



ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY CENTERS ON DISABILITIES
RESEARCH, EDUCATION, SERVICE

Wellness Promotion Activities

June 2007

The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) is the national organization representing three national networks of interdisciplinary university based centers and programs, namely University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND), and Developmental Disabilities Research Centers (DDRC). Among the 123 Centers and Programs, a significant number are engaged in activities to promote the wellness of persons with disabilities by bringing together research, educators, and local communities in innovative programs.

*This article provides brief descriptions of some of the wellness initiatives going on in 13 different university centers on disabilities, listed alphabetically by state. For a full listing, please visit www.aucd.org and click on **Issues**.*

Colorado

JFK Partners, University of Colorado at Denver Health Sciences Center

JFK Partners provides group and individual health promotion classes to teens and adults with developmental and other disabilities and their families or caregivers. JFK Partners provides in-service education to community center board staffs and school staffs on health promotion and wellness for people with disabilities. In their advanced practice nursing courses, they teach content on health promotion and wellness and the prevention of secondary conditions for people with developmental disabilities. JFK Partners also directs programs addressing the needs of individuals with particular disabilities or health conditions, such as yearly conferences and health consultations for people with Spina Bifida and Down Syndrome, and also coordinates the statewide ad hoc Aging and Developmental Disabilities Group, composed of agencies concerned with both Developmental Disabilities and Aging.

District of Columbia

The Center for Child and Human Development at Georgetown University

The Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities has created a variety of products related to health and wellness, including "Family Food and Fitness: A Guide to Healthy Eating and Exercise," "Health and Wellness for Individuals with Disabilities: An Annotated Bibliography of On-Line Resources," "Fit for Life," an exercise video made especially for adults with developmental disabilities, and other fact sheets and Power Point presentations on health and physical activity for persons with disabilities and seniors. Many of these materials are available for free online at www.dchrp.info.

Iowa

Center for Disabilities and Development, University of Iowa

The Center for Disabilities and Development (CDD) has offered "Living Well with a Disability" (LWD), a health promotion and wellness program, to over 500 individuals with disabilities in 10 Iowa communities over the past six years. The program consists of eight weekly, two-hour training sessions and covers such topics as goal-setting, healthy reactions, nutrition, physical activity, and systems advocacy.

Because peer support is a key program component, most training facilitators are individuals with disabilities. A four-week refresher course to LWD is also available, "Continuing to Live Well with a Disability." CDD staff has also developed "Staying Healthy and Living Well," a 10-lesson health promotion course targeting high school students with disabilities who are expected to make independent life decisions as adults. CDD has also developed a series of vignettes to instruct medical students on the appropriate treatment of patients with disabilities. This training has been offered to students in the Physician Assistant Training program since 2005 and for first year students in the College of Medicine since 2006, yielding extremely positive results.

Illinois

Institute on Disability and Human Development, University of Illinois Chicago

The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Aging with Developmental Disabilities (RRTCADD) is providing training to hundreds of staff working in community-based organizations across the United States and internationally to develop and implement health promotion programs for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This Train-the-Trainer training builds on RRTCADD's successful curriculum "Exercise and Nutrition Health Education Curriculum for Adults with Developmental Disabilities." The curriculum is an innovative and interactive twelve-week program where participants are encouraged to examine their attitudes toward health, food, and exercise; gain skills and knowledge about healthy eating and exercising; participate in and identify their preferences in each activity; and locate places in the community where they can exercise.

Kansas

Life Span Institute, University of Kansas

With funding from the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Life Span Institute is exploring the efficacy of particular diets and approaches to dieting to assist adults with developmental disabilities in KS to lose weight and increase exercise. The Institute has also received a grant from Special Olympics (2007-2008) to follow 450 special athletes in North and South America who will receive advice on hearing, vision, and oral health at Healthy Athletes screenings at major Special Olympics events this summer. The Institute has funding from the REACH foundation to conduct oral health screenings of adults with developmental disabilities and to refer and pay for assessments from local dentists to help defray costs of emergency and essential dental work. The Institute is also developing a nutrition and weight-loss promotion aimed at persons with physical, intellectual, and other disabilities across the state from 2007-2012.

Kentucky

Interdisciplinary Human Development Institute at the University of Kentucky

A key wellness project of the Interdisciplinary Human Development Institute is the Preservice Health Training Project, funded by the Kentucky Council on Developmental Disabilities, to provide training to medical, nursing, physician assistant, and dental students in communicating and caring for their patients via an interactive "virtual patient" case study approach consisting of seven modules. To date, over 1,000 students have participated in the modules across these various disciplines, and this summer 450 medical, dental, and nursing students across 15 university programs in Great Britain will take the training. Though designed for the Preservice level, they also have strong continuing education merit. To date, Preservice Health Training modules have been accepted for CME credit by the American Dental Association (the dental modules are in final stages of being placed on the ADA's website), American Academy of Physician Assistants, American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, and the American Osteopathic Association. Effectiveness studies on the project have appeared in numerous professional journals.

Maine

Interdisciplinary Disability Studies Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies at the University of Maine

The Prevention Center of Excellence (PCoE) is devoted to advancing universally accessible prevention throughout Maine and beyond. The Center conducts research, policy analysis, teaching, and technical assistance to align inclusive substance abuse prevention with the state's larger public health agenda. The PCoE has also developed fully accessible and inclusive initiatives in obesity prevention, domestic violence prevention and tobacco cessation. With the Healthy and Ready to Work National Center, a national project has been developed to provide health related organization, information and technical assistance to national Healthy and Ready to Work projects, Title V state agencies, and other health and wellness efforts focusing on youth with disabilities and chronic health care conditions who are transitioning to adulthood.

Montana

University of Montana Rural Institute: Center for Excellence in Disability, Education, Research & Service

The University of Montana Rural Institute on Disabilities has conducted research into the health and wellness of adults with disabilities since 1988. The "Secondary Conditions Screening Instrument" (SCSI) addresses secondary conditions experienced by adults with mobility impairments. A similar instrument, "Health and Secondary Conditions Surveillance Instrument for Adults with Developmental Disabilities," targets adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The 8-week workshop "Living Well with a Disability" for adults with mobility impairments has been adopted and implemented by over 120 organizations in 32 states and provides a process for setting, clarifying, monitoring and attaining self-selected goals. It also provides participants with tools to manage their health, make healthy lifestyle changes, increase physical activity, develop and maintain healthy relationships, avoid depression and frustration, and improve eating habits.

New York

Westchester Institute for Human Development in affiliation with New York Medical College

Westchester Institute for Human Development has just published a curriculum called "My Health, My Choice, My Responsibility" designed to teach adults with developmental disabilities to advocate for themselves for a healthier lifestyle. The curriculum is designed to be used by two trainers (one of whom is a self-advocate) over multiple sessions. It was done with the NYS Self-Advocacy Association and the DD Council. The Institute is also implementing an electronic medical record system and is working on a patient portal so that patients, families and support staff can access info from their own medical record and use it to make appointments and communicate with their primary care provider or other health professionals.

Oregon

Oregon Institute on Disability and Development at Oregon Health and Science University

Healthy Lifestyles (HL) is a free 3-day health promotion intervention designed for people with disabilities to develop confidence and skills to stay on a journey toward a healthy and happy life. This workshop is facilitated by trainers with and without disabilities and is appropriate for people with all types of disabilities. The curriculum covers social health, physical health, emotional health, spiritual health, and health through meaningful activities. After completion of the workshop, HL support groups meet once a month for six months where participants share their successes and challenges in meeting their self-identified goals and a guest speaker leads a discussion on a health-related topic. Celebrate Wellness (CW) is an annual conference now in its eighth year promoting health, fitness, social inclusion, consumer awareness, youth transition and overall wellness for people with disabilities. Conference attendees

include people with disabilities and their family members as well as service providers, researchers, educators and businesses that serve people with disabilities.

South Dakota

Center for Disabilities at the Sanford School of Medicine of The University of South Dakota

The South Dakota UCEDD, Center for Disabilities (CD), operates the state's only Dietetic Internship Program, one that is unique in the nation as it is the only dietetic internship, approved by the American Dietetics Association, with a focus on individuals with disabilities and/or special health care needs. CD's staff has assisted in the development of the State Plan for Nutrition and Physical Activity To Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases, a plan that focuses on all South Dakotans, including those with disabilities. Recently, CD began working with three community-based service organizations to develop nutrition educational materials with appropriate readability and literacy levels for individuals with disabilities to enable them to make healthy food choices for effectively managing their diabetes and weight. This initiative provides extensive nutrition education to people with disabilities, as well as their family members and direct support workers.

Utah

Center for Persons with Disabilities at Utah State University

The Utah UCEDD partnered with the Utah Department of Health two years ago to develop and implement a statewide health promotion and wellness initiative, conducting focus groups with over 200 Utah Latino adults with disabilities and family members to better understand the complex relationships between health, disability and Latino culture. The result was a Latino State Plan for Disability and Health and the development of the Utah Center for Disability and Health with a targeted focus on Latino issues. The Center has translated standard health promotion curricula into linguistic and culturally appropriate Spanish; partnered with the Mexican Consulate, Utah Governor's Office and other community groups to increase awareness of health and disability issues faced by Latinos in the United States; and is providing targeted health promotion training to Latino adults with disabilities and Latino families who have children with disabilities.

Wisconsin

Waisman Center on Mental Retardation and Human Development at the University of Wisconsin

The Waisman Center assumed the lead to convene a statewide invitational conference to develop the Wisconsin Blueprint to reduce health disparities of people with developmental disabilities. This report set the foundation for their continuing work in the health area, including developing a statewide set of recommendations to address issues in health care and for applying these recommendations to multi-county areas. The Center conducts local and regional trainings on various aspects of health care for individuals with disabilities as well as for health care and other service providers and holds nine specialty clinics within which it provides diagnostic and follow along services for specific disability areas.

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