



WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



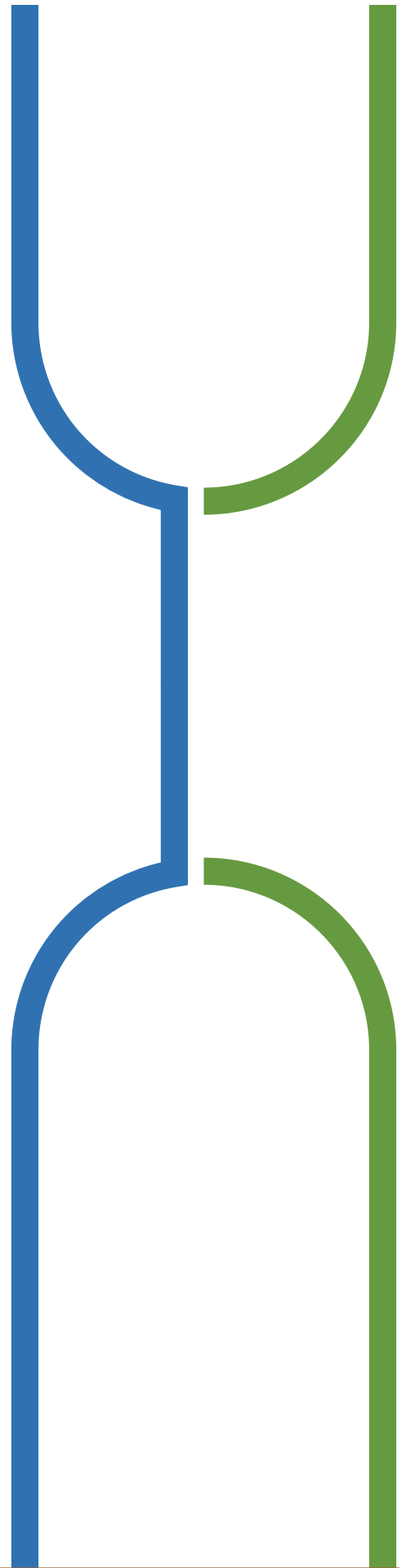
WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

2021-2023 BIENNIAL REPORT

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Message from Leadership

Here is the 2021-2023 biennial report from the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) detailing our mission, membership, goals, accomplishments, future needs, flexible work plan and budget.

Our federal charge in the Developmental Disabilities Act is identifying the most pressing needs of people with developmental disabilities and finding innovative and cost-effective ways to meet these needs in ways that uphold human and civil value. We must include on our board, at minimum, 60% people with developmental disabilities and their family members.

We prioritize getting people information in ways they can easily use and helping them understand and access programs and opportunities that improve their lives. We offer resources and opportunities both in-person and virtually, in accessible formats and in other languages whenever possible. We also advocate at the state level to improve services and supports so people with developmental disabilities can live the lives they want. More than 70% of our funds are invested in local communities in all areas of the state. We invite you to learn more about us and the opportunities we provide to the disability community at wi-bpdd.org

A few highlights include:

1. COVID Grants: We received more than \$130,000 in additional vaccine funding based on our proven track record getting shots in arms. Parent University partners with Hayat Pharmacy to coordinate in-home vaccinations and to host creative and fun events that draw community members and put people at ease. So far nearly 370 more people in Milwaukee have rolled up their sleeves to get vaccinated against COVID, flu, pneumococcal, and shingles.
2. Outreach: We partner with the WI Department of Public Instruction to support five community-based organizations that primarily serve families of color and/or Spanish speaking families with children with disabilities. These organizations know their families best and are highly skilled at listening to and responding to their families' interests and needs. Nearly 90% of youth and family members report increasing their advocacy. We also partner with the Coalition on Lead Emergency to support their grassroots efforts that equip families to reduce lead exposure and advocate for lead abatement. In the past year, over 2,500 families learned about sources of lead and ways to reduce exposure.
3. Policy Actions: We have been a leader in shaping policies that impact Wisconsinites with disabilities and their families. Our work has improved voting access, required training for guardians, improved protections for people with disabilities, helped families at risk of lead poisoning and explored affordable, accessible housing options.

For more details about this report or us, contact us at 608-266-7826 or at jeremy.gundlach@wisconsin.gov. More information, including our five-year plan for 2021 - 2026, is located on our website, www.wi-bpdd.org.



Mission:

To unite ALL of Wisconsin in supporting our residents with developmental disabilities to lead their most independent lives.

Charge:

We visited communities around the state to find out what issues matter to you and what you'd like to see changed. We listened. And from your words came our 5-year state plan for people with developmental disabilities.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement:

We want all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to have the lives they want. Yet, we know that not all people are living the lives they want because of racism and discrimination. We commit to finding and addressing these inequities at BPDD and in the service systems. We will listen, we will learn, and we will achieve change.

What We Do

We Lead: we take bold steps to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities. We help lead the way with new ideas.

We Partner: we bring together people with developmental disabilities, their family members, organizations, and others. Together we find solutions to problems and take action to bring about change.

We Advise: we are a trusted advisor to leaders in state government and the state legislature. We work with them to improve laws, policies, programs, and services.

We Advocate: we advocate for and with people with developmental disabilities to have the same opportunities in life that other members of the community have. We advocate for people to be included and supported so they are successful.

We Inform: we provide information and resources so people with disabilities and their family members can understand their rights, increase their independence, and find the services and supports they need.

We Strengthen: we fund advocacy and leadership training. People with developmental disabilities and their family members learn how to effectively advocate for themselves and others.

We Innovate: we are a leading organization in Wisconsin that funds grants focused on developmental disabilities. Grantees develop and test new ideas. We use what we learn to bring about change throughout Wisconsin.

We Connect: we facilitate community based organizations to bridge people to accurate and timely resources.



We Lead

Our **Living Well Grant** is leading the way to improve the health, safety, independence, and well-being of people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities living in the community. We work with many partners to empower people with disabilities to understand their rights.

245 self-advocates
and

105 staff and

20 families trained
on rights

1 revision to existing legislation to require investigation of abuse, neglect and exploitation involving people with disabilities

3450 more people learned about how to assert their rights by viewing the “Let’s Talk about Rights” video series

60 stakeholders across all areas of long-term care came together 3 times this year to propose best practices on quality home and community-based services

208 people learned more about high expectations for people with disabilities at three community conversations

“Because my brother has developmental disabilities it is easy for people to treat him like a child. No one in my family would tell anyone else that they have to go to church or not. The book helped put this into perspective and come up with the language to talk about it beyond ‘I feel uncomfortable with that’.”

Family Member from a Living Well “Let’s Talk about Rights” workshop

“It was amazing to watch my sons blossom virtually overnight. Also the SDM (supported decision-making) session was so valuable to our family, we will be creating two.”

Self-Determination Conference participant

We Inform

We continued our quarterly **webinar series** on ‘hot’ topics to give people easy-to-understand information on issues important to them. These free webinars focused on supported decision-making and ways to get involved with the biennial budget process.

To inform the larger community and the media about the caregiver crisis, we coordinated two press conferences with full panels of people with lived experience. Both press conferences resulted in multiple articles published in papers around the state.

Our **Self-Determination Conference** focuses on how to live more independently, participate more in your community, and direct your public funds efficiently. The conference was held as a hybrid event for the third year making it possible for more people to participate who struggle to attend in-person.

Webinar Data point:

100 people learned how to get involved in the state budget

15 articles published in media about non-driver transportation, ABLE accounts, seclusion and restraint and the caregiver crisis.

Self-Determination Conference Data points: Of the 119 survey respondents

92% reported making more choices about what is important to them

91% reported that because of the conference they have more resources to get the life they want

82% met at least one new person they plan to stay in touch with

We Partner

We partner with **People First Wisconsin** (PFW), a statewide advocacy organization run by people with disabilities. We help PFW strengthen their leadership and increase opportunities for more people with disabilities to advocate for issues important to them.

People First WI Data points:

4 grants received this year

Total number of people with disabilities employed by PFW in the last two years grew from **3** to **18**



\$268,000 in grant awards

PFW members serve on **17** boards and councils across the state

“In these last 5 years I’ve worked with the BPDD being a self-advocate leader and participating in different projects with them, that passion [for advocacy] has only grown. They have pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me realize my potential. I went from being completely shy and quiet to more outspoken towards injustices aimed at the neurodivergent community. BPDD and the opportunities they have given me are the reason I want to make disability advocacy a career. I’ve gained so many friends and made several professional connections. Every person I meet leads to a door opening.”

People First WI Self-Advocate Leader

We Partner

Our partnership with the WI Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to support five community-based organizations that serve families of color and/or Spanish-speaking families has resulted in 95% of families and youth feeling empowered to advocate for their own needs and/or the needs of their children.

Families Supporting Families Data points:

Over **1,435** people participated in at least one event

90% of families are participating in their child's special education meetings

100% of family members are participating in programs they are eligible for.

Success Stories



One grantee provided workshops for families about how to serve on groups that make decisions. **25 people graduated from the workshops** and **4 are already serving** on a council or board.

One grantee **partnered with a theatre company** to launch an inclusive program for youth with disabilities who speak Spanish. With that success the theatre company **decided to hire a permanent bilingual teacher** and they are now able to engage with a wider community.



We Connect

Through a **COVID grant** with USAging, we support Parent University in Milwaukee to connect more people to vaccinations and essential health information. Parent University partners with Hayat Pharmacy to host shot clinics and to visit senior centers and homes to vaccinate people and do health checks.

370 people vaccinated

660 people connected to accurate vaccination and health information and to other available services



We funded a **public health community organizer** through the Coalition on Lead Emergency who connects families to lead testing and education. Families also learn how to educate other parents about the dangers of lead and how to advocate to influence change.

210 kids lead tested

Over **1,000** lead safe kits in the hands of families who live in areas impacted by lead

Over **2,500** families trained on finding lead in water, paint and soil, and how nutrition can impact lead absorption



We Strengthen

We develop future leaders across the state through **Partners in Policymaking**. These leaders use their strengthened advocacy skills to work with legislators and communities on policies that benefit people with disabilities.

15 people with disabilities, parents and family members completed the program this year

300 graduates total

100% feel that they are stronger advocates

100% plan to be more engaged with their legislators



Our **Youth Leadership Forum** (YLF) is a career awareness and leadership training program designed to increase youths' skills in self-advocacy and leadership and expose them to the variety of options after high school.

29 high school students participated

86% say they will be stronger advocates in their communities

“YLF helped me see people were putting me in a box. I'm not going to let anyone do that to me anymore.”

YLF Graduate

We Advocate

We co-chair the **Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition** (DVC), a non-partisan effort to help ensure people with disabilities exercise their right to vote.

The DVC found voters with disabilities who were impacted by a law that said no one else can return an absentee ballot for you. The voters' stories led to a ruling upholding the rights for people with disabilities to have assistance in returning their absentee ballot.

40+

organizations are part of the vote coalition

trained and connected over

3,400 self-advocates and their supporters on the voting process and their rights

reached over

12,000 readers with our monthly newsletter.



“Voting is one solid avenue to make sure my voice is heard and that I am impacting the policies that affect me everyday.”

Voter in Madison

We Innovate

We have learned that communities know best how to serve their families. Rather than design projects for others to implement, we are looking to our partners to lead and decide what is needed. 18 innovation grants were awarded to local organizations.

\$280,000 that we committed for innovation went to culturally and ethnically diverse communities

We provide a platform for the voices of lived experience through our **Self-Determination YouTube channel** run by a group of self advocates.

1,560 subscribers with
350 new subscribers this year

22,323 views of videos that share strategies to be stronger advocates and more self-determined

55 new videos posted

56 Self-advocates featured



“It is well past time for Wisconsin to have an ABLE plan for its disabled citizens. By passing SB 122 we can bring greater awareness of this program, make it more accessible and enrollment less intimidating. Everyone in Wisconsin wins when our disabled population can gain greater financial security!”

Family Member who submitted testimony on a bill

We Advise



2 bills signed into law that we influenced



We testified on **3** bills



12 state policies were influenced by BPDD



Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

We Lead

- Living Well Grant



We Inform

- “Hot topic” webinars
- Supported Decision-Making
- Self-Determination Conference



We Partner

- People First Wisconsin
- Families Supporting Families grants

People First Wisconsin



See Our  Ability

We Connect

- Public Health Community Organizer (Lead)
- USAging COVID



We Strengthen

- Partners in Policymaking
- Youth Leadership Forum



We Advocate

- Voting



We Innovate

- Innovation Grants to communities
- Self-Determination YouTube Channel



We Advise

- Policy efforts



Financial Information

	FY 2021	FY 2022
Programming	\$1,162,181.27	\$1,161,888
Board Operations	\$173,028.73	\$143,604
Grants and Contracts	Living Well Grant: \$435,000 WI Department of Public Instruction: \$90,000 Public Health Workforce: \$95,319 Subtotal: \$620,319	Living Well Grant: \$435,000 WI Department of Public Instruction: \$90,000 USAging: \$133,000 Subtotal: \$658,000
State Funding	\$120,000	\$129,000
TOTAL	\$2,075,529	\$2,092,492



Performance Measures

2022 and 2023 Goals and Actuals

Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2022	Actual 2022	Goal 2023	Actual 2023
1.1	Number of people with disabilities and family members who say they understand the services and supports available	200	367	200	*
1.2	Number of families of children of color with developmental disabilities who report they know about and are using services, programs, and programs they want and need	20	209	20	*
1.3	Number of improved policies and practices that increase community participation, decision making and full inclusion	5	19	5	14
2.1	Number of people with developmental disabilities who report making at least one new connection to expand their social network or natural supports	130	105	130	*
2.2	Number of people with a developmental disability in long-term care programs participating in self-directed supports.	11,000	13,866	11,250	**
2.2	Number of people with developmental disabilities and their families can identify the rights of people with disabilities.	50 people with disabilities; 30 families	66 people with disabilities; 37 family members	50 people with disabilities; 30 families	*
2.2	Increased number of people with developmental disabilities recognize signs of abuse and know someone to whom they could report abuse	75	69	75	*
2.3	Number of people with developmental disability who say their advocacy skills have improved as a result of participating in our organization	100	114	100	*
2.4	Number of people with developmental disability and their families who participate in leadership training and practice their leadership skills	200	278	200	373

Note: The measures are established by the federally required five-year State Plan, which covers the period October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2026.

* Data for 2023 will be available in November 2023.

** Data for 2023 not yet available from the Department of Health Services until early 2024.

Performance Measures

2024, 2025 and 2026 Goals

Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2024	Goal 2025	Goal 2026
1.1	Number of people with disabilities and family members who say they understand the services and supports available	200	200	200
1.2	Number of families of children of color with developmental disabilities who report they know about and are using services, programs, and programs they want and need	20	20	20
1.3	Number of improved policies and practices that increase community participation, decision making and full inclusion	5	5	5
2.1	Number of people with developmental disabilities who report making at least one new connection to expand their social network or natural supports	130	130	130
2.2	Number of people with a developmental disability in long-term care programs participating in self-directed supports.	11,500	11,750	12,000
2.2	Number of people with developmental disabilities and their families can identify the rights of people with disabilities.	50 people with disabilities; 30 families	50 people with disabilities; 30 families	50 people with disabilities; 30 families
2.2	Increased number of people with developmental disabilities recognize signs of abuse and know someone to whom they could report abuse	75	75	75
2.3	Number of people with developmental disability who say their advocacy skills have improved as a result of participating in our organization	100	100	100
2.4	Number of people with developmental disability and their families who participate in leadership training and practice their leadership skills	200	200	200

Note: The measures are established by the federally required five-year State Plan, which covers the period October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2026.

Flexible-time Work Schedule Summary

BPDD is a small state agency with 7 full-time positions and 1.6 project positions. All project positions are dependent on grants and contracts obtained beyond our federally-funded core grant.

BPDD has moved to a flexible schedule in which all staff report to the office the same two days per week, then work remotely the other 3. Office days are focused on team time: full staff meetings as well as one-on-one supervision check-ins and smaller team meetings. Staff also travel statewide frequently for meetings and events.

BPDD has found that flexible staffing maximizes in-person connection while providing flexibility that minimizes commute times and allows staff to devote significant time to individual projects. BPDD also experiences the benefits of being able to recruit statewide for staff positions, as less time is expected to be in Madison. Productivity and meeting performance targets has improved using a flexible scheduling approach to staffing.

Future Needs and Program Improvements



While BPDD's accomplishments are highlighted here and participant survey responses continue to be positive, we identify the future needs and suggested program improvements in state government:

- Easier access to data from state agencies so we can more effectively measure needs, barriers, and progress toward success.
- More plain language on state agency websites and in official documents so our population can more readily access information and programs.
- Updated and more flexible procurement laws so that we can more effectively partner with and fund diverse stakeholders. For instance, if we are federally mandated to work with a specific partner or write a federal grant naming specific content experts, we need to be able to obtain permission through procurement without going to competitive bid.
- Equitable benefits, including retirement options, for project positions as for permanent positions so that we can recruit and retain highly qualified staff for projects.
- More opportunities for career advancement for staff within the agency.
- Increased state portion of overall budget, as our agency has experienced flat funding from our federal grant over the past 7 years. The needs of Wisconsin's developmental disability community have increased, particularly in the wake of COVID, and funding has not kept pace.

Board Members

Ashley Mathy, Chair
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WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

If you'd like to know more about any of our projects you can visit our website at **www.wi-bpdd.org** or contact us using the information below.

Website: www.wi-bpdd.org

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