

2016-2017 ISSUES IMPORTANT TO COALITION MEMBERS

1. LEADERSHIP/PUBLIC POLICY DECISIONS

- More people in government and agencies should ask US for OUR opinions on what we want/need, public policy, services, issues, etc. People with disabilities should have more control and decision-making over their services and supports, where they want to live, etc.
- Peer Support...Leadership skills and human rights education for people with disabilities by PEERS to learn to be more independent, advocate for themselves and speak up about bullying and living the life they want (not what someone else thinks they want), sexual abuse prevention, and learn leadership skills
- Potential cuts in Medicaid... Identifying new ideas for cost effective and good quality services that people with disabilities need and want
- State Medicaid approval of holistic health services (massages, Reiki, etc.) for people with disabilities who medically need those services
- Transparency and accountability by state and local agencies published online on the services available and outcomes of services so people with disabilities and their families have better information to make choices
- More safe and affordable housing options for people to have their own place to live



2. EMPLOYMENT

- Increased access for employment resources for people to get help they need to find Jobs
- Better paying jobs for people with disabilities... opportunities for pay raises and career advancement
- Resources for people with disabilities who may want to start their own business (self-employment)
- More employers hiring people with disabilities
- More Peer Support services ("Job Club", training and TA) on benefits of employment
- Payment of back wages to people with disabilities involved in the Department of Justice (DOJ) Settlement (some people still have not received back wages)
- Information and training on financial education, budgeting and saving money



3. PUBLIC EDUCATION

- Education of employers on appreciating the abilities of people with disabilities and advantages of hiring people
- Community acceptance, integration and real participation of people with disabilities, just like anyone else
- More information about choice of “self-directed services” and more flexibility for “in-home self-directed services”
- Sensitivity training for health care professionals (hospitals, doctors, etc.) in communicating with people with disabilities (using “people first” language)
- Education of RI Legislators and the general public about understanding issues and services important to people and the abilities of people with disabilities



4. ACCESSIBILITY

- Better enforcement of the ADA in RI
- Better transportation options and routes so people with disabilities can participate in the community
- Accessible recreational locations and social opportunities for people with mobility issues
- More accessible travel options in RI and out of state
- Improved access to information on resources/technology available for people with disabilities (video phones for people who are deaf, health care doctors/dentists, assistive technology, etc.)



MISSION of the RI Cross Disability Coalition is to bring together people with various types of disabilities from different organizations and groups in RI to:

- Meet one another,
- Learn from one another,
- Share information,
- Talk about opportunities for partnerships and connections within local communities,
- Build leadership capacity to increase and strengthen the voices of individuals with disabilities in public policy and state agency decisions on services/supports that people with disabilities need or want, *and*
- Talk about ways we can work together and unite as one on issues that *WE* think are important in our lives or will benefit people with disabilities living in RI.

The RI Cross Disability Coalition formed in 2009 for individuals with all disabilities to connect and talk about what is important in our lives and what we can do together to improve quality for all people! It is also an opportunity to become familiar with different services available from agencies in Rhode Island and learn what these agencies can do to support and meet the needs of individuals.

Telephone: 401-737-1238

Website: www.riddc.org/cross_disability