

DD NETWORK JOINT NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS AUGUST 2005

To determine the primary issues affecting individuals with disabilities in Kentucky, the KY Developmental Disabilities Council, the Interdisciplinary Human Development Institute (IHDI) at the University of KY, and the KY Protection and Advocacy developed a joint needs assessment survey. The survey asked respondents to prioritize the nine areas of the DD Act and provide comments on services and needs. In May 2005, the survey was mailed to over 500 individuals in Kentucky and also posted on the DD Network website.

A total of 247 individuals from 49 counties in Kentucky responded to the needs assessment survey. The statewide representation included urban and rural counties, and just over half of the respondents were from the "golden triangle." 36% of the respondents have a disability, and the majority of the remaining 64% were families of individuals with disabilities or service providers. 86% were white, non-Hispanic; 8% were African American; 2% were Native American; and 3% were other ethnicities. This representation is comparable to ethnic percentages in KY. The majority of the respondents were between the ages of 40-59 years old (60%) and female (72%).

Of the nine areas of the DD Act, 21% of the respondents stated "Education and Early Intervention" had improved the most in the last five years, and almost 13% stated "Quality Assurance" had improved the most. When asked which area had improved the least in the last five years, "Transportation" was mentioned the most (approximately 16%) followed by "Other, including Informal and Formal Community Supports" (approximately 15%).

Respondents were asked to check any of the nine areas of the DD Act that should be priorities for services to individuals with disabilities. There was no limit on the number of responses that could be selected. The percentages for each priority are listed below:

Area of Emphasis	Frequency	Percent
Quality Assurance (e.g. monitoring the quality of services, promoting self determination and self advocacy)	148	59.9%
Education and Early Intervention	144	58.3
Transportation Related Issues	140	56.7
Health Related Issues	132	53.4
Housing Related Issues	130	52.6
Employment	129	52.2
Recreation Related Issues	85	34.4
Child Care	81	32.8
Other, including Informal & Formal Community Supports	64	25.9

After identifying which areas of emphasis should be priorities, respondents were asked to rank the areas they believed should be a top three priority. In addition, respondents were asked to list their specific concerns related to their identified areas (e.g., "accessible housing" related to "Housing.") The areas most frequently listed were "Education and Early Intervention," "Employment," "Quality Assurance," "Health," and "Transportation." These areas comprised over 58% of the total responses. Subcategories were created by staff at IHDI based on the specific concerns listed. The subcategories and a sample of quotations from the top five areas are listed below:

Education & Early Intervention (14.2% of Responses)	
Subcategory	Sample Quotations
Early Intervention/Early Childhood	○ “Start early so individual with disability & their family can learn skills to make best possible outcome & future”
Disabilities Education/Awareness Education	○ “Teaching people about their disability and providing them with choices now that they are disabled”
Transition	○ “Smoother transitions between programs”
Inclusion	○ “Schools not practicing inclusion”
Professional Develop.	○ “Training of general ed teachers regarding special ed”
Therapeutic Services	○ “Increased funding to needed therapies”
Parent Involvement/Rights	○ “Parents do not know rights”

Employment (11.3% of Responses)	
Subcategory	Sample Quotations
Choices	○ “Supported ‘choice’ of work places”
Supports	○ “Expanding supported employment”
Getting Employment	○ “Being placed in appropriate job that allows productivity”
Training/Education	○ “Let public know we can work”

Quality Assurance (11.3% of Responses)	
Subcategory	Sample Quotations
Self Determination & Self Advocacy	○ “Self-determination; freedom; choice, opportunity”
Monitoring	○ “Even the programs that exist are often poorly monitored”
Other Quality Assurance Issues	○ “Retention of highly trained and highly qualified personnel who provide direct services to IWD”

Health (10.8% of Responses)	
Subcategory	Sample Quotations
Funding	○ “Funding for programs i.e. Medicaid”
Access to Services/Availability	○ “Agencies should provide special times for people with disabilities so they can get up early for work, school, and their children”
Quality of Care	○ “Drs that listen to patients and understand them and care both emotionally and physically”
Education	○ “Physician education on disabilities”

Transportation (10.8% of Responses)	
Subcategory	Sample Quotations
Access to Transportation	○ “Transportation—especially in more rural counties. This prohibits many from entering the workforce”
Funding & Availability of Affordable Transportation	○ “Because there are a lot of Kentuckians that CANNOT drive and yet in a lot of counties we don’t have transit systems that are cost effective for a fixed income”