

In The **LOOP**

OCTOBER 2024



## **Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council**

### **Partners in Policymaking 2025**

#### **What is Partners in Policymaking?**

Partners in Policymaking is a FREE virtual leadership training opportunity offered through the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council. People who are chosen to participate in the training will gain skills and knowledge that will help them make positive connections to elected officials, school staff, and with others who make decisions about disability services.

The goal of Partners in Policymaking is to develop partnerships between people who need and use services and those who make policies and laws.

Monthly training sessions are held January through September 2025. Each training session will focus on a new topic related to developmental disabilities. Participants will have opportunities to connect with others in the program who have diverse cultural backgrounds and life experiences, practice using newly learned skills, and learn from nationally recognized speakers in the disability field.

#### **Who can participate?**

Adults with an intellectual or developmental disability and parents of a child under the age of 17 with an intellectual or developmental disability are eligible to apply. Selected applicants must commit to attend all virtual sessions, complete all homework assignments, and submit a final project before graduating from the program.

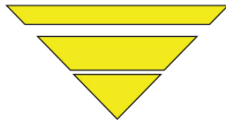
### **How to apply?**

Explore the [Partners in Policymaking webpage](#) to find instructions and a link to the application. A slide presentation and a recording of a past webinar describing the program in more detail are also available on the page.

### **Have questions?**

For questions about the Partners in Policymaking program, contact the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council at 1-800-500-7878.

## MISSOURI DIVISION OF **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**



### **Division of Developmental Disabilities Employment Resources**

The Division of Developmental Disabilities believes people should have opportunities to seek and obtain competitive employment as a member of their community's workforce. The Division follows an [Employment First Policy](#) that guides and affirms expectations in supporting self-determination, independence, and community membership for individuals through employment. The Division's [Employment webpage](#) holds resources to explore including:

- Navigating through Employment Services
- Balancing disability benefits when employed
- Connecting to an Employment Specialist
- Exploring employment partners



**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL  
ON DISABILITY**

**“Access to Good Jobs for All” Celebration**

Celebrate the National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) with the Missouri Governor’s Council on Disability. The celebration includes a keynote speech from Lydia Olmstead, a musical performance from Kayla Patek, assistive device demonstrations, and more. Exhibitors and refreshments will also be available.

**When:** October 21, 2024

**Time:** 11:00am

**Where:** Harry S. Truman Building, 301 High Street, Jefferson City, MO  
- Room 490-492

View [event flyer](#) for additional information.



**Missouri Family-to-Family Good Life Groups**

Did you know Missouri Family-to-Family offers FREE monthly virtual Good Life Groups with each call focusing on a different topic of interest related to disability?

Good Life Groups are designed to:

- Be interactive peer learning collaboratives
- Provide hands-on learning opportunities

- Help build the capacity of self-advocates and their family members

Join the next Good Life Group to talk about employment and learn how using Charting the LifeCourse can help individuals and their families explore and plan for meaningful employment opportunities.

**When:** Thursday, October 24, 2024

**Time:** 12:30pm-2:00pm

Participants must [register](#) to participate.

Explore additional [Charting the LifeCourse Employment](#) resources from the LifeCourse Nexus.



**Missouri  
Mental Health  
Foundation**

## **2025 Mental Health Champions**

### **Seeking Nominations**

The Missouri Mental Health Foundation is currently accepting nominations for the 2025 Missouri Mental Health Champions' Award. Each year one person is chosen from each nomination category to receive the award. The three categories include a person who is diagnosed and living with mental illness, a person who is in recovery from substance use or gambling addiction, and a person who has a developmental disability.

All champion nominees should be a role model who has made a positive contribution to their community, displays courage and resilience, and inspires others to achieve independence. Winners will be celebrated at the annual Mental Health Champions' Banquet, which will be held May 1, 2025, in Jefferson City.

Nominees must agree to share their personal stories. The person or people who nominate someone that is selected as a winner may be asked to appear in a video tribute for that award recipient.

Nominations are due by December 5, 2024.

Find additional information about the Mental Health Champions' Banquet and the nomination form on the Missouri Mental Health Foundation's [website](#). Questions can be directed to the Missouri Mental Health Foundation at 573-635-9201 or [mmhf@missourimhf.org](mailto:mmhf@missourimhf.org)

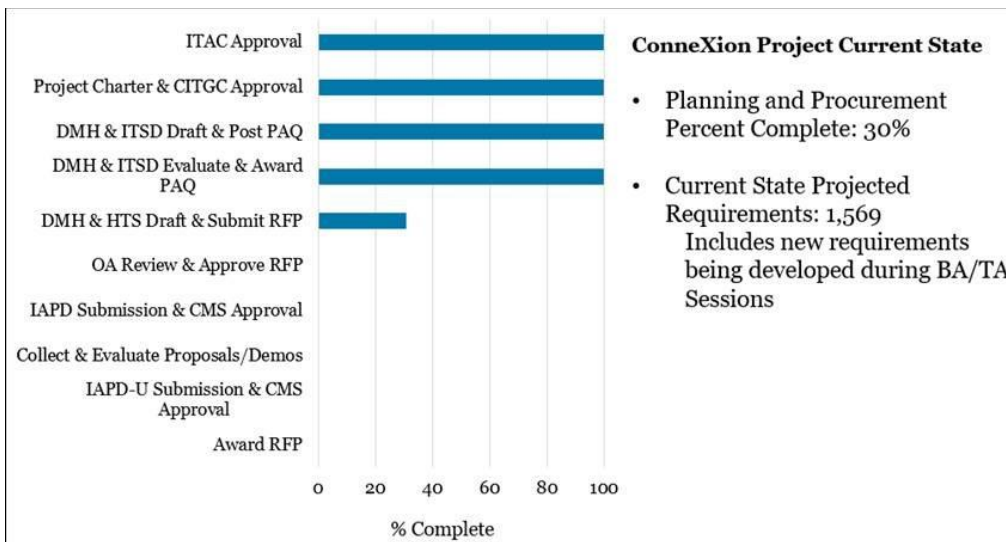


A Division priority is to provide timely updates to all stakeholders on the ConneXion Case Management System Planning and Procurement Project. ConneXion has a dedicated [webpage](#) with updates and information about the project. Review the ConneXion [overview](#) for updated information regarding the ConneXion project. For questions or concerns related to the project, contact [Toi Wilde, Project Director](#).

The Division is currently in the Planning and Procurement phase of the project and anticipates a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be released for competitive bid in late 2025. The Division has contracted with HealthTech Solutions (HTS) to complete the RFP for a commercial off-the shelf (COTS) Case and Financial Management system. HTS was onboarded to the project in summer of 2024. The Division has conducted a full analysis of requirements, completed vendor and state market research, and is currently working to complete business and technical area requirements sessions to the RFP and advanced planning document.

Please see The Division's Roadmap to ConneXion Planning and Procurement Timeline and Project Projects updates below.





## 2024-2025 Surveys: We Need Your Feedback!

The Division of Developmental Disabilities has begun a new survey cycle. The Division participates in three National Core Indicators (NCI) surveys and the Missouri Quality Outcomes (MOQO) Survey. These surveys ask people with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families about their lives and the services they use or need. All survey responses are anonymous.

People receiving Division services are randomly selected to participate in these surveys. Those who are selected will be contacted either by mail or telephone. Mailed surveys will come from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development (UMKC-IHD) and all telephone contacts will be made by Division Regional Office staff.

Explore additional information about NCI and MOQO surveys on the Division's [NCI webpage](#). Access the Division's [Surveys and You: Your Voice Matters](#) Easy Reader to better understand surveys and

why they are important. Direct any questions to Caitlin Bartley, NCI Project Coordinator at [caitlin.bartley@dmh.mo.gov](mailto:caitlin.bartley@dmh.mo.gov).



November is **National Family Caregivers Awareness Month**.

Follow the Division for notifications and posts during the month of November as we celebrate and recognize family caregivers.

### **Caring for the Caregiver**

Caregiving can be rewarding, but it can also be challenging and stressful for the caregiver at times. It is important that caregivers also take care of themselves and find ways to help lower stress. Small activities such as taking short walks, talking to a friend, or even sitting outside alone can often have big rewards.

Explore more ideas and resources for caregivers using the links below.

- [Take Care of Yourself](#)
- [Tips for Caregivers](#)
- [Family Caregiver Alliance](#)
- [Tips to Prevent and Manage Stress](#)
- [Tips for Family Caregivers](#)
- [Area Agencies on Aging](#)
- [Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services](#)
- [Missouri Family-to-Family](#)





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## Association on Aging with Developmental Disabilities

### Offers New **WE ♥ CARE** Caregiving Curriculum

The Association on Aging with Developmental Disabilities (AADD) in partnership with the University of Missouri-Kansas City's Institute for Human Development (UMKC-IHD), created **WE ♥ CARE** training curriculum.

**WE ♥ CARE** is an eight-week training course designed to empower mutual caregivers with developmental disabilities (DD) nationwide. As caregivers age and their needs change, the family member with DD may take on additional tasks to help support them, often with little or no formal guidance or training. **WE ♥ CARE** helps teach people with DD the skills they need to recognize and respond to their caregiver's basic care and home safety needs. The purpose is to enhance the ability of both mutual caregivers to support each other and increase their abilities to age-in-place together.

The full **WE ♥ CARE** curriculum offers eight modules of content and a complete facilitation guide in both English and Spanish. All materials are available at no cost and can be found on the [WE ♥ CARE curriculum](#) page.



Have some time available? Consider listening to these great podcasts.



### “Supporting the Spectrum”

Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment offers “Supporting the Spectrum” podcasts. Give a listen to [Season 2, Episode 2](#) to hear staff from Thompson Center talk about tips for helping children take part in Halloween activities. This podcast explains why Halloween can be difficult for some children and offers tips to help them adjust.



### “Growing Healthy Communities-Early Childhood Edition”

Missouri Department of Mental Health Children’s Office

Join Melody Boling, Children’s Office, Early Childhood Wellness Coordinator, in [Episode 2](#) as she talks with Nolanda Dodd, Program Manager, ShowMe Healthy Relationships. Listen to Nolanda share her personal experiences with HeadStart services and the lasting positive impact they had on her and her family’s life.



### “Accessible”

University of Missouri-Kansas City – Institute for Human Development (UMKC-IHD)

Listen to the latest [Accessible](#) podcast featuring hosts George Gotto, Director, UMKC-IHD, and Sr. Research Assistant, Amelia Reighard, as they talk with Pam Merkle, Executive Director of the Association of Aging with Developmental Disabilities (AADD). Hear Pam describe the AADD and its focus on positively supporting people to live their best lives. Pam uses her humor to share her knowledge, insights, and logical approach to supporting and providing care to people.



**Important dates:**

**November 3<sup>rd</sup>** is Daylight Saving Time ends. Don't forget to change your clocks!

**November 5<sup>th</sup>** is Election Day. Your vote counts!

**November 11<sup>th</sup>** is Veteran's Day. The Division would like to recognize and honor those who are Veteran's and those who are currently serving our country. Thank you for your service!

**November 28<sup>th</sup>** is Thanksgiving. All state offices will be closed in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.

*Stay Connected*



**FACEBOOK**

Missouri Division of  
Developmental Disabilities  
@MODivisionDD



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Developmental Disabilities  
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**INSTAGRAM**

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**YOUTUBE**

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**LINKEDIN**

Missouri Division of  
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Disabilities



**Contact Us**  
573-751-4054  
800-279-9329  
ddmail@dmh.mo.gov

[Regional Office Contact Information](#)

Missouri Department of Mental Health  
Developmental Disabilities | [dmh.mo.gov](http://dmh.mo.gov)  
573-751-4054

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