

# FYI Monthly e-News

For Your Information – September 2010  
Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities

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The “FYI” is on the Internet at <http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/resources/publications/fyi/fyindex.asp>.

# FYI *Monthly e-News*

September 2010

## TEXAS UPDATE & OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

*Texas Faces \$18 Billion Budget Crisis*

### **Disability Groups Call for Major Advocacy Efforts to Limit Cuts**

The Texas Legislature will face an estimated budget deficit of \$11 billion to \$18 billion for the next biennium (fiscal years 2012-2013) when it convenes for the 82nd Regular Session on Jan. 11, 2011. This shortfall represents the difference between what the state expects to collect in revenue during that period and what it would cost to keep programs operating at current levels. This is expected to have devastating effects on the state's programs, including services and supports for people with disabilities. Advocates are concerned that an \$18 billion dollar deficit could mean drastic reductions in current services as well as increases in waiting lists, cuts in provider rates and difficulty in receiving medical services.

In an attempt to minimize cutbacks, disability groups are calling for people across the state to participate in advocacy efforts to educate their legislators on the importance of funding disability services and the dire consequences that budget reductions would have on individuals, families and the state as a whole. "Unless we all work together to stop these cuts, many Texans with disabilities could lose the services they need to live independently in their own homes and communities," advocates stated. *More information on advocacy campaigns and opportunities is provided on the next page.*

**Background:** As the economy continues to stumble, Texas is struggling with how to handle the budget crisis while still meeting essential needs. Because of the financial shortfall, all state agencies were instructed to reduce their state funds by five percent this year and to include an additional 10 percent cut in state funds in their budget proposals for the next two years. Some programs are exempt from these reductions, such as funds to maintain eligibility in Medicaid entitlement programs, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and foster care. However, this can put other programs at risk of even higher budget cuts. Several items that were exempt in the past were dropped from the protected list this time including prisons, adoption subsidies and an effort to diagnose toddlers' physical and mental disabilities.

**The Budget Process:** State agencies were required to submit Legislative Appropriations Requests (LARs) by the end of August. The LAR is an agency's request for money to operate its programs over the next

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## Texas Faces Budget Crisis *Continued*

two-year biennium. These LARs, which can be several hundred pages long, can be accessed through the LBB's website at [http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/External\\_Links/LAR\\_82R/Agency\\_LAR\\_Listing\\_82R.htm](http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/External_Links/LAR_82R/Agency_LAR_Listing_82R.htm). TCDD staff are developing summaries of key items in various LARs that may impact people with developmental disabilities. The summaries will be posted at [http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public\\_policy/txlegis.asp](http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public_policy/txlegis.asp).

The state's Legislative Budget Board (LBB) and the Governor's Office of Budget, Planning and Policy (GOBPP) are holding joint hearings now on the LARs. While many of the hearings have occurred, their schedule is at [http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/Budget\\_Hearings/Schedule\\_by\\_Date.htm](http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/Budget_Hearings/Schedule_by_Date.htm). Once all hearings are completed, LBB staff will draft a budget bill for consideration by the board. The proposed budget, as approved by the LBB, becomes the initial appropriations/budget bill considered by the Texas Legislature during the 2011 regular session. The legislature is supposed to complete the budget before the session ends on May 30, 2011, and send it to the governor for his approval.

A chart on the "Texas Biennial Budget Cycle," which shows the steps taken in developing and approving the state budget, is on page five of "Budget 101: A Guide to the Budget Process in Texas," by the Senate Research Center. It is online at <http://www.senate.state.tx.us/SRC/pdf/Budget101-2009-web.pdf> or call (512) 463-0087 for a print copy.

### **Advocacy Campaigns & Opportunities:**

Invest in Community! is an advocacy campaign by a group of organizations and individuals that are concerned about home and community-based services for people with disabilities and older Texans. This group is working to make sure that the State of Texas funds all home and community-based services during the next legislative session. It held a rally on Sept. 1 at the capitol, which was covered by a number of reporters, including the [Austin](#) and [Dallas](#) newspapers.

The Invest in Community campaign also is looking for people willing to share their stories during the legislative session.

Additionally, it has an online [survey](#) at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZWGM96P> where people can provide information on how cuts to home and community-based services will affect them. For a print copy of the survey or more information, email [stoptexascuts@gmail.com](mailto:stoptexascuts@gmail.com) or call Sarah at (512) 478-3366. The survey is also available in Spanish. More details on the campaign are on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Invest-in-Community-Texas/147615905266784>.

Photos from Invest in Community rally



Texas Forward is a broad group that is calling for a balanced approach to a balanced budget. It states that, "A truly balanced budget adequately funds today's needed public services and prepares Texas for future demands caused by changing demographics, technology and economic competition." Information on Texas Forward is at <http://txforward.org/home.html>.

Other Advocacy Groups at the state and local level will also be working to improve services for people with disabilities. Individuals are encouraged to contact groups they are in to find out what is being planned and how they can work together to promote disability supports and services. For example, The Arc of the Capital Area, Easter Seals and Austin Travis County Integral Care are hosting a community forum in

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## Texas Faces Budget Crisis *Continued*

Austin on Sept. 28. The forum will address service and resource issues affecting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Local elected officials and state leaders will interact with consumers from each agency, who will speak about their experiences and service needs. For details on the forum, go to [https://ssl.capwiz.com/thearc/attachments/IDD\\_forum2\\_1.pdf](https://ssl.capwiz.com/thearc/attachments/IDD_forum2_1.pdf), contact [Erika.Canales@atcic.org](mailto:Erika.Canales@atcic.org) or call (512) 440-4063.

For information about contacting elected officials, go to the TCDD Advocacy 101/Advocacy Tips page at [http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public\\_policy/tips.asp](http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public_policy/tips.asp). To identify your legislators, go to <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us>.

## Election Drawing Near; Are You Registered, Ready to Vote?

***The deadline to register to vote in the General Election on Tuesday, Nov. 2nd is Monday, Oct. 4, 2010.*** This can be either the postmark date or the date the application is received at your county's [Voter Registration Office](http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml) (<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/votregduties.shtml>). Voter applications are available online at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/reqvr.shtml> and at the county voter registration office, many post offices, libraries, driver license/Texas Department of Public Safety offices, and Texas Department of Human Services offices throughout the state. ***Early voting runs from Oct. 18-29, 2010. Applications to vote by mail must be received by Oct. 26.***

***Offices that are up for election*** this year include the Texas governor and lieutenant governor; all 150 seats in the Texas House and all 32 of the state's seats on the U.S. House of Representatives and (which each serve for two years); half of the Texas Senate; three members on the Texas Supreme Court; three judges on the Court of Criminal Appeals; and eight positions on the State Board of Education (Districts 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 15), as well as various other offices.

A full list of offices up for election is at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/2010officesup.shtml>. Additional information about "What's on the Ballot," including information on candidates by party, is at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/whatisontheballot.shtml>.

***Individuals with disabilities in Texas who need help registering to vote, who have general questions about the voting process, or who feel their rights have been violated*** can contact Advocacy, Inc. The protection and advocacy organization is working to ensure that every person is able to cast an independent, private ballot in every election, under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Program. This includes registering to vote, accessing polling places and voting. For more information or assistance, call Advocacy, Inc.'s toll-free **Voter Assistance Hotline at 1-888-796-VOTE** (1-888-796-8683) or go to their website at <http://www.disabilityrightstx.org/what-we-do/voting-rights>. Advocacy, Inc. also has a number of [Voting Rights Resources](http://www.disabilityrightstx.org/resources/voting-rights) at <http://www.disabilityrightstx.org/resources/voting-rights>.

***The Secretary of State's Office also has information on Services Available to Voters with Special Needs in Texas***, at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/pamphlets/services.shtml>. Information on voting by mail is at <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/index.shtml>.

***For more information on voting in Texas, voting registration and specific elections***, see <http://www.votexas.org>. You can also contact the Secretary of State's Elections Division at 1-800-252-VOTE (8683) or by e-mail to [elections@sos.state.tx.us](mailto:elections@sos.state.tx.us).

***The period before elections is an excellent time for advocates to get to know candidates and educate them on disability issues.*** Advocates can also make a difference by volunteering for or contributing to a campaign and sending the message that people with disabilities are an important voting bloc.

## STAR+PLUS Enrollment in Dallas/Tarrant Regions Begins in November

Plans are moving ahead to expand STAR+PLUS managed care into the Dallas and Tarrant Medicaid Service Areas on Feb. 1, 2011. To help individuals prepare for this change, letters were recently sent to seniors (age 65 or older) and people with disabilities in these areas who have Medicaid to notify them about the program and that sign-up for it begins in November. An enrollment packet with more information will be mailed to Medicaid recipients at that time. This packet will include information about the three service providers in the Dallas area and two providers in the Tarrant area.



Most adults in the 13-county region who receive supplemental security income (SSI) are required to join STAR+PLUS. Children under age 21 who get SSI can choose to sign up for the managed care benefits under STAR+PLUS or stay with the traditional fee-for-service Medicaid. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) expects about 78,000 people in the Dallas and Tarrant Medicaid Service Areas to enroll in STAR+PLUS.

**Two public meetings on STAR+PLUS are planned in Arlington on Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2010, so people can learn more the program, enrollment and how coverage will work:**

- **A hearing for individuals in the [Tarrant Service Area](#)** will be held from 9 a.m. until noon. This is for people in Denton, Hood, Johnson, Parker, Tarrant and Wise counties.
- **A hearing for individuals in the [Dallas Service Area](#)** will be held from 2-5 p.m. This is for people in Collin, Dallas, Ellis, Hunt, Kaufman, Navarro and Rockwall counties.

Both hearings will be in the Texas Health Resources Corporate Office in the Executive Conference Hall on the 7th Floor of the Tower Building at 612 E. Lamar Blvd., Arlington. Reservations are not required. People with disabilities who require accommodations should contact Diane Eberhart at (512) 491-1126 at least 72 hours before the meeting to make arrangements.

### **Background:**

STAR+PLUS is a Medicaid managed care program that combines traditional health care, such as doctor visits, and long-term services and support, such as help at home with daily activities, home modifications, respite care and personal assistance. Individuals who enroll in the managed care program will have a “medical home” -- a primary care provider who will coordinate all their health care and make sure their health needs are met. That includes long-term services and supports that provide personal care in the home.

STAR+PLUS began operating in Harris County in 1998. In 2007, STAR+PLUS was expanded to serve 29 counties in the Bexar, Nueces, Travis, and Harris Expansion Service Areas. More than 164,000 individuals are in the STAR+PLUS program now.

The expansion will offer STAR+PLUS services to people eligible for Medicaid in the Dallas and Tarrant areas who previously received integrated acute and long-term services and supports through Integrated Care Management. HHSC ended its contract with Evercare of Texas for these services in May 2009.

### **For More Information:**

Details on the expansion are at [http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/medicaid/SP\\_DallasTarrantExpansion.shtml](http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/medicaid/SP_DallasTarrantExpansion.shtml), including “*Client Resource Materials*” and a link to the [letter](#) that was sent to seniors and people with disabilities who are on Medicaid. “*Frequently Asked Questions about Health Care for Clients*” is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). “*Frequently Asked Questions about Long-term Care for Clients*” is also available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

## Medicaid Begins Treatment for Adult Substance Use Disorder

Adults with Medicaid who are trying to stop using drugs or alcohol can now get access to outpatient treatment services such as counseling and medication assisted therapy. Residential treatment such as detoxification will be available after Jan. 1, 2011. Before Sept. 1, 2010, Medicaid treatment for adult substance abuse was limited to some hospital-based detoxification and mental health services such as psychotherapy. Treatment for substance use disorder for individuals under age 21 with Medicaid was already available.

Medicaid participants who are interested in getting the new outpatient services must be assessed first by a licensed chemical dependency facility. Individuals in the STAR and STAR+PLUS programs can call their health plan or the plan's behavioral health hotline. Those in PCCM or fee-for-service Medicaid can call their program's client helpline:

- PCCM Client Helpline: 1-888-302-6688
- Fee-for-service Medicaid: 1-800-252-8263
- STAR and STAR+PLUS clients: Call your health plan

People can also call a substance abuse provider in their community to see if the provider takes Medicaid.

More information is at <http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/SubstanceAbuseBenefit.shtml>.

## DADS to Hold Hearing on Proposed Long-Term Care Plan

A public hearing on the [proposed Long-Term Care Plan for Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Related Conditions 2012-2013](#) will be held by the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) in Austin on Thursday, Sept. 23, 2010. This plan reflects the legislative appropriations request (LAR) proposed for the:

- **State supported living centers (SSLCs, previously called state schools) and community-based intermediate care facilities (ICFs)** (licensed or approved as meeting license requirements); and
- **Capacity of the various home and community-based services waiver programs** for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities or related conditions.

Staff members from DADS and Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) will briefly discuss the plan at the beginning of the hearing, followed by public input on the plan. The hearing is scheduled from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Winters building at 701 W. 51st St., Austin.

Persons who cannot attend the meeting may provide input by calling 1-877-226-9790 during the meeting. At the prompt, enter Access Code 4764735. Written comments on the draft plan can be submitted to Kevin Estes at [kevin.estes@dads.state.tx.us](mailto:kevin.estes@dads.state.tx.us) by noon on Sept. 24. Persons who need accommodations to attend the hearing should contact Laura Arce at [laura.arce@dads.state.tx.us](mailto:laura.arce@dads.state.tx.us) or (512) 438-3512 by 5 p.m. Sept. 21.

**A copy of the plan** is at <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/homepage/proposedltcplan-9-1-10.pdf>.

***It includes information on the following programs:***

- Intermediate Care Facility for Persons with Mental Retardation or a Related Condition (ICF-MR/RC) Program;
- Home and Community-based Services (HCS) Program;
- Texas Home Living (TxHmL) Program;
- Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS) Program;
- Deaf-Blind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD) Program; and
- Consolidated Waiver Program (CWP).

## Collaboration for a Moratorium on SSLC Admissions

After extensive public comment and discussion, the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) approved a motion on August 6, 2010, to support a proposal by Advocacy, Inc. to call for a moratorium on new admissions to State Supported Living Centers (SSLCs). This proposal for a temporary suspension of admissions is based on ongoing concerns regarding the institutions and risks to the health and safety of residents. Advocacy, Inc. proposes a moratorium on new admissions until the state can demonstrate that the facilities, which were previously called state schools, are meeting residents' constitutional rights to protection, health care and behavioral and mental health services, and other supports.

As the state's federally funded protection and advocacy system for people with developmental disabilities, Advocacy, Inc. has also asked a variety of other organizations to support a call for a moratorium on SSLC admissions. This proposal is based on ongoing concerns noted in a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) investigation and recent reports by monitoring teams reviewing services provided in each facility. The reports document serious concerns and deficiencies in care, including serious health and safety problems that continue to put residents at risk of imminent harm.

TCDD is a 27-member board dedicated to ensuring that all Texans with developmental disabilities, about 437,885 individuals, have the opportunity to be independent, productive and valued members of their communities. TCDD believes that people with developmental disabilities should be free from harm and live in safe environments no matter where they live.

A fact sheet that contains more information on the proposal for a moratorium and the Council's decision is on TCDD's website [http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public\\_policy/ssl.pdf](http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public_policy/ssl.pdf). This includes background on the SSLC investigations and examples of problems that have been identified at the facilities. Recent reports on the SSLCs are at <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/monitors/reports/index.html>.

## News Briefs

### Texas State Council on Autism/PDD Requests Input:

The Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders is asking stakeholders across the state to give feedback on autism-related services and programs in their local areas. Specifically, they want to know what services and programs are, or are not, working well for people. The feedback will be used to help the council as it prepares for the next legislative session which starts in January. The survey closes on Sept. 22, 2010. To participate in it, go to <http://tinyurl.com/29zbvng>.

### HHSC Requests Medicaid Waiver Pilot for Texans with Brain Injury:

Based on a recent study, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is requesting funding for an exceptional item in its 2012-2013 Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) to create a pilot Medicaid Community Support Waiver for people with acquired brain injury (ABI). Two options were recommended in the *"Feasibility Study for Providing Community Support and Residential Services for Individuals with Acquired Brain Injury"*; however only one -- for a Community Support Waiver -- is proposed, because of the state's tight budget. This pilot waiver would provide supports for 200 individuals living in the community who have functional limitations resulting from ABI. The client-directed waiver would allow individuals to choose from an array of services that best fit their individual needs within the annual limit of \$15,000 per person, per year. The report is online at [http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/reports/2010/Rider66\\_ABIFeasibilityStudy.pdf](http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/reports/2010/Rider66_ABIFeasibilityStudy.pdf).

## News Briefs

### **Report Makes 16 Recommendations to Improve Consumer Directed Services:**

A new report on Consumer Directed Services (CDS) makes 16 recommendations to improve and expand consumer direction in Texas long-term services and supports. CDS allows individuals in some Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) programs to hire and manage the persons who provide their services, including personal assistance, habilitation, and respite care providers and, in some programs, professional services providers. The recommendations by the Consumer Direction Workgroup are intended to increase effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and freedom of choice in fiscal years 2012-2013. Between February 2008 and February 2010, the number of individuals participating in CDS nearly tripled, going from just over 2,000 individuals to more than 6,000 participants. The 15-page report is online at <http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/reports/2010/Consumer-Direction-Workgroup.pdf>. More information on CDS is at <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/cds>.

### **Social Security Lifts Texans Out of Poverty:**

Social Security payments kept 860,000 Texans out of poverty in 2008, according to a recent state-by-state analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. The report, which is based on Census data from 2008, notes that Social Security kept 20 million Americans out of poverty that year. The poverty rate for Texans over the age of 65 was 12.6 percent in 2008. Without Social Security, the poverty rate would have been 46.8 percent. The report cautions that any action to reduce or limit Social Security could significantly increase the ranks of those living in poverty. More details are at <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=3260>.

## FEDERAL UPDATE

### SSA Proposes New Medical Criteria for Evaluating Mental Disorders

The Social Security Administration (SSA) published proposed changes in the medical criteria for evaluating mental disorders, including intellectual disability/mental retardation, in the August 19, 2010, *Federal Register*. These criteria, or “listings,” are the first major step in determining if an individual is eligible for disability benefits under Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). The proposed rules would update the eligibility criteria so that applications will be evaluated on the most current diagnostic criteria, assessment strategies, and understanding of the course of the disability. This will broaden most of the current categories, add more listings and make other changes.

The proposal would also change the term “mental retardation” to “intellectual disability/mental retardation (ID/MR)” under the draft rule. While several government entities have completely replaced the term “mental retardation” with “intellectual disability,” the SSA would use both terms jointly. This is because the older term is still widely used in many government programs, and it is included in the current version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM), and elsewhere.

The proposed rules are open for public comment until Nov. 17, 2010, at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-20247.pdf>. For more information, contact Cheryl Williams at (410) 965-1020.

### Rosa’s Law to Replace ‘R-Word’ Passes Senate

A bill unanimously passed the U.S. Senate on August 5, 2010, to replace the stigmatizing terms “mental retardation” and “mentally retarded” with “intellectual disability” and “individual with an intellectual disability” in various federal laws which mainly relate to education and employment. The bill, which is known as Rosa’s Law, now moves to the House of Representatives. Meanwhile, a similar bill, the [Elizabeth A. Connelly Act \(H.R. 4544\)](#), is still in the House, awaiting committee action. These bills are only intended to eliminate out-dated terminology. They would not expand or reduce services or affect eligibility for services. Information about an initiative by Special Olympics in Texas to “Ban the R-Word” is at <http://www.sotx.org/news-events/rword/about-the-rword-campaign.html>.

### FEMA Hiring Regional Disability Integration Specialists

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the Department of Homeland Security is in the process of hiring Regional Disability Integration Specialists in each of its 10 regional offices. The disability specialists will help ensure that the needs of individuals with disabilities are addressed during disaster planning, response and recovery efforts. According to FEMA, the specialists will provide “guidance, tools, methods, and strategies to integrate and coordinate emergency management efforts to meet the needs of all citizens, including children and adults with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.” The job postings closed on Sept. 1, 2010. The specialist that serves Texas will be located in Denton.

## Medicaid FMAP Extended through June, by Education Relief Bill

In August, President Obama signed into law a six-month extension of the Medicaid's temporary enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for states, through June 2011. This extension is part of the Teacher Jobs and State Fiscal Relief bill. It would increase funds by 3.2 percent for January through March 2011 and by 1.2 percent for April through June 2011, for a total of \$16.1 billion in Medicaid assistance to states. To receive these funds, states must request them by Sept. 24, 2010.

Another \$10 billion is authorized under the legislation in educational assistance to help lessen budget reductions for fiscal year 2011 by the majority of states that continue to face severe shortfalls in revenue. Texas applied for \$830 million in these federal education dollars which Congress intended to help save education jobs, an estimated 14,500 in this state. However, the application was rejected because it did not meet a Texas-specific provision that asks the governor to guarantee that state spending on education funds will not be significantly cut for three years. Discussions are underway to try to find a way access the funds or hold them until the legislature can pass a new budget next year. This funding is important because it affects how many teachers are hired, including special education teachers.

More details on FMAP are at <http://www.thearc.org/document.doc?id=2659> and <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/secletter/100813.html>.

### COUNCIL NEWS

## Grant Awarded for Regional African American Family Support Conference

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities awarded a \$50,000 grant to Parents Anonymous, Inc., for the first year of a project to host a Regional Texas African American Family Support Conference in Houston. The project will host up to three annual conferences, with the first one in the summer or fall of 2011. This conference is being modeled on the Central Texas African American Family Support Conference which has been hosted by Austin Travis County Integral Care annually for 10 years. It will strengthen the awareness of families and individuals of mental and physical health care services through culturally sensitive education, supports and partnerships.

The project will increase the ability of African Americans with disabilities and their family members to advocate for and receive quality health care -- both mental and physical -- as well as learning about wellness and local resources. It also will provide valuable opportunities for professionals to learn about culturally appropriate ways to provide support to African American families and to network with others.

Parents Anonymous, Inc. plans to work with other organizations and community partners, from both the public and private sector in Houston and the surrounding areas, that will help sponsor the conference. They plan to reach out to leaders of faith-based organizations, mental and physical health-care professionals who focus on health disparities experienced by African Americans, African American community organizations such as sororities or fraternities, local businesses, provider organizations and local civil justice advocates to increase attendance.

The training will be free for up to 150 individuals with disabilities and their families each year starting with about 100 scholarships in the first year. Attendance is also open to other individuals, including people of other ethnic and racial groups besides African Americans, especially people from the most underserved and rural communities in the region. TCDD is funding this project to increase cultural competence in service provision and to reach out to African Americans with developmental disabilities, who may be under-represented in service and support systems in this state.

## TCDD Updates 2 Position Statements

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) reviewed and updated two position statements in August 2010. The Council has now completed its review of all 14 TCDD position statements. A full list of the position statements is at [http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public\\_policy/position/psindex.asp](http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public_policy/position/psindex.asp).

*The TCDD position statements reviewed in August 2010 are:*

- [Access to Health Care](#)
- [Community Living](#)

## RESOURCES

### New Statistics Released on Employment of People with Disabilities

Unemployment eased up a little for Americans with disabilities in August, after almost reaching record levels in July, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. In August, the unemployment rate dropped to 15.6 percent for people with disabilities, down from 16.4 percent in July. On the other hand, the average unemployment rate for workers with disabilities was 14.5 percent in 2009. The Labor Department has been tracking employment for people with disabilities since the middle of 2008, and the highest rate recorded, 16.9 percent, was set in August 2009. These statistics cover individuals over the age of 16 who do not live in institutions.

Despite the improvements in August, employment prospects for people with disabilities continue to fall far short of those for people without disabilities. The unemployment rate for the general population in August was 9.3 percent. Other findings from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that nearly one-third of workers with a disability were employed part time in 2009, compared with about one-fifth of those with no disability.

Meanwhile, the vast majority of people with disabilities, 80 percent, were not considered to be in the workforce at all because they were not seeking work. One reason for this may be that half of those with disabilities were over age 65. For more information on employment statistics, go to <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/disabl.nr0.htm> and <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t06.htm>.

## TCDD Adds Sports, Outdoor Links to Internet Resources Web Page

Each month, TCDD adds new entries to its [Internet Resources](http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/resources/internetresources.asp) Web page at <http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/resources/internetresources.asp>. With the approach of fall, many people take advantage of the cooler temperatures to enjoy sports and outdoor activities. We are introducing a new section this month on “*Sports, Fitness & Recreation, and Outdoor Activities/Camping.*” It can help people with disabilities enjoy sports and the outdoors while staying in shape year-round. A *brief summary of resources added this month follows*. If you know of other resources that you would like to share, please send them to [lucy.walker@tcdd.state.tx.us](mailto:lucy.walker@tcdd.state.tx.us).

### **Resource Directories:**

#### ● **Houston Area:**

- The Family to Family Network links to “*Important Agencies*” at <http://www.familytofamilynetwork.org/parent-resources/important-agencies> and “*Houston Organizations*” at <http://www.familytofamilynetwork.org/parent-resources/houston-organizations>.
- A “*Resource Guide for Special Needs*” by The Arc of Greater Houston, is at <http://www.thearcofgreaterhouston.com/pdf/Karens%20master%20changes%20resource%20guideBC.pdf>.
- The “*Houston Resource Guide for Parents of Children with Disabilities*” by Elaine Hime and Texas Children’s Hospital is at <http://www.texaschildrens.org/parents/resguide.pdf>.

#### ● **Texas Panhandle:**

- A “*Children with Special Health Care Needs Family and Provider Resource Handbook,*” is at <http://unitingparents.cohs.net/Resource%20Book%205th%20Edition%2008.pdf>.

### **Sports, Fitness & Recreation, and Outdoor Activities/Camping:**

- **The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD)** provides extensive resources on physical activity and disability at <http://www.ncpad.org>. Materials include [guidelines to consider before starting any kind of exercise program](#), plus factsheets on adapted activities, games, recreation and sports. It has information on [specific disabilities](#), [nutrition](#), [lifetime sports](#), [competitive sports](#), [exercise and fitness](#), [fun and leisure](#), [videos](#) and more.
- **The Sports and Leisure Channel** has ideas for inclusive community recreation programs, including [therapeutic hobbies](#), [arts & entertainment](#), [camps](#), [recreation & leisure](#), [exercise & fitness](#), [sports & team games](#) and [advocacy](#) at [http://www.ucp.org/ucp\\_channel.cfm/1/15](http://www.ucp.org/ucp_channel.cfm/1/15).
- **Videos showing adaptive sports** are on Disaboom.com at <http://www.disaboom.com/adaptive-sports>.
- “*Community Resources for People with Disabilities*” centers on sports in the Houston area, but it also lists diverse resources state and nationwide, at <http://www.dynamicoandp.com/disability.asp>.
- **Turning Point provides free and low-cost outdoor activities** for people with physical disabilities in Texas, plus annual “Extravaganzas.” Go to <http://www.turningpointnation.org>. Chapters include [National](#) (in Terrell), [East Texas](#), [Gulf Coast](#), [North Texas](#), and [West Texas](#).
- **Texas provides a number of sports and recreational accommodations** for people with disabilities. Go to <http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/recreation>.
- **The Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife is working to improve accessibility of State Parks.** For details on state parks and recreational activities, go to <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest>.
- **A guide to “Texas Public Campgrounds,”** listed alphabetically by town, is at [http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/trv/txcamp\\_gde\\_10.pdf](http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/trv/txcamp_gde_10.pdf).

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## Internet Resources *Continued*

- **Information on commercial campgrounds** in Texas is at <http://www.texascampgrounds.com>.
- **The Travel Tex website** provides print and online guides at <http://www.traveltex.com> in seven languages. For a free, print packet, call 1-800-8888-TEX (839) or order online at <http://www.traveltex.com/downloads/travel-guide/order-travel-guide>.  
**For travel assistance**, call 1-800-452-9292.
- **Morgan's Wonderland is a 25-acre, accessible, family fun park in San Antonio.** Reservations are suggested. Details are at <http://www.morganswonderland.com> or call (210) 637-3434.
- **Special Olympics Texas** holds more than 250 competitions annually on area, regional and state levels. Details are at <http://www.sotx.org/about>.
- **A "Fit for Life" brochure** offers examples of sports and exercising for people with disabilities at <http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/prevent/fitlife.pdf>.
- **ExerciseIsMedicine.org** seeks to make physical activity and exercise a standard part of a disease prevention and medical treatment.
- **A list of Texas "Camps For Special Kids"** has been compiled by a member of the Texas Occupational Therapy Association. See <http://www.tota.org/camps.html>.
- **VSA arts of Texas** is a nonprofit that strives to create a society where people with disabilities learn through, participate in, and enjoy the arts. <http://www.vsatx.org>.

## Conferences, Training and Other Disability Events

Information on conferences, training and other disability events is in the "[Training and Events](#)" section of TCDD's website at [http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/training\\_events/training.asp](http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/training_events/training.asp). *If you would like to suggest an addition to the events list*, please send details to Melissa Rosser at [melissa.rosser@tcdd.state.tx.us](mailto:melissa.rosser@tcdd.state.tx.us). Please note, however, that we do not include routine/monthly meetings or support groups in this list.

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**Got News?** Please send any information you would like to submit for the "FYI" to: Lucy Walker, Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, 6201 E Oltorf, Ste 600, Austin, TX 78741-7509; 1-800-262-0334 or (512) 437-5415; fax (512) 437-5434 or by e-mail to [lucy.walker@tcdd.state.tx.us](mailto:lucy.walker@tcdd.state.tx.us). We'd especially like to hear about any advocacy opportunities, good resources, websites and conferences, etc.