



**Institute for Community Inclusion**  
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

CENTER ON  
**YOUTH VOICE**  
**YOUTH CHOICE**

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## PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release: May 12, 2023**

### **The Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice Expands its National Community of Practice of State Teams Advancing Alternatives to Guardianship**

Boston, MA— The [Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice](#) (CYVYC) is delighted to announce its selection of three additional State Teams to join its national Community of Practice to promote alternatives to guardianship for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Nineteen teams from 15 States and the District of Columbia applied. The quality of the applications was excellent and revealed a deep interest in and commitment to Supported Decision-Making and its importance in the lives of transition-age youth.

After an extensive selection process, CYVYC has chosen State Teams from Arizona, California, and Texas to join our existing [Community of Practice](#). Each of the State Teams will be co-led by a youth with I/DD who is between 14 and 26 years old. The organizations co-leading the efforts of these newly selected State Teams include:

- [Diverse Ability Incorporated](#)
- [Disability Rights California](#)
- [Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities](#) and [Texas Advocates](#)

Under a 5-year grant from the US Administration on Community Living, CYVYC provides extensive technical assistance to State Teams to promote alternatives to guardianship so that fewer youth with I/DD have legal guardians. The Community of Practice—now composed of 11 State Teams—fosters a rich dialogue around best practices, supports long-term change, and centers the voices of youth leaders in its work. The Community of Practice members work together to create lasting systemic reform in their states and support [Youth Ambassadors](#) to be leaders for change.

“We look forward to collaborating with these new State Teams in advancing the decision-making rights, self-determination, and leadership of youth with I/DD. Ensuring this next generation of youth is front and center in all levels of this work is key to the success and lasting impact of this national initiative,” said

Cathy Costanzo, Executive Director of the Center for Public Representation (CPR), which facilitates the CYVYC Community of Practice.

The CYVYC Community of Practice Selection Committee was composed of a Youth Ambassador, a member of its Youth Advisory Committee, a representative from its National Coalition, and CYVYC staff, including representatives from the Institute for Community Inclusion, CPR, Self Advocates Becoming Empowered, and the Georgia Advocacy Office.

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### **About the Institute for Community Inclusion**

The Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) promotes the inclusion of people with disabilities in their communities through training, consultation, clinical and employment services, and research. ICI is a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities based at the University of Massachusetts Boston and Boston Children's Hospital.

The Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice (CYVYC) is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston, in partnership with the Center for Public Representation, Self Advocates Becoming Empowered, and the Human Services Research Institute, and in consultation with experts from the Harvard Law School Project on Disability and the Georgia Advocacy Office. CYVYC is funded by cooperative agreement # 90DNDM0004, Administration for Community Living (ACL), US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Washington, D.C. 20201.