Dear Editor:

The Metropolitan Council has adopted a Regional Policy Plan for Persons with Developmental Disabilities. The focus of the plan is to promote quality services which lead to increased self-sufficiency for persons who are developmentally disabled and to their genuine integration as participating members of their communities.

To promote awareness and use of this plan, a member of the Council's Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee will arrange to make a short presentation and provide a packet of written materials to your organization. The materials are suitable for publication in your newsletter. They include an executive summary of the plan and a series of original poems which illustrate some of the principles highlighted in the plan. The poems are based on the experiences of actual people who live in the Metropolitan Area.

Enclosed is a cover release, the executive summary and poetry. We recommend use of the cover release, and poems on the principle of community integration in the initial publication, followed by additional poems in subsequent issues. However, feel free to use the materials in the way that best meets your membership needs.

If you have any questions about the materials, please call Toni Lippert, Metropolitan Council, 291-6364.

Sincerely,

Mary Powell, Chair
Development Disabilities Advisory Committee
Metropolitan Council

MP:esw
Enclosure
Four out of every 1,000 Twin Cities residents have severe, chronic physical or mental handicaps that began before age 22, and will probably continue throughout their lives.

These handicaps, called "developmental disabilities," interfere substantially with at least three basic living skills, such as self-care, learning, language development or mobility.

People with developmental disabilities tend to have several handicapping conditions that require combinations of service - family support, residential programs, education, training for employment, health treatment and therapy, and social and recreational programs. These services must address their multiple needs over the entire period they need assistance.

The Developmental Disabilities (DD) Program for the seven-county Metropolitan Area was established at the Metropolitan Council in 1972. The Council's Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee oversees the DD Program and advises the Council on the needs of people with developmental disabilities.

The purpose of the program is to help develop a community service system that is comprehensive and enables persons with developmental disabilities to participate as fully as possible in the life of their own communities.

The Metropolitan Council adopted a new Regional Policy Plan in 1985 to promote a quality community service system. The plan contains advanced ideas about the kinds of services that should be delivered. It also includes appropriate goals the Metropolitan Council holds for its constituents who are developmentally disabled. These goals can be achieved if all individuals with an interest in their welfare will use the plan's guidelines and criteria to evaluate current services and practices. If the service system does not measure up to these standards, then the community at least has indicators of what changes are needed in all areas of the system.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The Metropolitan Council and its Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee use these policies when they develop DD work plans or projects, and for reviewing other DD current or proposed projects, policies and practices. Consumer organizations, public and private policy-makers or service providers are encouraged to use it for long-range planning, for identifying individual needs, for evaluating or monitoring service systems and for creating positive change.

WHAT THE PLAN CONTAINS

The plan starts with a description of a model array of services needed by persons with developmental disabilities. It identifies problems of unmet needs and proposes development of a model service system. The plan traces some of the trends which have only recently evolved and which have led to dynamic new ideas about what new expectations we now have for people with developmental...
disabilities. It also identifies and describes newer principles that have evolved from the philosophy of Normalization. New technical terms are defined so there is a clear understanding of what qualitative changes must be achieved in order to fulfill our new expectations.

The last section lists four goals that should be achieved in the next five years.

I. COMMUNITY INTEGRATION: All persons with developmental disabilities will receive services in settings that are integrated. The services will provide opportunities to live in a family-scale homes in residential neighborhoods, to participate in a full range of education offerings as children and adults, to work in community businesses, and to engage in the same social and leisure activities available to other community residents.

II. INDIVIDUAL CHOICE: Persons with developmental disabilities will be afforded continuous opportunities and training to make decisions about their lifestyles, relationships and futures. Administrative and resource decisions should directly support the individual with developmental disabilities to grow more self-sufficient through exercising choices.

III. SERVICE SYSTEM DESIGN: The service system will provide adequate capacity and be open to all persons with developmental disabilities as defined in federal and recent state legislation. The developmental disabilities service system will be organized so that policies, regulations and funding incentives provide only services that reflect best professional practice and that document the benefits received and valued by persons with developmental disabilities and their families. These benefits should include consideration of service availability, accessibility, acceptability, continuity, cost and quality as defined in this plan.

IV. PERSONNEL STANDARDS: In recognition of current and future advances in service technology, state, county, and other jurisdictional purchasers of service will develop and require competency standards that reflect job responsibilities and best professional practice. They will hold providers from whom they purchase services accountable for meeting those standards. Individuals who work with persons who are developmentally disabled will accept responsibility for meeting required standards and continuing their professional development to ensure successful client outcomes.

What follows after the goals are a list of six characteristics appropriate service should have so that the goals can be realized. The characteristics are availability, accessibility, acceptability, continuity, cost-effectiveness and quality of services.

Here is an example of one characteristic, its guideline and criteria. By changing each statement to a question, one can determine whether a particular service component has that particular characteristic. If the service being
considered, does not conform, both consumers and providers can work toward the positive change indicated by the guidelines and criteria.

EXAMPLE

Acceptability is a measure of the degree to which services promote genuine opportunities for community integration, self-directed choices and reduction of dependency.

Guideline 3. A comprehensive array of community services should afford persons who are developmentally disabled use of the same resources as, and regular contact with, non-disabled citizens.

Criterion 1. Services should provide many opportunities for individual choices and options.

Criterion 2. Services should never be totally segregated in their physical settings nor prevent one's regular interaction with non-handicapped people.

Criterion 3. The service system should include both formal and informal support networks.

Criterion 4. Public and private service providers should assume responsibility for promoting public education about the advantages of community integration for the whole community in a manner that minimizes negative reactions from the general public.

Criterion 5. Service providers should be accountable for reducing their clients' dependencies in terms of quantitative or qualitative measures.

The Metropolitan Council held a public hearing on the plan on July 11, 1985. The public hearing testimony expressed unanimous support for its adoption and provided several suggestions that would improve the document. These suggestions were incorporated in the plan which the Metropolitan Council adopted on September 26, 1985.

The Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee of the Metropolitan Council hopes that this summary will motivate you to read the plan in its entirety and to use it as a basis for change in Minnesota.
A term we've heard many times Throughout the past twenty Years.

A term which stands for
The right of all people To live according to their Personal beliefs and pursuits,
Ruling out all forms of Discrimination based upon the Color of one's skin, nationality, Political convictions and Economic stability.

A term which only recently Our society decided to apply To persons with developmental Disabilities.

And why?

It's because we made such People invisible by housing Them in institutions.

We didn't think it was Our responsibility to examine How and why we were the cause Of discrimination they Struggled with.

We took it upon ourselves To feel sorry for them, Never asking if they would Like to pursue personal Goals and learn skills that Would enable progress.

We, we, we.

Time is long overdue for Us to practice community Integration as it is taught, And eliminate the handicap Of our conscience caused by Ignorance.

How do we go about it?

By providing them a home With a backyard, trees, and Flowers in a community neighborhood, Rather than an institution.

By providing their parents sufficient Financial support to purchase Equipment necessary to raise them at Home, so they can grow with love, Laughter, security, and parental, Not clinical, supervision.

By giving them an education at a Neighborhood school with their Brother, sister, and neighborhood kids, Rather than shipping them off to a Clinical school specializing in Special education.

By giving them the training and a job In the real world of business and Industry where they can earn a decent Salary, rather than encourage them To enjoy the boredom of a hobby or Instruct them how to appreciate a Manual entitled, "The Joy of a Career In a Developmental Achievement Center."

By giving them equal access to health Services in physicians' offices, Community clinics or hospital, rather Than make them dread the long bus ride Or make their parents, guardians go out Of their way investing time and money For gas because certain doctors, Administrators prefer not to open Their doors, doors displaying the Invisible sign "For non-handicapped People only."

By giving them a religious nurture Alongside of us in our church or Synagogue where they can have a choice To sing in the choir, to serve as an Usher, to assist the clergy person in Services, rather than receive private Religious nurture secluded from others Because those without developmental Disabilities somehow failed to apply the Golden rule to all of God's children.

By giving them the excitement of leisure-Time activities not only in their home
But in public parks, theaters, Libraries, and sports facilities, Rather than the ritual, Unstimulating boredom of a Television, a few nights a Month at a bowling alley, and Nothing other than an Imagination of what it would Be like to see a play at Chimera Theater, to head for Orchestra Hall and feeling their Anticipation mount as the lights Dim and whispering voices quiet, To be able to tell others how Much they enjoy library programs, And to score the winning points In a basketball game.

They're not asking for much Only what we take for granted. Legal rights. Community integration. Their time has finally come.
**PRINCIPLE OF ULTIMATE FUNCTIONING**

We grow up in a competitive society
Surrounded with norms determining
How, when, and why to develop
Personal skills and behavior in
Order to survive and succeed now
And in the future.

Our parents, family members and
Teachers take the time to teach us
The rules on how, when, and why.

Most of us develop according to
The norm, staying on the right
Track laid out and well used in
Society.

Most of us have journeys in life
That are safe, stimulating and
Progressive.

Far more often than not, we keep
Looking straight ahead locking our
Thoughts and concerns on that which
Only affects ourselves.

In doing so, we make people with
Developmental disabilities become
Shadows of fate, placing them in
Directions that will not be in
Our way, simply because they are
Unable to develop exactly
According to our norm.

Rather than take the time now To design and
construct tracks To promote their individual
Development in self-care, learning
Economic self-sufficiency, independent
Living skills, mobility, self-direction,
And receptive, expressive language we
Continue to ignore their existence and
Determine the fate of their journey in
Life.

The principle of Ultimate
Function Starts with today's
opportunity to Develop the personal
skills and Behaviors essential to
live in Present and future
environments That mostly include
non-handicapped People.

They must learn early how to
Select and pursue goals, and steer
Their lives in a direction headed for
Success.

All they ask for are early beginnings
That will get them as close as possible
To the norms and patterns of society,
Ultimate functioning.

We must listen.

We need to learn.
He has a serious form of Spina
Bifida.

At birth, his spinal cord
resembled the flat shape of a
Rubber band, whereas his
Parents' resembled the circular
Width of one's finger.

Ultimate functioning for
Shane Was learning how to use a
Caster cart, resembling a
Mechanic's creeper or raft,
Equipped with a backrest, two
Wheels at the end, a front
Wheel, and ample space
Surrounding his legs.

It is Shane's way to get
Around the house, play
Outside with friends, and
Haul his toys. With his
Arms positioned over each
Side, and hands placed
On the floor,
Shane is able to push wherever
His caster cart can go.

At fifteen months, the dart
And dash stage of development
For most non-handicapped toddlers,
Shane was able to dart with his
Cart and dash with a lash securing
His body.

At four years old, when most kids
Are Saturday morning cartoon fans,
Shane was able to turn channels
With a clothespin his parents
Attached to the dial, a
Challenge overcome through
Creativity.

Several special education administrators
Opposed Shane's enrollment in a
Neighborhood school, claiming he would
Do better academically in a special
Learning environment.

His parents wanted their son to
Learn socialization behaviors through
One-on-one contact with non-handicapped
Students, rather than be taught how
To do so through special education
Teachers and books.

Shane's above average academic
Performance just slightly dropped at
The neighborhood school, whereas his
Ability to socialize have scored sky
High.

A promising mixture of personal skills
And behaviors to function in present
And future environments which include
Mostly non-handicapped people.
Third grade teachers predict
Shane will either serve as our nation's
President or become a sales executive
For a major firm.

Figuratively speaking, he has his feet
Well positioned on the ground, running
In the right direction.

Way to go, Shane.

Congratulations to his parents.
He has autism and is seventeen years old.

Ultimate functioning for Eric was learning how to put his hands to good use and appreciate his ability to control his behavior in a part-time job at a restaurant working with non-handicapped people, rather than be taught how to prevent self-injury by putting his hands in his pockets or by folding them without an opportunity to progress in the real world showing his ability to do so.

Eric thrives on going to the bank, meeting people, and talking about how he controls his behavior at work.

Way to go, Eric.

Congratulations to his parents and employer.
He has severe cerebral palsy.

Ultimate functioning for Paul was learning how to make it to the top by carrying his own weight rather than being taught how to adapt to a lifestyle almost 100% dependent on others.

After a year and a half of hard practice, Paul can carry his body up and down fifteen stairs, around the house, make his bed, wash clothes and dishes, clear the table and empty wastebaskets.

Way to go Paul.

Congratulations to his parents, brothers and sisters for taking the time to show their love.
She has mental retardation, and
is nine years old.

Ultimate functioning for Kristina
is learning how to count,
using real life experiences
rather than be taught
how to count blocks.

Ultimate functioning for Kristina
also is learning how to write her
name by practicing how to draw
lines between dots mapped out
for the letters K, r, i, s, t, i, n, a
rather than be taught the
more difficult way of drawing
letters.

She's proud to be able to
count and measure food and
water for her dog and cat.

She was thrilled to give her dad
a Valentine signed "Love, Kristina."

Way to go, Kristina

Congratulations to her parents and
teacher.
She is legally blind, has
Mental retardation, a short
Memory span, cannot read, and
Lived in an institution for
Forty years.

Ultimate functioning for Mary
Began late, but not too late,
Memorizing cards picturing tasks
Of her first job in domestic
Services.

Within two weeks Mary had the
Tasks cards memorized, proving to
Herself that something associated
With success can be memorized.

She earned a well-deserved raise
In just six months
Ultimate functioning gave her a
Chance to become someone.

Way to go, Mary.
As I tuck you into bed,  
The fear silently captures  
My thoughts.

The fear that you will be  
Denied a right to participate,  
To whatever extent is possible,  
In the life of our community.

The fear that many Non-handicapped persons will  
Reject rather than help  
Fashion adaptations for  
Activities and environments  
Which enable you to participate  
In some way, using the same  
Community resources they use.

You're such a beautiful  
Daughter, Bridget, thriving  
As non-handicapped children  
Do on the excitements of  
Learning, experimentation,  
Playing, friendship, being  
Loved and sharing love.

I see how much you enjoy  
The pleasure of learning I watch  
your desire to Become autonomous  
develop,  
Wanting to psychologically  
Stand on your own two feet.  
Everyday you look forward to  
Playing with your dad, myself  
And friends, the smile on your  
Face radiates when friends  
Knock at the door, all  
Normal, positive expressions  
Of life.

You were born with (type of DD),  
Bridget, not cursed with it.

Your dad and I promise you with all  
The love in our heart that we will  
Diligently try to match your  
Determination to thrive with our  
Effort to enforce your right to  
Live as non-handicapped children.

Fear is what we allow it to become,  
Bridget.

Hopefully, the day will soon come  
When those who choose to interfere  
With the principle of partial  
Participation will regret their lack  
Of understanding and strive to improve  
Errors, we will welcome them, not  
Reject them.

Look forward to sharing tomorrow with  
You. Pleasant dreams, my daughter.

The principle of partial participation  
Requires that adaptations to activities  
And environments be made for individuals  
So they can participate in some way,  
Using the same community resources  
Available to those who are not  
Handicapped. This principle affirms  
That persons with severe mental or  
Physical handicaps have a right to  
Participate, to whatever extent is  
Possible, in the life of their  
Communities.
At the age of fifteen she became a person with epilepsy. Within one year memory loss began, a learning disability caused by anti-seizure medication.

Partial participation for Sheila was learning how to adapt to her learning disability by using a tape recorder in class to serve as a backup for her memory.

During the first year of her learning disability, Sheila's grade point average fell from 3.10 to a 1.68.

Because a teacher was able to identify her learning disability and Sheila had the courage to use a tape recorder, her grade point average managed to reach a 3.0.

Her hope to attend college is not lost.

Way to go, Sheila. Congratulations to her teacher.

Partial Participation affirms each person's right to adaptations needed to participate in the same opportunities that everyone else uses to develop and become valued members of their communities.
PRINCIPLE OF PARTIAL FUNCTIONING

She has a hearing and speech impairment. At the age of thirteen months, a critical infection silenced her ears to the sounds we hear, express, learn through, and function by.

Partial Participation for Sarah is sign language, picture cards, role playing, blinking light fixtures, and a dog trained to notify her of significant sounds.

Through sign language, Sarah will learn how to communicate in the world of sound, using her hands to speak.

Her parents felt lost for words to describe their joy the first time Sarah learned to say, "Hi, Mom and dad."

Picture cards will teach Sarah the visual image and definition of words, helping her work through the complexity of those spelled the same, but with different meanings.

She'll learn that the word, bow, defines the ribbon in her hair.

The equipment her dad uses to hunt deer, and the courtesy movement her brother makes following his piano performances.

Role playing will help Sarah learn and apply words associated with specific functions, teaching her communication skills for roles she will assume as a child, teenager, and an adult.

Blinking light fixtures located throughout her home will encourage Sarah to seek independence with confidence, spending time doing what she'd like in rooms by herself.

They give her and her parents a security in knowing a light will blink whenever attention is desired.

A dog trained to notify Sarah of significant sounds will promote self-care by giving her an opportunity to handle responsibilities that require hearing.

Her pet keeps an ear open for a fire alarm, a weather warning, someone knocking at the door, the alarm clock, the stove's timer, and the presence of a person walking behind Sarah.

Sarah just celebrated her sixth birthday.

She's always on the go to learn words, she always has something to say, she's eager for role playing, she enjoys drawing picture cards with her parents, she has her operation of the blinking light fixtures down pat, and she walks around the block in pride with her dog.

Through adaptations, Sarah can hear and express the sounds of life with a stronger appreciation than some persons who can listen and talk with little effort.

Way to go, Sarah. Congratulations to her parents.
Sitting alone in the reverend's Office, her fingers crossed, hoping that her prayer will be answered. She wants more than anything to assist in church services.

The reverend arrives. Tension begins as he is gently trying to explain how it would be best to set aside her goal, pointing out how some parishioners will be distracted during services by the complications of her disability or for epilepsy: in seeing a generalized tonic clonic seizure.

She can't hold back the tears. This creation of God wants so very much to fulfill her goal. She's grown tired of just doing things that persons with developmental disabilities are allowed to do, rather than what she wants.

Silently she ponders the questions. "Would God be distracted by a person with a disability?" "Would God prevent me from obtaining my goal?"

She musters enough courage to gently explain to the reverend that God knew all along that she would have disability. That God would encourage, not prevent her, from obtaining the goal. That God would reach out to parishioners, calling upon them to treat her as they do all others.

Her words were heard. A program was designed to teach her lessons on church services. The reverend called upon parishioners to respect her determination to seek and fulfill a meaningful goal.

The principle of natural proportion was applied. God must have smiled.

The principle of natural proportion says that persons with developmental disabilities should regularly interact with more non-handicapped people than handicapped people approximate to that ratio in the total population.