



# Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education

## 1 ROLE

### 1. Role of the Council

- State Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Special Education Advisory Panel
- Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities
- Governing Board of the Special Education Service Agency
- Beneficiary Board of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

2010



## 2 MISSION

### 2. Mission

To improve the lives of Alaskans with disabilities

## 3 STRATEGIES

### 3. Strategies

- Capacity Building
- Systems Change
- Advocacy

## 4 THE COUNCIL IN ACTION

### 4. Making Sustainable Change — The Council in Action

- **Convened a task force to develop a better way of managing the waitlist for developmental disabilities services.** As a result, the Legislature funded a \$7.1 million increment (\$3 million state funds/\$4.1 federal funds) in Fiscal year 2007 to implement the task force's recommendations and to take individuals over the age of 40, who most likely had aging parents, and young adults transitioning from school to adult life off the waitlist. Even more important, after the new system was put in place and evaluated, the Division of Senior & Disabilities Services implemented a policy to draw 50 people per quarter from the waitlist. **As a result, 200 people continue to be drawn for services every year since and the waitlist is the lowest it's been in many, many years (870) despite new people regularly coming onto the waitlist.**

## 5 OUTCOMES

## 6 PRIORITIES

## Sustainable Change Continued ...

- **Implemented the StartUp Alaska Initiative, a three-year research and demonstration grant funded by the federal Office of Disability Employment Policy, to increase the self-employment of Alaskans with disabilities.** As a result of the Council's work with a variety of stakeholders, 71 individuals were served and 33 launched their own businesses. Even more important, several entities, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Employment Security Division, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, the Center for Human Development at the University of Alaska Anchorage, the Center for Economic Development at the University of Alaska Anchorage, and the University Small Business Development Centers have implemented or are implementing policy to sustain best practices identified through the grant. *As a result, Alaskans with disabilities will continue to have access to resources that will enable them to successfully launch and grow their own businesses.*
- **Convened an ad hoc committee on autism, which developed a set of recommendations that were bundled into a 5-part Autism initiative to meet the needs of the 1,512 children and youth under the age of 21 who have autism, of whom approximately 454 need significant clinical treatment. The 5-part initiative consists of: universal screening, expanded diagnostic clinics, enhanced referral and consultation services, time-limited intensive early services and workforce development capacity building.** Starting in 2006, the Council "shopped" the initiative with the administration and the Legislature. As a result, state and Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority funding was secured for expanded diagnostic clinics, enhanced referral and consultation services, and workforce development capacity building. In addition, the Council and the Center for Human Development at the University of Alaska Anchorage helped the Division of Public Health, Section on Women, Children and Family Health, write and secure a federal Combating Autism grant to develop a system for better meeting the needs of children in rural and remote areas of the state who are typically diagnosed with autism 1 to 3 years later than children residing in urban areas. Even more important, children referred to the Children's Hospital at Providence now have a more comprehensive evaluation process with more specific treatment recommendations being provided; the backlog of older children was eliminated and screening and assessment clinics are available in a variety of locations statewide. Families have access to more information about available options and support groups. A cadre of 15 individuals is being supported to secure board certification in Applied Behavior Analysis, the leading evidence-based intervention for autism. *As a result, Alaska is on its way to establishing a comprehensive cross-agency system that meets the needs of Alaskans with autism.*

## 5. Examples of Outcomes for Alaskans with Developmental Disabilities in Fiscal Year 2010

As a result of the Council's work with numerous stakeholders, the following outcomes were achieved:

- 86 individuals have jobs of their choice
- 500 people have needed health services
- 77 programs or policies were created or improved
- Public perception of Alaskans with developmental disabilities positively changed from 2008 to 2010 as evidenced by an Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority-funded survey in terms of ability to hold down a job (45.7 percent to 53 percent), whether services improve their quality of life (71.5 percent to 73.4 percent) and comfort level (80.8 percent to 82.1 percent)

## 6. Fiscal Year 2011-12 Priorities

- Establishing a complex behavior hub to meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and challenging behaviors
- Mandating insurance coverage for Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Expanding services and supports for people with Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Removing the Special Education Service Agency's sunset clause and changing its funding formula in state statute
- Increasing the employment and self-employment rate of people with disabilities
- Improving services provided to women with disabilities who are the victims of sexual or physical assault
- Establishing a transportation fund that will result in a stable source of funding for operating community transportation and transit programs
- Changing eligibility for early intervention/infant learning programs
- Increasing access to services for people residing in rural and remote areas of the state



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