



MINNESOTA GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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April 4, 2012

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Public support increases for people with developmental disabilities participating fully in their communities

Minnesotans' positive attitude toward people with developmental disabilities has increased markedly in the past 50 years, according to a report released today by the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Nearly 90 percent of survey respondents believe that people with developmental disabilities can have regular lives and should be integrated into society as much as possible, compared to 64 percent who felt that way in 1962. Nearly three-quarters of people surveyed agreed that those diagnosed with a developmental disability should be able to participate in activities such as voting and obtaining a driver's license.

"Minnesota has demonstrated a commitment over many years to helping people with developmental disabilities move out of institutions into community settings," said Colleen Wieck, executive director of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. "Progress has resulted from the contributions of many groups, including self advocates, families, providers and government agencies."

The survey showed that more than 90 percent of survey respondents believe that people with developmental disabilities should be kept out of institutions, compared to 55 percent of respondents in 1962.

"It is encouraging to see the positive trend in public support for the full inclusion of Minnesotans with developmental disabilities in community life," said Human Services Commissioner Lucinda Jesson. "This parallels the trend of an increasing number of people with disabilities receiving care and supports in home and community-based settings, as shown on [the DHS Dashboard](#) on our department's website."

While a high percentage in the general population believe it is important to use public resources to ensure adequate government services for people with developmental disabilities, responses to how well the services are being delivered varied widely among survey respondents.

One concern among people with developmental disabilities and their families is abuse. Sixty-two percent of this population reported that abuse toward a family member is a concern, while only 31 percent of the general population is concerned about the abuse of a family member. Thirty-five percent of people with developmental disabilities and their families cited poor performances in abuse prevention services.

“Better protection of vulnerable individuals is one of our highest priorities,” said Jesson. “We are supporting legislation to make willful neglect of vulnerable adults a felony and also working with counties to increase abuse prevention efforts and improve investigations.”

The survey, first conducted in 1962, was repeated in 2012 to assess and measure changes in awareness and attitudes toward people with developmental disabilities in Minnesota over the past 50 years.

A full copy of the report is available at the [Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities website](#).

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