



WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE  
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

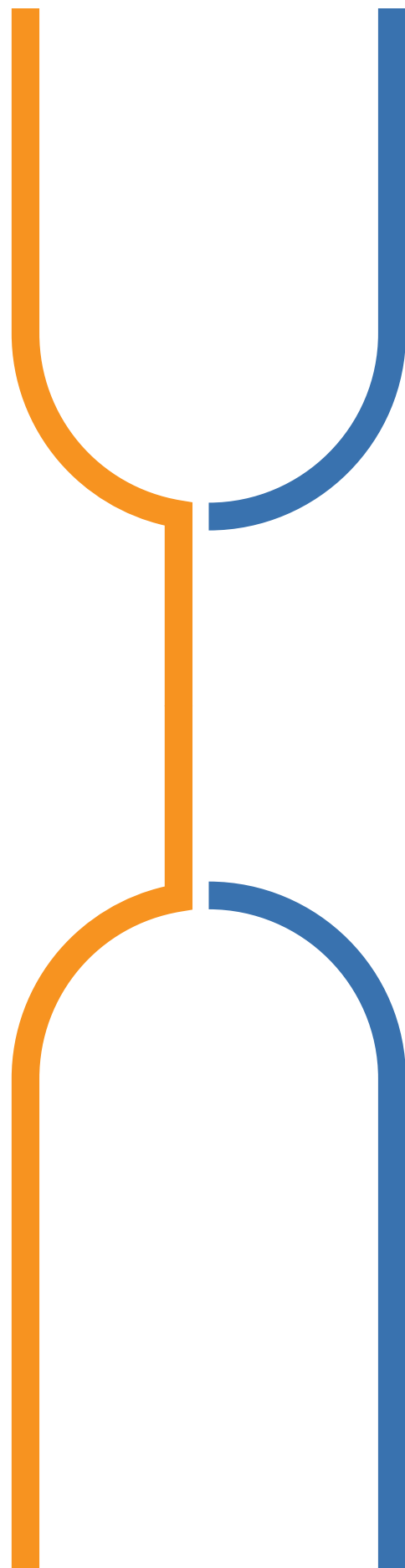


# WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

# Contents

- 1** MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP
- 2** MISSION, CHARGE and DEI Statement
- 3** OUR ROLE IN THE STATE:
- 4** WE LEAD
- 5** WE INFORM
- 6** WE PARTNER
- 7** WE CONNECT
- 8** WE STRENGTHEN
- 9** WE ADVOCATE
- 10** WE INNOVATE
- 10** WE ADVISE
- 11** INVESTMENTS
- 12** FUTURE AND ONGOING PROJECTS
- 13** BOARD MEMBERS
- 14** BOARD STAFF
- 15** CONTACT US



# Message from Leadership

Here is the 2022 annual report from the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) detailing our mission, membership, goals, accomplishments, and budget.

Our federal charge in the Developmental Disabilities Act is identifying the most pressing needs of people with developmental disabilities and finding innovative and cost-effective ways to meet these needs in ways that uphold human and civil value. We must include on our board, at minimum, 60% people with developmental disabilities and their family members.

We continue to change and improve as lessons are learned through the COVID-19 pandemic. We prioritize getting people information in ways they can easily use. This includes offering gatherings both in-person and virtually as much as possible. This allows people who may not be able to participate in in-person events, due to transportation or caregiving barriers, ways to get involved and contribute. We also newly recognize the importance of getting grant funds into the hands of people with strong ties to their communities.

## A few highlights include:

1. COVID Grants: We partnered with 6 community-based organizations to help people get vaccinated. These grantees know their communities best and understand what barriers need to be overcome. Through their efforts, over 1,700 people have been vaccinated. Two of the grantees presented to a national audience on their successful strategies.
2. Outreach: We partner with the WI Disability Vote Coalition, People First Wisconsin, and other groups to keep people in Wisconsin up to date on changes that could impact them and their family, including changes to voting, and understanding and exercising civil rights.
3. Policy Actions: We have been a leader in helping Wisconsinites with disabilities and their families: from navigating the pandemic and new voting rules to supporting legislation that requires training for guardians. These actions impact everyday life for people with disabilities and their families.
4. Our current state plan makes diversity, equity, and inclusion a priority in all aspects of our board. As a Governor-appointed Board, we are committed to apply cultural competence in all that we do and expand our networks into all Wisconsin communities. We strive to increase the number of people in Wisconsin with I/DD to become more independent, productive, and included in all facets of community life.
5. For more details about this report or us, contact us at 608-266-7826 or at [jeremy.gundlach@wisconsin.gov](mailto:jeremy.gundlach@wisconsin.gov). More information, including our five-year plan for 2021 - 2026, is located on our website, [www.wi-bpdd.org](http://www.wi-bpdd.org).



*Beth Swedeen*

Beth Swedeen, Executive Director



*Gregory Meyer*

Gregory Meyer, Board Chair

# Mission:

To unite ALL of Wisconsin in supporting our citizens with developmental disabilities to lead their most independent lives.

# Charge:

We visited communities around the state to find out what issues matter to you and what you'd like to see changed. We listened. And from your words came our 5-year state plan for people with developmental disabilities.

# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement:

We want all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to have the lives they want. Yet, we know that not all people are living the lives they want because of racism and discrimination. We commit to finding and addressing these inequities at BPDD and in the service systems. We will listen, we will learn, and we will achieve change.

# Definition of Terms

**We Lead:** we take bold steps to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities. We help lead the way with new ideas.

---

**We Partner:** we bring together people with developmental disabilities, their family members, organizations, and others. Together we find solutions to problems and take action to bring about change.

---

**We Advise:** we are a trusted advisor to leaders in state government and the state legislature. We work with them to improve laws, policies, programs, and services.

---

**We Advocate:** we advocate for and with people with developmental disabilities to have the same opportunities in life that other members of the community have. We advocate for people to be included and supported so they are successful.

---

**We Inform:** we provide information and resources so people with disabilities and their family members can understand their rights, increase their independence, and find the services and supports they need.

---

**We Strengthen:** we fund advocacy and leadership training. People with developmental disabilities and their family members learn how to effectively advocate for themselves and others.

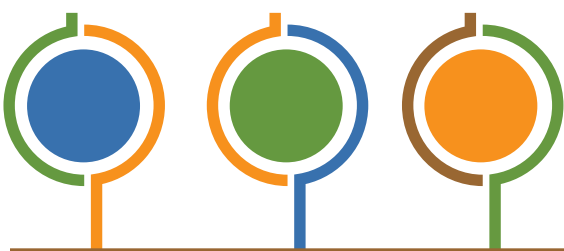
---

**We Innovate:** we are a leading organization in Wisconsin that funds grants focused on developmental disabilities. Grantees develop and test new ideas. We use what we learn to bring about change throughout Wisconsin.

---

**We Connect:** we facilitate community based organizations to bridge people to accurate and timely resources.

---



# We Lead

Our Living Well Grant is leading the way to improve the health, safety, independence, and well-being of people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities living in the community. We work with many partners to empower people with disabilities to understand their rights.

**155** self-advocates and **85** staff trained on rights

**60** stakeholders met to discuss quality home and community-based services

**80** people attended a community conversation



“We need to support people to feel respected, trusted and safe. People are safest when they are in community surrounded by their neighbors.”

*Quote from attendee at community conversation*



“I am already thinking about how I will adjust all of my written communication: emails, proposals for funding, medical information that I share with families, EVERYTHING!”

*Quote from webinar attendee*

## We Inform

People want easy-to-understand information on important topics. We launched a quarterly webinar series on ‘hot’ topics to meet this need. These free, virtual webinars focus on:

- supported decision-making,
- community-supported living options,
- plain language strategies.

Our Self-Determination Conference focuses on how to live more independently, participate more in your community, and direct your public funds efficiently. The conference was held virtually for the second year making it possible for more people to participate who struggle to attend in-person.

### Self-Determination Conference Data points:

**353** people with disabilities participated

*including*

**132** students in **28** classrooms across the state

### Webinar Data points:

Over **1000** people educated

**4** family members who attended will now use supported decision-making instead of guardianship as a result of this training.

**94%** reported learning new ways to plan for living in the community

**81%** reported that it will be easier to get the supports they need because of this training

# We Partner

We partner with People First Wisconsin (PFW), a statewide advocacy organization run by people with disabilities. We help PFW strengthen their leadership and increase opportunities for more people with disabilities to advocate for issues important to them.

## People First WI Data points:

**3** grants received this year

Total number of people with disabilities employed by PFW - from

**3** to **16** total



**\$175,000**  
in grant awards

## Families Supporting Families Data points:

**500** people served

**40** events and gatherings held

In partnership with the WI Department of Public Instruction, we support five community-based organizations to continue or expand their services to families of color and their children with disabilities. Through these efforts, families connect to the people, activities, and community resources they need to live the lives they want.

“...Ms. Shanice came to my house because I don’t have a laptop and zoom don’t work with my phone. I never had a person come to my house twice in a day so I can be in the meetings that help me so much. She also explained a lot of things to me about different [school] training and more.”

*Families Supporting Families Quote:*



# We Connect

We partnered with Wisconsin Department of Health Services and University of Wisconsin to develop and distribute plain language resources on vaccines for official use in statewide vaccine education. We awarded 6 grants across the state to increase vaccinations in Black, Indigenous, and Latino communities. The grantees were organizations with deep ties to communities which resulted in hundreds of vaccines distributed.

**1,700**  
people vaccinated

**4,500** people  
connected  
to accurate vaccination  
information and assistance  
scheduling vaccines

**2** grantees  
presented their  
models nationally

“My son was more nervous than usual about going to the clinic to get shots. I felt like my prayers were answered when I learned that ALAS was coordinating at-home COVID – 19 vaccinations. ALAS...had a nurse from Hayat Pharmacy come to us. My son said afterward, “She had magic hands, I didn’t even feel it. ALAS is incredible. They found a way for me to get the shot here at the house.” *Family member*



# We Strengthen

We develop future leaders across the state through Partners in Policymaking. These leaders use their strengthened advocacy skills to work with legislators and communities on policies that benefit people with disabilities.

**19** people with disabilities,  
parents and family members  
participated this year

**200** graduates total

**100%** feel that they  
are stronger  
advocates

**100%** plan to be more  
engaged with their  
legislators

“Partners influenced me to make a big career change and start two new businesses. One on the caregiver crisis and one on improving employment options for people with disabilities.”

Our Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a career awareness and leadership training program designed to increase youths' skills in self-advocacy and leadership and expose them to the variety of options after high school.

“I met kids and staff with all different types of disabilities and I finally feel like I'm accepted”

**32** high school students  
participated

**82%** say they will  
be stronger  
advocates in their  
communities

“Thanks to Cassidy for inviting me to BPDD’s Take Your Legislator to Work. She showed me the ropes where she works and has a system to get the job done and done well. I learned a few things [visiting her job]!”

*Assembly Representative*

## We Advocate

We co-chair the Department of Transportation’s Non-Driver Advisory Committee to develop policy solutions to increase affordable and reliable transportation options because 1/3 of Wisconsinites are non-drivers.

- Because of the Committee, DOT created a mapping system to show where non-drivers live

We also co-chair the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition, a non-partisan effort to help ensure people with disabilities exercise their right to vote.

**40+**

**organizations are part of the vote coalition**

**trained over**

**600**

**self-advocates and professionals about their voting rights**

**reached over**

**10,000**

**readers with our monthly newsletter.**

“If people with disabilities would all get together and vote, we would be the most powerful voting bloc in the country.”

*Voter in Minong*



# We Innovate

We have learned that communities know best how to serve their families. Rather than design projects for others to implement, we are looking to our partners to lead and decide what is needed. 18 innovation grants were awarded to local organizations.

Nearly a **\$250,000** was invested in grants to Wisconsin communities to do what they do best.

We provide a platform for the voices of lived experience through our Self-Determination YouTube channel run by a group of self advocates.

**33%** increase in subscribers in the last year

**29,883** views

**761.8** hours or watch time

**26** videos posted

**75** Self-advocates featured





“As part of our healing journey, we advocated for this positive change to help survivors with intellectual disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are one of the largest groups of sexual assault victims. However, their claims may be ignored or marginalized. We thank Governor Evers for signing this into law.” *Family Member who testified on a bill*

## We Advise



**3** bills signed into law that we lead advocacy for

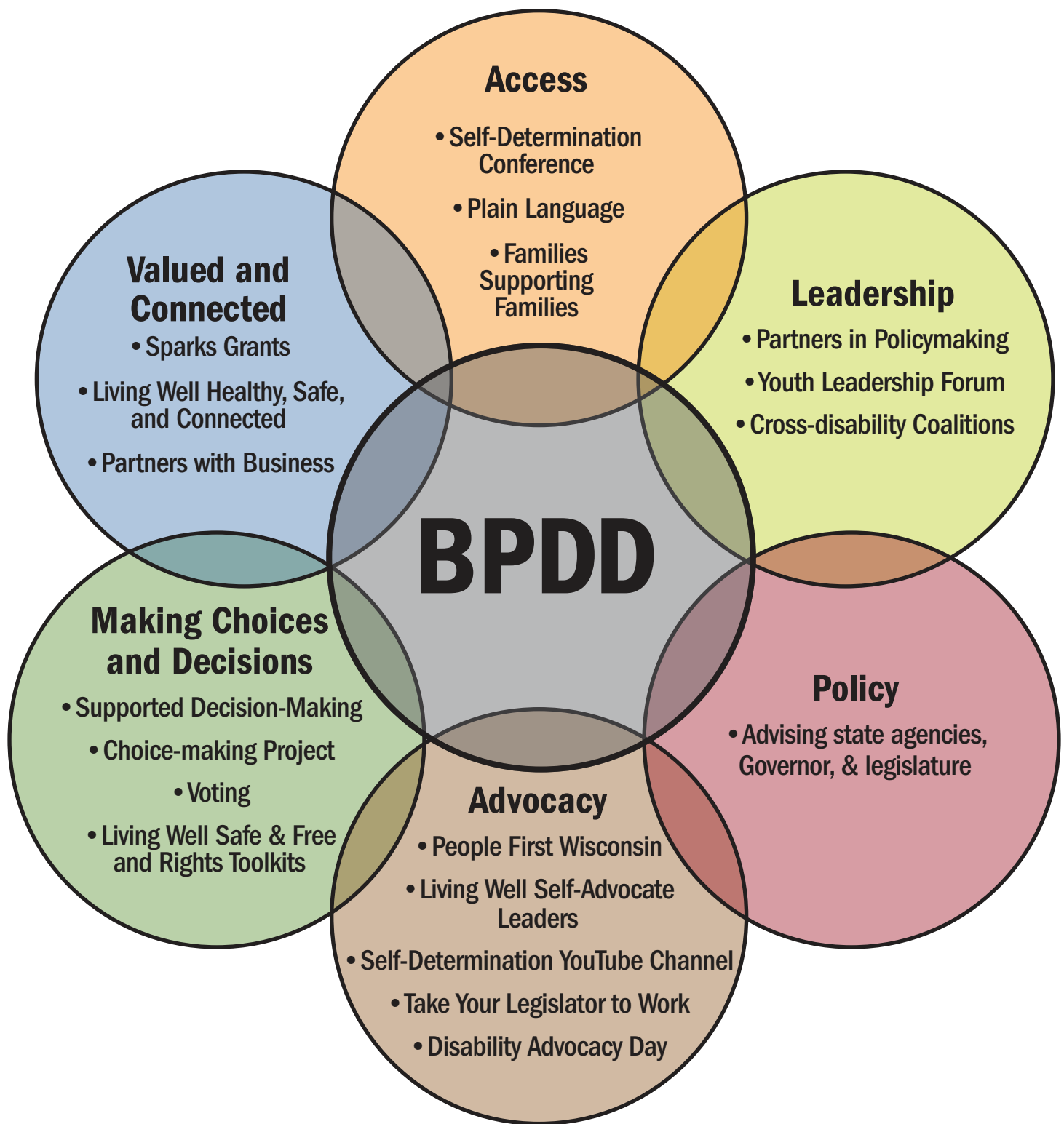


We testified on **32** bills



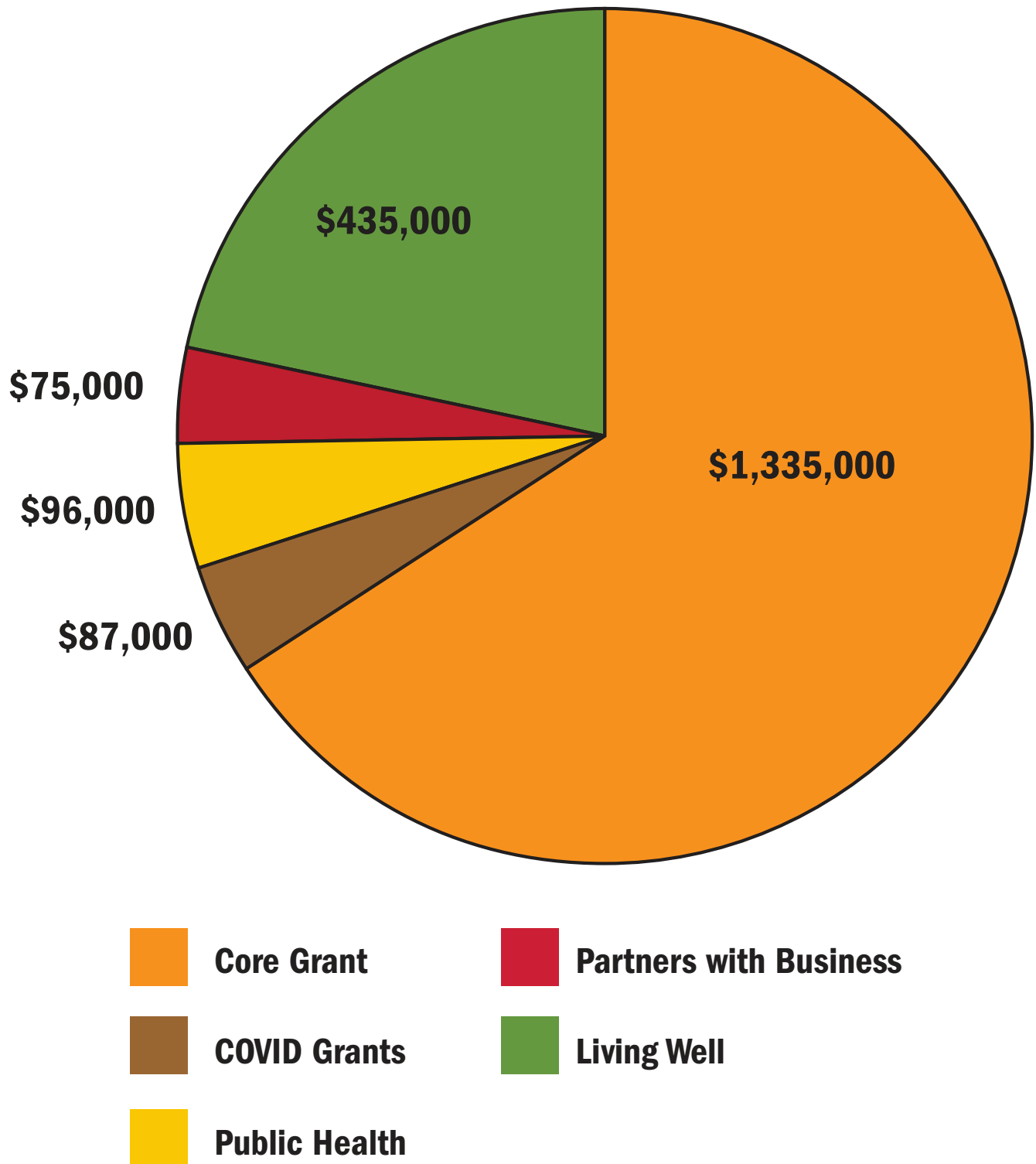
**16** state policies were influenced by BPDD





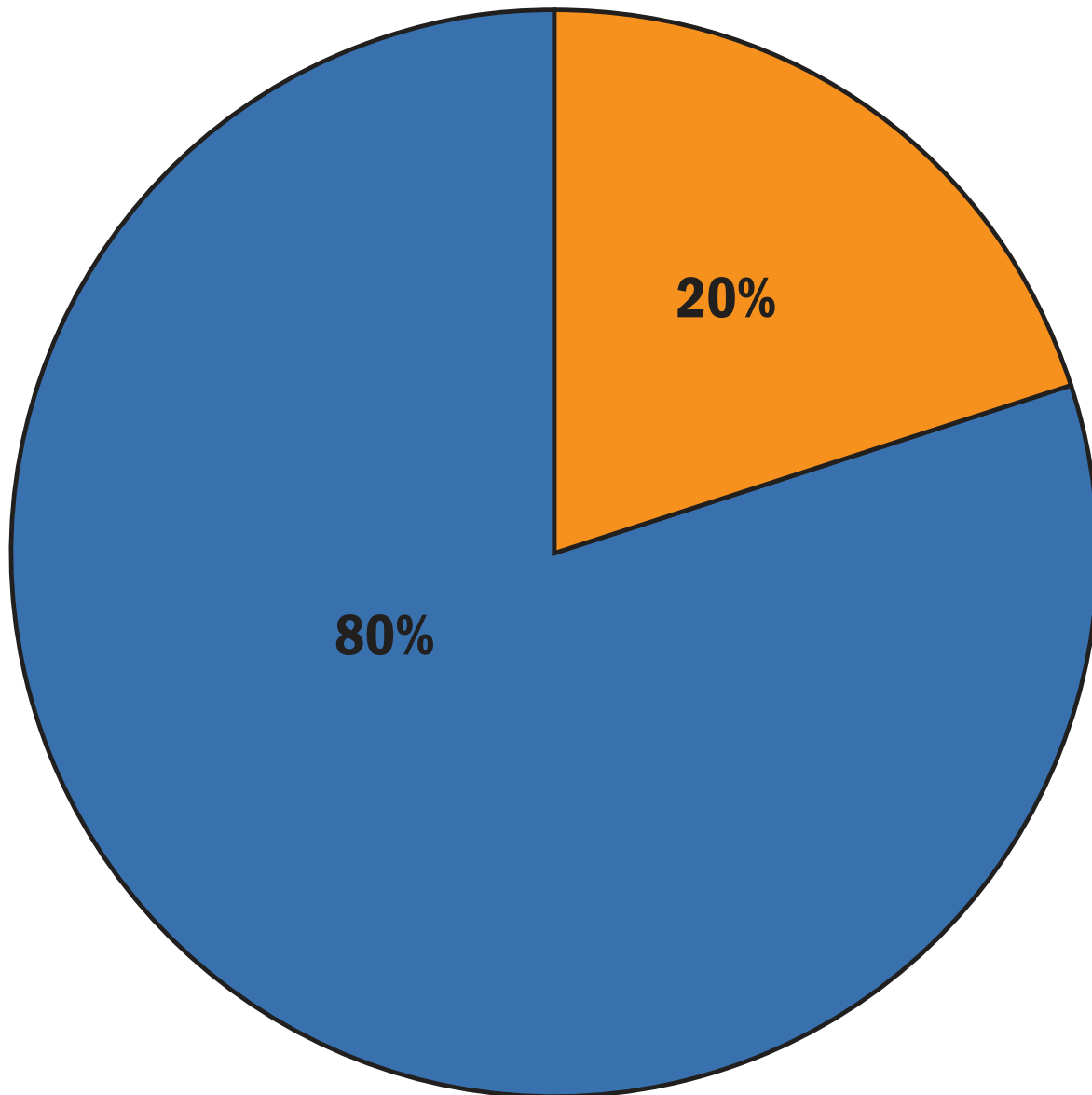


# Financial Notes



# Financial Information:

## How we use our Funding



**Investments in  
Wisconsin communities**



**Administrative costs**

# Other Efforts

## Choice-making:

Provide training to families and Children's Long-Term Support service coordinators about choice-making and ways to involve children in making choices about their lives. By supporting children to make their own choices, they gain valuable practice that prepares them to make higher stakes choices and decisions.

## Guardian training:

We were instrumental in passing legislation requiring prospective guardians to be trained in seven core areas before being appointed. We are contributing to the training modules being developed and anticipated to be available next year.

## Center for Youth Voice Youth Choice (CYVYC):

CYVYC will focus on creating materials directed for youth to understand their rights and to speak up for what they want. Many youth report that they did not understand what a guardian is, how that would impact their lives, or what alternatives are available.

## Lead education/prevention:

Educate families at high risk for lead exposure about lead poisoning, resources, and strategies to lessen exposure. Help families access lead testing. Support families interested in strengthening their leadership skills through opportunities to educate and advocate for themselves and others.

## Caregiver crisis:

We are actively engaging state agencies and the legislature on how ongoing paid caregiver shortage negatively impacts family caregivers, Wisconsin's workforce, and larger economy. We are recommending policy solutions to improve the wages, benefits, and retention of paid workers.

## Partners with Business:

The Wisconsin Legislature established this coaching model called Partners with Business. Through this initiative we assist businesses interested in employing people with disabilities. We provide technical assistance on hiring and supporting employees with disabilities, including using natural (and in some cases paid) co-worker support.



# Board Members

**Gregory Meyer, Chair**  
Monico

**George Zaske, Vice Chair**  
River Falls

**Carrie Arneson**  
Waisman Center

**Sydney Badeau**  
Brodhead

**Barbara Beckert**  
Disability Rights  
Wisconsin

**Gail Bow**  
Middleton

**Kedibonye Carpenter**  
La Crosse

**Felicia Clayborne**  
Wauwatosa

**Kevin Coughlin**  
Dept. Of Health  
Services

**Pam Delap**  
Oshkosh

**Anna Eggebrecht**  
Dept. Of Workforce  
Development

**Patrick Friedrich**  
Milwaukee

**Dr. Cheryl Funmaker**  
J'apresanacat'iga  
Wisconsin Dells

**Desi Kluth**  
Pewaukee

**Ashley Mathy**  
Rhinelander

**Stephenie Mlodzik**  
Appleton

**Jocelyn Osborne**  
Greendale

**Daniel Parker**  
Dept. Of Public  
Instruction

**Marcia Perkins**  
Milwaukee

**Hector Portillo**  
Madison

**Nathan Ruffolo**  
Appleton

**Julie Strenn**  
Wisconsin Rapids

**Andy Thain**  
Thorp

**Tricia Thompson**  
Menomonie

**Kelly Weyer**  
Mukwonago

**Chris Wood**  
Eau Claire

**Houa Yang**  
Madison





# Board Staff

**Beth Swedeen**

Executive Director

**Ramona Boswell**

Financial Specialist

**Fil Clissa**

Community Inclusion

**Molly Cooney**

Employment And Diversity  
Outreach Specialist

**Natasha Fahey-Flynn**

Office Manager

**Sally Flaschberger**

Living Well Grant Manager

**Jeremy Gundlach**

Communications Director

**Tami Jackson**

Public Policy Analyst

**Russell McCillough**

Office Associate

**Shyquetta (Shy) McElroy**

Public Health - Lead  
Organizer

**Kaitlin McNamara**

Living Well Project  
Coordinator

**Jenny Neugart**

Disability Grassroots  
Organizer





WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE  
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

If you'd like to know more about any of our projects you can visit our website at **[www.wi-bpdd.org](http://www.wi-bpdd.org)** or contact us using the information below.

**Website: [www.wi-bpdd.org](http://www.wi-bpdd.org)**

**Phone: 608-266-7826**

**Address: 101 E. Wilson St., Rm. 219**

**Madison, WI 53703**