

Family Support 360: *Empowering a Community*



Executive Summary

*A plan adopted on July 20, 2006 by
The Project for Family Support 360 Advisory Committee*

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The Illinois Family Support 360 Center Plan

“What I would change is that right now there isn’t a center where the people of Cicero and Berwyn can go. We don’t have help. What I would change would be for them to open an office that really helps us because we really need it.”

- Family Focus Group Participant

Why is a Center Needed?

In the last ten years, the communities of Berwyn and Cicero have experienced a dramatic growth in their Latino population, without a concurrent increase in services to meet their needs, especially for families of persons with developmental disabilities (DD). They present a significant and growing need for bicultural and bilingual supportive services that address the unmet needs of the individual with DD while providing information, referral and linkage services that foster improved family stability.

How did a Grassroots Approach Guide the Family-Driven Plan?

Combining experience and expertise in family support, Community Support Services (CSS) and the Institute on Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois at Chicago (IDHD at UIC) partnered together to respond to the needs of these families. Through funds from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (#HHS-2004-ACF-ADD-DN-0003), we have forged a dynamic plan for a one-stop Center to respond to what these families need and want.

To effectively meet the needs of these families, a grassroots approach involved families in ALL stages of the planning.

- **Successfully Developed A Family-Driven Plan** through a 360 Advisory Committee of 40 members that began with family members and built upon their perspectives through partnerships with key community leaders, service providers and village, township and state officials.
- **Assessed Community Needs From Data Obtained From:** Four Focus Groups (3 Spanish; 1 English) with 37 family members and Data from the Statewide Disability Needs Assessment, the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS), for Berwyn and Cicero provided by Suburban Access.
- **Family Advocacy Efforts Instrumental in Being Awarded \$500,000 for Capital Costs and \$100,000 in Operating Costs for the Center:** a capital grant of \$500,000 in FY 2006 and an operating grant for the Center of \$100,000 in FY 2007 were obtained from the State. The project sponsored a family advocacy training series and trip to the State Capitol led by the Family Support Network. Families learned how to improve services for their relatives with DD and advocate for their needs. The training series concluded with a trip to the State

Capitol where nearly 40 people, mostly Latino family members, met with close to 30 legislators (including most of the Latino Caucus) to advocate for their needs. State Senator Martin Sandoval of the 12th District (that includes Berwyn and Cicero) continues to be a key supporter and strong advocate for this project.

- **Established meaningful collaborations** at the State and local level... Health, Mental Health, Education, Aging, advocacy groups, Government Agencies, elected officials, etc. (refer to page 8).

What are Key Barriers Experienced by Families?

- Difficulty in locating and accessing supports and services
- Language and cultural barriers
- High gap in services, including financial, informational, health, legal, respite/day care, transportation, recreational, and clinical supports
- Lack of disability awareness and understanding in the community and among professionals

How Would the Center Enhance Access to Support for Families?

■ ***Coordinated, Flexible and Accessible Services***

- A single point of entry for a variety of support services and guidance for families to help them navigate service systems to address their needs
- A centralized, accessible location that is visible and familiar to families
- A flexible schedule of services

■ ***Family Centered and Culturally Competent Supports***

"[T]he most difficult [thing] for me was the fact that I didn't drive, and I didn't speak [English] and that's why I stopped looking for help...I really didn't speak to people, I was like isolated."

– Family Focus Group Participant

- A bilingual and bicultural environment to reduce language and cultural barriers and ensure the meaningful participation of all

families (e.g. access to information through bilingual staff, translation and interpretation services)

- Supports guided by families and based on their voiced needs and wants. Services and supports for all members of each family
- Families with more intensive needs will develop a family support plan in partnership with a service coordinator
- Other services will be offered to families who are not selected for an individualized family support plan (e.g. information and linkage to other resources, educational and social opportunities of the Center)
- The 360 Center will NEVER close its doors to families in crisis

Collaborative Community Partnerships

“I’ll put her [my friend] before me. That’s the way Latinos are. We don’t want to leave anyone behind.”

– Family Advisory Committee Representative

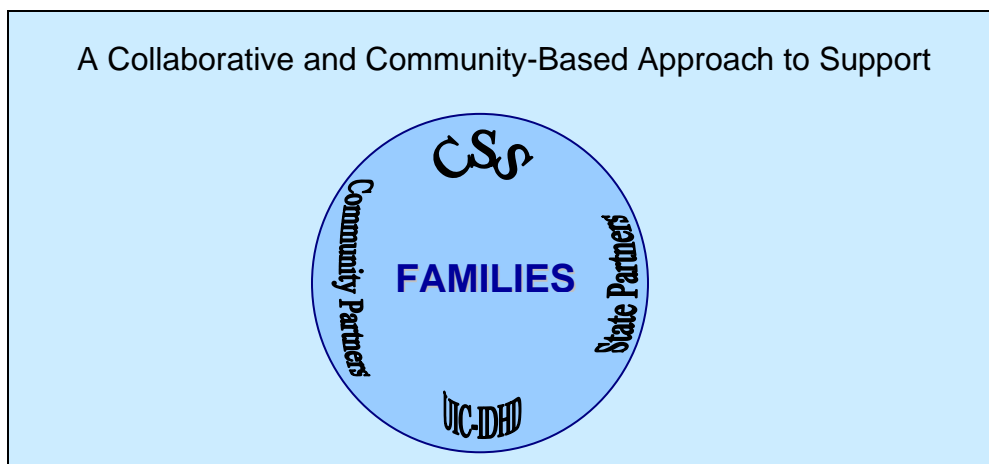
- The Latino families of the project have demonstrated a strong sense of community, often putting others’ needs before their own. These values were incorporated into every aspect of the Center
- A collaborative community-based approach to services/supports that will foster uniform communications, the pooling of resources, and enhanced support
- Social and educational events and assistance from other service providers who come to the Center based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Promotion of disability awareness and understanding in the community

What Would Be the Core Supports and Services to Empower Families?

- **Information and Referral:** Facilitate access to bilingual information and resources in a variety of ways: Community Support Services’ (CSS) and the Institute on Disability and Human Development’s (IDHD) websites, collaboration with other one-stop systems of information, a family resource exchange program, and resource room

- **Training and Education:** Promote disability awareness and offer bilingual training and educational opportunities with IDHD for persons with DD, their families, professionals, and the community, both within and outside of the Center
- **Case Management:** Families will partner with a service coordinator who will help them identify and prioritize their needs and develop a family support plan. Services and supports may include those provided by CSS and/or IDHD; other service providers who have a MOU with the Center; specialized and generic service providers, as needed; and/or linking families to each other
- **Respite:** Each year, families can choose between two basic types of respite:
 - *Voucher Respite Program* in which the family hires, trains and supervises the direct support professional (DSP) and CSS reimburses them, based on their costs
 - *Respite Array Program* in which CSS hires, trains and supervises the DSP. Families may choose from a variety of ways for respite care to be provided for their family member (e.g. at home, in the community, as part of an organized event for families)

How Would the Center Maximize Partnerships?



The Center will be an extension of CSS in partnership with the families and IDHD, building upon the work and relationships developed during the planning phase.

- **CSS**, as an established community agency, already provides a wide range of services and supports that can be utilized by the Center.
CSS:
 - Has offered comprehensive family support services for the past 25 years
 - Serves nearly 600 persons with DD and their families each month in nearly 60 communities located in Chicago’s western suburbs

- Will operate the 360 Center through partnerships that draw upon the various talents and contributions of the community, placing particular emphasis on the value of families

■ **IDHD**, the University Center for Excellence in DD (UCEDD) for the State of Illinois, will bring resources to the Center and will promote its model statewide and nationally.

IDHD:

- Will distribute information on disability issues to the community through training, technical assistance, service, research, and publications
- Is home to many recognized experts in the DD field
- Operates two programs specializing in work with the Latino population
- Will be a primary partner through a Memorandum of Understanding

■ **Family Members** will guide the focus, operation, and sustainability of the Center. Families of the Family Support 360 Advisory Committee will transition into an Advisory Committee for the 360 Center and will be an extension of the CSS Program Committee of the Board of Directors

■ **Community and State Partners:** The commitment of affiliate service providers and partners will be obtained through memorandums of understanding, building upon the relationships and partnerships formed during the planning phase of the project (e.g. Mental Health, Education, Aging, advocacy groups, Government Agencies, elected officials).

How will the Model be Sustained and Replicated?

■ **Presentations:** Presentations about this project will continue to communicate its success, gain support, and hopefully replicate the model in other areas

■ **Relationships with Elected Officials:** Developing strong relationships with elected officials is another route to obtaining support and insuring sustainability

“I am very happy to see a project like this come to the 12th Legislative District. Families of developmentally disabled children need to have somewhere to go that will provide them all the services in one place without them having to search or travel away from their community.”

Senator Martin Sandoval

(Source: Illinois State Senate Democrats Website: <http://www.senatedem.state.il.us/sandoval/news-h.shtml>)

- **Advocacy:** We witnessed the benefit of collaborative community advocacy during the Family Advocacy Training Series trip to the State Capitol. The Center will support the empowerment of families and encourage their active role in finding collaborative solutions to community needs. The importance of family involvement in solutions to community concerns was highlighted by Senator Sandoval during an in person meeting at a Family Support 360 advocacy training (March 10, 2006):

“We only are as powerful as you are united with us. When we look around and don’t see you, we feel alone.”

- Senator Martin Sandoval (March 10, 2006)

- **Evaluation:** The key to the Center’s success is the ongoing input and guidance of families. This includes surveying families for their input and feedback to develop annual goals, guide family plans, and identify Center strengths and areas for improvement
- **Outreach, Recruitment and Information Dissemination:** The Center will employ a Center Manager and a Family Outreach Liaison who will be responsible for outreach and the dissemination of information together with families of the Center

Fulfilling the 360 Vision

The 360 Center is based upon the strength and empowerment of Latino families and collaborative solutions to community needs. It will not only bring positive change to the Berwyn and Cicero communities, but has the potential to extend beyond these two communities, fostering systems change state-wide and beyond. While we have successfully obtained capital and operational funding from the State, more funds are necessary to fulfill the vision of Berwyn and Cicero families. We are dedicated to finding and securing the support to fund the 360 Center so that the 360 Vision of families can be brought to its full realization.

**“Thank you for getting our people here.
It is a beautiful thing to know that we are not forgotten.”**

-Family Advisory Committee Representative

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Latino Family Institute

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Illinois Department on Aging

Equip for Equality, Inc.

Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities

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