are a means to independently drive a vehicle without using the steering wheel. Touch screen operation of secondary systems provides an alternate way to access vehicle functions such as turn signals, headlights and windshield wipers. Entry systems including ramps and lifts enable a person who may have a mobility limitation to get in and out of their vehicle.

Driver rehabilitation services are provided at no charge to the person. If it is determined that the person can safely drive with vehicle modifications and that this will help the person to get or keep a job, OVR may assist in providing the modifications needed to a personal vehicle. We are all very familiar with the fact that lack of transportation negatively impacts opportunities for Kentuckians with disabilities. So HDI is very excited to work on this important effort to help people be successful and safe drivers. This, in turn, leads to greater job possibilities, economic self-sufficiency and improved quality of life. Goals within the next year are to use UK vehicles as part of the fleet of evaluation vehicles. HDI hopes to develop research opportunities to learn more about the outcomes of our driver rehabilitation services, as well as create new partnerships to expand these services.
What is Supported Employment and how did it come to be?

Supported Employment (SE) arrived on the human services scene more than 30 years ago – recognizing that most people with disabilities had been excluded from socially valued employment, and understanding that typical employment opportunities can dramatically improve people’s lives. It came into being largely as a reaction to other kinds of services that hadn’t worked very well. That is, employment services for people with disabilities were primarily to be found in special programs intended to simulate “real” business. On the basis of having disabilities, people were placed with others having disabilities, and for the most part kept apart from people who didn’t have disabilities. Typically, pay was meager. Despite the good intentions of those developing these ways of work for people with disabilities, expectations remained low. Furthermore, the popular notion of people getting “ready” for real work by staying in simulated, congregated, segregated programs proved disappointing since few were deemed to be “ready.” Instead, most people with disabilities remained, even for a lifetime, in the simulated, congregated, segregated places.

Who’s not ready?

This question provided the catalyst for SE. Were the people attending the special programs “not ready” to work in typical jobs? Or were those overseeing the programs not ready to envision real employment for the people attending their programs?

Kentucky and SE and the beginnings of HDI’s Supported Employment Training Project (SETP)

Kentucky was one of the early states to embrace SE. Its first SE agency opened in 1981, providing one-person-at-a-time supports for people having intellectual disabilities. Then in 1985, Kentucky was one of 10 states selected to expand and demonstrate SE through an OSERS (Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services) systems change grant. Even though SE methods were still relatively new and primitive, Kentucky held true to personalized SE, avoiding “group placements” or “enclaves” as were developed by some other states. HDI’s Supported Employment Training Project initiated its first events for people learning about SE in 1988 – funded initially through a three-year RSA (Rehabilitation Services Administration) grant and now supported by the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Kentucky Division of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities.

SE today and practices we want to promote through HDI’s SETP

The SETP is mostly known for our seven days of SE events required for SE personnel employed by the 80 plus SE provider programs statewide. We also offer other optional events to supplement the required training. While the underlying values and principles of SE have stayed the same, its approaches have been significantly refined over the last 30 plus years. It’s these vastly improved means of providing SE that we do our best to study, understand, and teach through our SETP events. We have improved our understanding about:

1. relevant ways of instruction, so that the same people formerly
thought incapable of working can learn and perform work having significant complexity;

2. devoting time with job seekers to discover previously unrecognized talents, interests, and ways of personal contribution, as well as identifying conditions that need to be in place for an individual to be at his/her best – instead of “placing” people in arbitrary job openings;

3. strategies for studying and learning business culture and the means for all new employees receiving instruction/support, and then honoring these practices to the fullest extent possible -- rather than smothering employers and supported employees with unnecessary “job coaching”;

4. negotiating jobs with employers by matching employer needs with the interests and contributions of job seekers -- transcending typical job descriptions and job applications.

These evolving practices are especially significant since it’s been noted in the literature that a huge obstacle to good SE is providers’ refusal to study or use the best currently known approaches.

**The Vision Collision**

Because we live in a society that has a longstanding, deep and abiding commitment to “special,” separate, and simulated services that group together people with disabilities, there will be a certain amount of resistance to supported employment, and possibly a shortage of people truly interested in learning about it. This is not an issue about good people or bad people. It’s probably fairer to think of a “vision collision.” That is, there’s an ongoing collision of values, expectations, and vision about what should be the place of people with disabilities in society. Should there be supports for people with disabilities to participate in valued aspects of everyday life, including employment? Or should people with disabilities have special work, special schools, special homes, special worship, and special recreation?

**What are positive ways our SETP and others may proceed?**

- Acknowledge the countercultural nature of SE and maintain a healthy dose of tenacity.
- Commit to studying, learning and using the best SE approaches known.
- Embrace the cause with humility and with curiosity about better ways to support job seekers and employers.
- Be involved in demonstrating the benefits of good supported employment for people with disabilities, their family members, employers, co-workers, as well as other community members. Good SE provides one certain way to build a better society.

For additional information, visit www.hdi.uky.edu/setp or contact Milton Tyree at 859-977-4050, ext. 234 or mtyree@uky.edu.

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**Dartmouth Supported Employment Project** *(continued from front page)*

The Kentucky National Alliance on Mental Illness was also awarded a grant from Dartmouth-Johnson & Johnson to be a part of a family advocacy project. Each pilot site works with a local NAMI affiliate in furthering family advocacy for evidence based supported employment.

DSEP also has a statewide steering committee that is made up of diverse stake holders that meets on a quarterly basis.

Funding comes from a variety of mechanisms such as Vocational Rehabilitation; grants from the Greater Cincinnati Foundation as well as mental health block dollars.

Employment is often so much more than just a job. It can build your self esteem, give you money to spend and help you make new friends. One individual working with DSEP, Tyler, is a great example; he secured a job through the assistance of The Employment Connection, Communicare. Tyler works at Colton’s Steakhouse and Grill. He started out as a fry cook, then quickly moved to sauté cook. While employed at Colton’s, he has received two raises, and has recently gotten married. When asked what work means to him by his Employment Specialist, Sheila Runyon, he had this to say:

"Work means being a provider; a father and now a husband. It means money coming in because of me, a roof over my family’s head, food on the table and clothes on their back. Work means making friends and new supports in my life. Being more active, more positive, and doing something about your problems instead of just wishing they would go away. I guess that’s what it’s all about and I got a whole new family with y’all (Supported Employment), I love you guys."

For more information about the Dartmouth Supported Employment Project, please call Lori Norton, Supported Employment Trainer, at 859-339-0730 or email at lori.norton@uky.edu.
The Training Into Practice Project
Improving early childhood care and education through professional development

The Training Into Practice Project (TIPP) was started in 2003 as one component of the early childhood KIDS NOW initiative under Governor Paul Patton. The purpose of the project was to implement several of the new professional development initiatives included in KIDS NOW (e.g., a KY Early Care and Education Trainers Credential). The overall goal of the professional development initiatives and of TIPP has been to increase the quality and effectiveness of the training provided to early care and education professionals in the state and, as a result, improve the quality of services available to young children and their families. Evidence-based practices indicate the education and training of early childhood professionals are strongly correlated with favorable outcomes for young children in early care and education programs.

TIPP is designed to serve trainers applying for and renewing their Early Care and Education Trainers Credential, child care directors and staff, and others working in the field of early intervention/early childhood services. The project is funded through a contract with the Division of Child Care, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, using tobacco funds allocated by the KY legislature for the early childhood initiative.

Specifically, TIPP has developed and coordinates the following:

- A 15-hour *Fundamentals of Effective Training* seminar that focuses on adult learners, effective training design, and evaluation/follow-up, offered quarterly as a pre-requisite to applying for a Trainer’s Credential.

- Technical assistance to initial applicants and those renewing the Trainers Credential. Currently there are more than 750 credentialed trainers in KY.

- Review of applications for the Trainer’s Credential by a 12-member Panel, which makes recommendations to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

- Review of renewal applications for the Trainer’s Credential (required every 3 years).

- *Beyond Fundamentals* workshops held quarterly around the state, *Dial-A-Discussion* webinars, and an annual Trainers Institute, all of which offer training hours in adult learning/effective training design to improve trainer skills and for renewal of the Trainers Credential.

- *ECOOL (Early Orientation OnLine)*, a web-based version of the 6-hour *Orientation* training required for all newly hired early care and education staff. Last year more than 1600 providers completed this online course.

- Updated training modules and materials for face-to-face delivery of the *Orientation* modules and training-of-trainers workshops for those who desire to become approved trainers of the modules.

- Workshops on the implementation of *Kentucky’s Continuous Assessment Guide*, specific to the areas of Screening, Classroom/Instructional Assessment, and Authentic Methods of Assessing Young Children, delivered regionally in collaboration with the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and/or with the Community Early Childhood Councils.

- A web-based course for new directors/owners of child care programs which gives a practical approach to the implementation of both state regulations and recommended practices.

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**HDI Spring 2012 Seminar Series**

**February 3**
**Inside/Out: Perspectives on Autism Topics**

**March 23**
**The Impact of Supported Higher Education on Improving the Lives of those with Intellectual Disabilities**

**April 13**
**Supports for Young Children with ADHD in Home, School and Community**

Unless otherwise noted, all seminars will be held from 1:00pm - 3:00pm at the HDI Coldstream training room located at 1525 Bull Lea Rd. in Lexington and will be teleconferenced to other approved sites. For more information, updates, or to register, visit www.hdi.uky.edu.
MSRRC welcomes Dr. Mike Abell
The new director of the Mid-South Regional Resource Center

Dr. Mike Abell has been named as the new Director of the Mid-South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC), one of six Regional Resource Centers across the nation. MSRRC provides ongoing technical assistance to nine states in our region in both their implementation of special education services for students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and these states’ Infant-Toddler programs for young children with developmental delays.

Across his work with federal and state projects, Dr. Abell has developed a clear reputation for collaborative leadership skills and team-based problem solving. He has evidenced strong project management skills that will enable our MSRRC team to continue its outstanding work in addressing both the needs of our states and the national priorities of the entire RRC program.

Dr. Abell most recently has served Director of the Academic, Behavior, and Response to Intervention Project at the University of Louisville, focused on building multi-tiered intervention teams in Kentucky schools. He also directs the Higher Education Low Incidence Initiative, a part of Kentucky’s State Personnel Development Grant. The Higher Education Initiative, representing teacher training programs in Moderate and Severe Disabilities (MSD) throughout KY, has worked to create an internship teacher evaluation system focused on the unique needs of teachers of students with moderate and severe disabilities. This work has been endorsed by our KY Education Professional Standards Board, as a potential model for other teacher internship programs in our state.

Dr. Abell has experience directing other large projects, including a U.S. Department of Education 3.2 million dollar grant through Office of Migrant Education. He has served as a local Director of Special Education, District Preschool Coordinator, School Psychologist, and many years ago, Dr. Abell worked as intern here at HDI! During his free time, he stays busy with his wife, Karen, and two sons, Drew and Clay. He enjoys running, camping, and traveling whenever possible.

Consumer Advisory Council Updates

by Shannon Caldwell, HDI-CAC Liaison

I hope everyone is enjoying this holiday season with family and friends. The CAC has been busy this year. We recently sent a letter to urge and call on the company (Sequenom) that has developed the new non-invasive prenatal test for Down syndrome to ensure that when families get a positive result for Down syndrome, they are provided with accurate information and resources. Our Chair, Malkanthie McCormick, signed the letter and we all supported the motion.

Earlier this year, we advised HDI on their five year plan and gave input for the needs assessment process. We also made a decision to move our meetings to the HDI Coldstream office in the coming year and will experiment with long-distance conferencing. We are currently looking for two new members to serve on our CAC, preferably from the Western or Northern part of the state.

Finally, we would like to thank Malkanthie McCormick for her role this year as Chair. She has done a wonderful job as our leader. We welcome our incoming Chair, Chastity Ross, and our new Vice-Chair, Morry LaTour. We would also like to thank Christina Espanosa for her presentation on the Home Modification Project, which was our spotlight project this time. Our CAC meeting dates for next year will be Monday March 5th, Monday June 4th, August Joint DD Network Meeting TBA, and Monday December 3rd. Well, that is it for this time. See you all in 2012!
The Human Development Institute (HDI), a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service, is about people and the belief that we all deserve the opportunity to be valued, active members of our communities. The Institute’s mission is to promote the independence, productivity, and integration of people with disabilities and their families throughout the life span.

HDI is a unit of the Office of the Vice President for Research at the University of Kentucky and part of a nationwide network of University Centers for Excellence. The Centers were established by federal legislation to promote team-based approaches to providing services for individuals with disabilities and their families.

The Institute operates projects in areas such as:

- Technology development and training
- Early identification of children at risk of disabilities
- Promotion and development of school programs that meet the needs of all children in primary through secondary levels
- Employment and living opportunities for individuals with disabilities
- Life-span educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities
- Personal futures planning to identify individual interests and goals for individuals with disabilities
- Training programs to improve the provision of human services for individuals with disabilities and their families.