
BE EXCEPTIONAL

 LEARNING
CORNER


Training Announcements

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), Office of Human Resources and Learning, is offering virtual trainings. Listed below are those currently scheduled. For more information regarding virtual trainings, [click here](#).



- **Facilitating Healing of Family Violence, Anger and Substance Abuse in Treatment**
- **IDD Participant Direction New Enrollment - Webinar**
- **HRST: One Day Training for Clinical Reviewers**
- **HRST: One Day Training for Intensive/Support Coordinators, State Service Coordinators, and Intensive SC Clinical Supervisors**
- **Positive Behavior Supports Curriculum Train the Trainer Series**

If you have any questions, please contact DBHDDLearning@dbhdd.ga.gov.

DD Learning Collaborative Call for Proposals

**Submission Deadline
March 22, 2023**



The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Division of Intellectual Developmental Disabilities, and the Office of Human Resources & Learning are pleased to announce this Call for Proposals for the 2023 DD Learning Collaborative (DDLCC).

The DD Learning Collaborative is scheduled for June 13 - 15, 2023 at the Augusta Marriott at the Convention Center in Augusta, Georgia. The theme this year is Shifting the Landscape: From Being to Belonging!

The DDLCC Call for Proposals website provides details on the DD Learning Collaborative, plenary/workshop requirements, intended audience, topics, and the presentation review and selection process. For more information, click the link below.

[DD Learning
Collaborative](#)

If you have additional questions or need technical assistance submitting your interest, contact DBHDDLearning@dbhdd.ga.gov.

Disaster Mental Health Field Response Training

March 24, 2023, 10:00am

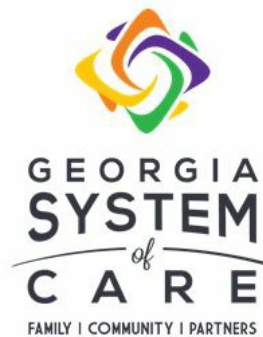
**DON'T
MISS IT!**

The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities is offering this free virtual training which covers the following topics:

- Short segment on the National Incident Management System
- The biology of stress and its impact on behavior
- Initial disaster mental health response
- Needs assessment and the FEMA Crisis Counseling Program
- Information on psychological first aid interventions
- Triage assessment and referral
- Self-care

Please contact Kalie Burke at kalie.burke@dbhdd.ga.gov if you are interested in participating.

This is a required training for DBHDD community providers per policy **Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Disaster Recovery Requirements for Community Providers, 04-102.**



16th Annual System of Care Academy Conference

Ready. Set. Connect!

June 7 - 9, 2023 | Stone Mountain, GA

2023 SOCA Awards

Timeline

March 31st : Submission Deadline

April : Committee Review

June 8th : Awards Presented at 2023 SOCA Awards Luncheon

IMPORTANT: There will NOT be a submission deadline extension.

The 16th Annual Georgia SOCA conference is scheduled for June 7-9, 2023, at the Atlanta Evergreen Lakeside Resort in Stone Mountain, Georgia. The System of Care Academy Awards will be presented on Thursday, June 8, 2023, at the SOCA Awards Luncheon.

View the awards criteria and submit your nominations for the System of Care Academy Awards at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2023SOCA>

The nomination deadline for all awards is Friday, March 31, 2023, at 11:59pm.

I/DD Supported Employment Training Opportunities

The following opportunities have been made available by the DBHDD Division of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) in partnership with Wise to advance Competitive Integrated Employment in Georgia.



Prepare for what's NEXT in Community-Based Employment

For Individuals with I/DD and Caregivers

As Georgia expands competitive integrated employment, families and home supports have many questions and concerns: What does community employment look like? What will they do with the rest of their day? How will they maintain relationships? Who will be here to support them? What skills are needed to be successful?

NEXT is a series of 6 workshops that are designed to help individuals and their families and home supports discover possibilities through facilitated discussion, informational sessions, and person-centered activities. With the goal of leaving with an understanding of what will happen, who can help and a clear vision for what is NEXT.

We are encouraging you to invite families and/or home supports to attend most if not all 6 sessions.

All sessions are from 6:30-8:30pm EST beginning April 1st:

- April 1: Seeing Possibilities
- April 10: Building Community
- April 17: Discovering Abilities
- May 1: Being Professional / What's Needed for Success
- May 8: Using Technology
- May 15: Interviewing Skills / Understanding and Planning for What's Next

All sessions will be virtual with the possibility of an in-person final session. Stay tuned for updates.

[Click here to register](#) and to access more information on the training series.

Recruit, Cultivate and Retain

Training for Supported Employment Managers

Recruit, Cultivate and Retain (RCR) is a new leadership series designed for mid-level I/DD managers working in employment and community inclusion service provider agencies. By joining RCR, you will have the opportunity to work with a range of program managers to re-energize, create solutions to complex problems and share expertise. There are a limited number of spots available.



- March 27, 11:30am-1:30pm PST
- April 17, 11:30am-1:30pm PST
- May 8, 11:30am-1:30pm PST
- May 22, 11:30am-1:30pm PST
- June 5, 11:30am - 1:30pm PST

Important note: *There is no registration fee for I/DD Supported Employment Providers who are active members of and participate in the monthly Supported Employment Gardens meetings. To become a member of the Gardens and obtain a registration code, which allows these providers to attend for free, please contact Beth McKenney at beth@gowise.org.*

[Click here to register](#) and to access more information on the training series.

For assistance or information on either of the above trainings, contact Beth McKenney at beth@gowise.org.

Plan to Placement Cohort

I/DD Supported Employment



Our DBHDD partners at Wise (Washington Initiative for Supported Employment) are offering another round of their highly successful **Plan to Placement Cohort beginning April 11, 2023!** Attendees will take a deep dive into gathering employment information on job seekers and enhance their Person-Centered Employment plan development skills.

Cohort participants are asked to attend all 6 sessions. The dates are as follows:

1. April 11, 3:30-5:00pm EST
2. April 25, 3:30-5:00pm EST
3. May 9, 3:30-5:00pm EST
4. May 23, 3:30-5:00pm EST
5. June 6, 3:30-5:00pm EST
6. June 20, 3:30-5:00pm EST

To register for the event, [click here](#). There are a limited number of spots available.

Important note: *There is no registration fee for I/DD Supported Employment Providers who are active members of and participate in the monthly Supported Employment Gardens meetings. To become a member of the Gardens and obtain the registration code, which allows these providers to attend for free, please contact Jenny Crook at Jenny@gowise.org with any questions.*

Click the link below for more information.

[Plan to Placement Cohort
Flyer](#)

Featured Article

**Attention ProviderConnect
& IDD Connect Users**

The Georgia Collaborative ASO is notifying all users of the ProviderConnect and IDD Connect systems of an upcoming change to the ProviderConnect and IDD Connect portals.

reminder

Beginning March 17, 2023, both platforms will require the use of Multifactor Authentication (MFA).

Multifactor Authentication (MFA) is an authentication method that requires users to provide two or more verification factors to gain access. This new function is important to help increase security since it means if one credential (User ID and Password) is compromised, unauthorized users will be unable to meet the second authentication requirement and will not be able to access the system. Additionally, MFA will reduce the risk of identity compromised by as much as 99.9% over passwords alone.

In an effort to prepare you for this new step, which will be required to access these systems, we will be hosting webinars and publishing reference guides between now and March 17th. Please watch for upcoming email announcements, which will include webinar registration information and training materials.

We appreciate your patience as we work on improving our system.

If you have additional questions, you may contact the Georgia Collaborative Provider Relations team at: GACollaborativePR@beaconhealthoptions.com.

Division of Developmental Disabilities

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

The National Association of Counsels on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) has launched **Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month 2023: Beyond the Conversation** this month.

The Theme for DD Awareness Month 2023 is “Beyond the Conversation.” It is time to ask the question, “Once the conversations have taken place, what comes next?” What comes next is action. What are communities doing to create change? So, simply said, the time for talking is over, now it is time for us to act to create this change. (NACDD)



Please utilize their [reference guide](#) or their [website](#) for more information.

I/DD NOW/COMP Waivers Rate Study

The DBHDD Division of Developmental Disabilities, alongside our vendor Burns and Associates (HMA-Burns), are carefully reviewing approximately 400 unique submissions of public comment from the initial draft rate tables. We are appreciative of all the feedback and will be considering them for the final rate tables.



More information will be provided soon regarding the rate study results. If you have any questions, please reach out to Ashleigh.Caseman@dbhdd.ga.gov.

I/DD Supported Employment Regional Gardens Meeting

The DBHDD Division of Developmental Disabilities, in partnership with WISE (Washington Initiative for Supported Employment), would like to invite you to Georgia's Monthly Supported Employment Gardens Meeting.



All Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Supported Employment providers are welcome to attend. If you are not currently a member of the Regional Gardens, this is a great opportunity to join a growing team of providers, state agencies, advocates, and others working together to increase Competitive Integrated Employment in Georgia.

Click the date below to register for the April Regional Gardens meeting.

April 19, 2023, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Contact support@gowise.com for any questions.

I/DD Supported Employment Georgia Video Storytelling Project

Wise (Washington Initiative for Supported Employment), in collaboration with DBDHDD, is pleased to announce the **Video Storytelling Project starting April 2023**. This project is designed to build the capacity of Georgia provider agencies. Videos created will be available for provider use as well as featured for statewide benefit.



The Video Storytelling Project will provide training and support to walk you through creating brief stories and tips for videos promoting Competitive Integrated Employment statewide. Videos can also be utilized within your own organization. Gain the capacity to create future videos to meet the needs of your organization and jobseekers and supported employees with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

No specialized videography equipment is needed to participate in this project!

Click here for more information and to access the application.

Please note, following registration and approval by DBHDD, organizations will be provided more detailed information outlining project parameters and time commitment for the desired project.

Office of Investigative Services

Tips for Improving Suicide Prevention

Suicide Assessment: It is easy with our busy days and heavy workloads, to get into the habit of merely checking off boxes. Staff should be trained to always keep in mind they are responsible for conducting suicide prevention procedures with an awareness they are protecting the individual by thinking



through each step and personalizing strategies to keep them safe.

The mistake most often made when completing the **C-SSRS** is completing it with exactly what the individual answers. This assessment is for you (staff) to complete, based on the individual's answers among other things.

DBHDD policies **Suicide Prevention, Screening, Brief Intervention and Monitoring, 01-118** and **Suicide Prevention, Screening, Brief Intervention and Monitoring for Tier 2 and Tier 2+ Providers, 01-126** states the C-SSRS is to utilize information from a variety of informants, not only the individual who is being assessed. This involves family members, caregivers, friends, hospital records, and the agency screener. A "yes" response from any informant qualifies for inclusion in the analysis (B.3). The screener is to also gather information about current stressful life events and considers this in the decision pertaining to disposition and triage (B.5).

Take everything into consideration when completing the assessment and don't just rely on what the individual answers in the moment. *Use your clinical skills to determine their risk level and* remember, any "yes" answer on questions 1 and 2, either recent or lifetime, automatically disqualifies the individual from being categorized as "low risk" and means the individual is given the most applicable C-SSRS Full Scale (C.2). Individuals who have ever had suicidal thoughts in their lifetime cannot be considered low risk.

Safety Planning: The safety plan is developed to help the individual in a crisis with tools to minimize their risk to themselves. It could make the difference between life and death. The two parts of the safety plan which are often not completed thoughtfully are the Lethal Means and the Likelihood of Use sections.

Lethal means should be thoroughly discussed with the individual. Do not just ask the question and fill in their answer. For example, "ways to keep myself safe" - answers like "they said things are safe", or "I will work on my moods" are not appropriate. This section should be individualized so you must know what things might put this individual at risk. Have they tried to overdose in the past? Have they mentioned if they decided to die, they would use a gun? Use this information and help the individual come up with ways to keep their environment safe. Will they have a family member keep their gun? Can they have their spouse check to ensure they are not stockpiling their medication? Or have their roommate lock up their own medications, so the individual does not have access to someone else's medications? Think this through and make sure you are developing a useful, personalized plan.

Likelihood of use is not meant to be something like "signing this plan indicates an intention to use the plan". Likelihood of use is intended to get a more detailed idea of how likely they are to use the plan which you have developed with them. The intention is if they say they are not very likely to use it, or are somewhat likely to use it, or would not use it, you go back and make the plan more usable for the individual. Talk to them about why they might not use it and how you can make it more useful. Document this conversation. This is your opportunity to see if this plan is one which can and will be used in a crisis, which is the purpose of the plan.

Office of Disaster Mental Health Services



Weather Preparedness: Increasing Temps

Seventy years from now, most of Georgia is likely to have 45 to 75 days per year with temperatures above 95°F, compared with about 15 to 30 such days today. (EPA, 2016)

Building Resilience

Resilience is a person's ability to adapt to difficult and challenging experiences that are significant sources of stress. People can increase their resilience by:

- Practicing good self-care that includes regular exercise; time set aside for meditation, relaxation, or quiet; healthy eating; and a good sleep routine;
- Participating in religious or spiritual practices and communities;
- Connecting with family, friends, and your community.

You can also increase resilience by creating an Emergency Plan and putting together a Disaster Kit.

Note: People taking certain psychotropic medications may experience more side effects than usual when temperatures increase. Some psychotropic medications can interfere with a person's ability to regulate heat and their awareness that their body temperature is rising, which is associated with injury and death. Types of psychotropic medications include antidepressants, anti-anxiety medications, stimulants, antipsychotics, and mood stabilizers. Contact a mental health provider if you have any concerns regarding your specific medications. (SAMHSA, 2023)

If you have any questions, please contact the DBHDD Office of Disaster Mental Health Services at kalie.burke@dbhdd.ga.gov or 404-416-2829.

Tools & Resources

[EPA: What Climate Change Means for Georgia](#)

[Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Resource Guide 2023](#)

[SAMHSA: Tips for People Who Take Medication](#)

Question for your Provider Relations Team?

The **Provider Issue Management System (PIMS)** is your online source to have your questions answered in a consistent, reliable and timely way! In addition to providing a timely response, the information we gather from PIMS will assist DBHDD in trending common concerns, developing FAQs, and informing policy reviews. You can access the PIMS site directly by using the link below.

Provider Issue Management System

PIMS is also accessible through the **DBHDD website** by hovering over the **"For Provider"** tab located across the top of the page. When the drop-down menu appears, click on **"Submit a question to PIMS"**.

Director

Anna Bourque

Senior Provider Relations Managers

Carole Crowley

Sharon Pyles

For Provider Relations inquiries,
please contact us at
DBHDD.Provider@dbhdd.ga.gov.



BE WELL



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