

Current IOTI Funded Projects 2018-19

Basic Guardianship and Pro Se Training

ABSTRACT

Guardianship Associates of Utah (GAU) submits this proposal to address the need for teaching families and professionals about both the basic aspects of guardianship and the court process for guardianship in the state of Utah. The purpose of this project would be twofold--to teach families and professionals the basics of guardianship within our state's statute, and secondly on a more limited basis, to teach families how to act Pro Se (self representation) in a guardianship proceeding. We feel that both areas of guardianship training are essential due to the continually increasing need for basic guardianship training information as we see the population demographic of children with special needs and mental health issues continue to reach the age of majority.

The first training objective will be to teach families and professional staff throughout the state the basics of guardianship. This will be accomplished in two ways: The first is through 2-hour trainings that include information about the process for guardianship. The trainings include details about when to seek guardianship and/or conservatorship, types of guardianships allowed within Utah's guardianship statute, new legislative changes to the guardianship statute, and ongoing duties of a guardian. This training will use a Power Point presentation with correlating written materials. GAU estimates providing up to 16 basic guardianship trainings throughout the state including Southern and Eastern Utah. At least one of these trainings will be for Spanish-speaking-families.

The second training objective will be to provide eight Pro Se Training Classes in different regions of the state, including one in Northern Utah, two in Central Utah, one in Eastern Utah, one in Southern Utah, and one in Southeastern Utah according to interest shown. In this specialized 2.5 hour training, GAU will teach participants how to fill out the necessary court documents for a guardianship proceeding, provide verbal and written instructions on how to file the guardianship paperwork with the court, and teach attendees how to represent themselves in a court hearing.

GAU will evaluate the effectiveness of the outcomes of these trainings. Questions and Lickert Scaling using five levels of agreement or disagreement will be used to assess how effectively training participants understand the guardianship issues presented. Information from these evaluation forms will be reviewed and compiled into data that indicates the percentage of attendees who feel they have been educated about the different aspects of the guardianship information they have received. GAU will track the number of individuals who successfully attend the trainings and request the documents to petition the courts for guardianship during the FY 2018-2019.

This project is interagency in scope. GAU coordinates with family support agencies that assist families with special needs individuals and school districts throughout the state.

TRANSITION – PARENT CONNECTIONS

ABSTRACT

Easter Seals-Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain's (ESGW) proposal focuses on the need to provide learning, support, and networking opportunities for parents with transition age youth. Transition from school to employment or further education is a new experience for parents who often don't start to plan for transition with their student until the final year of school.

Over the past two years ESGW has committed to providing services following the Discovering Personal Genius ™ model (Discovery) of Customized Employment developed by Griffin Hammis and Associates. Students, parents, support staff and ESGW staff work together as a team to determine the strengths, needs, and interests of the student, identify vocational themes and provide the student work experience to further explore the student's interests. Students, their parents and support staff are also provided the opportunity to explore vocational interests by conducting informational interviews with local businesses. Several providers in Utah are also following this model, and it is the model adopted for the "School To Work" Program.

The ideas presented to students working towards employment are new. A parent, Lisa Wade, whose son successfully completed the Discovery process and is now employed, suggested that it would be very helpful for parents to have the opportunity to network, learn and support each other through the Transition process. Lisa developed a curriculum based on the following steps of the Griffin Hammis Self-Guided Discovery model: Why Work?; Discovery Activities; Vocational Themes; Informational Interviews; Vocational Profile; Ideal Job Conditions; Job Development; Business Development Planning; Job Interviews.

Lisa Wade will facilitate the meetings supported by ESGW staff. ESGW has piloted the parent meetings to refine the curriculum. The meetings were small but the parents conveyed their appreciation for the opportunity to meet with other parents, noting how valuable the information is when they can learn from the other parents in the class.

Objectives of the training are for parents to review the Discovery steps; discuss progress through Discovery; compare their approach on transition to employment; share information about informational interviews; expand on vocational themes and how they match with local businesses; use information shared to plan for future exploration; share resources; and provide support through sharing everyday experiences.

Bringing parents together around the Discovering Personal Genius ™ Model of Customized Employment developed by Griffin Hammis will strengthen the ability of parents to support their student in planning for employment or further education.

SHIFT TRANSITION TRAINING: Life Launch and Take Charge Training

ABSTRACT

Statement of Training Need: Transition planning is a challenging time for many parents of youth and young adults with disabilities. Data from the Utah Parent Center indicate that as their children age into adulthood, the need increases for actionable information, referral, supports, and services for parents and youth. Parents face difficulties in encouraging decision-making, developing self-awareness, and building self-advocacy skills in their son or daughter.

Purposes: SHIFT is an existing peer-to-peer, evidence-based, curriculum developed for use by Parent Centers under a federally funded Rehabilitation Services Administration grant to the PEAK Parent Center. The Shift curriculum uses a "joint training" model, where activities are experienced by both the youth with a disability and his or her mentor (typically a parent) to simultaneously increase their respective knowledge and skills, and to facilitate connections with adult service providers to improve access to and use of support services related to employment, independent living, and post-secondary options.

The Shift curriculum has two parts: **Life Launch** (*The Road to Independence*, *The Road to Employment* and *The Road to a Good Life* are workshops designed to be taught as a series of three sessions or as individual stand-alone sessions or as full days) and **Take Charge** (a 5-session intensive, hands-on course with short, medium and long-term goals for a cohort of youth and parent participants).

Both *Take Charge* and *Life Launch* training courses contain specific objectives delineated for each session. All sessions utilize a strengths-based model with proven presentation modalities, including incorporated success stories, peer mentors (including self-advocates), and hands-on activities with real-time adaptations and modifications to those activities as needed by the participants.

Objectives: Activities are designed to help youth gain optimal self-determination and self-advocacy skills to more effectively pursue goals while simultaneously engaging their parents/families to be better informed and supportive as their roles and responsibilities change. They provide ready access to information and tools that can help them plan successful adult lives.

Nature and Extent of Proposed Training Activities: We will utilize experienced parent trainers and cross-agency collaborators to use the existing curriculum piloting the 3 *Life Launch* workshops in Spanish in urban and rural locations to approximately 100 participants including "teams" of parents and their son or daughter. We will recruit and teach the *Take Charge* 5-session series, piloting it for the first time in the Salt Lake Valley to a cohort of 12 youth and their parent/mentor (total of 24).

Target Population to be trained: Training participants include students with disabilities ages 14-26 preparing for adulthood and their parent/family members. Paraprofessionals/professionals are also invited to attend the *Life Launch* series. The targeted audience will include parents whose student receives services from schools and agencies serving adults with disabilities.

Description of Interagency Scope: Trainers consist of UPC & partner State agencies or organizations serving transition-age youth.

Completing the pilot of the Shift curriculum will prepare two teams of trainers (English and Spanish) establishing capacity within the UPC to offer the training beyond the period of IOTI funding.

EMPLOYMENT AND DISABILITY: YOUR RIGHTS

ABSTRACT

Employment is an essential part of participating in our society. Not only does it provide financial stability, but it offers a sense of purpose, identity, and inclusion. The connection between poverty and disability is complex and multidimensional. Throughout the entire United States, people with disabilities constitute a disproportionate number of the poor. Census data shows that as the number of Americans living in poverty climbs, people with disabilities are faring among the worst. During FY 16, the Disability Law Center (DLC) and Utah Legal Services conducted a survey regarding the legal needs of vulnerable adults in Utah. For Utahns with disabilities, getting or keeping a job was ranked #1 in a list of fifteen challenges that they are currently facing (277 people, representing 57.5% of the respondents). When qualified respondents were given a list of nine ways in which limited funds could be used to serve the needs of people with disabilities and asked to mark the top three ways they thought the funds should be used, “helping people with disabilities get the accommodations they need to keep their job” ranked #1 (281 individuals, representing 59, 5% of the total respondents thought this is the most important priority for funding).

For transition-aged youth with disabilities, finding and maintaining employment poses a unique set of challenges. In order to empower transition youth and their families and offer them tools to help them avoid and overcome barriers to successful employment, the DLC will:

- Develop and deliver seven trainings on the employment rights of people with disabilities in various geographical locations throughout the state. Training topics include: what is a reasonable accommodation for employment and how to ask for it; how to discuss disability with a potential or current employer; how to recognize discrimination in employment practices and file a charge of discrimination; and what work incentives exist for recipients of social security.
- Develop methods of on-going support to effectively implement and utilize the training materials developed including webcasts and individual technical assistance.

In order to train a variety of stakeholder groups, the DLC will also record a training webinar, which will be made publicly available online as a training/technical assistance tool. The webinar will be promoted online and in-person with both consumers and professionals.

DLC has a detailed understanding of employment law and Social Security rules and regulations. It is unique in that no other agency in Utah has the substantive knowledge and the 40 years of successful advocacy, outreach and training work that has reached hundreds of thousands of people. The DLC has been tracking and reporting data since 1996 when the DLC piloted the web-based case management and data collection system, Disability Advocacy Database (DAD). DAD was recognized nationally as the premiere method of tracking our work and the majority of protection and advocacy systems nationwide have adopted DAD to monitor their activities. We will be using DAD to track the development and implementation of this training project.

This project is a collaboration of the DLC, Utah Parent Center, Ability First, Columbus Connects, Easter Seals, Logistic Specialties Inc., the Red Rock Center for Independence and the Utah Independent Living Center.

BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS IN HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

ABSTRACT

Project Description: The objective of this project is to present evidence based training to families and caregivers across the state of Utah. Utilizing the Positive Behavior Supports philosophy, trainings will prepare participants to better support individuals with disabilities in exhibiting positive and pro-social behaviors. Trainings offer strategies to address challenging behaviors and conflict management.

Statement of Need: Families and paraprofessionals provide many hands-on supports to persons with disabilities living in Utah who often display challenging or dangerous behaviors that limit their success at home, school, employment and social settings. Training for care providers is limited, particularly in rural areas or for non-traditional groups and families. A basic knowledge of Positive Behavior Support strategies gives families and care providers skills to prevent and manage difficult behaviors in ways that respect and include people.

Objectives: To present evidence-based training supports to families and caregivers. Training focus: a) Positive behavior supports focused on guiding principles, ethics, laws and rights; b) Functional behavior analysis and basic behavior plan development; c) Teaching new and alternative behaviors, including specific strategies for use of positive social skills; d) Individualized prevention and intervention strategies; e) Using positive supports to help avoid escalation and aid in conflict resolution; f) Effective discipline techniques; g) Disseminate evidence-based best practice manual and online tools.

Participants: This project will target parents, family members, and paraprofessionals supporting people with disabilities, including people with limited supports and minimal access to available training resources. Training will be completed across the State of Utah. Trainers for the grant reside along the Wasatch Front, as well as in rural areas of both Eastern and Southern Utah. Partnerships have been and will be established in those communities for localized, in-person training and follow up.

Trainers and Training Materials: All trainings will be facilitated face-to-face by Master's level trainers with experience in both training on and implementing Positive Behavior Supports. Trainers will be available for follow-up via phone, email, skype and further training. Participants will receive handouts, manuals and presentation outlines, which include examples of behavior programs, visual aids, sensory de-escalation objects and motivation tools will be included. Materials will also be available via web and digital format.

Interagency Collaboration: The project will work with existing and new partnering agencies to increase outreach capacity. A variety of partner relationships currently exist with parent groups, medical and mental health providers, disability groups, educational providers and service agencies. Partnering agencies will collaborate in determining specific training topics and needs, as well as in advertising and hosting training.

Ongoing Training: TKJ has held an IOTI behavior grant for many years and we are always evaluating need. Agency partners and training participants regularly request additional trainings. Because of that, and the IOTI behavior grant area remaining the same, we have reapplied. Many parts of the proposal are effective and remain similar to what has been submitted in previous years. TKJ has a process in place to review and make proposal changes to stay abreast of change in needs, new research, current evidence based practices and adjustments as a result of feedback from participant and partner agencies.

DUAL DIAGNOSIS

ABSTRACT

Project Description: The objective of this project is to present evidence based training to care providers and families across the state of Utah. Trainings will focus on the unique needs of individuals with intellectual disabilities who are also living with a psychiatric diagnosis.

Statement of Need: A significant percentage of individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities are also living with a psychiatric diagnosis. The co-occurrence of psychiatric illnesses and other disabling conditions often leads to behavioral challenges, and may limit a person's ability to be successful across a variety of settings. Individuals, families, and care providers often struggle to balance access to mental health services with other needed resources in residential, educational, and community settings. The current lack of training for care providers and family members supporting individuals with dual diagnosis increases the likelihood of an individual accessing mental health supports only in times of crisis, when available options are most limited. Additionally, mental health providers lack the specific training needed to adequately treat individuals with disabling conditions.

Objectives: To present evidence-based training supports to care providers and families. Training focus: a) Increasing competence of mental health providers in assessment of individuals with a dual diagnosis, b) Awareness of how intellectual or developmental disabilities may mask or alter presentation of psychiatric conditions; c) Understanding when and how to locate mental health services; d) Management of problem behaviors that may occur in treatment settings; e) Preparing for and evaluating efficacy of mental health services; f) Self harm and suicide prevention; and g) Coordination of supports across residential, educational, and community-based settings.

Participants: This project will target paraprofessionals, family members, professionals and other care providers supporting people with dual diagnosis. Training will be completed across the state of Utah, including rural areas. In addition to those located in the Wasatch Front area, trainers for the grant reside in the rural areas of both Eastern and Southern Utah, with partnering relationships in those communities and availability for localized training and follow up.

Trainers and Training Materials: All trainings will be facilitated face-to-face by Master's level trainers with experience working with individuals with disabilities and a dual diagnosis. All trainers are also Licensed Clinical Social Workers who have experience in mental health assessment. Participants will receive handouts and presentation outlines. Trainers will be available for follow-up via phone, email, skype, and further in-person trainings.

Interagency Collaboration: The project will work in conjunction with a variety of existing and new partnering agencies to increase outreach capacity. A variety of partner relationships currently exist with medical and mental health providers, disability groups, and educational providers. Newer partnerships, including service agencies that support underserved groups, will be developed. Partnering agencies will collaborate in identifying high-needs populations, as well as in advertising and hosting training opportunities.

OPENING DOORS TO INCLUSION: Early Childhood

ABSTRACT

Preschool providers in community, private, and school district programs around Utah will be recruited to participate. Project staff have participated for several years on the State Leadership Team for a Utah State Board of Education initiative around inclusive practices. This initiative provides trainings to preschool teachers in Utah School districts. Project staff will select from the materials used in the State Board initiative to provide training to private providers and other community programs who have not had access to this training. Trainings will be delivered online to providers who enroll.

Training will consist of eight to ten online meetings. Teams will receive evidence-based information on inclusion of young children with disabilities and develop an action plan for change in their program based on the Preschool Inclusion toolbox (Barton & Smith, 2015). In the first few meetings, teams will work together to analyze their barriers and develop these action plans. Project staff will act as mentors to teams to assist them in evaluating and revising their programs.

Training on Division for Early Childhood recommended practices, developed by the Reaching Potential through Recommended Practices technical assistance grant from the Early Childhood Technical Assistance program, will be delivered to all. The following topics will be shared: environmental arrangements (zone defense, organizing classroom schedule and routines), scaffolding support to students (adult and peer supports), observing and evaluating child engagement, using child engagement strategies, and embedding learning opportunities. There will be five 90 minute trainings on inclusive strategies. Trainings will be scheduled approximately every four weeks to allow time to practice the new skills. A follow-up meeting to answer any questions concerning the implementation of those skills will occur two to three weeks following the training. It is hoped 50-60 providers from throughout Utah will participate in this training.

Several objectives are established for the training.

- Preschool staff in Utah (private and public) will receive training on strategies to create an inclusive environment for children with disabilities.
- Preschool teams will work through the Preschool Inclusion toolbox, (Barton & Smith, 2015) and develop an action plan for their agency.
- Preschool teams will receive training on the Division for Early Childhood recommended practices to address the needs developed in their action plans.

Project staff will collect evaluation data on these objectives and share changes in knowledge and application of the strategies introduced in the training. Project staff will also assist teams to address the steps in their action plan to make real changes in their service provision, to be better equipped to enroll a child with a disability. Several references and the archived trainings will be provided to programs in hopes of sustaining the use of these inclusive practices as well as allowing the programs to orient new staff to these strategies. It is hoped that by directing training on inclusive strategies to private and public preschool service providers, more preschool children with disabilities and their families around Utah will have access to inclusive environments.

TECHNOLOGY FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

ABSTRACT

According to the National Federation of the Blind, the number of individuals in Utah reported to have a visual disability in 2015 is 51,000 (<https://nfb.org/blindness-statistics>). The American Foundation for the Blind shows the 2015 rates of visual loss in Utah at 23,150 males and 27,791 females. Ages 18-34 there are 8,843; ages 35-64 there are 18,048; ages 65-74 there are 6,025; 75 and older there are 12,680 individuals <http://www.afb.org/info/blindness-statistics/state-specific-statistical-information/utah/235>

The purpose of this project is to provide assistive technology training for individuals who are blind or have low vision and the parents/guardians of minors who are visually impaired. The project also includes providing training to service providers who work with blind and visually impaired individuals. Keeping up with innovations is difficult because technology for the blind and visually impaired changes so quickly. It has been said that people from a variety of agencies who provide blind and low-vision services have expressed a desire for training in technologies and services for their staff and the people they serve.

Training will increase independence through technology to individuals in rural areas of Utah. Training participants will include employees of the six independent living centers throughout the state and staff of select departments in colleges and universities.

The goal of the training is to update the staff at the IL centers on current technologies. Because technology for the blind and visually impaired is constantly changing, and services in rural Utah range from severely lacking to non-existent, training is designed to educate low-vision and blind clientele and service providers in technology, software, and new developments to promote independence. A combined total of 90 people statewide, consisting of professionals, paraprofessionals, parents/guardians, and visually impaired and blind individuals have been identified as needing training in 14 training locations throughout Utah: Vernal, Moab, Delta, Richfield, Price, Cedar City, Orem/Provo, Ogden, Salt Lake City, St. George, Montezuma Creek, Ephraim, Park City, and Logan.

Training will be delivered in a presentation and hands-on workshop format. Trainings will focus on inclusive design technology through applications for smart phones (iPhones and Android) and tablets to either improve or acquire independence. There are numerous applications for iPhones, iPads, and Android phones and tablets that allow individuals to read print, recognize objects and faces, recognize currency, read and program thermostats, and even provide visual interpretation for travel. Explaining the differences between inclusive and specifically designed technologies is important to acquiring and maintaining employment and independence. This project will increase knowledge, help to identify, and understand 1) appropriate technology for the blind and those with low vision; 2) helpful technologies for themselves, their children, or their clients/students; 3) available low and high technology for the blind and visually impaired; 4) services for those who are blind or visually impaired; and 5) resources for obtaining assistive technologies.

Project staff include Alma J. Burgess, MPA of the Center for Persons with Disabilities, as the Project Coordinator and Everette Bacon, Field Services Coordinator for Utah's Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, as lead trainer.

ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT OF PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

ABSTRACT

The need for this training is evidenced by the fact that it is common for individuals with disabilities to exhibit problem behavior. This is compounded by the lack of qualified professionals to deliver behavior analytic services and limited access to high quality training. The training methods used to teach skills to address problem behavior may be ineffective, and many professionals may not feel adequately equipped to address problem behavior. In addition, it may be the case that the individuals delivering the training may not be experts in the field. For example, the trainers may not be certified by the behavior analysis certification board, and may not have sufficient direct clinical experience working with individuals who engage in a wide variety of moderate to severe problem behavior. The proposed project seeks to overcome those barriers to effective training.

The Utah Behavior Support Clinic (UBSC) will develop online training and support focusing on the development and application of assessment and treatment procedures addressing problem behavior in individuals with intellectual disabilities. The UBSC is a clinic associated with the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation at Utah State University specializing in using effective evidence-based approaches to develop positive behavior strategies to reduce problem behavior and increase functional communication and living skills in individual with disabilities. The UBSC staff have clinical experience providing evidence-based services for individuals with developmental disabilities in a variety of school, community, and residential settings.

The proposed project will use a combination of online module-based training, online discussion, and live webinars do deliver training to families, staff, and professionals working with individuals with disabilities that exhibit problem behavior. The training has three major tracks that consist of an introductory course, a mid-level course, and an advanced level course. These courses will run for approximately three months each and will involve 20-25 asynchronous modules, 6 online discussions, and 3 online live webinars. Both online discussions and live webinars will be delivered via online teleconferencing technology.

The target training participants will be from a variety of community agencies providing residential and community supports for individuals with disabilities and their families, as well as caregivers.