

Fact Sheet

Enhancing community living and participation for people with disabilities

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Building Capacity to Promote Full Community Participation for People with Disabilities

Purpose of the Study

Centers for independent living (CILs) have been at the forefront of creating changes to make community participation more accessible to people with disabilities.

This project is designed to expand the capacity of CILs to help change community conditions so that their consumers can engage more fully in their communities.

CIL staff will receive training and technical assistance that enhances their ability to create conditions that ensure opportunities for community participation. This includes activities such as volunteering, working, taking advantage of educational opportunities, advocating for community change and participating on boards of non-profit organizations.

Training CILs to Use Tools for Change

People with disabilities are the largest and fastest growing minority population in the U.S. Yet despite progress toward deinstitutionalization and the increased availability of support services for independent living, people with disabilities still encounter barriers to participating in their communities.

To make participation easier, changes are needed in systems, programs, policies and practices. In this project, staff members from collaborating CILs will learn ways to strengthen their efforts to bring about changes that support increased community participation.

First, participants will receive training in six “core competency” areas to enhance their ability to

Core Competencies

Staff at centers for independent living (CILs) will enhance their ability to make changes in their communities by learning more about these topics:

- Assessing Community Needs and Resources
- Analyzing Problems and Goals
- Developing Strategic and Action Plans
- Developing an Intervention
- Increasing Participation and Membership
- Advocating for Change

make community changes. (*See box.*) The training curriculum is based on the Community Tool Box (ctb.ku.edu), an internationally known online resource that provides information on essential skills for building healthy communities.

Then they will use a tool that helps community groups document their work and provides them with real-time data to guide their efforts for change.

That tool is the Online Documentation and Support System (ODSS), which was developed by the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas through more than 20 years of participatory research experience.

The ODSS has been used since 1990 to help local, state and national initiatives. This project is the first time the ODSS has been used to help disability organizations improve community conditions for their consumers.

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Project Investigators

At the University of Kansas

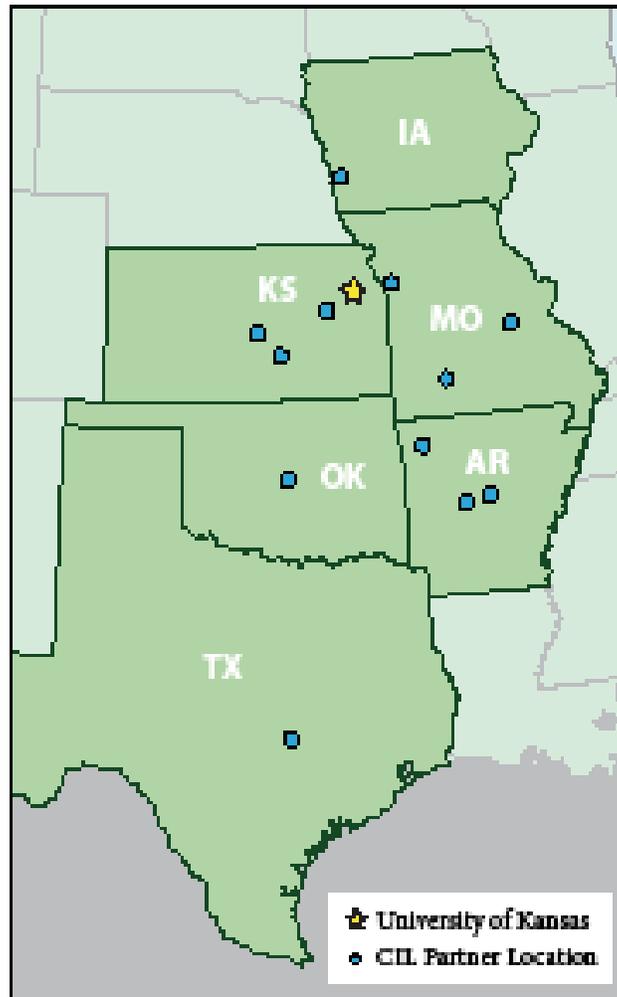
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Our CIL Partners

Staff members at 12 CILs in Federal RSAs 6 and 7 are working with us to test this program.



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- Prairie Independent Living Resource Center, Hutchinson, KS
- Heartland Independent Living Center, Owensville, MO
- Southwest Center for Independent Living, Springfield, MO
- The Whole Person, Kansas City, MO
- League of Human Dignity, Council Bluffs, IA
- Progressive Independence, Norman, OK
- Mainstream Independent Living Center, Little Rock, AR
- Spa Area Independent Living Services, Hot Springs, AR
- SOURCES for Community Independent Living Services, Fayetteville, AR
- A Resource Center for Independent Living, Austin, TX