

Person-Centered Agency & System Design Training Opportunities

Human Service Research and Developmental Center (HSRDC) coordinated the Person-Centered Agency Design project for three years with eight participating residential and vocational agencies serving persons with developmental disabilities in urban and rural areas. HSRDC also coordinated the two-year Person-Centered System Design project with all the developmental disabilities providers (residential, vocational, count social services, special education, and advocacy) in a two-county area. Several training opportunities on these themes have been provided throughout the U.S. and Canada and are available to others:

1. Building Community Connections, Friendships, and Valued Social Roles

This training emphasizes “how to” strategies to connect persons with disabilities in one-to-one relationships with community members, to assist individuals with disabilities in joining and participating in community associations, and to expand the variety and types of social roles experienced. The training includes exercises using persons with disabilities supported by the agency, and participants will learn how to identify and approach the right community members to ask about connections, how to introduce people, and how to seek out valued roles for an individual in a particular community setting. The preferred format for this training is one day, but shorter versions can be done in half-day blocks. Additional training can also be designed on specific issues: sharing successes, concerns, moving from acquaintances to deeper friendships, etc.

2. Person-Centered Planning Approaches—Personal Futures Planning, Essential Lifestyle Planning, Annual Planning, Person-Centered Teams

Training on a different Person-Centered Planning approaches can be provided, including how to facilitate a Futures Planning group. Training and support can also be provided regarding the basic values of a person-centered approach, different ways to do annual planning, and integrating more of a person-centered approach into other processes like semi-annuals. Agencies have developed a variety of ways to adapt formal planning processes to be more person-centered. Training and/or facilitation can be provided with individual agencies and/or in coordinated meetings with several agencies at one time: with county case managers, residences with day programs, day programs with residences, etc.

3. A Person Centered Self-Determination Approach- Values toward Persons with Disabilities and the Role of Human Services

Different types of training can be devised to provide information and direct experiences concerning fundamental values toward persons with developmental disabilities, understanding the role of human services agency, and the process of organizational change using a person-centered approach

For instance, the five valued experiences, as developed by John and Connie Lyle O'Brien in Framework for Accomplishment, make up part of the foundation for a person-centered approach. The five valued experiences are:

- Growing in personal relationships
- Sharing ordinary community places
- Contributing
- Making choices/having a say over your life
- Being treated with respect
- Having a valued social role

We can design exercises around specific individuals that the agency supports, and do practical work generating ideas to increase their valued experiences. Training can be designed around all five valued experiences, or any specific ones that an agency chooses. The time frame for the training can be designed to fit into existing staff meetings or in-service time frames. A specific workshop can be designed around specific issues- for instance, what are valued roles for persons who are labeled profoundly handicapped? How do we build connections for someone who has some behaviors others see as bizarre, etc.? What role should our agency be playing in supporting people?

4. Person Centered Agency Design and Person-Centered System Design: Organizational Change and Self-Determination

Organizational planning to become a more person-centered agency can be facilitated. This values-based planning can incorporate principles of John and Connie Lyle O'Brien's Framework for Accomplishment and other approaches which clarify understanding of the assumptions and practices currently operating in an agency's design. One process is generating agreement from major stakeholders on a vision for the design of a person-centered agency, understanding of an agency's/system's current status, and identification of necessary steps to plan and realize the person-centered design.

Various forms of ongoing consultation and training over time can also be provided.

Any type of workshop custom-designed around your requests or identification of needs for training with direct care staff, consumers, families, case managers, other agencies, etc.