

Background:

A report of recent public information activities is included for the Committee’s review.

Discussion topics include:

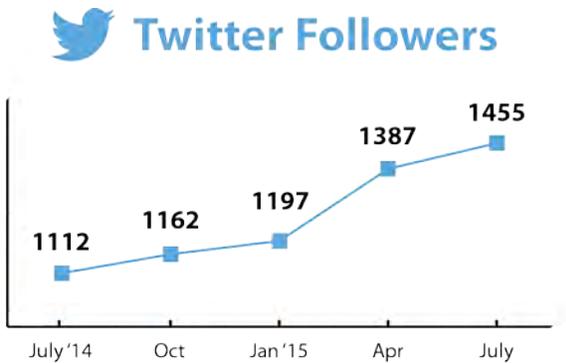
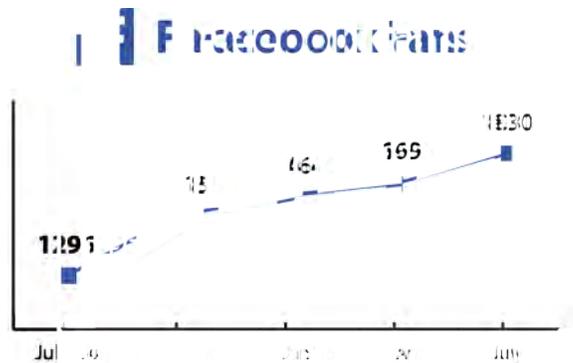
- Social Media
 - Father’s Day Facebook post
 - Executive Director hiring announcement
- Understanding Employment Options and Supports RFP announcement
- Materials Order Requests

<p><u>Committee of the Whole</u></p> <p><u>Agenda Item 8.</u></p>	<p><u>Expected Action:</u></p> <p>The Committee will receive an update regarding recent public information activities and provide guidance as needed. No action is anticipated.</p>
<p><u>Council Meeting</u></p> <p><u>Agenda Item 11. B.</u></p>	<p><u>Expected Action:</u></p> <p>The Council will receive a report of Committee discussions on this item. No action is anticipated.</p>

TCDD Public Information Report

August 2015

Social Media



Top Facebook posts



ABLE ACT TO ALLOW PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO SAVE FUNDS W/O LOSING MEDICAID

The 84th Texas Legislature passed bill that will establish the Texas Achieving Better Life Experience (ABLE) Program. The new program – known more widely as the ABLE Act – will allow people with disabilities and their families to save private funds for disability-related expenses without losing Medicaid eligibility.

Reach: **6,174**; Post clicks: **346**; Likes, comments & shares: **274**



SECURITY CAMERAS APPROVED FOR USE IN SELF-CONTAINED CLASSROOMS

In an effort to improve safety for students who receive special education services in self-contained classrooms, the Texas Legislature passed law permitting the use of security cameras in the classrooms. The law requires security cameras to be installed if requested by parent, school board trustee, or staff member.

Reach: **3,190**; Post clicks: **192**; Likes, comments & shares: **171**



TCDD WELCOMES NEW PUBLIC POLICY ASSISTANT

TCDD is excited to announce the newest addition to our team, Ashley Ford, Public Policy Assistant. Ford earned her bachelor's degree from Texas State University and she served as legislative intern during the 83rd Legislative Session. Ford officially joined TCDD on May 1, 2015.

Reach: **3,154**; Post clicks: **430**; Likes, comments & shares: **264**



1 SCHOOL DISTRICTS ACCUSED OF VIOLATING IDEA

A complaint that was filed on behalf of students with disabilities accuses 1 school districts and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) of violating the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The complaint accuses the school districts of failing to give students with disabilities individualized education services.

Reach: **3,026**; Post clicks: **299**; Likes, comments & shares: **103**

Reach: the number of unique people who received impressions of Page post

Post Clicks: the number of times a person clicks anywhere on post (image, video, link, "See More")

Likes, Comments & Shares: the sum of all likes, comments and shares on post

Father's Day on Facebook

For Father's Day, the TCDD Facebook page featured family photos submitted by some of the TCDD dads.



Andrew Crim & family



Scott McAvoy & family



John Thomas & family

Other Social Media Notes

- **New record:** The ABLE Act post on Facebook set a TCDD record for reach. The post reached over 6,000 people, while the previous record reached about 4,500 people.
- **Top posts:** All five of TCDD's top Facebook posts of all time – in terms of people reached – have been in 2015.

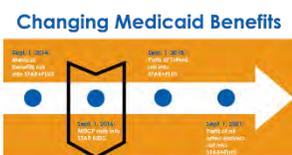
Website Posts & Articles



Sunset Update: Health & Human Services Agencies

June 11, 2015

The Sunset Advisory Commission's recommendations regarding the state's five largest health and human services agencies were included in bills that were considered by the 84th Texas Legislature.



Update: Transition to Managed Care

June 18, 2015

If they haven't yet, many Texans with disabilities will transition from traditional Medicaid to managed care and how they receive their health care could change. Learn more about the upcoming changes.



RFP: Understanding Employment Options and Supports

June 26, 2015

TCDD issued an RFP to fund one organization to develop effective training and information to help people understand ways to retain supports while employed in the community.



RFP: Policy Fellows Needed to Impact Advocacy

June 26, 2015

TCDD issued an RFP to fund up to two organizations to hire and support a full-time Policy Fellow. Fellows will develop a deep understanding of policy and build skills to promote self-determination and self-advocacy.



TCDD Selects Beth Stalvey to Lead Organization

July 8, 2015

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) is pleased to announce the selection of Beth Stalvey as the organization's new Executive Director. Stalvey has extensive experience working to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities (DD) and working with DD Councils.

Information Requests & Distribution

E-newsletter: The e-newsletter, *TCDD Connection*, was distributed on April 23 to 875 contacts and on July 1 to 863 contacts.

Emails: The following single-topic email blasts were issued:

- Budget Decisions o DADS & DARS
- Legislative Hearings: April 13-15
- Legislative Hearings: April 20-22
- Legislative Hearings: April 27-29
- Legislative Hearings: May 4-6
- Legislative Hearings: May 11-13
- Legislative Hearings: May 18-20
- RFP: Texas Faith Inclusion Network
- RFP: Policy Fellows Needed to Impact Advocacy
- RFP: Understanding Employment Options & Supports

I&R Requests: Staff responded to 53 requests for information and referral.

Materials Distributed

- People First Language Handout: 306
- Higher Ed Guide (English): 25
- The Next Step (DVD): 132
- BDR (English): 25
- BDR (Spanish): 25
- Every Member Matters: 22

Note: Susan Fernbach, the Director of Genetic Outreach for the Baylor College of Medicine at Texas Children's Hospital, provides monthly talks about genetics and different types of disabilities. At the talks, Fernbach makes TCDD's People First Language handout available to people who attend. Fernbach ordered 100 in late April for the next round of talks.

TCDD Selects Beth Stalvey to Lead Organization

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) is pleased to announce the selection of Beth Stalvey as the organization's new Executive Director. Stalvey has extensive experience working with people with developmental disabilities (DD) and working with DD Councils.

Beth Stalvey, MPH, PhD, has dedicated the past 20 years to improving the lives of people with DD and older adults. She also has extensive experience working with DD Councils.



Stalvey began her human services career at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) where she researched the mobility needs of individuals with visual and cognitive impairments. In 2000, she moved to Texas to work as a Gerontologist with the Texas Department on Aging before moving to the Policy and Innovation Division of the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS). While at DADS, Stalvey represented the agency at TCDD Council Meetings and, in 2005, she joined TCDD as the organization's Public Policy Director.

Stalvey left Texas in 2006 to move with her family to Atlanta, Georgia, where she served as the director of an aging and disability policy consultancy firm that worked with public, non-profit, private, and grassroots entities. She led initiatives on legislative education, advocacy strategies, and community capacity building for individuals with disabilities and their families. Through the firm, Stalvey also worked with TCDD and the Georgia DD Council. In 2010, she joined the North Carolina DD Council as a Policy Analyst, a position she held prior to her selection as TCDD's Executive Director.

"I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as TCDD's Executive Director," said Stalvey. "TCDD's mission is incredibly important and I look forward to working to improve the lives of Texans with disabilities."

Stalvey received both her doctoral and master's degree in Public Health from UAB. She received her bachelor's degree in Sociology and Gerontology from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Stalvey will succeed Roger Webb, who served as TCDD's Executive Director from 1985-2015. She will officially start with TCDD on September 1, 2015.

Published date: July 7, 2015



RFP: Understanding Employment Options and Supports

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to fund up to one Texas organization to develop training and information for people with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families on ways to retain benefits from SSI/SSDI programs, waiver programs, and other formal and informal supports while increasing their income and assets through gainful employment with competitive positions in the community. The deadline to submit a proposal is August 26, 2015.

Background

TCDD invests in initiatives to expand employment options for Texans with DD so they can be fully included in their communities and exercise control over their own lives. While it is important to continue these efforts, it is also important to ensure that employed Texans with DD are able to realize the positive impacts of competitive employment without fearing the reduction or loss of some benefits due to a lack of information.

State agency personnel, advocates, and families continue to report that many individuals and families mistakenly believe adults with disabilities automatically lose all SSI/SSDI and health benefits when they start working. In some cases, this discourages individuals with DD from seeking employment. Others do not fully understand the impact that work has on SSI/SSDI benefits until their benefits are reduced. The Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) provides training about various options that allow individuals to retain SSI/SSDI benefits when working. However, DARS' capacity to train all those who may need this information is limited.

Providing targeted training and information to Texans with DD and their families should help people to understand that there are a variety of tools that may help them avoid the loss or reduction of public benefits. Also, experiences and insights gained by the organization that develops and conducts the training may be of assistance to service providers, state agencies, and policymakers.

About the RFP

TCDD hopes to fund one Texas organization to develop effective training and information. The trainings and information will be designed to increase the number of individuals with DD who retain their benefits from SSI/SSDI programs, waiver programs, and other formal and informal supports, while working in competitive positions in the community. The program established as a result of this RFP is expected to continue to be of benefit for a minimum of three-to-five years after grant funding ends.

The applicant should describe how its project will help people with disabilities overcome barriers to obtaining integrated competitive employment, especially barriers related to understanding how

benefits are affected by employment. For example, known obstacles are related to misinformation, lack of information, and the sometimes overly complex nature of information about benefits.

The majority of the organization's work should consist of determining, developing, and packaging presentation-style trainings and materials. "Presentation-style" means the information is provided in an engaging manner that includes, at a minimum, both visual and auditory components. At least one final packaged product must continue to be used after the conclusion of the grant and applicants must explain how the product(s) will be updated after funding has concluded.

Eligibility

Eligible grant applicants include public agencies, private not-for-profit agencies, schools, and private for-profit organizations. Grant applicants will be the organization that provides the administrative functions for the grants and should receive, disburse, and account for grant funds. Individuals are not eligible to be awarded a grant under this announcement.

Grant Funds Available

TCDD has made available up to \$150,000 per year, for no more than one organization, for up to two years. The second year is not automatically awarded. Organizations may collaborate on proposals, but no proposal will be awarded more than \$150,000. The organization receiving the grant may use the grant funds to:

- Hold a conference resulting in the creation of the product(s);
- Involve recognized experts, including self-advocates and family members with personal experience as well as professionals, in the creation and adaptation of the training and materials;
- Create and edit video/audio recordings as necessary;
- Provide necessary captioning, subtitles and translation into other languages; and
- Purchase available materials as appropriate.

Key Dates

Proposals are due to TCDD by 5 p.m. Central Standard Time on August 26, 2015. Late proposals will not be accepted. TCDD will notify proposers of decisions between November 9, 2015, and November 20, 2015. The earliest expected project start date is January 1, 2016 (this date may change).

More Information and Submitting a Proposal

More information, including the complete RFP, is available on the DD Suite website. Proposals for this RFP and all forms must be submitted using DD Suite.

Questions

If you have questions after reviewing the complete RFP, contact Joanna Cordry, Planning Coordinator, at Joanna.Cordry@tcdd.texas.gov or at 512-437-5410.