



February 19, 2001

Mobilizing for Change: Web-Based Training for Improved Direct Support

Finding, keeping, and training direct support professionals is the single biggest barrier to high quality community supports for individuals with developmental disabilities. With turnover rates averaging between 45-70% per year, and vacancy rates exceeding 10% in many states, the demand for training on how to recruit, retain, and train direct support professionals is rising.

Staff of the Institute's Research and Training Center on Community Living (RTC) have developed a comprehensive curriculum that utilizes research-based strategies to address these challenges. Over the past two years this curriculum has been delivered to over 4,000 people across the U.S. and Canada in a face-to-face workshop format. The demand for the comprehensive, state-of-the-art training continues to build and now exceeds the capacity of RTC staff to present it. In response, Mobilizing for Change, a three-year RTC project funded by a \$300,000 grant from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, will develop a national Web-based training program to deliver the curriculum to a wider audience.

The Web-based curriculum, to be available Fall of 2002, will be presented in two formats: as a self-paced individual study program, and as an instructor-facilitator certificate-based course. It is designed for current and potential frontline supervisors, consumers of services, families, and others who need and want training on this topic. The curriculum is based on extensive analysis of the job content of frontline supervisors and focuses specifically on competencies needed to find, keep, and train direct support

professionals. Targeted competencies include the role of frontline supervisors in influencing recruitment, retention, and training outcomes; using effective recruitment and selection strategies to find and hire direct support professionals; effectively using socialization, orientation, mentoring, and training strategies; effectively using team building, conflict management, and employee recognition strategies; and effectively using, selecting, implementing, and evaluating targeted recruitment and retention interventions. The instructional strategies used in the Web-based training include a computerized self-assessment of skills, online worksheets to compute turnover rates and other important outcomes, and interactive exercises. In addition, it will include stories and perspectives of consumers, families, direct support professionals, and frontline supervisors to document why various intervention strategies are important, what works, how specific tools should be used, and what the results will be. The supported instructional model will provide Web-based contact with an instructor and other students, and may include "Web-casts" by national experts.

The curriculum will be accessible to supervisors, family members, and consumers through the project's Web site. It will also be available at community locations to human service organizations, postsecondary educational institutions, public agencies, and advocacy organizations. Details about how to obtain and use the materials will be available through the project's Web site as they are developed.

For further information contact project directors Amy Hewitt (624-1098) or Sherri Larson (624-6024).

Staff Update

- **Staff Arrivals.** **Maureen Hawes**, Community Program Associate; **Babette Gronland**, Coordinator; **Amanda Dennison**, Community Program Associate; all with the Intended/Unintended Consequences Project. **Melissa Steenhard**, Student Secretary, RRTC. **Brooke Carroll**, GRA, Sertoma Subcontract. **Penny Pesola**, Office Specialist, CEED.
- **Jean Ness** presented her research on retention of American Indian students at tribal colleges at the National Association of Native American Studies Conference on February 15, and at the First Year Experience National Conference on February 18. She will present at the Title III Conference on February 26-27. Jean and Jim Brown are also presenting on the Title III Project with Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College at the February 18 conference. **Jean** has additionally now completed her doctorate in Educational Administration.
- **Christopher Watson**, as a member of the Executive Committee of Minnesota's Infant/Toddler Training Intensive, met with WestEd in Sausalito, California, regarding plans to enhance Minnesota's PITC (Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers) training program.

Dates to Remember . . .

- **February 21: RTC Policy Forum**, 10:15-11:45, Roseville.
- **March 19: ICI Council Meeting**, 10:00 a.m., 118 Pattee.

From the Front Office

News from ICI's Administrative Staff

- **Attention Civil Service/BU Staff.** There will be a Civil Service staff meeting on Wednesday, February 21, at 10 a.m. in Room 118. Please contact Beth at 6-8042 for more information.
- **Graduate Research Assistants and Supervisors.** Reminder: The deadline for submitting performance evaluation forms for GRAs is Thursday, March 1. Please contact Beth at 6-8042 for more information.
- **P&A Staff.** A memo was distributed on Monday, February 12, to all P&A staff regarding P&A salary review for

2001. Please get your materials to David Johnson by Friday, March 30. Call David at 4-1062 or Beth at 6-8042 if you need more information.

- **Vacancies.** ICI currently has multiple openings in both Civil Service and P&A positions. Please see the bulletin board in the lobby for current openings; they are also listed on our Web site. Inquiries should be directed to the supervisor of the vacant position or Beth Nelson, ICI's Human Resources representative.

Miscellaneous

- **RTC Community Supports Public Policy Forum.** *Using Litigation to Make MR/DD Policy: Trends and Issues* is the topic for the February meeting in this series sponsored by the Institute's Research and Training Center on Community Living. Invited discussants are Bud Rosenfield, Luther Granquist and Anne Henry from the Disability Law Center, and the latest *RTC Policy Research Brief* titled *Litigation Concerning Medicaid Services for Persons with Developmental Disabilities: Status Report* will provide background for the discussion. The forum will be on Wednesday, February 21, from 10:15-11:45 at Ramsey County Public Library in Roseville, 2180 Hamline Avenue. Copies of the *Policy Research Brief* are available in the Publications Office. For more information or to RSVP contact Sherri Larson at 624-6024.
- **Special Education Advisory Committee.** The next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee is March 27 in Plymouth, with presentation topics related to transition and state improvement initiatives. Contact Julia Washenberger (4-2380) for additional information.

- **PACER Workshop.** PACER Center, Inc., is offering a free workshop for parents and professionals on how environmental controls can promote independence and enhance quality of life for people with disabilities. Titled *Making Things Happen: Accessing Your Environment Through Technology*, the workshop will be offered Wednesday, February 21, from 8 a.m. to noon at PACER Center, 8161 Normandale Boulevard, in Bloomington. Advance registration is requested. To register or obtain further information call 952/838-9000.
- **Free Guide to Alternate Formats.** The guide, *User-Friendly Materials and Alternate Formats*, has been published by the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research, and is available on its Web site at <http://www.ncddr.org/du/products/ufm/ufm.html>.
- **Birthdays.** Jennifer Huisken (2/16), Jennifer Sandlin (2/21), Dan Rosen (2/21), Heidi Kluding (2/22), David Johnson (2/26), Carrie Sword (3/7), Beth Nelson (3/8), Regan Cunningham (3/9), Steve Lauer (3/9), Brett Bruininks (3/10), and Mary McEvoy (3/13).

Bits & Pieces

Information from the Institute's Web Development Team (110 Pattee, 6-8649) and Publications Office (109 Pattee, 4-4512)

Web Group Activities

- **NCSET Web site** (<http://ici.umn.edu/mcset>). The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition's Web site is now up and running! Find out more about the new Center, including upcoming events, publications, related projects, and its partners.

From the Publications Office

- **New Publications.** Just arrived are the brochures describing the Institute's new National Center on Secondary Education and Transition as well as fliers with Center Rolodex cards.
- **Vacancy.** The Publications Office Manager/Editorial Assistant position remains unfilled. Please allow as much time as possible for us to respond to requests for assistance during this staffing shortage.
- **Can You Share These?** We have large quantities of the following publications for you to share/promote at upcoming conferences, classes, etc.:
 - *Impact: Feature Issue on Partnering to Improve Health Care for Children with Disabilities*
 - *Impact: Feature Issue on Postsecondary Education and Students with Disabilities*
 - *Impact: Feature Issue on Youth with Deafblindness*
 - *Impact: Feature Issue on Persons with Disabilities Working in the Arts*
 - *Differentiated Teaching and Learning in Heterogeneous Classrooms: Strategies for Meeting the Needs of All Students*
 - *Meeting the Needs of Youth with Disabilities: Institute Transition and School-to-Work Publications brochure.*
- **FYI Deadline.** Submissions for the next FYI should be sent to Vicki Gaylord in 109 Pattee or emailed to gaylo001@tc.umn.edu by Tuesday, March 13.