



Board Meeting Packet

January 19-20, 2022
Virtual Meeting



Board Meeting

Virtual Meeting · January 19th-20th, 2022

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January 2022

Dear BPDD Board Members,

Happy new year! I look forward to seeing you online for the board meeting next week Wednesday and Thursday. We will be starting our Thursday meeting with an update on governmental affairs followed by a short presentation about what plain language is and an update of the board's plain language project.

With our new 5-year state-plan underway the Executive Committee thought it would be good to take time to discuss our projects, both old and new. In your packet there is a section with pages outlining the projects and their status.

Our March board meeting will be on Wednesday March 23rd. Save the date for the virtual Disability Advocacy Day on March 16th. Board staff will update members about registration when it is available and can also register you for Disability Advocacy Day if you are available.



With so many unknowns surrounding COVID-19 the Executive Committee will be assessing the safety of having in-person meetings and what that will look like but we are committed to keeping a virtual option available for every meeting going forward.

Stay warm and healthy!







Greg Meyer

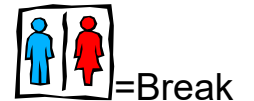
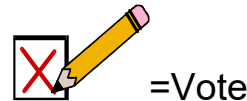
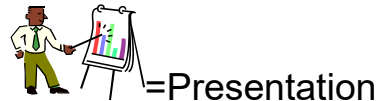
BOARD AGENDA JANUARY 19-20, 2022

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2022

Time	Symbol	Topic	Facilitator/Presenter
3:00-3:30 PM		Member Caucus	All
3:30-4:30 PM		Diversity Committee	Staff: Molly Cooney

Thursday, January 20, 2022

Time	Symbol	Topic	Facilitator/Presenter
7:45-8:30 AM		Welcome and Technical Assistance (meeting starts at 8:30am)	All
8:30-9:30 AM		Governmental Affairs	Staff: Tami Jackson
9:30-10:15 AM		Plain Language and Accessible Design Discussion	All
10:15-10:30 AM		Public Comment	
10:30-10:45 AM		Break – FILL OUT, SIGN, AND RETURN TRAVEL VOUCHERS to BPDD STAFF	All
10:45-11:45 AM		State-Plan Objectives Review - Current Grants/Grantees	All



Business Meeting

11:45-11:50 AM
11:50-11:55 AM
11:55-12:00 PM
12:00-12:05 PM
12:05-12:10 PM
12:10-12:15 PM
12:15-12:35 PM
12:35-12:40 PM
12:40-12:45PM



- Vote to accept November 2021 Minutes
- Chair Report
- Executive Director Report
- Financial Report
- Executive Committee
- Diversity Committee
- Nominating & Membership Committee
- Partner Agency updates
- Additional Questions
- Adjourn

All

All

- Greg Meyer
- Beth Swedeen
- Beth Swedeen
- Greg Meyer
- Andy Thain
- Ashley Mathy
- DRW, DPI, DHS,
DWD, Waisman



= Meal



=Meeting



=Presentation



=Vote



=Walking Activity



=Break

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Present:	Chair: Greg Meyer Vice Chair: George Zaske, Sydney Badeau, Barbara Beckert, Gail Bovy, Kevin Coughlin, Pam Delap, Desi Kluth, Ashley Mathy, Stephenie Mlodzik, Daniel Parker, Hector Portillo, Nathan Ruffolo, Andy Thain, Tricia Thompson, Kelly Weyer, Amy Whitehead, Chris Wood
Absent:	Kedibonye Carpenter, Patrick Friedrich, Houa Yang, Meredith Dressel,
Staff Present:	Fil Clissa, Molly Cooney, Natasha Fahey-Flynn, Jeremy Gundlach, Sally Flaschberger, Tami Jackson, Kaitlin McNamara, Jennifer Neugart, Beth Swedeen

Vice Chair George Zaske called the meeting to order at 11:31 AM.

1. Chair Report:

- We passed on the chair report as Chair Greg Meyer is sick and has lost this voice. There is a chair letter included in the board meeting packet for November.

2. Executive Director Report:

- ED, Beth Swedeen gave an update on a new board member who was appointed but not able to make this meeting on short notice. Beth also gave an update on two trainings that BPDD will be doing in the next several months. The first is on Plain Language and it is a 2-part training. The second is on Supported Decision Making and alternatives to guardianship. Beth also gave an update on the federal grants being given to DD councils, Protection and Advocacy agencies, and UCEDDs around public health work. BPDD has been working with DPI on reaching families of color to bridge gaps in community resources and involvement. DPI will be matching funds that BPDD puts into the partnership.

3. Financial Report:

- BPDD's current financials can be found in the November board meeting packet. We are currently cleaning up the funds in our fiscal year 2020 pot of money. The fiscal year 2021 year has ended but we have another year to spend down the money. We have currently spent down about 30% of the funds.

4. Executive Committee Report:

- Vice Chair George Zaske discussed the October meeting in which we setup the agenda for the November board meeting. There was also a discussion about BPDD's equity work and grassroots advocacy.

5. Nominating & Membership Committee Report:

- Did not meet in November. BPDD is still looking for a board member to fill a provider role.

6. Diversity Committee Report:

- The diversity committee is very focused on working on BPDD's equity statement to make sure we are being responsive and open to all

communities. The committee looked at examples of other agency's equity statements and are in a continuing discussion to work on a statement.

7. Action Items:

Motion to accept the September 2021 board minutes made by Nathan Ruffolo and seconded by Stephenie Mlodzik. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Agency Updates:

DRW- September Updates

- Mitch Hagopian also joined the meeting to talk about DRW's PADD plan.
- [DVC Sign on Statement](#)
- [Elections 2022](#)
- [Voting Advocacy Help](#)

DHS- [September Updates](#)

Waisman- [September Updates](#)

DWD- [Public Input Session](#)

DPI – [September Updates](#)

Motion to adjourn by Andy Thain at 12:32 PM; seconded by Chris Wood. Unanimously passed.

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-  BPDD Board Meeting
-  Self-Determination Conference / Disability Advocacy Day / Employment Conference
-  BPDD Executive Committee Meeting
-  Partners in Policymaking
-  National Election Day
-  State Holiday

Updated: 1/12/22 jg

Exec meeting dates should be scheduled 6 weeks before board mtg dates

Board Meeting Dates & Locations:

January 19 & 20, 2022	Virtual Meeting via Zoom
March 23, 2022	Virtual Meeting via Zoom
May 18 & 19, 2022	Virtual Meeting via Zoom
July 20 & 21, 2022	Virtual Meeting via Zoom
September 21 & 22, 2022	Virtual Meeting via Zoom
November 16 & 17, 2022	Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Executive Committee Meeting Dates

February 14 th , 2022	3:00-4:00 PM
April 4 th , 2022	3:00-4:00 PM
June 13 th , 2022	3:00-4:00 PM
August 8 th , 2022	3:00-4:00 PM
October 10 th , 2022	3:00-4:00 PM
December 12 th , 2022	3:00-4:00 PM

Other BPDD Dates:

March 16 th , 2022	Disability Advocacy Day
TBD	Self-Determination Conference

Committee Assignments 2020 - 2021

Diversity committee:

- 1. Andy Thain – Chair**
- 2. Hector Portillo – Vice Chair**
3. George Zaske
4. Kedibonye Carpenter
5. Barbara Beckert
6. Daniel Parker
7. Meredith Dressel
8. Desirae Kluth
9. Houa Yang
10. Cheryl Funmaker
11. Amy Whitehead
12. Pam DeLap

Nominating and Membership Committee:

- 1. Ashley Mathy - Chair**
2. Patrick Friedrich
3. Tricia Thompson
4. Nathan Ruffolo
5. Stephanie Mlodzik
6. Kevin Coughlin
7. Pamela DeLap
8. Greg Meyer
9. Chris Wood
10. Kelly Weyer
11. Sydney Badeau
12. Gail Bovy

Executive Committee:

- 1. Greg Meyer - Chair**
- 2. George Zaske – Vice Chair**
3. Andy Thain
4. Nathan Ruffolo
5. Ashley Mathy

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Zoom

Present: **Chair:** Greg Meyer **Vice Chair:** George Zaske; Andy Thain, Nathan Ruffolo, Ashley Mathy
Staff Liaison: Beth Swedeen

Absent:

Staff Present: Beth Swedeen, Jeremy Gundlach

Meeting called to order at 3:07 pm.

1. **Set January Board Mtg Agenda:** Meeting will be Virtual

3:00-3:30 PM	Member Caucus
3:30-4:30 PM	Diversity Committee
4:30-5:00 PM	Nominating and Membership

7:45-8:30 AM	Welcome and Technical Support
8:30-9:30 AM	Governmental Affairs
9:30-10:15 AM	Plain Language and Accessible Design Discussion
10:15-10:30 AM	Break
10:30-11:15 AM	State-Plan Objectives Review - Current Grants/Grantees
11:15-12:15 PM	Business Meeting

2. **Discuss March Board Meeting Options:**

- The 2022 Disability Advocacy Day will be virtual. The time should not interfere with the regular board meeting schedule.

3. **Set date to review BPDD Bylaws:**

- Executive Committee has decided to review the bylaws at the February 14, 2022 meeting. Jeremy will send out the bylaws for members to review after the current meeting is finished.

4. **Other Agenda Items:**

- BPDD Diversity training for the board is a good idea with support from the executive committee. Having the training during a board meeting would allow for most board members to participate. We will plan to have the training in March. Staff will look into possible trainers and training activities.

Motion to adjourn by George Zaske at 3:36 PM seconded by Nathan Ruffolo. Unanimously passed.

January 19, 2021





3:30-4:30 pm

Diversity Committee Agenda

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88154161351?pwd=YWZweHZCMEo3dTRMUHRUN1FiZTFodz09>

(phone number listed below)

Members **Chair:** Andy Thain **Vice Chair:** Hector Portillo; George Zaske, Kedibonye Carpenter, Desirae Kluth, Houa Yang, Cheryl Funmaker, Shannon Mattox, Pam DeLap, Amy Whitehead, Alicia Reinhard, Barbara Beckert, Daniel Parker, Meredith Dressel
Staff Liaison: Molly Cooney

Symbol	Topic	Presenter	Time
	1. Call Meeting to order	Chair	3:30
	2. Further development of BPDD equity statement	All	3:30-4:20
	3. Identify next steps	All	4:20-4:30
	4. Meeting closes	Chair	4:30

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88154161351?pwd=YWZweHZCMEo3dTRMUHRUN1FiZTFodz09>

Meeting ID: 881 5416 1351

Passcode: 001681

Call in # 1(929) 205-6099



=Meeting



=Presentation



=Vote



Committee Present:	Chair: Andy Thain, Vice Chair: Hector Portillo; Cheryl Funmaker, George Zaske, Kelly Weyer, Barbara Beckert, Amy Whitehead, Sydney Badeau
Committee Absent:	Greg Meyer, Daniel Parker, Alicia Reinhard, Kedi Carpenter; Meredith Dressel; Desi Kluth, Houa Yang, Shannon Mattox
Staff Present:	Beth Swedeen; Natasha Fahey-Flynn; Molly Cooney
Guests:	

Meeting called to order at 3:30 PM

1. Topic 1: Discuss and develop a draft equity statement

- We might want our equity statement to be clearly defined but broad enough; shouldn't have to change it every few years. Broad will allow for change, evolution, and new things to emerge
- The committee reviewed the examples and discussed what we like and dislike from the various statements:
 - Pennsylvania's statement: Some committee members liked it found it a little long; we could revise it to make it shorter and at an easier reading level
 - However, the statement doesn't mention intersectionality, and this is an important point that we may want to make – people have multiple identities, and these identities impact each another
 - Some don't like the line, "embrace of all human diversity."
 - Washington's statement is liked but it's long and includes a long list
 - Many did not like the idea of including a list b/c it inevitably will exclude people; avoid labeling people
 - Washington's statement also includes a comment about people-first and identity-first language. We may need to consider this as well. Maybe it's not exactly part of our equity statement but it's important and should go somewhere.
- Where should the equity statement go? Part of our mission, part of our charge or a 3rd additional item? Probably a 3rd item
- Discussion around struggling with equity statements in general. Does a statement prove anything?
 - Having a statement on the webpage sends an important message that we support and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion for all. Important to have public acknowledgement of this.
- Suggestions for a statement:
 - Inclusion, Representation and Equity Statement - The WI Board for People with DD is committed to making sure our work welcomes, involves, and benefits people from all backgrounds and identities.
 - Inclusion, Representation and Equity Statement - The WI Board for People with DD is committed to making sure our work welcomes, involves, and benefits people from all backgrounds and identities. BPDD haven't 'arrived' and we recognize that this is an ongoing journey

- We are committed to making sure our work welcomes, involves and benefits people from all backgrounds and identities.
 - People like this one but someone pointed out that it doesn't get at or recognize that many people have experienced disparities
- We may also want to include in our statement:
 - a comment acknowledging that this is an 'ongoing journey' or process; that we recognize there are holes in our awareness
 - a comment that states that we recognize that systems are deficient and leave out a lot of people and communities
 - a comment that acknowledges that things are unbalanced

2. Next steps

- Molly to type up notes and send to all to review before next meeting.
- Next meeting we'll continue to work at developing an equity statement

Meeting adjourned at 4:32 PM

BPDD Budget Update



Programming

Category	Federal Fiscal Year 2020			Federal Fiscal Year 2021		
	Budget	Spent	Remaining	Budget	Spent	Remaining
Personnel	482,099.41	533,938.98	(51,839.57)	499,866.00	321,930.39	177,935.61
Grants, Contracts, Partnerships*	702,168.19	639,756.20	62,411.99	668,549.00	280,951.84	387,597.16
Programming Subtotal	1,184,267.60	1,173,695.18	10,572.42	1,168,415.00	602,882.23	565,532.77
Must be >=70%	88.6%	90.2%		89.5%	85.9%	



Board Operations

Category	Budget	Spent	Remaining	Budget	Spent	Remaining
Personnel	103,778.42	88,101.85	15,676.57	86,359.00	54,844.21	31,514.79
Grants, Contracts, Partnerships*	47,935.98	39,874.90	8,061.08	50,718.00	44,146.91	6,571.09
Board Operations Subtotal	151,714.40	127,976.75	23,737.65	137,077.00	98,991.12	38,085.88
Must be <=30%	11.4%	9.8%		10.5%	14.1%	



TOTAL

1,335,982.00	1,301,671.93	34,310.07	1,305,492.00	701,873.35	603,618.65
		2.6%			46.2%

Summary		Summary	
Project Period:	10/01/2019 - 09/30/2021	Project Period:	10/01/2020 - 09/30/2022
Project Status:	Liquidation	Project Status:	Open
Total Award:	1,335,982.00	Total Award:	1,305,492.00
Spent	1,301,671.93	Spent	701,873.35
Remaining	34,310.07	Remaining	603,618.65



The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) mission is to help people with developmental disabilities become independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life.

Plain Language: What is it? What are our plans?



Slides 2-5 from:

Jennifer Sell

Cultural Linguistic Services

UW–Madison Office of Human Resources

jennifer.sell@wisc.edu



Cultural Linguistic Services
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

Plain Language is

- communication your audience understands the **first** time they read or hear it
- defined by results. Your audience can...
 - ✓ Find what they need
 - ✓ Understand what they find
 - ✓ Use what they find to meet their needs



Plain Language is **not**

- “Dumbing **down**” -- Plain Language is “clearing **up**”
- “Write to express, not impress.”
- Plain Language in government, law, medical, and law enforcement settings saves time, money, energy, and even lives.

“And besides, have you ever heard anyone complain that a public document is too clear?”

Attorney Joseph Kimble

Benefits of Plain Language

- ✓ **More** people understand and remember your message
- ✓ You deliver your message **more** quickly
- ✓ You spend less time explaining and fixing mistakes
- ✓ People are motivated to read or listen...and follow through faster!

“We're all busy...We don't want to waste a lot of time "translating" difficult, wordy documents. Plain language saves time. If we save time, we save money. Plain language is good customer service and makes life easier for the public....

--www.plainlanguage.gov

Examples

- It has come to our attention that it will be necessary for you to provide further documentation verifying your residency.
- Residents are obligated to remove themselves from any situation where a violation is occurring.
- **Please send proof that you live in Wisconsin.**
- **You must leave the area if someone is breaking the rules.**

Resources

- [UW Madison's Plain Language Tips](#) 
- [Learn More About Plain Language](#)
Topics include legal, health literacy, and accessibility
- <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/>
- [Maryland DD Council's Guide](#)

Plain Language

Use **plain language**, so people are motivated to read and can understand your message right away.

Prepare for a Successful Message

Who is your reader? What does your reader need to do? Why is the message important to your reader?

Use Plain Language Strategies

- Start with the most important information: **What does your reader need to know, think, or do?**
- Talk to the individual readers in your audience. Use the pronouns **I, you, and we.**
- Write **short sentences and paragraphs.**
 - Don't use more words than you need.
 - Cut out modifiers. (**absolutely**, actually, completely, really, quite, totally)
 - Start a new sentence for each new idea.
- Write **active sentences.**
 - Subject – verb – object
 - No:** The application must be submitted by October 1. (passive)
 - Yes:** You must submit the application by October 1. (active)
- Use **familiar words.**
 - Avoid acronyms or jargon.
 - Find an "everyday" way to say it.
 - No:** There are no vacancies at this point in time.
 - Yes:** We don't have open positions now.
- Pay attention to the **look** of your message.
 - Organize information in small chunks. (1-3 lines of text)
 - Use bullet points and checklists to create white space.
 - Write in 12-point font or larger.
 - **Bold** important information.
 - Avoid ALL CAPS and *italics*. Only underline headings and links.

Which site should I visit first for Plain Language resources?

- <https://plainlanguage.gov/>

Stumped on what word to substitute? Want to tackle wordiness?

- <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/words/use-simple-words-phrases/>
- https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/style/css_wordvphrases/

"How to Write Email That Respects Your Reader's Time" webinar on YouTube

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7P7KLH4T5w>

Interested in writing "readable" blogs?

- <https://thewordyhabitat.com/how-to-make-your-blog-posts-more-readable/>

Need research-based guidelines and tips for writing on the web?

- <https://www.nmgroupp.com/topic/writing-web/>

BPDD's Plain Language Activities

- ❑ Hosted a two-part statewide training on plain language in December 2021 and January 2022. Over 230 people attended!
- ❑ Encourage disability agencies to use of plain language for their websites, publications, and communication. We hope to partner with an agency to support their efforts. In our Feedback Survey from the training 19 agencies expressed interest in follow-up work.
- ❑ Develop videos and other materials to educate people about plain language and resources
- ❑ Support self-advocates and family members on boards and councils to advocate for the use of plain language.



Wisconsin Board for People
with Developmental Disabilities
~ Celebrating 50 Years ~

Project Updates

Board Meeting January 2022

Families Supporting Families Grants



The Families Supporting Families grants began in recognition that community-based organizations run by people of color know best how to support the families they serve. BPDD partners with the Department of Public Instruction to provide grants to support these organizations to expand their services. Through these efforts, more families of color and their children with disabilities will get connected to the people, activities, and community resources they need to live the lives they want.

Grantees empower families:

- Parent University located in Milwaukee brings families together at monthly meetings to share information related to special education, busing, housing, advocacy, school relationships, and many other topics.
- Mommy's Beautiful Sunrise located in Milwaukee supports families to learn about resources, to connect with each other and with the community, and to practice self-care.
- Alianza Latina Aplicando Soluciones (ALAS) based in Milwaukee serves Latino/a parents who have children and youth with disabilities by providing information, individual assistance, and training to enable them to advocate for their children's access to appropriate services and help their children meet developmental and academic goals.
- Ho-Chunk Nation of Black Rivers Falls and their non-profit partner Living Our Visions, Inc. will host weekend retreats for tribal families with a child with a disability. Families will connect with each other and learn together about resources they can access.
- Padres E Hijos En Accion based in Madison increases the education, resources, independence, and well-being of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in the community.

SPARKS Grants

The 2021-22 Sparks Grants have a new focus! People with disabilities and their family members have said they are especially concerned about social isolation, so this round of grants challenged community groups and individuals to submit ideas for creating more social connections and inclusive opportunities for people with disabilities. We received 20 applications and funded 7 projects. Below is a summary of each project.

The **Disability Action Network** in La Crosse will host its first Disability Pride Fest this summer as part of the No Limits: Ability Awareness Week. The Pride Fest will highlight the value of people with disabilities in the community. The celebration will include networking events, presentations, performances, a community art project and resource booths.

The **Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast** is committed to providing an inclusive, fun experience to all girls – regardless of their disability status. To help foster this commitment, Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast will develop and pilot an inclusion module as part of the required training that all troop leaders receive. The goal is to reach up to 250 troop leaders over the next year.

The **La Crosse Area YMCA** will host evening art sessions throughout the year called, Lived Experiences Through Art, will be led by a local artist with a disability who is passionate about guiding support and connection through different mediums. The events will take place at the new All Abilities Trane accessible park in partnership with the City of La Crosse. The park itself is safe and welcoming to all ages and abilities.

St. Croix Therapy in Hudson is offering inclusive art classes, hosting a Community Conversation on Autism Awareness and providing a 4-week sibling support program to bring together families who receive services and the greater Hudson community.

The **Wisconsin Aspergers Empowerment** and **Our TreASures** are joining forces to host four social game nights for people with Autism and community members. The goal of the game nights is to spark friendships and help community members get to know each other beyond the labels.

The **W.J. Niederkorn Library** will provide monthly all-inclusive sensory story times for children ages 3 to 6 that will consist of extra supports such as a visual schedule, textured props and interactive books with felt boards. Sensory story times will also end with sensory play activities including homemade scented playdough, mud painting, water bead sensory bins, and more. The library will also develop a custom app which will include social narratives about visiting the library, attending library programs, and getting a library card.

The **YMCA of Greater Milwaukee's Camp Minikani** provides meaningful experiences for more than 2,500 youth in the Milwaukee area. The Day of Inclusion will bring the "Magic of Minikani" to children with disabilities to experience the outdoors, play and grow with their peers without disabilities. This day is intended to introduce youth with disabilities to the camp experience to make them and their parents more comfortable with the idea of sending their kids to camp. Children can participate in adaptive activities like climbing, boating, horseback riding and swimming.

Decision-Making

Supported Decision-Making is an alternative to Guardianship. It is a least restrictive option, allowing the person with the disability to retain decision-making authority. We have created informational materials, a tool kit, PowerPoint presentations, and webinar trainings. We have conducted, numerous presentations and guidance to families and professionals interested in this option for supporting loved ones with disabilities.

We are participating in a Community of Practice with the Center for Public Representation. The project focuses on empowering Self-Advocates to lead training and guidance for their peers on Supported Decision-making. We have 5 self-advocates participating in the project as ambassadors, a mentor and a co-leader.



In February 2022, BPDD is hosting a virtual workshop on supported decision-making. Over 1,000 people have registered!

It's important that children have opportunities to make their own choices so that they grow into more independent adults who make their own decisions. A new collaboration with Family Voices of WI and the DHS Bureau of Children's Services aims to support this. Using DHS's "Deciding Together" tool, we will identify strategies and train service coordinators and equip families so that they can encourage children with disabilities to make choices from a young age.

Self-Determination

Self-Determination Conference: 1,100 people registered for the 2021 conference. The conference originated with the intent to provide information and training to people with disabilities wanting to use self-directed supports. Training is an important component to self-direction. We again had to shift gears and had a completely virtual conference.



Self-Determination YouTube Channel: This project focuses on giving self-advocates a platform to voice their opinions, talk to other self-advocates and provide information they feel self-advocates want to know about. It is also a way for self-advocates to share with the general public what they want them to know about people with disabilities. Currently we have 1184 subscribers. We produce 2 videos per month.

The content is determined by a steering committee made up of mostly self-advocates. The Channel has 7 hosts and has interviewed over 100 self-advocates. Since the pandemic, they have gotten creative with how to produce these videos.



Increasing Advocacy and Leadership Skills

The Board supports the statewide self-advocacy organization, People First Wisconsin. People First WI supports self-advocacy leadership in WI. The People First organization works to support self-advocates in understanding disability issues so that they can better advocate on issues. They provide support to create local People First Chapters around the state. Members participate in Disability Advocacy Day, testify at hearings, provide stakeholder input on various committees, boards, and councils, and share their stories with policymakers. In 2022, there will be a stronger emphasis on providing more support to local chapters.



Youth Leadership Forum:

The Wisconsin Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a week-long leadership training and career awareness program for high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors with disabilities. Each summer, 25-30 students with disabilities participate.

- Due to COVID-19 both the 2020 and 2021 YLF sessions were canceled.

People First Wisconsin:

- People First supports 19 local People First Chapters around the state. People First members work on state and local issues to improve full participation in their communities and access to the services and supports they need including: expanding transportation, increasing integrated employment, voting education, self-directing their long-term care services and COVID reopening guidance.
- People First provided training and support to local chapters on how to use technology to stay connected and continue to provide the support and information to members through weekly zoom meetings to share information on COVID and address member concerns.
- People First works to ensure people with disabilities are represented on committees and Boards that oversee issues that are important to them.
- People First mobilized and gave testimony on voter bills that would create barriers for people with disabilities to vote. People First also provided testimony on an abuse and neglect bill.

Partners in Policymaking

Partners in Policymaking is an advocacy program for adults with I/DD and family members of children with disabilities under the age of 21 to become seasoned leaders across the state. Graduates work to improve policies and practices that lead to better lives for people with disabilities by improving the quality of supports, developing cost efficiencies, and learning how to use community supports to maximize independence. Partners provided programming in a virtual format this year allowing many participants to participate for the first time because barriers like transportation and childcare were no longer in the way.



“My biggest a-ha was realizing that the disability community is more powerful when it bands together than being in silos. There are so many common goals.”

- Partners Graduate ”

100% of graduates said they would be more connected with their legislator.

Partners gets results:

- 100% of Partner graduates say they will be a stronger advocate and be more actively involved in issues that affect people with disabilities.
- 73% of 2021 graduates said Partners influenced them to be part of a board/committee or to run for office.
- “Because of Partners, I shared my perspective for the state budget proposal, attended a local rally and met my legislators. I was also inspired to submit a proposal for our school district’s use of rescue funding, participate in our PTO and in local parent groups. Because of more participation from families with disabilities, our PTO allocated funds for children’s books that are inclusive of people with disabilities.”
- “Zoom removed barriers that formerly would have prevented in-person advocacy such as lack of transportation, childcare and physical accommodations turned out not to be obstacles. We were able to coordinate and organize on social media and attend meetings and advocacy opportunities remotely.”
- More than 200 Partner graduates are now a network of community leaders and decision- makers serving on policymaking committees, commissions, and boards at local, state and national levels.

Increasing Civic Engagement and Advocacy

The Board is sought out by state agency and state policymakers for its I/DD perspective. We are frequently asked how public policies—budget decisions, legislation, administrative rules, and changes to or implementation of state agency programs—will affect people with I/DD and their families. We are also consulted for recommendations on ways to improve programs and public policy for people with I/DD and are a valued stakeholder in a wide variety of public policy arenas (health care, long term care, transportation, and education).

BPDD works in collaboration with **Survival Coalition**—a cross disability group of 30 organizations—and with the three DD Act partners—Disability Rights Wisconsin, the Waisman Center, and People First Wisconsin—on high priority public policy issues affecting people with I/DD and their families including expanding integrated employment, increasing transportation options and access, improving special education quality and general education access, and improving Medicaid and long term care quality and access.

BPDD collaborates as a joint partner in the **Disability Vote Coalition**, a non-partisan effort to increase voter turnout and participation in the electoral process by Wisconsin voters with disabilities.



“

I am thinking of getting involved in my local government. Maybe working on a commission on veterans issues. 6 months ago I would not even have thought about this.

- Partner in Policymaking Graduate

”

Empowering advocates with information:

- BPDD collaborates with Survival Coalition of Wisconsin during Disability Advocacy Day. This event connects more than 600 disability advocates from around the state with their legislators at the State Capitol. The annual event includes a briefing about current disability issues and meetings between disability advocates and their legislators.
- BPDD maintains an active legislative alerts email service which allows us to send about 200 alerts a year. BPDD maintains an overall list of more than 9,000 members. In 2018-2019 more than 1,200 subscribers were added to the list.
- BPDD, in partnership with Disability Rights Wisconsin and The Arc, trained over 400 people statewide on disability-specific issues in Governor Evers 2019-21 Biennial Budget to help them advocate for their needs. • Two trainings were offered in Spanish along with translated materials. About 25 people took advantage of these trainings.
- The WI Disability Vote Coalition provided language and testimony on a bill to remove the requirement that a voter with a disability must state their name before being allowed to vote.
- Promoted social media campaigns, public service announcements, press releases and email to spread awareness about Disability Voter Registration Week.



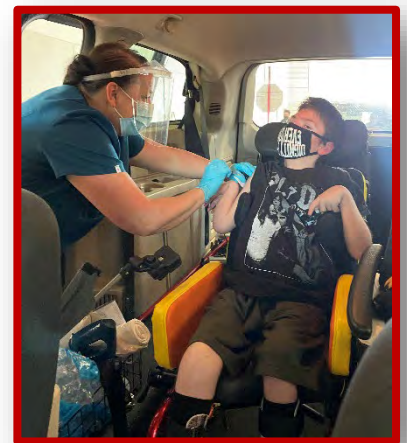
Developmental Disability Councils play a crucial role in ensuring that people with disabilities, their families and their support networks are not left behind during COVID-19. Wisconsin's Board for People with Developmental Disabilities has shifted much of our work to shape COVID-19 related state policies and support communities around the state to promote the health, safety, and connections of people with disabilities who are at increased risk of infection, serious complications, and heightened health and safety risks created by isolation and lack of supports.

Resources

■ BPDD partnered with the Department of Health Services (DHS) to ensure that the COVID-19 page for members had plain language resources vetted by people with disabilities.

■ BPDD received federal funds to aid in getting people with disabilities and their families vaccinated. BPDD awarded \$60,000 in COVID vaccination grants to community groups educating and vaccinating people with disabilities in historically oppressed, diverse, or underserved communities. The grantees include Parent University in Northern Milwaukee, ALAS, Padres e Hijos en Accion in Dane County, the Sokagon Chippewa Health Clinic, and the LOV, inc working with the HoChunk Nation.

■ BPDD and the Living Well Project developed a [COVID-19 Toolkit](#) with plain language resources for staying Healthy, Safe, and Connected during the COVID-19 pandemic. BPDD also worked with DHS to develop flyers and [resources on where and how to get the COVID-19 vaccine](#) and answer frequently asked questions about the vaccine.



Outreach

BPDD has utilized virtual platforms to continue supporting people with disabilities, providing resources and sharing information across Wisconsin.

- VIRTUAL Conferences: BPDD transitioned the conferences and in-person gatherings to a virtual format to connect thousands of people with disabilities, their families and supporters during the pandemic, including a virtual Self-Determination Conference, a virtual Disability Advocacy Day, and a virtual Employment First conference
- BPDD has developed a databank with close to 10,000 contacts and an active social media presence that allows us to quickly get information and resources into the hands of the disability community.
- BPDD and the Living Well Project hosted weekly [Living Well Wednesday presentations](#) live on Zoom and Facebook Live on topics ranging from COVID-19 and the vaccine, changes to the Medicaid Purchase Plan, how to have healthy relationships, and tips for reducing stress. The presentations have been viewed more than times.
- BPDD's [Self-Determination You Tube Channel](#), which features 4 dynamic self-advocates co-hosting segments that feature other self-advocates.

"Thank you for the great information about COVID-19 and the vaccine. Very much appreciated!"

- Tricia



Wisconsin's Living Well project aims to increase the health, safety, independence, and well-being of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in the community. This 5-year federal grant from the Administration on Community Living develops and tests new approaches for improving home and community-based services (HCBS) for people with developmental disabilities focused on building capacity for home and community-based services and improving community monitoring to present abuse, neglect, and exploitation. In addition, the project's policy and evaluation teams work together to use findings to change programs and policies statewide.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Convened 3 stakeholder meetings attended by more than 60 stakeholders each meeting. The stakeholders discussed capacity building to support people with disabilities, focusing on social isolation, abuse and neglect reporting systems, and rights education.

Wrote and coordinated a letter from 40 disability organizations to the State Disaster Medical Committee recommending adults and children using long-term care be included in Phase 1b for vaccination.

9 service providers participated in a virtual services evaluation of 349 individuals' experience with over 45 different offerings.

Peer Education and Network

Piloted the COVID-19 Toolkit with 120 people with disabilities receiving services from 5 managed care organizations, 1 IRIS agency, and 7 service providers.

Self-advocate leaders delivered the Safe and Free peer instruction to 87 individuals across seven provider agencies.

Self-advocate leaders presented at state and national conferences on the safe and free curriculum and the COVID-19 toolkit.

Family Education and Network

Engaged over 7000 people with Living Well Wednesdays via Zoom and Facebook. Presentations focused on health, safety, independence, and well-being.

Hosted a webinar for over 50 families, guardians, and self-advocates to inform on available virtual services, the advantages, and how to access technology.

Quality Home and Community-Based Services

Met and coordinated with state agencies at the Department of Health Services and the Department of Justice to review the current abuse and neglect incident reporting systems and provided recommendations for improvement.

Developed a "Let's Talk about Rights" booklet with the Council on Quality and Leadership to train direct service professionals on the rights of people with disabilities and partnered a four-part webinar series focusing on rights. A self-advocate version and a family/guardian version of the "Let's talk About Rights" were also developed as companions to the provider version.

Partners with Business Annual Report to the Legislature, July 2020 – June 2021

The Wisconsin Legislature established the Partners with Business initiative to assist businesses interested in hiring and employing people with disabilities using an evidenced based coaching model. During the past state fiscal year, Partners with Business provided grant funds and coaching to ten grantees.¹

According to a report published by the Kessler Foundation, employment rates for people with disabilities fell by 20% due to the pandemic, while rates for workers without disabilities fell by 14%.² The impacts of COVID were even greater on people with disabilities in Wisconsin’s Medicaid funded long-term care programs. Wisconsin Department of Health Services data indicates approximately 50% of people in long-term care lost jobs during the pandemic.



Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the Partners with Business initiative was able to demonstrate cost savings in Medicaid funded job coaching support through stronger partnerships with employers, influence positive systems change, and develop best practice guides for employers and employment service providers.

Cost Savings through Stronger Partnerships with Employers

The initiative collected employment data from 9 participants with disabilities to determine the impact on Medicaid savings when service providers invest in creating stronger partnerships with employers.

Before Partners with Business		After Partners with Business	
Average Hours per Week Employee with a Disability Received Medicaid Funded Job Coaching Support	Average Annual Cost to Medicaid System to Support this Person on the Job	Average Hours per Week Employee with a Disability Received Medicaid Funded Job Coaching Support	Average Annual Cost to Medicaid System to Support this Person on the Job
6.8 hours/week	\$8,840	4.6 hours/week	\$5,980

The Partners with Business investment resulted in a 32% reduction in the number of Medicaid funded job coaching support hours. This saved the Medicaid system on average \$2,860 annually per person or about \$25,740 total per year for the 9 participants with disabilities in this year’s Partners with Business cohort.

¹ Inclusa, Lakeland Care District, Headwaters, Goodwill of North Central Wisconsin, Lakeside Packaging Plus, Aspiro, Rangam SourceAble, Wisconsin Association of People Supporting Employment First (WI APSE), Ascend Services and Disability:IN Wisconsin.

² Kessler Foundation. (May 20, 2020). May 2020 Special Report: Workers with Disabilities in the COVID-19 Economy. <https://kesslerfoundation.org/press-release/ntide-may-2020-special-report-workers-disabilities-covideconomy>

Systems Change: DVR Promotes Partners with Business in response to COVID-19

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) decided to promote Partners with Business strategies so that more employees with disabilities could be supported by co-workers. This decreases the need for outside job coaches to come into the business to provide support. It also provides an incentive to businesses to rely less on outside job coaches and utilize a more cost-effective model for supporting workers with disabilities on the job. Three businesses have taken advantage of this new option, resulting in 6.5% savings for DVR funded workplace supports. This cost savings will continue to increase over time as the individuals working with these businesses transition from DVR funded support to Medicaid funded supports in the long-term care system.

Partners with Business Capacity Building:



Ensure good job matches between employers and job seekers with disabilities;



Empower employers to directly train and supervise their employees with disabilities;



Cultivate workplace inclusion and natural supports;



Maximize independence on the job for workers with disabilities; and



Reimburse employers for the costs of providing formal support above and beyond the “natural supports” typically found in the workplace to their employees with disabilities, rather than relying on outside job coaches provided by a vocational agency.

Partnership with Disability:IN Wisconsin to Create Best Practice Guide for Employers

Many large businesses and corporations want to diversify their staff and create an inclusive culture. However, many do not know where to start. To support interested businesses in their efforts, the Partners with Business initiative partnered with Disability:IN Wisconsin to develop a best practice guide for employers on recruiting, hiring and supporting workers with disabilities.

Disability:IN Wisconsin, a business-to-business association, is a state chapter of the United States Disability:IN. Disability:IN Wisconsin offers participating employers resources for recruiting candidates with disabilities, information on disability issues/topics, recognition for best disability employment practices, and exposure to an untapped market for goods and services. This newly developed guide will be distributed widely throughout Wisconsin.

Partnership with Wisconsin APSE to Create Best Practice Guide for Service Providers

When employment service professionals use best practices to support people with disabilities on the job, there are reductions in Medicaid spending. To increase the number of professionals using these best practices, the Partners with Business initiative partnered with APSE (or Association for People Supporting Employment First), a national and state membership organization that focuses exclusively on improving and advancing integrated employment opportunities, outcomes, and services for people with disabilities. WI APSE developed a best practice guide for agencies that provide employment services and supports to people with disabilities. The newly developed guide will be distributed widely to employment service providers throughout Wisconsin.

Partnership with Rangam SourceAble

A private sector business, Rangam, joined the Partners with Business initiative this year to support more large businesses to hire people with disabilities. Rangam is an international staffing agency that has developed a service called SourceAble. SourceAble leverages the latest technologies, workforce expertise, and strong ties to the disability community to deliver an integrated solution for attracting and hiring qualified talent with unique abilities. Through innovation and collaboration, SourceAble helps employers build a culture of inclusion, create a better brand, and drive sustainable results.

With support from the Partners with Business initiative, Rangam presented its SourceAble service to four businesses and is moving forward with Cargill to expand their efforts to hire people with disabilities. For more information about SourceAble, visit: <https://www.sourceabled.com/>

Partners with Business Success Story

Mitchell started his job as a laundry attendant at Fox Hills Resort in Mishicot, WI in March 2021. Mitchell worked with an Employment Specialist named Logan from Ascend Services to find his job. Because Logan made the extra time and effort to find the right job match, Mitchell caught onto the job quickly. He also has a coworker, Linda, who teamed up with him through his shift. With Linda's support, Ascend Services was able to fade back Mitchell's publicly funded job coaching support significantly.

Mitchell is a very social 22-year-old powerlifter who has a goal to move out into his own apartment soon. "We like him a lot. He fits right in," says Mitchell's boss, Alissa, who spoke about her experiences with Mitchell at a Legislative Mixer event about employing people with disabilities hosted by Ascend Services in August 2021. Mitchell plans to pick up more hours at work so he can start saving for his future apartment.

For more information about Partners with Business visit: <https://wi-bpdd.org/index.php/partners-with-business/>

“ We like him a lot.
He fits right in.”

Mitchell's boss, Alissa



Mitchell, his coworker Linda and his Employment Specialist, Logan, at Mitchell's job



The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) mission is to help people with developmental disabilities become independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life.