

INTRODUCTION

After 78 years in existence, on November 17, 1993, the Brandon Training School was closed. This was a significant event and one to celebrate. People with disabilities who had lived at Brandon now would live and receive supports and services in their own homes and communities.

Vermonters worked for at least 20 years to build the community system of supports and services that would be needed to make the closing of Brandon possible. Service agencies and programs had to be created; flexible ways to fund community supports had to be found; and ideas about how best to support and serve people with disabilities had to be continuously challenged and revised.

So much has been done; but there is still more to do. The community system is being called upon to serve children and adults with a wide range of disabling conditions. We need to respect the abilities of all individuals and their families, and find ways to build on their strengths, while also ensuring that people who need significant and continuous supports are able to obtain them. A creative, collaborative, community-based family centered service delivery system must continue to be developed.

The closing of Brandon Training School has offered a unique opportunity to address these continuing challenges. In September 1993, a broad-based group of people with disabilities, their families, support and service providers, and advocates formed the Vermont Community Services Coalition to help determine the basic principles of a self-directed, community-centered service system and the goals for that system.

The Coalition's purpose was strongly tied to the value that participation from individuals and communities across the state was essential for the planning that needed to be done. In November 1993, a survey was sent to nearly 2,000 people and organizations to find out how they felt about their experience with the service system.

Thirteen regional forums were held statewide in May 1994. Information gathered from the regional forums was used to stimulate discussion at two statewide meetings in Burlington and Rutland held in June 1994. The more than 180 people who participated shared principles, values, and goals of a home and community-based support system, and identified the strategies needed to achieve them.

The survey responses and statements from people at the regional and statewide forums were used to develop the principles that form the foundation for the service delivery system. These principles provide clear guidance for the work that needs to be done. Committed local and regional planning will help translate these principles into everyday practice throughout the State.

This material is available in alternative formats, such as Braille, large print, or on audio tape. Call (802) 241-2614 or TDD: (802) 241-2604, Division of Mental Retardation, 103 South Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671.

THE VERMONT COMMUNITY SERVICES COALITION
C/O THE DIVISION OF MENTAL RETARDATION
103 SOUTH MAIN STREET
WATERBURY VT 05671-1601

Principles and Goals of Services for Vermonters with Developmental Disabilities and Their Families: A Guide for The Service System

The Vermont Community Services Coalition is made up of individuals with disabilities, their friends and family members, advocates, service providers, staff from the Division of Mental Retardation, community organizations, guardians, teachers, neighbors, employers, and other people interested in planning for the future.

Members of the Vermont Community Services Coalition hope the information contained within this pamphlet will stimulate discussion, provoke ideas, and cause change to enrich and empower the lives of adults and children with developmental disabilities and their families.

Abraham-Demotte, D./Adams, M./Aichroth, S./Allen, A./Allen, C./Alai, A./Alai, D./
Andrews, J./Anthony, G./Armstrong, B./Arlis, K./Auckler, M./Badger, D./Baaz, D./Baies, C./Baies,
S./Bardass, M./Bascam, J./Batra, V./Beakley, K./Beaulieu, A./Beckerman, A./Bell, L./Beig-Huni,
T./Bishop, G./Bishop, T./Blakey, K./Boleski, J./Boleski, L./Bombard, D./Boaska, C./Boaca, C./Boaley,
G./Boiley, M./Briceland, E./Briefferman, S./Brigante, V./Brooks, P./Brown, B./Brown, R./Bruce, M./
Buck, K./Buckley, S./
Burns, W./Burns, K./
Cameron, E./Cane, B./
Cantell, B./Catoncagno,
land, B./Carusi, G./
pagne, C./Charishois,
A./Citrillo, F./Clark, K./
Cohen, J./Cohen, S./
M./Cook, M./
Couchaine, E./Covey,
Chang, P./Cyr, A./
White, A./Delphic, B./
L./DesRochers, E./Des-
Devino, L./Dow, P./
Drabing, R./Discoli, L./
Dupuis, D./Farrell, M./
Forest, J./Favia, J./
Francis, P./Frawley, P./
A./Fuller, D./Fuller, D./
Fuller, S./Fusco, A./
Gaboriault, L./Goetz,
C./Gillen, D./Gillespie,
Goodrich, K./Grace,
E./Haley, T./Halpin, J./
ond, L./Hansen, S./Har-
Hathaway, R./Howley,
Newitt, K./Newitt, P./Hibbitts, B./Hilman, S./Horniller, J./Howe, M./Hoyle, K./Hutchins, J./Hull, M./
Nyffen, C./Iarnelli, A./Isabelle, F./Jansen, W./Jennings, C./Jones, K./Josier, M./Jusien, F./Keating,
D./Keete, A./Kelly, D./Kilby, O./King, K./Kirby, S./Knapp, J./Kronoff, D./Kusselov, C./Lacoste, D./
Lamb, T./Lamoureux, L./Lapaglia, J./Laramie, B./Laramie, J./Larsen, Mrs. M./Lawrence, J./Leblanc,
A./Lecky, J./Leech, C./Lengyel, C./Leopold, B./Leopold, S./Leugen, M./Libby, F./Libby, M./Lippert,
W./Longe, S./Lucia, S./
P./Malone, E./Man-
D./Marlin, P./Maur
McAtee, J./
McDonald, B./
McFadden, C./
McKee, D./McKnight,
Milizia, B./Milizia, S./
Mitchell, H./Mitchell,
Mongan, M./
Montag, D./Moran, P./
Morris, P./Morse, M./
Mulachy, E./Muller-
Mundstock, P./
L./Nelson, D./Nichols,
O'Neill, S./O'Riordan,
Oakes, G./Otto, L./
E./Parker, C./Parker-
L./Palriest, C./
Pedroly, G./Pentak,
Perry, J./Phurham, L./
Pombar, T./Poppe, C./
Quimby, J./Quinn, A./
M./Raymond, J./
Rogers, J./Rosen, J./
Roux, J./Rump, S./
Schroeder, D./Sewall,
Isherman, J./Shockey,
M./Smith, P./
C./Spencer, J./Spiegel, J./Spinney, P./Sprague, D./St. George, M./Stacey, J./Stambler, K./
Stevens, S./Stinson, C./Stockman, F./Stone, P./Stoudt, T./Sullivan, E./Sweet, A./Silvester, J./Teber,
D./Thom, B./Thiel, C./Toker, J./Towers, M./Trombley, L./Turchin, R./VanHorn, A./VanHorn, C./
Vaccione, A./Vignoe, D./Willemate, T./Wright, S./Wanda, L./Wasser, S./Ward, J./Warner, S./Wolf,
R./Welch, K./Weinhaus, B./Wells, E./Wheslock, G./Whitcomb, F./Whitmore, G./Wilder, J./Willard,
C./Williams, K./Wilson, M./Wing, R./Wood, S./Wood, T./Wright, D./Wright, L./Wundham, L./Young,
P./Yuan, S./Zucca, K./Zura, M. ...

PRINCIPLES

- (1) **A**ll people with disabilities are recognized as unique and important members of their community. Communities welcome them, respect them, and understand their abilities, skills, and needs. People with disabilities feel safe and are not taken advantage of by others.
- (2) **P**eople with disabilities have different abilities, interests, and needs. Families and service providers are aware of each individual's particular strengths and needs.
- (3) **P**eople with disabilities can achieve fulfilling lives when their supports are designed around their own unique and changing needs. Families, friends, advocates, teachers, service providers, and other community members work as a team with people with disabilities to follow their individual dreams.
- (4) **P**eople with disabilities have opportunities to make friends just like anyone else. People with disabilities spend time with people who are not paid to be with them.
- (5) **P**eople with disabilities are a part of their community. They have opportunities to work, play, volunteer, and do other social activities. They can express their individual spirituality and sexuality.
- (6) **P**eople with disabilities are supported to make informed and personal choices about where to live, whom to have as friends, what activities to do, what services they want, and where to get them. People with disabilities decide how well services are helping them. Families, friends, and service providers listen to people with disabilities.
- (7) **P**eople with disabilities and their families get to say how money is spent to support them. Funding is based on each individual's needs. Money is attached to people rather than programs.
- (8) **F**amily members are an important part of the support network of the person with a disability. Children and adolescents belong with their families whenever possible. Everyone should work to support and respect family relationships.
- (9) **F**amilies and individual family members have different needs at different times. Family members decide what kinds of support they need at different times in their lives, regardless of their age or where they live. Family members decide how, when, and from whom to receive support.
- (10) **E**ach family member's values, beliefs, skills, interests, needs, and desire to help people with disabilities are recognized and respected.
- (11) **S**ervice providers are caring and committed people who respect people with disabilities and their families at all times and accept them as equals. Service providers promote the value and dignity of the people they're working with at all times.
- (12) **P**eople with disabilities and family members can get information about where and how to get services and supports. Support is provided before problems arise. Services are provided according to need.
- (13) **S**ervice providers and agencies listen carefully to people with disabilities and their families about how well services are helping them, and they respond appropriately. Service providers work continually to improve the quality of services.
- (14) **A**ll service providers are skilled and knowledgeable and receive enough training to help people with disabilities and their families to pursue their dreams and respond to their needs. The skills and experience of service providers are recognized and supported.

GOALS

- (1) **P**eople with disabilities, their family members, advocates, service providers, and other community members can get all the information they need to find supports and services.
- (2) **P**eople with disabilities, wherever they are in Vermont, can find a place to live that they can afford and that is easy to get into and is comfortable.
- (3) **P**eople with disabilities are supported to communicate for themselves about what they want and need.
- (4) **F**amily members are supported to communicate for themselves about what they want and need.
- (5) **P**eople with disabilities and their family members, wherever they are in Vermont, can get the help, supports, and services they need anytime during their lives. People do not have to wait for the supports that they need.
- (6) **P**eople with disabilities and their family members can choose who will support them.
- (7) **S**ervice providers, volunteers, people with disabilities and their families, advocates, and other community members get all the training they need to support people with disabilities.
- (8) **S**ervice providers work closely together in teams. All staff get the information they need about the people with whom they work.
- (9) **F**unding is available to support all people with disabilities and their families. People with disabilities and their families decide how the money will be used to support them.
- (10) **P**eople with disabilities and their families are supported through a collaborative statewide coalition that includes people with disabilities and their families, friends, advocates, teachers, service providers, state and community agencies, and other community members.