We create opportunities for independence for people with disabilities through research, education, and consultation

IL-NET
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Disability, Diversity & Intersectionality in CILs: Rural Outreach and Engagement

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Presenters:
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IL-NET is a project of Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) in partnership with the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL), and Utah State University Center for Persons with Disabilities (USU-CPD)

Liz Sherwin
Illinois/Iowa Independent Living Center (IICIL)
Rock Island, IL

The community that you serve has to feel that you are a part of them....People know me, see me, and trust me. It's the same with the rest of the staff. Those are the kinds of things that validate us because we are part of the community and that's how we are able to provide that level of service.

**~ Liz Sherwin, Executive Director
Illinois Iowa Center for Independent Living (Illinois/Iowa)**

What You Will Learn

- Importance of identifying diverse populations in CILs' rural geographic areas.

- Strategies for centers becoming highly visible and identifiable in rural communities.

- Strategies for developing connections and relationships that lead to effective and successful outreach with diverse populations in rural communities.

- Rural outreach implementation tips, strategies, and outcomes through real-world examples.

Acknowledging What Is Different in Rural Areas

- What is often different in rural areas are
  - Higher rates of disability.
  - The logistics, distances to negotiate.
  - Fragmented healthcare delivery system.
  - Stretched and diminishing rural workforce.
  - Certain target populations (e.g. farm workers).
  - Fewer or no resources and options of all kinds.

"…rural people with disabilities participate in their communities less and have few opportunities to take advantage of community resources, even at the smallest scale" (Sage, Myers, & Ravesloot, 2017).

Identifying Populations — Unrepresented and Underrepresented

- Know the demographics of your service area
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Racial and Ethnic background
  - Disability
  - Residential status
  - Socioeconomic status
  - Urban vs. Rural
  - Religion/Faith Groups
  - Sexual Orientation

Potential Sources for Finding Information

- Census Bureau
- CIL 704 Report – demographic page
- Bureau of Vital Statistics
- Chamber of Commerce
- City and County Planning Departments
- Community Action Centers

- Local College and University libraries
- United Way
- Public Housing Authorities
- Urban Leagues
- NAACP
- Others

Get Information—Local, State, and National

- **Local Sources**:
  - Telephone & Service Directories
  - Libraries
  - Community Colleges & Universities
  - City and County Planning
  - Local Ethnic & Service Orgs
- **State Sources:**
  - Rehabilitation Services
  - Statewide Independent Living Councils
  - Assistive Technology Projects
  - Disability/Advocacy Councils & Orgs

- **National Sources:**
  - Independent Living Research Utilization
  - National Council on Independent Living
  - Census Bureau www.census.gov
  - National Council on Disability
  - National Organization on Disability

What Organizations, Programs, and Services are Already Available?

- Do they promote the independent living philosophy?

- Are people satisfied? Why/why not?

- What are the key issues to address?

- How do you know what they are?

Who is not being served and why?

- What are the barriers?

- What local organizations might support CIL activities?

- How do we demonstrate community support for those needs?

- How can CILs adjust their programs to meet those needs?

- Examples of effective outreach successes.

Know and Respect Cultural Differences

- Not all cultures understand or accept the IL philosophy.

- One cannot make assumptions about groups.

- Collect information in a way that is open.

- Respect cultural language, traditions, beliefs and spiritual perspective of the target population.

- Consider the social and economic climate.

- Do not stereotype cultures.

- Know the issues and priorities.

- Know the leaders and key players.

Know Your Communities

1. Identify bilingual and bicultural partners.
2. Gather reliable information:
   - Conduct focus groups.
   - Conduct interviews.
   - Conduct mail or telephone surveys.
   - Assess CIL information and referral data.
3. Develop a list of issues or information.
4. Use target group to train staff and board.

Build Partnerships

- Work with organizations that serve targeted populations. (examples: MLK Community Center – ACTIVE Club; Rock Island NAACP)
  - Understand their programs.
  - Make sure CIL services are complementary.
- Recruit board and staff that reflect community.
- Assure board and staff are community leaders.

Marketing and Public Relations

- Incorporate community issues into your Strategic Plan. (examples; NPC 11 – Clean-up; NAACP – Expungement Workshops)

- Develop a public relations campaign.

- Create outreach materials targeting needs of specific groups.

Accessible Materials to All

- Write at a reading level that is easy to understand.

- Avoid acronyms and "professional phrases" that are not easily understood.

- Use language that can be understood.

- Accessible in a variety of formats: Braille, large print, tape and disk.

- Qualified persons should edit and proof.

Monitor the Effectiveness of your Public Relations

- Get feedback.

- Make staff available to communicate.

- Develop process to address language and cultural issues.

Getting Information Out

- Train Board and staff – Program Strategy Team.
- Designate a lead person.
- Maintain current list of media contacts.
- Develop relationships with local media.
- Respond to issues in editorials and opinion pages.
- Create a media package.
- Build a public and community history.

Information should be accurate and cost-effective.

Enhancing Your Public Relation Strategies

- Create opportunities through radio, TV, and newspapers on a regular basis.

- Utilize existing mailings.

- Develop partnerships (local college interns).

- Respond to hot issues.

Create Opportunities

- Regular information magazines.

- Public television programs.

- Column in a local newspaper or newsletter.

- Use your own calendars and newsletters.

Getting the Word Out

- Network with other agencies.

- Provide website updates and e-alerts.

- Produce disability issues program on public TV or radio.

- Locate good, generic videos.

- Write a grant to produce a video.

- Expand partnerships by getting consumers on Boards and Commissions.

- Set up videoconferences with others.

- Use list serves and group emails.

- Contact an advertising club for donated time.

Implementation and Evaluation

- Implement an outreach action plan.
    - Target a specific group or community.
    - Assign a team with a leader.
    - Collect and review information about the group.
    - Develop a timeline.
    - Develop a budget if needed.
    - Implement.

  Example:

  Identify a community or group (Don't bite off more than you can chew!)

Evaluating Outreach Effectiveness

- Formative Evaluation.
  - Series of activities to improve outreach.
  - Have an expert review and comment on your plan.
  - Make changes in the plan based on new data.
  - Try a small scale outreach effort.
  - Revise according to feedback.

Process Evaluation

How successful was the outreach design?

- Takes place during and after implementation.
- Gather an outreach evaluation (one page).
- Make changes based on feedback and interviews.

Outcome Evaluation

- Measure the impact and people who have benefited.
  - Review data collected in the 704 reports.
  - Calculate a cost benefit analysis.
  - Evaluate success based on satisfaction level of new persons reached.

Analysis

- Who do we provide outreach to?
- What do we know about the population?
- Where do we start implementing it?
- When should this process be started/completed?
- How will we evaluate or know if we succeeded?
- When completed: What outcomes will be measured?
  - What are the cost benefits?
  - What is the satisfaction level of consumers?

Questions and Discussion

Kim Gibson
disABILITY LINK
Tucker, GA

One of the major practices here is the inclusion of all people that starts at the front door to say "is it inviting to all?"

**~ Kim Gibson, Executive Director
disABILITY LINK (Atlanta, GA)**

Taking Inventory and Gathering Data

- Took inventory of staffing, board membership and consumer population.

- Used the last census data available for each area.

- Included data related to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability.

- Looked at our annual performance reports and compared to our population.

Getting Feedback

- Promoted feedback from the community with surveys for interest and comments.

- Invited feedback and ideas from communities, consumers, and board members.

- Encouraged staff to bring back ideas and interests.

Community Engagement

Participation in social justice events

- MLK Parade

- Pride Parade

- Voting Events

Hosting workshops on diversity

- Peer support trainings

- Workshops provided on a variety of diversity topics

Reaching Out to the Community

Reaching out to meet the needs of rural populations.

- Community outreach and participation using health fairs, support groups, VR, Senior Centers, Churches, international days, etc.

- Use of partnerships for meeting spaces.
  - Vocational Rehabilitation Offices
  - Libraries
  - Bookstores

- Increased visibility in schools by attending transitional school fairs.

Example

- Engaged with the consumers, staff, board and community
  - Asking all what is their interest
  - Are you part of a community, a board, a network?
  - Peer support classes often led by board members and consumers.
    - Hearing Voices Network led by board member.
    - Faith based peer groups led by consumers.
    - Veterans groups led by consumers.
    - Respect Institute led by board member/consumer.
    - Us Blind Girls – staff interest and group to lead moved to be out of office.

Using Technology

Zoom technology –

- Video conferencing that can be accessed on any phone/computer. Does not necessarily have to have video.

- Use for all classes – Sign-in sheet lists that it is being used and we state this at the beginning of all classes.

- Allows for individuals to participate and feel part of the group.

- Has captioning ability.

Using Technology, cont'd.

Other Technology –

- Use of Access interpreting that allows for on-demand interpreting as well as scheduled interpreting.

- All staff trained and can be accessed on computer, phone, iPad.

- Use of LanguageLine for a variety of languages. https://www.languageline.com/interpreting/phone

- Use of trained peer supporters.

Language Interpreting Example

- Contacted by a nursing home – consumer wanted to go home but social worker thought family's interpreting wasn't providing accurate information. They seemed fearful of family member leaving "safe" environment.

- Suggested using LanguageLine at first but recognized disabilityLINK specialist spoke consumer's language: Patwa (an English-based creole language with West Indian influences) so disabilityLINK specialist spoke directly with consumer who could now set goals and direct the Plan.

- Staff worked with family to provide transition supports.

- Consumer has now been living in the community for over 2 years.

Getting Ideas

- Encouraged staff to bring forth ideas and address individual needs and goals they were passionate about.

- Encouraged board members and consumers to bring forth their ideas.

- Invited consumers in for planning groups.

- Included it in our strategic planning.

Getting the Word Out

Collaborations with different groups:

- Black Lives Matter
- NAACP
- Latino, Korean, Muslim, Jewish, etc.
- LGBTQIAP
- NFB, Us Blind Girls
- Domestic Support Groups
- City of Clarkston

Example: Making the Connections

- A consumer identified a need for a peer-led group that addressed police brutality with people of color and disabilities. The group began as an interest over Anthony Hill's case in Atlanta. To get the group started, we organized a planning meeting that involved Anthony Hill's fiancé, NAACP, Black Lives Matters, consumers and invited in the community who was interested. The group formed and renamed themselves "Us Protecting Us." Partnerships have done work on addressing the issues individuals have faced with police brutality through advocacy, education, and peer support.

Staff and Board Playing a Big Part

- Hiring of staff reflective of the community.

- Recruitment of board reflective of community. Community assessment.

- Creating partnerships and passion from staff.

- Having staff taking ownership of programs.

- Staff are empowered to bring ideas and then develop the classes within that perspective. Workshop proposals sheets are completed.

Example: Recruiting Staff

- Hiring of staff reflective of the community.
- Required changing policies to reflect diversity.
- Support staff as well as board through trainings.
  - Weekly trainings held.
  - Peer support for all new employees (curriculum addresses issues of diversity in peer support).
  - Board training required prior to being considered to be a member.
  - Staff are empowered to bring ideas and then develop the classes within that perspective. Workshop proposal sheets are completed.

Questions and Discussion

Final Questions and Evaluation Survey

Any final questions?

Directly following the webinar, you will see a short evaluation survey to complete on your screen. We appreciate your feedback!

https://usu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2gCuNOHvcbTzTHn

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