

Disability Policy Framework

A Review

Historically

- We have tried to “fix” people with disabilities
- If we could not “fix” the person, we supported exclusion, segregation, and denied services and supports
- Sometimes we made laws to ban people with disabilities from being seen in public
- Sometimes we forced people with disabilities into institutions and sterilized them
- People with disabilities were perceived as vulnerable/dependent people

Current

- Disability is a natural and normal part of the human experience and in no way diminishes a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of society
- Focus is to “fix” the physical and social environment to provide effective and meaningful opportunity to people with disabilities.

Goals of Disability Policy

- Equality of Opportunity
- Full Participation
- Independent Living
- Economic Self-Sufficiency

Equality of Opportunity

- **Individualization**
 - Decisions based on facts, objective, evidence, person's needs and preferences, state-of-the art science
- **Effective and Meaningful Opportunity**
 - Focus on meeting the needs of all individuals, provide reasonable accommodations and reasonable modifications to policies, practices and procedures
- **Inclusion and Integration**
 - Provide services in the most integrated setting appropriate for the person, avoid unnecessary and unjustified segregation and isolation

Full Participation

- Involve people with disabilities and their families in decisions affecting them
- Involve people with disabilities and their families in developing policies at the systems/institutional level

Independent Living

- Recognize as a legitimate outcome of public policy
- Skills development, long-term services and supports, cash assistance

Economic Self-Sufficiency

- Recognize as a legitimate outcome of public policy
- Support systems providing employment related services/supports, cash assistance with work incentives.

Why do we need to know this?

- The disability policy framework is a guide to assess social policy from a disability policy perspective.
- This framework provides guidance and insight to effectively develop, implement and support systems change initiatives and consumer-driven alternatives.

Connecting with the DD Act

- The DD Act embodies the core policies of the disability policy framework
- The DD Act includes demonstration of methods of administration consistent with the disability policy framework

Using the framework

- Councils can use the framework to guide their work as they assess social policy from a disability perspective and effectively develop and implement home and community based systems change initiatives and consumer-controlled and driven alternatives.

Reference

- Silverstein, R. (2000). Emerging disability policy framework: A guidepost for analyzing public policy. *Iowa Law Review*, Vol. 85(5).