

On Target

Informing Indiana About
Disability Issues

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On Target is a monthly publication of the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities.

We welcome your suggestions for newsletter content and ideas concerning the actions of the Council.

On Target is made available in accessible formats upon request.

Suellen Jackson-Boner
Executive

Changes ahead for FSSA

State government's largest agency, the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), is planning a major restructure. The plans were announced when FSSA released an audit that revealed 185 risks - 87 of them identified as "high-risk" - in the agency's operations and services.

The audit report, conducted by audit firm KPMG, was based on findings from several months of research into the agency's systems and budgets, as well as conversations with social workers, supervisors and managers. A copy of the report can be found on FSSA's Web site at <http://www.in.gov/fssa/>. Following is a brief outline of what the agency's overhaul could mean for Hoosiers with disabilities.

How does the restructure impact people with disabilities?

FSSA provides services to help people with disabilities thrive in their communities and remain healthy and safe. FSSA programs for people with disabilities include health care and community living support, vocational rehabilitation, independent living, supported employment, and customized services for people who are blind or visually-impaired, and deaf or hard-of-hearing.

The agency also operates the Fort Wayne Developmental Center, which serves people with disabilities, as well as several large institutions for people with psychiatric

Director disabilities.

Christine
Dahlberg
*Associate
Director*

What programs could be affected?

FSSA administers several federal and state programs. Please refer to the sidebar on page 3 for a list of specific programs.

Paul
Shankland
*Grants
Manager*

What were the high-risk issues identified in the audit?

Among the 87 "high-risk" issues are the following:

- There is an existing FSSA Medicaid error rate that potentially costs the state \$25 million, and FSSA has done little to fix it.
- There is no existing process to validate information provided by those seeking public assistance, contributing to the error rate.
- FSSA has not maintained effective communication between its lines of service, and is riddled with inaccurate and inconsistent data.
- Case workers experience high caseloads, inconsistent applications of eligibility criteria and inconsistent policies between offices and locations.
- Employee skill sets are greatly and negatively impacted by many of the state's personnel policies. Caseworkers are only required to have a high-school diploma or equivalent, and there are no quality or performance measurements in place to address FSSA staff skills.

How and when could FSSA change?

Initial changes have already begun and will continue until the reorganization is complete. FSSA Secretary Mitch Roob does not expect changes to be complete until 2009.

One significant change, the way in which Medicaid waiver services are billed and delivered, was announced in mid-August. See the corresponding pull-out box for details on how this change will be implemented.

Other changes being considered include:

- Medicaid applications: Roob is calling for a reduction in

the number of county offices handling eligibility applications and the privatization of the workforce managing the application process.

- State hospitals: Roob wants to examine having local not-for-profits manage Indiana's state hospitals, including those in Evansville, Madison and Richmond. The goal of this localization effort is to give local communities more control over the management and livelihood of the facilities.
- Contractors: FSSA wants to reduce the number of contractors it works with.
- Nursing homes: Roob is exploring a flexible freeze on the number of new long-term care nursing home beds that can be opened in Indiana.

Will those served by the agency be able to provide feedback?

FSSA will be holding outreach meetings throughout the state, inviting input for issues related to the agency's restructure plans, such as the state hospital localization plan. The agency also plans to form committees to further examine other issues. FSSA will be looking for community volunteers to serve as committee participants.

Questions or comments about FSSA plans can be addressed to: Indiana Family and Social Services Administration; Office of Communications; P.O. Box 7083; Indianapolis, IN 46207-7083. Or, visit <http://www.in.gov/fssa/about/contact/> and provide comments through FSSA's online form.

Changes coming to Medicaid waiver system

On Aug. 12, Governor Mitch Daniels announced changes within the state's Medicaid waiver program that are projected to save roughly \$14 million annually and provide services to hundreds of Hoosiers with disabilities who currently sit on lengthy waiting lists.

Under the new plan, annual contracts will be instituted for people served on the developmental disability, support services and autism waivers. Currently, providers must

record services provided in 15-minute increments.

The new process will utilize existing plans of care as a guideline for services to be provided for each individual client. An annual care allowance will be developed based upon each client's historical needs. The provider and client, along with their support team, will have discretion on how these funds are used day by day throughout the upcoming year to deliver the goals outlined in the plan of care.

FSSA will mail letters to providers on Sept. 15 announcing the billing changes, which are scheduled to go into effect Nov. 1, for people on the development disabilities and autism waivers. The support services waiver is scheduled to undergo similar billing changes soon afterward, if not at the same time.

Today, more than 15,000 people are waiting for some type of service through Indiana's Medicaid waiver program. By Dec. 1, 2005, the savings that are realized as a result of the changes will begin to be spent to bring waiver services to new clients, with the ultimate goal of bringing waiver services to an estimated 500 new clients.

Roob said FSSA will continue with other steps toward systematic reform. First, waiver recipients will be, when possible, required to live with housemates. Roob said this will result in savings from reduced rents and shared staffing - without reducing services.

In addition, Roob said FSSA will authorize and encourage the use of new technologies that streamline service delivery. For example, FSSA has begun the approval process to implement Rest Assured, a nighttime monitoring program developed by researchers at Purdue University and implemented at the Wabash Center in Lafayette. The monitoring technology has reduced staffing levels from a one-to-one staff/client ratio to a one-to-10 staff/client ratio, without any increase in problems.

IDEA changes on the way

On Dec. 3, 2004, President Bush signed the Individuals with

Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 04) into law. The purpose of IDEA has been expanded to not only prepare children with disabilities for employment and independent living, but to also prepare them for further education.

The reforms contained in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, the education reform law designed to ensure student academic achievement, were applied to IDEA. Most of the requirements of IDEA 04 became effective on July 1, 2005. However, the final federal regulations are not yet approved

At this time, the U.S. Department of Education is conducting public meetings around the country to obtain comment and feedback on the proposed regulations. The feedback will be used to develop the final regulations, which should be in place by December 2005.

Once the federal regulations are finalized, they will be made publicly available in the Federal Register, the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules and notices of Federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents. All states must wait for the final federal regulations before they can make the necessary changes to state rules and regulations.

Bob Marra, Associate Superintendent in the Indiana Department of Education and Indiana's Director of Special Education, said, "After federal regulations are adopted, the Division of Exceptional Learners, with input from a number of constituencies, will recommend to the State Board of Education changes it believes need to be made to Article 7."

Marra also noted that the process for revising Article 7, known as the rule promulgation process, will involve the State Board of Education, the State Advisory Council on the Education of Students with Disabilities, parents, educators, organizations and other stakeholders interested in the success of students with disabilities.

States and local schools are required to implement the IDEA 04 requirements even before the regulations are final. However, if current state requirements are of a higher

standard than those in IDEA 04, the existing state requirement will be followed. For example, Indiana will be held to a 30-day complaint investigation period as specified in Article 7 even though a 60-day period is allowed in IDEA 04.

Following are several potential changes that may result from IDEA 04:

- IDEA 04 provides a mechanism for up to 15 states to participate in pilot programs to reduce the Individualized Education Program (IEP) paperwork burden.
- The legislation also includes provisions under which parents and schools can agree to change an IEP without a formal IEP meeting.
- In IDEA 04, school districts have more flexibility in determining if a child has a specific learning disability. This is a change from the old requirement that a severe discrepancy between potential ability and achievement must exist to categorize a child with a learning disability.
- It is required that parents be provided a copy of procedural safeguards at least once a year and upon initial referral, as well as when due process is requested, or upon parent request.
- IDEA 04 changes the due process procedures and timelines. Also, it includes a "resolution session" to resolve any issues prior to an actual hearing.
- The legislation makes changes in special education mediation and provides that mediation agreements are binding on the parties.
- The qualifications of special education personnel are addressed in IDEA 04, specifically concerning the "highly qualified" status. All special education teachers must be certified or licensed in special education to be considered highly qualified. Also, special education teachers who teach two or more core academic subjects to students with disabilities must pass a test before they will be considered highly qualified.

Many other areas of change contained in IDEA 04 will be examined as Indiana proceeds with the state rule revision

process.

For up-to-date information, a side-by-side document comparing Article 7 and IDEA 04, and frequently asked questions regarding the legislation, visit the Division of Exceptional Learners' Web site at <http://doe.state.in.us/exceptional/speced>.

Get to know FSSA

FSSA is Indiana's largest agency, with approximately 9,700 employees and offices in all 92 counties. FSSA's total annual budget is \$6.3 billion, comprised of state, federal and local dollars.

The agency provides state-mandated programs, as well as services to promote self-sufficiency, independence, prevention, and health and safety.

FSSA services affect nearly one million Hoosiers - about one in every six people in the state. Programs include:

- Health care, including: Medicaid, Medicaid Select, M.E.D. Works, Medicaid Waivers, Hoosier Rx, Indiana Chronic Disease Management Program, Indiana Long-Term Care Insurance Program, Hoosier Healthwise, First Steps and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- Social Security and Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- Vocational rehabilitation.
- Prevention and early intervention services.
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
- Food stamps.
- Housing and community services for low-income families.
- Child development services.
- Community-based services for people with disabilities and seniors.
- Treatment of mental illness or addiction.
- Vocational rehabilitation.
- Services for people who are blind or visually impaired,

or deaf and hard-of-hearing.

September is time to hit the books

September is "Library Card Sign-Up Month" - a time to encourage people to sign up for library cards. Hoosiers who want to access books and materials from the Talking Book and Braille Library don't need a card, but they do need to fill out an application to be eligible for services.

The Talking Book and Braille Library provides large print books, Braille books and books on tape to Indiana residents who are unable to read regular print because of a physical, visual or learning disability. A network of subregional libraries also provides recorded book services, welcomes walk-in patrons and helps readers select books. Information on each library follows.

- Indiana State Library - The state library serves all Indiana residents and is located at 140 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, 46204. The library is open Monday - Friday, from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. For more information, visit their Web site at <http://www.statelib.lib.in.us/www//isl/lbph/lbphmenu.html> or contact the library at lbph@statelib.lib.in.us (email), (317) 232-3684 (voice) or (800) 622-4970 (voice), or (317) 232-7763 (TTY).
- Bartholomew County Public Library - This subregional library serves people in Bartholomew, Clark, Crawford, Decatur, Floyd, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Scott and Washington counties. It is located at 536 Fifth St., Columbus, 47201. Operating hours are Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. For more information, visit <http://www.barth.lib.in.us/talkingbooks.html> or contact the library at talkingbooks@barth.lib.in.us (email), (812) 379-1277 (voice) or (800) 685-0524 (voice).
- Elkhart Public Library - This subregional library serves Elkhart, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Marshall, St. Joseph, and Starke counties, and is located at 300 S. Second, Elkhart, 46516. The library's operating hours are Monday -Friday, 9 a.m. -5 p.m. For more information,

visit <http://www.elkhart.lib.in.us/cgi-bin/index5.pl?&file=bph.html> or contact the library at pciancio@elkhart.lib.in.us (email) or (574) 294-2619 (voice).

- Lake County Public Library - Serving residents of Jasper, Lake, LaPorte, Newton and Porter counties, this subregional library is located at 1919 W. 81st Avenue, Merrillville, 46410. Operating hours are 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday - Friday. Visit http://www.lakeco.lib.in.us/talking_books.htm for more information, or contact the library at tbooks@lakeco.lib.in.us (email), (219) 769-3541 (voice) or (219) 769-3541 (TTY).
- Evansville-Vanderburgh Public Library - This subregional library serves Daviess, Dubois, Gibson, Knox, Martin, Perry, Pike, Posey, Spencer, Vanderburgh, and Warrick counties, and is located at 200 SE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Evansville, 47713. The library is open Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. For more information, visit <http://www.evpl.org/services/tbs/index.html> or contact the library at tbs@evpl.org (email), or (812) 428-8235 (voice) or (866) 645-2536 (voice).

To obtain an application to access services of the Talking Book and Braille Library's or any of its subregional libraries, visit

<http://www.statelib.lib.in.us/www/isl/lbph/application.doc>.

Service lets users hear the news

Hoosiers with a print impairment, which can be caused by physical, visual or learning disabilities, can call the Nina Mason Pulliam Statewide Dial-Up and hear sections of local newspapers.

The phone service, sponsored by the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, receives more than 1,000 calls each month. Volunteers from the Indiana Reading and Information Services (IRIS) read the news using a telephone voice messaging system.

Listeners can choose from several voice prompts to hear the

information of interest to them.

The following newspapers can be heard by using the system:

- The Indianapolis Star
- The Star Press (Muncie)
- Chronicle Tribune (Marion)
- Tribune-Star (Terre Haute)
- The Republic (Columbus)
- The Herald-Times (Bloomington)
- Journal & Courier (Lafayette)
- The Journal Gazette (Fort Wayne)
- The News Sentinel (Fort Wayne)
- South Bend Tribune
- The Elkhart Truth
- Kokomo Tribune
- Kokomo Perspective
- The Goshen News
- The Post-Tribune (Gary)
- The Times (Hammond)
- Palladium-Item (Richmond)
- Brown County Democrat

To receive a password, a person must have a medical or social certification of print impairment. To apply for a password, fill out the listener application at <http://www.wfyi.org/irisdialUp.asp>.

To access the phone service, interested applicants need a touch tone phone. Toll-free access is available for those who live outside the Indianapolis calling area. For more information, contact IRIS at (317) 715-2004 (voice) or (877) 854-0077.

New Supreme Court justice could have huge impact

President George W. Bush recently announced his decision to nominate U.S. Circuit Judge John Roberts, Jr. to the Supreme Court. If confirmed by the Senate, Roberts would replace retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

Roberts, who grew up in Long Beach, Ind., graduated from

Harvard Law School before he served as clerk for Justice William Rehnquist before the latter was elevated to chief justice. Since 2003, Roberts has served on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. He was confirmed by a unanimous vote to his current position.

Justice O'Connor gained a reputation as a moderate swing voter in her 24 years on the nation's highest court. With Roberts selected by the president to replace O'Connor, disability advocates are speculating on what his possible confirmation means for the disability community and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Such is the situation with *Goodman v. Georgia*, which is set to be heard by the Supreme Court on Nov. 9. Goodman, a state prison inmate who is also paraplegic, sued the state of Georgia because prison officials would not assist him in reaching the bed or toilet in his cell.

The case is similar to *Tennessee v. Lane*, which was decided in a 5-4 vote in favor of Lane, who sued Tennessee because the state lacked court access for people with disabilities. O'Connor was widely considered to be the swing vote in that case. The ruling in favor of Lane allows states to be sued under the Americans with Disabilities Act, which is the basis for *Goodman v. Georgia*. The upcoming case could serve as an early test of Roberts' views on disability rights and the ADA.

Confirmation hearings for Roberts will begin on Sept. 6, with the Supreme Court reconvening for a new term on Oct. 3. If confirmed, Roberts' could prove significant in future interpretations of disability-related laws. Check with news outlets for information related to both Roberts' confirmation hearings and *Goodman v. Georgia*.

Organization offers free therapeutic riding

EquiVenture Therapeutic Riding, Inc., has been offering free therapeutic riding and horse care skills for children with physical or cognitive disabilities since 1993.

The Russiaville organization has a program two nights per

week, from May - September of each year. This past season, EquiVenture worked with 34 children.

"The neat thing about our program is that you can see the progress of the children as they work with the horses. It is amazing," said Bonnie Flynn, EquiVenture co-founder, board member and instructor.

EquiVenture is the only facility of its kind in the country that has been able to operate for an extended time without charging rider fees. The use of an all-volunteer staff allows the organization to do this.

"We have a wonderful group of volunteers," said Flynn. "At least 20 people come to help each night we have a program. We could not work without them."

EquiVenture's final event each year is their annual horse show. This event, which will be held on Sept. 18, will feature an awards ceremony for riders who have completed the program.

The organization is currently taking names for its waiting list of people interested in participating in the program.

To be added to the waiting list, contact Bonnie Flynn at (765) 883-5420 (voice) or flynnbms@aol.com (e-mail). For more information about EquiVenture, visit <http://www.equiventure.org/>.

Build your net worth at annual conference

The 2005 Conference for People with Disabilities, "Building Your Net Worth," will be held Dec. 5-6 at the Westin Indianapolis.

The Conference will feature keynote speaker Dr. Charles Garfield, author of Peak Performers, Peak Performance and Second to None. Other featured speakers include:

- Jim Dickson, vice president for governmental affairs of the American Association of People with Disabilities.
- John D. Kemp, a principal in the law firm of Powers, Pyles, Sutter and Verville, who has a federal law and

- legislative practice in the areas of disability, rehabilitation, health care and nonprofit organizations.
- Robin Jones, director of Great Lakes ADA and Accessible IT Center.
 - Anne Rohall, an attorney in the field of health and disability policy.

Concurrent workshops will also be held to educate attendees about disability-related issues. Workshop topics include financial management, starting your own business, estate planning, net worth, how to make yourself a valued commodity by voting, and many others.

Registration forms were mailed in late August. If you haven't received one, contact the Council at (317) 232-7770 (voice) or visit the Web site at www.in.gov/gpcpd to print a copy of the form.

Commission works for fair housing

According to a recent Indiana survey, housing discrimination based on disability is on the rise. The Indiana Civil Rights Commission is working to build awareness about this issue, as well as to educate and train both housing tenants and landlords.

The 2004 survey asked local government officials, community leaders, housing providers, economic development professionals, social service organizations and others, about the prevalence of discrimination in their communities and existing barriers to fair housing.

Compared to 2002 and 2003, a larger percentage of survey respondents in 2004 identified discrimination based on disabilities as occurring in their communities. Discrimination based on disability became their number one concern in 2004 at 28 percent, up from 22 percent in 2003, and 19 percent in 2002.

In addition, respondents were asked whether certain groups in the community could obtain desirable housing. Forty-two percent of respondents felt that persons with disabilities

could not obtain desirable housing.

People with disabilities are protected by federal and state civil rights laws against discrimination in housing, as well as in the areas of employment, education, public accommodations and credit. The Indiana Civil Rights Commission is charged with addressing violations in these areas.

"Sometimes, people don't even know when they are being discriminated against. They don't know their rights," said Judy Kochanczyk, program director of special projects. "Even when they do know their rights, they don't know how to contact us."

According to Kochanczyk, both housing tenants and landlords are uninformed about what accommodations are required by law. For this reason, fair housing workshops hosted by the commission are also geared toward those responsible for renting and managing housing.

In addition to these services, the commission also offers a mediation team, which can be used as an alternative to the court system. Two parties can use the mediation team to solve a dispute, which can save time and costly legal expenses.

If you have been discriminated against because of a disability, you are encouraged to call the Indiana Civil Rights Commission at (866) 332-4748 (voice) or (800) 743-3333 (TTY).

Oct. 19 is Disability Mentoring Day

Disability Mentoring Day promotes career development for students and job-seekers with disabilities through job shadowing and hands-on career exploration.

Students and job-seekers with disabilities are matched with workplace mentors according to expressed career interests where they can experience a typical workday. This helps to prepare people with disabilities to enter the workforce.

The goals of Disability Mentoring Day are:

- To enhance internship and employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- To promote disability as a central component of diversity recruitment for a more inclusive workforce.
- To dispel employers' fears about hiring people with disabilities.
- To increase confidence among students and job seekers with disabilities.
- To launch a year-round effort to foster mentoring opportunities.

Disability Mentoring Day began in 1999 with fewer than three-dozen student or job-seeker participants. In 2004, 9,000 people with disabilities participated nationally and in nearly 20 international locations. They were mentored by almost 1,500 private, non-profit, governmental, and educational organizations.

The Indianapolis Mayor's Office on Disability Affairs is partnering with the Indianapolis Private Industry Council (IPIC) to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in local Disability Mentoring Day activities. IPIC is a not-for-profit corporation that works to improve lives through education and employment. For more information, contact Juli Paini at (317) 327-3798 (voice).

Disability Mentoring Day is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). For more information, visit <http://www.dmd-aapd.org/>.

Legal decisions affect ADA

Recently, two decisions were announced that could affect the interpretation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

In the first ADA-related decision, a complaint was filed under the ADA against Regal Entertainment Group, the nation's largest movie theater chain. The lawsuit disputed the

placement of seating in Regal's theaters. These theaters failed to place wheelchair accessible seating in a comparable line of sight that would be given to the general public. The agreement reached states that all Regal current and future stadium-style theaters must provide improved seating for individuals using wheelchairs. Furthermore, all future cinemas must be designed in accordance with the ADA in that wheelchair seating must be placed in the middle of the theater. Also, Regal must make the necessary changes to all existing theaters to meet these requirements, as long as major reconstruction is not needed.

"The stadium style is less accessible for me because you have to take stairs to get to the seats, and there is no way that I can do that. Even if they built a ramp, it would be much steeper than those mandated by the ADA," Karen Kissick said. "Right now, I have to sit in the front row." Kissick, an independent living advocate for the Indianapolis Resource Center for Independent Living, is a frequent movie attendee.

In the second ADA decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that foreign cruise ships that sail in U.S. waters can be sued under a federal civil rights law for discriminating against passengers with disabilities. This agreement clarified the reach of the ADA, which has been argued amongst lower courts.

The original case involved Norwegian Cruise Line Ltd., which was accused by several passengers of denying accessibility on 1998 and 1999 cruises. The lawsuit stated that physical barriers on the ship denied the passengers access to emergency equipment, public restrooms, restaurants, swimming pools, elevators and cabins with a balcony or window. All foreign-operated cruise ships are now covered by the ADA.

More information on these decisions can be found at www.aapd-dc.org.

Entries needed for upcoming art exhibit

Hoosier artists with disabilities are encouraged to submit

entries into an upcoming art exhibit sponsored by VSA arts of Indiana and the Indiana Resource Center for Families with Special Needs (INSOURCE). The exhibit will be presented at INSOURCE's annual conference on Oct. 21 and 22 in West Lafayette.

A jury panel comprised of VSA arts of Indiana and INSOURCE staff members will select the artists who will be invited to show their work at the exhibit. All artists who submit entries will be notified of the decision by mail no later than Oct. 5.

The deadline for entries is Sept. 28. Following are the eligibility rules and guidelines:

- Only original work from an Indiana artist with a disability will be accepted.
- Only two-dimensional art will be accepted (i.e. paintings, drawings, printmaking collages, mixed media, etc.).
- Art must remain on display until the exhibition is closed.

Work may be delivered in person or mailed to VSA Arts of Indiana at 1505 N. Delaware St.; Suite 100; Indianapolis, IN 46202.

All work, regardless of use in the exhibit, will be available for personal pick-up starting Oct. 27. Submissions may also be mailed back by request, with postage paid by VSA arts of Indiana. Please include a mailing address with your submission.

For more information, visit <http://www.vsai.org/> or call (317) 974-4123 (voice) or (317) 974-4117 (TTY).

Of Note

Register now for Arc of Indiana dinner

The Arc of Indiana's 2005 annual meeting and appreciation dinner will be held Nov. 18 at The Marten House; 1801 W. 86th St.; Indianapolis. The dinner will include the

presentation of awards honoring outstanding individuals, businesses and organizations for their contributions to improving the lives of people with cognitive disabilities. For ticket information, contact Sally Morris at (317) 977-2375 (voice) or (800) 382-9100 (voice). October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month The official theme for the 2005 National Disability Employment Awareness Month is "Workers with Disabilities: Ready for Tomorrow's Jobs Today." The theme will be used by the private sector, federal, state and local governments, and advocacy organizations to plan events and programs that showcase the abilities and skills of job candidates who have disabilities.

Opinions sought in Council survey

The Governor's Council is conducting a consumer satisfaction survey this fall. The online survey, titled "Tell It Like It Is," will help the Council understand how people with disabilities and their families feel about the current status of disability-related issues in Indiana. Survey results will be used by the Council in shaping a five-year plan for 2007-2011. Results will identify the critical issues and areas that need to be improved. Once the survey is complete, results will be published in On Target and will be disseminated statewide.

The survey will be available by mid-September on the Council Web site (<http://www.in.gov/gpcpd/>). It will also be available in printed form, including alternative formats, by request. For more information, contact the Council at (317) 232-7770 (voice).

Web resources help assist hurricane victims

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, thousands of people with special needs are without homes and/or jobs and are in need of urgent assistance. Several organizations are available to help. A listing is available at www.katrinadisability.info/. TheArcLink, an Indiana-based site located at www.thearclink.org, has created a central online clearinghouse for listings of people or families who need support. The site can also be used for people anywhere

in the U.S. to offer financial assistance, housing, employment and other assistance.

Free fair housing workshops offered

The Indiana Civil Rights Commission and the Indiana Fair Housing Task Force will provide fair housing workshops at no cost on Sept. 14, 2005, following the Housing and Community Economic Development Conference at the Indiana Convention Center. Workshops include: Fair Housing 101 - 2:15-3:30 p.m.; Predatory Lending - 3:30-5 p.m.; and Fair Housing for People with Disabilities - 2:15-5 p.m. Those who would like to attend can RSVP to Judy Kochanczyk at (317) 233-6306 (voice) or jkochanczyk@crc.state.in.us (e-mail).

MAAP to host annual conference

MAAP Services for Autism and Asperger Syndrome, in conjunction with the Indiana Resource Center for Autism, will host its annual conference Oct. 28 and 29 at the Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel & Suites. The theme of the conference is "Stop, Look and Listen to the Autism Spectrum" and will feature speakers on topics relating to school-age children and adults. For more information, contact Diana Stille, Indiana Resource Center at (812) 855-8508 (voice) or MAAP at (219) 662-1311 (voice).

Register now!

The Annual Conference for People with Disabilities, "Building Your Net Worth," will be held Dec. 5-6, 2005.

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