

Blueprint for Success:

Employing Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities in Massachusetts

*The Massachusetts Experience
Presented by: Margaret Van Gelder, Department of Developmental Services
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**Employment First:
Vision ~ Opportunity ~ Reality
It is a Journey!**



“Work makes me excited and happy, especially when I do something new, for instance when learning new tasks. Getting a paycheck makes me feel proud that I have done a good job and I earned it myself.” (Adult with ID)

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Building The Foundation How We Started

- ▶ Cross-Stakeholder Planning Team Established: 2006
- ▶ Strategic Plan for Employment Adopted- 2008
- ▶ Procurement Clarified Service Expectations: 2009
- ▶ Employment First Policy: Adopted 8/2010
- ▶ Plans from Providers regarding Transformation of Center-Based Work Programs: 8/1/11
- ▶ Area Office Employment Plans with ID goals: FY’ 12
- ▶ MOA with Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission to cost-share services: Focus on Transition-Age: FY ‘12
- ▶ Standard Rates for Employment & Day Services implemented in FY ‘14

Activities Initiated to Promote Integrated Employment

- ▶ Training:
 - Comprehensive Series for Employment Specialists/Job Developers
 - Conferences
 - Best Practice Forums on selected topics
 - Forums on Conversion of sheltered work to IE
- ▶ Technical Assistance for Providers
- ▶ “School Days to Pay Days” Publication
- ▶ Self-Advocate Peer Employment Training Project: Explore, Prepare, Act



Development of the Blueprint: The DDS Commissioner Asked a Workgroup in 2013 to do the following:

- ▶ Design a phased-in plan
- ▶ Increase inclusive and higher income work opportunities
- ▶ Phase out sheltered workshops
- ▶ Work with stakeholders, such as ADDP and The Arc of Massachusetts
- ▶ Outreach to additional stakeholders



Blueprint Design Features

- ▶ Foundation
 - Value and importance of employment
 - Benefits to individuals, communities, and businesses

“[Having a job is important to me because] I want to be normal, and be respected as an equal. To be paid the same as others doing the same job. I don't want to be treated as less than equal or a poor handicap person. (Adult with ID)

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Blueprint Features Continued

- ▶ Strengths
 - Success of individuals employed in a variety of different businesses
 - Increase in businesses who have partnered & opened their doors
 - Success of large employment provider network
 - Clear voice of self-advocates, families, and allies
 - Service innovation
 - Strong collaboration of DDS, providers, families and consumers.

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Blueprint Features Cont.

- ▶ Challenges
 - Fear of change, loss of stability and the unknown when leaving workshop
 - Will I still see my friends?
 - Availability of jobs from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 - Impact of earnings on Social Security & other benefits
 - Limited transportation options
 - Competitive jobs in current economic climate

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Goals & Schedule for Implementation



Fiscal year 2014:

- ▶ Cease sheltered workshop referrals as of Jan. 1, 2014
- ▶ Begin planning to prepare for phase out of all sheltered workshop services by June, 30, 2015
 - Maintain hours of day service to ensure stability for families and residential providers

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*Plan Schedule Continued**

Fiscal year 2015

- ▶ Transition from sheltered work to individual or group supported employment and/or expanded Community Based Day Support programs
 - Current # of hours of service provided remains the same

Fiscal years 2016 – 2018

- ▶ Increase pace of transition to individual and group supported employment
- ▶ Continue development/expanded scope of CBDS

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*Recommendations:
Need for Financial Investment
Request for \$26.7 million* over 4 years*

**Net cost to state is approximately \$13 M given 50% SGF 50% FFP*

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Steps to Success

- ▶ FY '14: Planning year for assessments and determine best alternative service option
- ▶ FY 15: Investment needed to transition all sheltered workshop participants to individual or group supported employment and/or CBDS
- ▶ FY '16: Funding needed for increased movement from CBDS to individual or group supported employment
- ▶ FY '17 & 18: Investment needed to support continued movement to integrated employment

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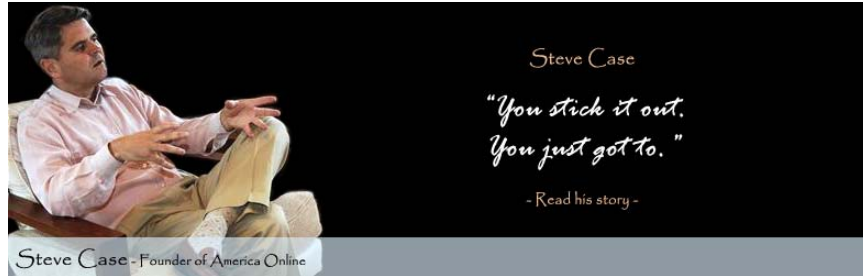
Resources to Build Capacity – Commitment from DDS



- ▶ **Engagement with and support to individuals & families**
 - The Arc of Mass, MASS, and MFOFC
 - Training, informational materials, resources, peer support
- ▶ **Staff development and training**
 - Employment specialists/job developers and DDS staff
 - Benefits training and resources and specialized topics
- ▶ **Technical Assistance & Consultation for Providers**
- ▶ **Expansion of Regional Employment Collaborative Model**

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Maintaining Momentum..



Thank You & Questions

A copy of the *Blueprint* can be obtained at www.addp.org
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