ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020

FISCAL YEAR 2020
The Boggs Center’s Annual Report reflects on the work of the past year, affirms our mission of promoting the full participation of people with developmental disabilities and their families in our communities, and demonstrates our commitment to supporting those who work on their behalf.

The world has faced an unprecedented global health crisis as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19. Since March, 2020, this pandemic has posed unique challenges for people with disabilities in New Jersey and beyond, including accessing understandable information, adopting recommended public health strategies, and equitable access to health care.

The Boggs Center continues to fulfill its mission as New Jersey’s federally designated University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) and Leadership in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program during these fraught times. A number of programmatic adaptations, new activities, and approaches have supported our efforts to build capacity, promote advocacy, and facilitate systems change.

RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS:
A LOOK AT NEW ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMATIC ADAPTATIONS

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES RELATED TO COVID-19 WEB PAGE

The Center created and curated vetted and trust-worthy resources useful to the disability community from New Jersey and around the country to address topics of health care and communication, emotional well-being and mental health, employment and financial assistance, grief and loss, emergency planning and wearing face masks.

The Center’s Information and Resources Related to COVID-19 web page, which houses these resources, has been viewed over 5,000 times: http://rwjms.rutgers.edu/boggscen/links/COVID-19Resources.html
NEW PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO COVID-19

The Center created several publications to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), families, and supporters become comfortable with face masks, plan for emergency situations in which a primary caregiver can no longer provide support, process grief and loss, engage in remote learning, and navigate the changing landscapes of community-based instruction and employment during the time of COVID-19.

- A Parent’s Guide: Helping Your Child Wear a Face Mask (English) (Spanish)
- Help Your Child Feel Good about Using and Seeing Others Wearing Face Masks (English) (Spanish)
- I Can Stay Healthy by Wearing a Face Mask (English) (Spanish)
- Helping Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Become Comfortable with Face Masks (English) (Spanish)
- Wearing a Face Mask: A COVID-19 Social Story for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (Spanish)
- Planning Ahead for When the “What If” is Now: Emergency Planning for When a Primary Caregiver is Not Able to Provide Support (English) (Spanish)
- Responding to Grief Reactions of People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (English) (Spanish)
- Ritualizing Grief with People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (English) (Spanish)
- Helping People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Process Grief (English) (Spanish)
- Resources: Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and Grief, Death, & Dying
- Employment Risk Assessment (English) (Spanish)
- Supported Employment COVID-19 Resources
- Resources: Community Living Skills for Students with Disabilities
- New Jersey Positive Behavior Support in Schools Resources to Support Students, Staff and Families During COVID-19 Web Page
EXPANDED COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The Boggs Center and our Developmental Disabilities Act funded partners, the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities (NJCDD) and Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ), along with the Ombudsman for Individuals with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and their Families, convened a series of Virtual Town Hall Meetings to engage and community in times of COVID-19.

VIRTUAL TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The Boggs Center is responsive to the continued training and technical assistance needs of current and future professionals, people with disabilities, and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Training and technical assistance activities in the areas of Community Supports, Education, Employment, and Health have been adapted and developed for virtual formats and offered online to maintain the health and safety of our learners.

JUST IN TIME WEBINAR SERIES

The Boggs Center launched the COVID-19 Just in Time Webinar Series in response to emerging informational and skill-building needs resulting from the pandemic. These webinars were hosted live 1-2 times each, with many recorded and posted online. Collectively, more than 1,000 people participated in live Just in Time webinars on:

- Supporting Positive Behavior and Mental Health throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Using Virtual Technology and Web-Based Courses for Staff Training
- Maintaining Connections, Engagement, and Well-Being while Social Distancing
- Self-Care Strategies for Direct Support Professionals
- Making it Meaningful at Home
- How to Assist People with I/DD Through Loss & Grief While Navigating Them Ourselves
- Remote Strategies for Job Coaches: Pre-Placement Supports
- Remote Strategies for Job Coaches: Virtual Job Coaching Strategies

All 4 spring sessions of the Center’s long-standing Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series (DDLS) were delivered online. Nearly 1,500 participants logged in to access DDLS sessions on autism and transition, building social inclusion, making employment a reality, and aging and I/DD.
COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

In partnership with the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities, The Boggs Center provides training and technical assistance on person-centered planning and inclusive community supports for people with disabilities, families, and professionals in the disability field. This includes training on topics related to Support Coordination, Supports Brokerage, Direct Support Professional Workforce Development and Frontline Supervision, Positive Behavior Support, Mental Health and Dual Diagnosis, and Quality Improvement in Community Supports.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES LECTURE SERIES

The Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series (DDLS), The Boggs Center’s signature community training and continuing education opportunity for professionals, policymakers, people with disabilities, and families, has provided presentations on innovative approaches and best practices from nationally renowned leaders in the field of developmental disabilities since 1984. Free and open to the public, eight sessions of the Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series are held each year, with four in the Fall, and four in the Spring.

FAMILY AND SELF-ADVOCACY

In continuing support of family and self-advocacy, The Boggs Center coordinates New Jersey Partners in Policymaking, an 8-month leadership development and advocacy education program for adults with developmental disabilities and family members, available through a collaboration with our Developmental Disabilities Network Partners, The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities (NJCDD) and Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ).

With support from New Jersey’s Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), The Boggs Center offers training on systems navigation and working in partnership with Support Coordinators for people with disabilities and families. The Center has also recently partnered with DDD and NJCDD to participate in the National Community of Practice for Supporting Families and implement the Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) Framework statewide.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Together with our NJ DD Act partners, DRNJ and NJCDD, The Boggs Center works to promote the full citizenship of people with disabilities through dissemination of educational resources about voting rights, the voting process, and pressing public policy issues. The Center develops timely and relevant fact sheets about upcoming elections and policies impacting people with I/DD and their families. Voting: It’s Your Right, a plain-language guide for people with I/DD is now in its 4th edition.
EDUCATION & TRANSITION TO ADULT LIFE

The Boggs Center partners with the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education (NJ DOE OSE) to advance the participation of children, youth, and emerging adults with I/DD in inclusive education and transition activities adapted to meet the needs of school personnel during the pandemic through 3 collaborative efforts: Community-Based Instruction (CBI), New Jersey Positive Behavior Supports in Schools (NJ PBSIS) and Person-Centered Approaches in Schools and Transition (PCAST).

EMPLOYMENT

Through the support of the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), The Boggs Center provides Supported Employment Training and Technical Assistance to build capacity and competence among service providers to assist people with disabilities with choosing, obtaining, and maintaining employment. Training opportunities include: a 4-day Employment Specialist Foundations course, training for day habilitation staff on designing meaningful day programs that advance Employment First policies, and a variety of supplemental courses on topics related to competitive integrated employment.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

In collaboration with the Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, The Boggs Center facilitates a medical home for adults with developmental disabilities that provides care coordination and supports faculty and resident physicians in caring for patients with developmental disabilities at Family Medicine at Monument Square in New Brunswick. With support from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), The Boggs Center also provides training, technical assistance, and consultation on coping with grief and loss, aging, and end-of-life issues unique to adults with I/DD.
HEALTH & HEALTH DISPARITIES RESEARCH

Faculty from The Boggs Center, in collaboration with colleagues from Children’s Specialized Hospital (CSH), conduct research on health and health disparities related to improving screening and early identification of autism and other developmental delays for New Jersey’s underserved children. “Parental Concerns of Underserved Young Children at Risk for Autism,” co-authored by Boggs Center faculty and colleagues from CSH, was published in the May 2020 edition of the Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved to describe research findings about the kind of language families from underserved backgrounds might use to express concerns about their children’s development to professionals.

STUDENT PROGRAMS

NJLEND is The Boggs Center’s Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities program, federally funded through the Autism Cares Act, and part of the national network of LEND programs. NJLEND prepares graduate-level health and allied health fellows to provide high-quality, interdisciplinary, family-centered, culturally competent care addressing the complex needs of children with autism, related disabilities and other maternal and child health populations. NJLEND also provides technical assistance and continuing education opportunities for practicing maternal and child health professionals.

All medical students at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical participate in NJLEND through the Seminar on Family Centered Care and Developmental Disabilities, a required component of the 3rd year Pediatrics clerkship during which students are educated directly by families of children with developmental disabilities through a home visit. The Boggs Center also offers a medical school elective on health care for children and adults with developmental disabilities.

The Center provides undergraduate and graduate students with individualized learning opportunities through our Interdisciplinary Traineeship program, and also co-sponsors a Certificate Program in Developmental Disabilities with the Rutgers School of Social Work, Office of Continuing Education.
LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE TOGETHER

The Boggs Center is guided by our partnerships with people with disabilities, families, service providers, state agencies, and policymakers. Please connect with us to let us know how together we can continue to support New Jersey’s developmental disabilities community.

Access our Contact Form: http://rwjms.rutgers.edu/boggscenetr/contact_us/reqform.php

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Rutgers
Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities
Department of Pediatrics
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Liberty Plaza, 335 George Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

rwjms.rutgers.edu/boggscenter
p. 732-235-9300
f. 732-235-9330