

Long-Range Strategic Business Plan For Self-Advocates of Indiana, Inc.

An organization by and for people with developmental disabilities



People Helping People

Founded: January 10, 1990

Incorporated: August 12, 2002

MISSION OF SELF-ADVOCATES OF INDIANA

To be an organization of citizens who speak out and educate for equal rights, respect, and inclusion for all in the community.

Welcome

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our promise to ourselves to work for a brighter future for all people with developmental/intellectual disabilities. We are working hard to make our dreams come true.

In the past we've done speaking engagements. We have been on committees. We have held conferences and fundraisers, and we have had reunions and picnics. We've traveled throughout the state starting new groups and keeping our groups going.

Now we will reach out to more people about people with developmental disabilities so they don't need to be afraid of us and they will learn we are good workers and good neighbors.

We have developed our long-range strategic business plan to guide us. We know that in this day and age we need to look at how we do business. Money is tight and the system is trying to do more for more people with less.

We have made our plan flexible so we can meet the ever-changing circumstances people with developmental disabilities face. We have been careful to include time in our plan to evaluate our goals and our progress. We are excited about the possibilities for people with developmental disabilities in the future and we want our plan to reflect our commitment to work hard through our goals for the benefit of all people with developmental disabilities.

We want to offer our expertise because of who we are and what we do. We stand by the international slogan, "Nothing About Us, Without Us."

Because we believe so strongly in this, we have added our own phrases: "Hear our voice, don't make our choice" and "We are informed and we are paying attention."

Sincerely,

The Self-Advocates of Indiana Board of Directors

We believe in our Values:

Fairness and Justice, Friends and Family, Support for Success,
Satisfaction in Doing a Good Job and Recognition for a Job Well Done,
Teamwork, Community, Responsibility and Citizenship.

Our vision for our organization is based on our values.

Self-Advocates of Indiana sees a world where all people are equal and treated with dignity and respect. To contribute to this idea for all, SAI offers its vision for our organization:

1. We will be the leader for people with developmental disabilities in all parts of Indiana.
2. We will educate ourselves so we can be clearly understood.
3. We will partner with state government and other stakeholders to create a system of supports and services that offers quality of life for people while being financially responsible.
4. We will educate people in the community about equal respect and understanding.
5. We will promise our families and supporters that we are striving for this new way of living our lives with careful thought and planning and confidence in our ability to succeed.

Our organization helps us to achieve our Goals.

Our Self-Advocates of Indiana organization gives us time to get together to talk about things that are important to us, learn new ideas, make important decisions, listen to others as we make our plans, and be with good friends.

It gives us strength in our beliefs because we know other people who have had the same experiences we have had.

It keeps us focused so we can make informed decisions that are thoughtful and meaningful.

Our Customers:

SAI's customers are adults with developmental/intellectual disabilities.

Many have lived away from their home towns, in isolation and separated from friends and families.

Many would like to move back to their home towns and become more involved in their community.

Many have never been asked their opinion.

Many are beginning to talk to each other and find out they do have opinions that count.

Many are tired of having to ask their staff for permission for everything they do.

Many want to explore their options and make decisions for themselves.

Many have been told they can live in a residence only if they obey all the rules.

Many now want to choose where they live and make their own rules.

Many have been excluded from educational opportunities because of the opinion they could not learn.

Many are now proving they can and do learn when they are given information that fits their learning styles.

Many have been told all their lives they could not do things they want to do because they have a disability.

Many now want to try, and be allowed the dignity of risk-taking.

Self-Advocates of Indiana's pledge of service:

Self-Advocates of Indiana pledges to open up a world of opportunity for people with developmental disabilities by educating its members, families and supporters, and the general public on the abilities of people with developmental/intellectual disabilities.

Communities will profit from the contributions of hard working citizens.

Families will benefit from the inclusion of their loved ones into their communities.

People with developmental disabilities will grow, building their self-respect and confidence in their ability to succeed.

Self-Advocates of Indiana's products will have one objective in mind – to educate. All materials will promote mutual respect and understanding of the principles of dignity of the human spirit.

Our long-range strategic business plan gives us a way to organize our goals and activities so we can achieve the best outcomes.

Our Mission:

An organization of citizens who speak out and educate for equal rights, respect, and inclusion in the community.

Our Activities:

- Meetings
- Outreach
- Training teams
- Educational Presentations and Publications
- Partnerships

Our Goals:

1. Maintain an effective statewide self-advocacy organization
2. Increase the presence of self-advocacy in Indiana
3. Build and maintain an effective training team
4. Educate all people about the abilities of people with developmental disabilities
5. Build relationships with policy makers and other stakeholders

Desired Outcomes:

- A unified voice and support for all
- An educated membership
- An educated community
- Self-Advocates in all regions of the state
- SAI increased capacity to impact public policy for the good of all

Operations: Self-Advocates of Indiana strategic goals and objectives

Funding for operational expenses is being provided by the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities. SAI realizes it must secure alternative sources for these expenses and others to expand its activities if it is going to realize the outcomes that are so important.

SAI's incorporation as a 501(c)3 and the development of its board of directors has resulted in an increased number of self-advocates who are active in self-advocacy. New leaders have emerged to carry on the work of the founders of SAI. SAI is committed to continuing the work of its board and committee members.

1. To create and sustain an effective statewide self-advocacy organization that will benefit all people with developmental disabilities. An effective organization is the foundation that will allow us to realize our vision and achieve our mission.

Objective A: By end of year four, secure a funding structure that will support SAI's operational expenses.

Next year:

Task 1: Develop a fee scale for SAI presentations, products and services.

Task 2: Investigate what funding other state self-advocacy organizations have.

Task 3: Investigate sources of funding from national, state and local civic organizations.

Task 4: Evaluate activities and progress on a six-month basis throughout the year.

Objective B: By the end of year four, secure a strong leadership for SAI.

Next year:

Task 1: Facilitate the work of the board of directors and their committee members by holding six board-development meetings each year.

Task 2: Evaluate activities and progress on a six-month basis throughout the year.

Objective C: Each year revisit the SAI Long-Range Strategic Business Plan, evaluate the progress and adjust accordingly.

SAI considers its commitment to each and every person with an intellectual disability in Indiana to be its most important responsibility. It is because of this commitment that SAI will continue to travel to bring the principles of self-advocacy and self-determination to every region of Indiana.

Outreach activities to increase the number and presence of active self-advocates in each region of Indiana in the last two years have been very successful. SAI's two statewide conferences have been successful. The first one was small but was well received by the self-advocates who attended. The second one was a huge success and was instrumental in revitalizing interest in self-advocacy. SAI's quarterly statewide meetings provide the opportunity for the self-advocates to meet on a regular basis.

2. To increase the presence of self-advocacy and introduce the principles of self-determination to all regions of Indiana.

Objective A: By end of year four, all regions will have an active self-advocacy presence.

Next year:

Task 1: The Wabash Valley self-advocates who are on the SAI board will continue their pilot project of developing their regional activities in the West Central region of the state.

Task 2: Using the experience of the Wabash Valley Self-Advocates, the board will develop a model to be used for regional meetings and activities in the other regions of the state.

Task 3: Each year, SAI will plan a regional outreach trip to an area of Indiana that does not have an active self-advocacy group.

Task 4: The board will research ways the local groups can keep their groups active despite changes in helpers or transportation difficulties.

Task 5: Each year, SAI will evaluate its progress and activities on a 6-month basis and adjust accordingly for the maximum desired outcome.

Objective B: By end of year four, SAI will carry on regular, on-going communication with all self-advocacy groups in Indiana.

Next year:

Task 1: SAI will investigate the use of distance education technology for its statewide meetings.

Task 2: SAI will hold a statewide conference in 2006.

Task 3: SAI will evaluate these activities on a six-month basis and adjust accordingly.

Educating its leaders and membership is an on-going and very necessary element of each year's activities for SAI. The education provided not only presents new information to them but also awakens abilities in them that they didn't realize they had.

SAI offers publications that are informative and effective in promoting the principles of self-advocacy and self-determination. The SAI booklet "We have Community in Common" explores the Olmstead Decision and its impact on community living for people with developmental disabilities. The SAI video, "Self-Advocates of Indiana Speak Out for a Better Tomorrow," offers insight into what is important to people with developmental disabilities through interviews with self-advocates and staff who support them. The SAI 2004 Calendar highlighted people with developmental disabilities living every day lives. SAI will have a calendar for 2006.

3. To educate to build the capacity of people with developmental disabilities while creating a path for mutual understanding among all citizens.

Objective A: By the end of year four, SAI will have developed the leadership skills of its self-advocate leaders through continuing education.

Next year:

Task 1: Each board development meeting will include an educational segment.

Task 2: The board will investigate other ways they can educate themselves.

Task 3: The board will evaluate the methods offered to them to educate them and adjust accordingly on a six-month basis.

Objective B: By the end of year four, people with developmental disabilities will be educated about their rights and the opportunities for them in their communities.

Next year:

Task 1: Each statewide membership meeting will include an educational segment.

Task 2: SAI will employ distance-ed technology for trainings.

Task 3: The membership will be asked to evaluate each training.

Objective C: By end of year four, the public will have been educated on what it means to have a developmental disability. We are working to open the doors of communication and change age-old stereotypes that have kept us isolated from our communities. Neighbors can learn they don't have to be afraid of a person just because he or she talks or acts differently.

Next year:

Task 1: SAI will investigate the best strategies for getting their message out to the public, e.g.: presentations, advertisements, flyers/pamphlets.

Task 2: SAI will give presentations to at least four audiences.

Task 3: SAI will evaluate the effectiveness of their work on a six-month basis in this area.

Objective D: To educate parents and supporters to calm their fears and encourage them to see the capabilities of their loved ones.

Next year:

Task 1: SAI will use the next statewide conference as a starting point for their goal of educating their families and supporters because they will be incorporating the family track again in their conference planning.

Task 2: SAI will ask their families to evaluate what the self-advocates have presented to them and suggest ways it can be improved.

SAI's training team has grown from just two speakers to eight speakers. As a result, they are able to offer trainings to more audiences. A short time ago, SAI was able to present luncheon keynotes plus two breakout sessions in three different towns on three consecutive days for The Arc of Indiana workshops.

4. To build and sustain an effective training team that will facilitate SAI's goal of increasing the number of presentations it offers and the increased number of committees it seeks to join.

Objective A: By the end of year four, SAI will have trained members in each of the six regions to be able to give presentations in their area.

Next year:

Task 1: Hold public speaking and committee participation practice sessions at each board meeting.

Task 2: Match new members of the training team in each presentation given by experienced speakers.

Task 3: Evaluate its strategies on a six month basis and adjust accordingly.

Objective B: By the end of year four, SAI will develop presentations on more subjects. Currently, SAI has developed presentations on How to Start a Self-Advocacy Group, Project Vote, and Self-Determination.

Next year:

Task 1: Choose a topic to develop a presentation on.

Task 2: Develop a presentation on the chosen topic

Task 3: Give one presentation on that topic.

Task 4: Evaluate its progress on a six-month basis and adjust accordingly.

Establishing SAI's reputation so that it can impact public policy is always on the collective mind of SAI leaders. All of the above goals and activities can be instrumental in developing SAI's reputation as a responsible organization that has a lot to offer.

SAI has formed partnerships with the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities, and the Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services and looks for partnerships with other organizations.

5. To develop and implement strategies to identify and take advantage of opportunities to impact public policy, build relationships with policymakers and other organizations, and communicate SAI's policy positions effectively.

Objective A: By end of year four, SAI will have developed a partnership with another organization.

Next year:

Task 1: SAI will examine what a partnership is, what SAI's contribution can be, and how to approach another organization with a plan that is beneficial to both.

Task 2: Investigate a possible connection with the Kiwanis.

Task 3: Investigate possible connections with other organizations.

Task 4: Evaluate progress and adjust accordingly.

Objective B: By end of year four, SAI will have continued to participate on state advisory meetings and commissions and have increased the number of self-advocates participating on these committees.

Next year:

Task 1: Increase the number of self-advocates participating on committees by two.

Task 2: Increase the number of committees and boards by two.

Task 3: Use those opportunities to meet state officials and introduce them to SAI.

Task 4: Evaluate these strategies every six months and adjust accordingly.

SELF-ADVOCATES OF INDIANA HISTORY

Our history gives us confidence in our ability to accomplish our goals.

1985-1986: The Arc of Allen County wrote a proposal to the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities to start a self-advocacy group with the intention of expanding statewide. They held trainings for the self-advocates and meetings through June, 1986, at which time efforts dwindled.

1990: Funded again by the Governor's Council, a leadership conference was held on January 10, 1990, during which advocates from around the state developed a mission statement, membership criteria, chose their official name, and committed themselves to stay together & continue to talk to each other.

1990 – 1997: A small group of committed self-advocate leaders continued to meet to sustain themselves and carry on their work.

1997: The fall of 1997, Self-Advocates of Indiana (SAI) began a partnership with the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community. A staff person from the Institute met with the self-advocates and was impressed with their level of enthusiasm and dedication to their work.

In the meantime, the vice-president of SAI wrote a proposal to the director of the Indiana Institute asking for support to develop the capacity of their state organization. The self-advocates and Indiana Institute staff saw that they shared a common vision and dedication to increasing the power of the voice of people with developmental disabilities.

October, 1998: The Indiana Institute staff developed the first directory of local self-advocacy groups in the state for SAI.

September, 1999: The Governor's Council awarded SAI its first grant for operational expenses.

1999: The Indiana Institute staff developed and printed a second directory of self-advocacy groups in Indiana and reprinted the SAI Handbook on how to establish self-advocacy groups and how to run their meetings. Both were made possible through funding from the Governor's Council.

November, 1999: A grant from The Center on Self-Determination and 21st Century Leadership provided the funding for the self-advocates to hold a statewide conference. One hundred self-advocates and their staff attended. It was instrumental in attracting more groups to the efforts of the statewide organization. Out of that conference, came position statements developed by SAI members on issues important to people with developmental disabilities. The Indiana Institute printed a brochure the self-advocates could disseminate to promote their statements on the issues.

October, 2000: SAI's president testified before the Health Finance Commission on October 31, 2000.

2001: SAI established its first board of directors and began the process for incorporation. These and other activities were funded by the second grant from the Governor's Council for People with Disabilities.

January, 2002: The development of the SAI Speakers Team began.

July, 2002: Self-Advocates of Indiana and the Indiana Institute produced two publications, "We Have Community in Common," a booklet on the Olmstead Decision, and a video, "Self-Advocates of Indiana Speak Out for a Better Tomorrow."

August, 2002: SAI is incorporated as a 501(c)3.

2003 to present: Continuing to be funded yearly by the Governor's Council, SAI increases its ability to inspire its members to believe in themselves, educate others on the principles of self-determination and self-advocacy, and contribute to their communities.

OUR INDUSTRY – THE NATIONAL FOCUS:

Our research has proved to us people are listening. A civil rights movement like this takes time and energy and commitment of many people to change a huge system such as ours. We do believe the outcome will be for the benefit of all.

“The structure of the US residential care system has changed a great deal over the past two decades. The state-operated institutional census declined from approximately 195,000 in 1967 to 52,801 in 1998; 118 institutions have closed, including 66 in the decade of the 1990s. Since 1977, the nation’s overall residential service system capacity has increased by 44%...this growth has been fueled by a marked increase in the number of people with mental retardation living in settings for six or fewer individuals.” [Braddock et al., 2000]

In the meantime, “waiting lists for residential and community services are growing rapidly in the United States.” [Hayden & DePaepe, 1994] “This is due in part to growth in the number of individuals with mental retardation living with caregivers age 60+ years and to the increasing longevity of persons with mental retardation. It is estimated that approximately 480,000 people with mental retardation and closely related developmental disabilities were living with aging caregivers in 1996.” [Braddock, 1999]

In the meantime, the system experiences conditions that have been prevalent for 25 years. “These unfortunate circumstances include high staff turnover, low social status for the staff, insufficient training, limited educational and career opportunities and poor wages. These undermine the commitment of the direct support professionals, and have made it very difficult to recruit and train qualified and committed individuals in direct support roles in every area of human services.” [NADSP, 2001]

In the meantime, Medicaid funding and eligibility guidelines are constantly being threatened. “Medicaid is the most valuable resource for children and adults with disabilities to access health and long-term supports and services in the community. Medicaid offers certain mandatory services such as hospital, physician, and nursing home services. States can also choose to offer optional services such as prescription drugs, home and community based services, case management, rehabilitative services, etc.” [The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy Disability Policy Collaboration Policy Statements, 2005]

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Braddock, D. (1999) “Aging and developmental disabilities: Demographics and policy issues affecting American families.” *Mental Retardation*, 37(2)

The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals, www.nadsp.org/library/articles.html; “Issues in the Direct Support Workforce and their Connections to the Growth, Sustainability and Quality of Community Supports” (2001)

The Arc of Indiana; www.arcind.org: Arc Legislative Information Page; Fact Sheets from The Arc; Medicaid.

Funding for operational expenses is being provided by the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities. These yearly grants afford SAI the opportunity to meet six times per year to manage the business of the corporation and work on our goals. Our plan for how we will accomplish our goals is only limited by the funding we are able to obtain. We envision a more ambitious schedule in the future. We know that to spread the word of self-advocacy and self-determination, we must travel to all parts of Indiana. We want to be able to offer support and information to people with developmental disabilities in every town and city in Indiana. We have to consider the development and production costs that will be connected to every publication we plan to create.

The board of directors of SAI has always made every effort to find consistent, reliable financial support. In the past, the leaders have secured funding for additional events and projects through the years. Funding for the statewide conference in 1999 came from The Center on Self-Determination and 21st Century Leadership. SAI was able to obtain funding to provide Project Vote training through the Center as well.

As of 2004, the self-advocates have begun to be paid for their work, including their development of a self-determination training module, presentations to various audiences, and video-taped vignettes for the new statewide training curriculum for direct support staff. SAI considers that to be a huge accomplishment.

SAI leaders are proud of the fact that their fundraising efforts raised more than \$4,000 for their 2005 Statewide Conference.

SAI is a 501c3 non-profit organization. Therefore, contributions are tax deductible. SAI welcomes financial support from endowments and donations of any kind that will sponsor, expand or complement our current strategic directions. We value diversity of thought and vision for the future and how we might get there.

SAI offers multiple categories for sponsors:

For a minimum contribution of \$25 per year, a person can register as a "Friend of SAI."

For a minimum contribution of \$250 per year, a person can register as a "Golden Sponsor."

For a minimum contribution of \$1,000 per year, a person can register as a "Guardian Angel."

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