

A National Gateway to Self-Determination

Project Abstract

The overall goal of this project is ***“to establish a sustainable, evidence-based training system that enhances self-determination training programs that lead to quality of life outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities throughout the lifespan.”*** In support of this goal a UCEDD Consortium (Missouri, Kansas, Oregon, New York, Illinois) in partnership with a newly formed National Self-Determination Alliance (including self-advocates, families, and numerous national partners) will implement a comprehensive set of activities designed to achieve the following objectives.

- 1. To establish a leadership structure that enables partnerships and collaborations to support the creation and sustainability of the National Self-Determination Gateway.** A *National SD Alliance* will be formed to identify current practices and gaps in SD training, plan and pilot new Specialty SD Curricula, conduct state SD demonstrations, and design, build and sustain a new National SD Gateway.
- 2. (Phase I): To review and identify national self-determination training resources and gaps using an evidence-based framework.** Understanding of SD training gaps and needs will be enhanced through the development and use of a *SD Life Chances Planning Tool*, an evidenced-based instrument designed to review and refine existing SD curricula, guide the development of new curricula, and provide a framework for curricular evaluation. In addition, a *National Guide for Achieving Sustainable SD* will be created that outlines a national plan to develop, test, and sustain, access to SD training.
- 3. (Phase II): To develop and test approaches that address barriers to self-determination, fill existing gaps, and provide national self-determination training.** Availability of SD evidence-based training resources will be expanded through development and piloting of specialty SD curricula. Also, a *National SD Gateway* will be created as a sustainable national resource to support the development and advancement of SD training through virtual and personal access to SD curricula, consultants, and other SD resources. Finally, a *SD Capacity Building Handbook* will be developed and piloted as a self-assessment and resource component of the SD Gateway that is designed to enhance state capacity and scale-up self-determination training on an individual state level.
- 4. (Phase III): To market the SD Gateway nationally and promote its large scale diffusion, implementation, and sustainability.** The UCEDD Leadership Consortium and the SD Alliance will review the results and lessons learned from the pilot SD Gateway and curricula development initiatives and use the results to plan for large scale implementation which will include a SD Gateway sustainability plan.
- 5. To evaluate effectiveness of the national self-determination training initiative and disseminate findings, results, and research to practice publications.** The outcomes of this project will be evaluated and UCEDD Consortium members will develop and disseminate a series of SD information briefs on research, policy, and support issues.

There are a number of important beliefs upon which this SD initiative is founded. They include:

- SD is best considered in the context of a *social-ecological framework*
- Development of SD is a *lifelong process*
- Scaling-up SD training activities must occur within an *evidence-driven* framework
- The development of SD is a means to obtaining an *improved quality of life*
- People with developmental disabilities *must be equal partners*