

Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council  
2026–2031 State Plan  
Compiled Edited Text (January 2026)

## Introduction

This document is the full draft of the 2026–2031 State Plan, including proposed goals, objectives, activities, and performance measures.

**It reflects what the Council has learned from community input, data, and discussion, including feedback from Council member small group discussions, and shows how the Council proposes to organize its work over the next five years to move learning into coordinated action. Across all goals, Council members emphasized the importance of reducing silos, strengthening collaboration across systems, and ensuring that coordination leads to meaningful outcomes for people with developmental disabilities and their families.**

### **Goal 1: Advocacy – Helping People Speak Up and Be Heard**

The Council will help people with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families learn how to speak up for what they need, share their experiences, and work together for change. **Our focus is on strengthening self-advocacy, growing diverse leadership, protecting rights, improving access to information, and coordinating public-policy efforts statewide in ways that lead to clear, decisive action rather than passive coordination alone.**

#### **Objective 1.1 — Strengthen Self-Advocacy and Peer Leadership**

The Council will support self-advocacy activities and organizations across Washington through training, mentorship, and collaboration.

**Programs such as Self-Advocates in Leadership (SAIL) and Allies in Advocacy will continue to develop emerging leaders and connect them to opportunities for civic participation, including intentional outreach to youth and emerging advocates.**

## Activities

Support self-advocacy groups and peer-led initiatives statewide.

Expand training in leadership, policy advocacy, and civic engagement.

Create plain-language self-advocacy and civil-rights resources.

Foster collaboration between self-advocacy, civil-rights, and cross-disability coalitions with an emphasis on reducing silos across systems and advocacy efforts.

Support education and peer discussion on **sexual health, healthy relationships, consent, and bodily autonomy**, helping individuals understand their rights and make informed choices.

Include materials and peer-learning opportunities about supported decision-making and other less-restrictive alternatives to guardianship, helping individuals understand their rights and plan for future decision-making.

Promote awareness and peer training on assistive technology and communication supports that help individuals express choices, advocate for themselves, and participate fully in community life.

**We'll know it's working when more self-advocates report confidence in influencing policy, feel empowered to discuss health, communication, and personal rights including decision-making supports, and when advocacy efforts show stronger coordination that leads to visible outcomes, and more individuals with DD serve in advisory and leadership roles.**

## Performance Measures

### Outputs

Number of self-advocacy trainings, workshops, and peer-led events delivered statewide.

Number of self-advocates participating in trainings, mentorship, and leadership activities.

Number of plain-language resources developed or updated on self-advocacy, civil rights, supported decision-making, and healthy relationships.

Number of self-advocacy groups and peer-led initiatives supported, including SAIL and Allies in Advocacy.

Number of trainings or peer-learning opportunities that include assistive technology and communication supports.

## **Outcomes**

More self-advocates report confidence in influencing policy and speaking up about issues that matter to them.

More individuals with developmental disabilities serve in advisory, leadership, and decision-making roles across systems.

More self-advocates report feeling informed and confident discussing health, communication, relationships, and personal rights, including decision-making supports.

Self-advocacy groups and coalitions report stronger leadership pipelines and more sustained engagement.

## **Sub-Outcomes**

Participants show improved knowledge on post-training surveys about self-advocacy, rights, and decision-making options.

Self-advocates provide more testimony, comments, or feedback in public policy processes.

Increased use of supported decision-making and other less-restrictive alternatives to guardianship is reported by partners and participants.

Partners report increased use of assistive technology and communication supports to help people express preferences and make choices.

**Council Initiatives: SAIL | Allies in Advocacy | Other (TBD)**

### **Objective 1.2 — Develop Leadership Capacity Among Diverse Families and Emerging Leaders with IDD**

**Families, youth and emerging leaders with IDD are powerful advocates for change. The Council will partner with community organizations to provide multilingual, culturally responsive mentoring and leadership training for families and emerging leaders with IDD, prioritizing Tribal, rural, and underrepresented communities and supporting pathways that connect lived experience to broader advocacy and policy efforts.**

#### **Activities**

Partner with community-based organizations to provide culturally relevant leadership and mentoring.

Build a statewide advocacy-leadership program.

Offer small grants and support for local family and IDD-led leadership projects.

Develop outreach that reflects cultural values and community strengths.

*We'll know it's working when more family members, youth and emerging leaders with IDD from diverse backgrounds join statewide networks, lead initiatives, and influence decision-making.*

#### **Performance Measures**

##### **Outputs**

Number of leadership development, mentoring, and family advocacy and self-advocate trainings conducted with community partners.

Number of participants in leadership activities from Tribal, rural, immigrant, and other underrepresented communities.

Number of family and youth led projects or initiatives funded or supported by the Council.

Number of multilingual and culturally responsive outreach materials and tools developed.

## **Outcomes**

More family members and emerging leaders and youth with IDD from diverse communities participate in statewide advocacy networks and advisory bodies.

More participants from underrepresented communities report increased confidence and skills to advocate for services, rights, and systems change.

Partner organizations report stronger leadership and advocacy capacity among the families and community members they serve.

## **Sub-Outcomes**

Participants report specific ways they have used their skills (e.g., testifying, joining boards, organizing local efforts).

Increased representation of diverse family leaders on coalitions, advisory groups, and planning bodies.

Community-based organizations report improved collaboration with the Council and DD Network partners on leadership and advocacy initiatives.

Local, culturally grounded leadership projects show evidence of continued activity after Council support ends.

**Council Initiatives: Open Doors for Multicultural Families | ALDC-type Activity | Tribal Outreach**

## **Objective 1.3 — Reduce Institutionalization and Justice-System Involvement**

**The Council will expand cross-agency advocacy to prevent people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) from entering or remaining in restrictive or carceral settings. This includes strengthening collaboration between justice, crisis-response, and disability-service systems to actively address silos that contribute to harm or unnecessary system involvement.**

### **Activities**

Partner with law enforcement, courts, and community systems to divert individuals from jails and institutions.

Provide training on disability rights, de-escalation, and person-centered supports.

Promote policies that reduce restraint, seclusion, and unnecessary institutionalization.

Support programs that build safe reintegration pathways into community life.

*We'll know it's working when more individuals with DD are supported in their communities, fewer are placed in restrictive environments, and crisis-response systems demonstrate effective diversion practices.*

### **Performance Measures**

#### **Outputs**

Number of trainings and technical-assistance sessions provided to law enforcement, courts, crisis-response teams, and service providers.

Number of cross-system meetings or planning efforts focused on diversion, rights, and community-based supports.

Number of tools and resources developed that support disability-informed crisis response and alternatives to institutionalization.

### **Outcomes**

Fewer individuals with IDD enter or remain in jails, institutions, or other restrictive settings when community-based supports are appropriate.

Justice and crisis-response systems increase the use of diversion practices and community-based responses for people with IDD.

Families and individuals report better experiences navigating crisis systems and accessing timely support.

### **Sub-Outcomes**

Partners report increased knowledge of disability rights, de-escalation, and person-centered practices.

Cross-system agreements, protocols, or policies are developed or strengthened to support diversion and community-based responses.

Documented examples show successful reintegration and stability for individuals transitioning from restrictive or carceral settings.

Data from partners shows reduced use of restraint, seclusion, and unnecessary institutional placements.

## **Council Initiatives: Justice & Crisis Response Collaboration | Contracted Activities | Staff Support**

### **Objective 1.4 — Strengthen Statewide Communication, Resources, Outreach, and Navigation**

**Access to accurate, plain-language information empowers families and individuals with IDD. The Council will expand and modernize the Informing Families project, ensuring materials are accessible, tools that help people understand how systems connect and where gaps between systems exist, including plain-language systems mapping tools that show how services, agencies, and decision points relate to one another across the lifespan that are culturally relevant, and available in multiple languages.**

### **Activities**

Maintain and modernize Informing Families as the state's primary source for disability information.

Collaborate with agencies and advocacy partners for consistent messaging.

Produce multilingual, universally designed materials in digital and print formats.

Conduct targeted outreach with Tribal, rural, and immigrant communities.

Gather user feedback to continuously improve accessibility and relevance.

*We'll know it's working when families, individuals, and professionals report better understanding of services, improved navigation, and greater access to inclusive opportunities.*

### **Performance Measures**

#### **Outputs**

Number of plain-language, universally designed resources created or updated through Informing Families.

Number of resources translated into additional languages and formats.

Website, social media, and digital analytics (page views, downloads, engagement) for Informing Families and related materials.

Number of targeted outreach activities with Tribal, rural, and immigrant communities.

### **Outcomes**

Families, individuals with DD, and professionals report improved understanding of services, supports, and rights.

Families and individuals report that it is easier to find information and navigate systems using Informing Families and related resources.

Agencies and partners increasingly rely on Informing Families as a primary resource for disability information.

### **Sub-Outcomes**

User feedback shows improved accessibility, cultural relevance, and clarity of materials.

Increased referrals to Informing Families from state agencies, providers, and community partners.

Analytics indicate increased use of key navigation tools (e.g., timelines, checklists, decision guides).

Outreach partners report better alignment and consistency in information shared with families.

### **Objective 1.5 — Advance Coordinated Advocacy Through the Community Advocacy Coalition**

**The Council will strengthen collaboration among advocacy groups through the Community Advocacy Coalition (CAC). The CAC will facilitate collaborations and initiatives through its work to align training, outreach, and legislative engagement. The CAC will create statewide alliances that bring together people with developmental disabilities, families, and organizations to**

**identify shared priorities and advance change through coordinated action that is intentional, time-bound, and focused on shared outcomes.**

## **Activities**

Support the work of the Community Advocacy as a unifying statewide voice on disability issues.

Coordinate testimony, legislative visits, and community-education events during the legislative session.

Develop plain-language policy materials and legislative updates for advocates and families.

Provide platforms for cross-organizational learning and communication among advocacy partners.

Promote shared policy priorities that reflect the lived experiences of people with DD and their families.

*We'll know it's working when statewide advocacy organizations collaborate around shared goals, new and diverse voices participate in advocacy, and policy changes reflect priorities identified by people with disabilities and families.*

## **Performance Measures**

### **Outputs**

Number of Community Advocacy Coalition (CAC) meetings, planning sessions, and joint advocacy activities held each year.

Number of organizations and advocates participating in CAC activities, including new and diverse members.

Number of plain-language policy briefs, legislative updates, and advocacy tools produced and distributed.

Number of coordinated legislative visits, testimony events, and community-education activities.

## **Outcomes**

Statewide advocacy organizations, self-advocates, and families increasingly coordinate around shared policy priorities.

New and diverse voices, including people with DD and families from underrepresented communities, participate in advocacy efforts.

Policy changes and legislative outcomes more clearly reflect priorities identified by people with disabilities and families.

## **Sub-Outcomes**

CAC partners report improved communication, alignment, and reduced duplication of advocacy efforts.

Increased number of jointly developed policy priorities, sign-on letters, or shared campaigns.

Participant feedback indicates that CAC activities make it easier to understand and engage in policy processes.

Documented examples show advocacy wins or system improvements linked to CAC coordination.

## **Council Initiatives: Community Advocacy Coalition | Policy & Systems Committee**

### **Goal 2: Systems Change – Making Programs and Services Work Better**

**The Council will work with state and community partners to improve how supports and services function for people with developmental disabilities and their families. It will focus on fairness, accessibility, coordination, and ensuring that programs reach people in every community — especially those who are underserved or underrepresented, including people and families navigating multiple systems at the same time.**

## **Objective 2.1 — Improve Coordination Between Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Systems**

**The Council will bring agencies and partners together to improve integration between behavioral-health and developmental-disability services, ensuring timely, person-centered support and fewer institutional placements. This includes a focus on people with IDD who are aging and the growing number of family caregivers who are themselves aging, as well as families experiencing gaps when individuals move between child, adult, and aging systems.**

### **Activities**

Convene cross-system partners for coordination and planning that includes direct service providers and smaller agencies, not only state-level systems.

Collaborate with crisis-response and justice systems to promote diversion.

Develop tools that improve communication between families and providers and clarify overlapping roles across systems where similar titles or functions create confusion (e.g., care coordinators).

Support policies that advance prevention, early intervention, and equitable access.

Partner with agencies providing supports and services to people who aging and family networks to strengthen coordination between aging and DD systems.

Promote supports that recognize the dual challenges of people with IDD who are aging and family caregivers who are themselves aging.

Identify and share models that help families plan for long-term care transitions, including housing, health, and alternatives to guardianship planning, with attention to kinship caregiving and grandparents serving as primary caregivers.

**We'll know it's working when systems communicate effectively, fewer people are institutionalized, older adults with DD and aging family caregivers have access to coordinated supports and smooth transitions, and families report that services feel less fragmented and easier to understand, and families report easier access to care.**

## **Performance Measures**

### **Outputs**

Number of cross-system meetings, workgroups, or planning sessions held that include DD, behavioral health, aging, crisis-response, and justice partners.

Number of tools, protocols, or communication aids developed to support coordination between families, providers, and agencies.

Number of trainings or learning sessions on integrated support for people with IDD who have behavioral-health needs, including aging-related issues.

### **Outcomes**

Fewer people with IDD experience institutional or crisis placements due to gaps between systems.

Older adults with IDD and aging family caregivers have better access to coordinated supports and smoother transitions across systems.

Families and partners report that services are easier to navigate and more responsive to complex behavioral-health and aging needs.

### **Sub-Outcomes**

Cross-system partners adopt or pilot new coordination tools (e.g., shared care plans, warm-hand-off protocols).

Collaborative initiatives are created that address co-occurring IDD and behavioral-health needs, including crisis diversion.

Documented examples show improved stability and quality of life for people with IDD and their caregivers.

## **Council Initiatives: Behavioral Health Collaboration | Staff Activities**

### **Objective 2.2 — Promote Expansion, Inclusion, and Policy Reform Across Systems**

**The Council will embed expansion principles — equity, access, belonging, and representation — into all Council initiatives and advocacy. We'll review policies for fairness, support inclusive navigation models, and share recommendations that improve access statewide, including across systems that are not traditionally part of the DD service network.**

#### **Activities**

Conduct equity and expansion reviews of DD policies and initiatives.

Collaborate with CAC and advocacy partners to track and influence legislation.

Promote culturally responsive navigation and support models that help people from different cultures understand how systems work and how services connect.

Monitor restraint, isolation, and rights protections across service systems.

#### **Performance Measures**

##### **Outputs**

Number of DD policies, initiatives, or proposals reviewed using equity and expansion principles.

Number of legislative and policy analyses prepared in collaboration with CAC and advocacy partners.

Number of navigation models or projects supported that help people from diverse communities access services.

Number of monitoring or data-gathering activities related to rights protections, restraint, and isolation across systems.

### **Outcomes**

More policies and initiatives across systems reflect equity, access, belonging, and representation.

Navigation supports are more available and effective for underrepresented communities, including Tribal, rural, and immigrant populations.

Advocacy and policy recommendations result in measurable improvements in how systems protect rights and promote inclusion.

### **Sub-Outcomes**

Partners report increased use of equity frameworks and data when designing or revising policies.

Examples emerge of policy or practice changes that reduce disparities and improve access.

Data shows improved attention to rights protections, including reductions in restraint, isolation, and harmful practices.

Community members from underserved groups report feeling more seen, heard, and included in planning and decision-making.

### **Council Initiatives: Community Advocacy Coalition | Policy Analysis | Staff Coordination**

## **Objective 2.3 — Expand Equitable Participation and Collaboration Across Communities and Tribal Nations**

**The Council will work in partnership with Washington’s Tribal governments and rural communities to co-develop culturally grounded supports, host listening sessions, and provide local grants that build lasting change, including partnerships with smaller and community-based organizations that are often excluded from statewide systems work.**

### **Activities**

Partner with Tribal and inter-Tribal organizations to expand culturally grounded services.

Support rural and frontier communities in developing local solutions.

Host community-led listening sessions and fund local initiatives.

Collaborate with DD Network partners (UCEDD, P&A) on Tribal and rural projects.

*We’ll know it’s working when Tribal and rural projects grow, partnerships strengthen, and community solutions become part of statewide policy and planning.*

### **Performance Measures**

#### **Outputs**

Number of formal partnerships and projects with Tribal governments, inter-Tribal organizations, and rural communities.

Number of listening sessions, community forums, or local planning events hosted or supported.

Number of mini-grants or local initiatives funded to address community-identified priorities.

Number of collaborative projects with DD Network partners that focus on Tribal and rural communities.

#### **Outcomes**

Tribal and rural communities report stronger relationships with the Council and DD Network partners.

Locally designed solutions and projects in Tribal and rural communities become more visible and sustainable.

Community-generated priorities increasingly inform statewide policy, planning, and resource allocation.

### **Sub-Outcomes**

Increased participation of Tribal and rural community members in Council activities, committees, and state-level conversations.

Documented examples of local practices or models being shared or replicated in other communities.

Feedback from Tribal and rural partners indicates increased trust, relevance, and cultural responsiveness.

Mini-grant and project reports show concrete changes in access, inclusion, or service quality.\

### **Council Initiatives: Tribal Outreach | Council Collaborations**

#### **Objective 2.4 — Build Evaluation and Data-Driven Learning Across All Council Initiatives**

**The Council will create an evaluation framework to measure the impact of all funded projects and use data to guide future planning and accountability, including expanding the types of data reviewed to better understand gaps between systems and communities currently underrepresented in existing data sources.**

#### **Activities**

Implement a unified evaluation system for all Council projects.

Publish annual summaries of statewide outcomes and trends.

Use results to inform future priorities and funding decisions.

*We'll know it's working when the Council consistently uses data to show impact, improve decision-making, and strengthen public trust.*

## **Performance Measures**

### **Outputs**

A unified evaluation framework and set of tools is developed and implemented for all Council-funded initiatives.

Number of Council projects and contracts that report data using the unified evaluation system.

Number of annual or periodic summaries produced on statewide outcomes and trends.

### **Outcomes**

The Council consistently uses data to show impact, improve decision-making, and adjust priorities over time.

Council members, partners, and community stakeholders have greater access to clear information about what is working.

Evaluation findings inform future funding decisions, strategic planning, and policy recommendations.

### **Sub-Outcomes**

Increased completeness and quality of data submitted by grantees and contractors.

Staff and partners report that evaluation tools are feasible, useful, and reflect community values.

Examples emerge of specific changes (e.g., funding shifts, new activities, policy recommendations) driven by evaluation results.

Public-facing summaries and dashboards show progress in ways that are accessible and understandable to non-technical audiences.

## **Council Initiatives: Evaluation Framework | Data Analysis | Council Reporting**

### **Goal 3: Capacity Building – Strengthening Communities and the Council**

**The Council will support programs and practices that help people with developmental disabilities live full lives in their communities. This includes funding innovation, improving workforce skills, promoting inclusion and health, and ensuring that the Council itself remains strong, transparent, and accountable, with a clearer emphasis on outward-facing impact and long-term community sustainability.**

#### **Objective 3.1 — Respond to Emerging Issues and Test Innovative Approaches**

**The Council will fund flexible, community-driven projects that address emerging issues and promote inclusion, accessibility, and quality of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families, with an emphasis on building lasting community infrastructure rather than short-term solutions.**

#### **Activities**

Provide flexible funding opportunities that help communities respond to new challenges and test creative ideas for inclusion and access.

Fund projects focused on housing, employment, health, and technology or assistive-technology access, including workforce development efforts that strengthen community sustainability.

Encourage partnerships with Tribal and rural communities.

Provide technical assistance and evaluation support to grantees.

Share promising practices and success stories statewide.

**We'll know it's working when new local solutions improve inclusion and access, and successful pilot projects are sustained or expanded across Washington, and communities demonstrate increased long-term capacity beyond the life of individual projects.**

## **Outputs**

Number of grants and flexible funding opportunities awarded to address emerging issues and test new approaches.

Number of projects focused on housing, employment, health, technology, or assistive-technology access.

Number of Tribal and rural communities participating in innovation projects.

Number of technical-assistance and evaluation-support activities provided to grantees.

## **Outcomes**

New local solutions improve inclusion, access, and quality of life for people with IDD and their families.

Successful pilot projects are sustained, expanded, or replicated in other communities or regions.

Community partners report increased capacity to respond to emerging needs and implement innovative practices.

## **Sub-Outcomes**

Projects report specific, measurable changes in areas such as housing stability, employment participation, health access, or technology use.

Stories and case examples highlight how innovations have changed practice or improved lives.

Lessons learned from innovation projects are documented and shared statewide.

Follow-up data shows which models are sustained beyond initial funding.

## **Council Initiatives: Community Innovation Grants | DTMT Partnerships | Council Collaborations**

### **Objective 3.2 — Dan Thompson Memorial Trust (DTMT): Innovation, Review, and Investment**

**The Council will strengthen statewide innovation by supporting the Dan Thompson Memorial Trust (DTMT) process in collaboration with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the Dan Thompson Advisory Committee. Through this role, the Council reviews proposals submitted by individuals and community organizations, recommends projects for funding, and promotes models that improve housing, employment, health, and inclusion for people with developmental disabilities, with attention to how these models contribute to broader community capacity and sustainability.**

#### **Activities**

Review and recommend innovative community and organizational projects that promote inclusion, independence, and access.

Provide technical assistance and outreach to help applicants develop strong, community-based proposals.

Prioritize recommendations that benefit underserved, Tribal, and rural communities.

Host learning exchanges and networking opportunities for DTMT grantees to share outcomes and lessons learned.

Use DTMT results to identify emerging needs and inform statewide policy and systems change.

*We'll know it's working when DTMT-funded projects demonstrate measurable outcomes in inclusion, employment, housing, and health — and successful models are replicated and integrated into Washington's broader system of supports.*

## **Performance Measures**

### **Outputs**

Number of DTMT proposals reviewed and recommended for funding each cycle.

Number and proportion of DTMT-funded projects serving underserved, Tribal, and rural communities.

Number of technical-assistance and outreach activities provided to applicants.

Number of learning exchanges or networking events held for DTMT grantees.

### **Outcomes**

DTMT-funded projects show measurable improvements in inclusion, employment, housing, health, or community participation for people with DD.

Successful DTMT models are replicated or integrated into ongoing services and systems.

DTMT results inform broader statewide policy and systems-change efforts.

### **Sub-Outcomes**

Grantees report increased capacity to design, implement, and evaluate innovative, community-based supports.

Evaluation data and stories from DTMT projects are used in Council and DSHS planning.

Cross-project learning leads to refinements in DTMT priorities and guidance.

Emerging needs identified through DTMT inform future funding rounds and Council advocacy.

### **Council Initiatives: Dan Thompson Memorial Trust Partnership | Innovation Exchange | Technical Assistance and Review**

### **Objective 3.3 — Strengthen Council Leadership, Transparency, and Public Engagement**

**The Council will model inclusion and accountability by ensuring its work is transparent, accessible, and responsive to the communities it serves. By strengthening member leadership and promoting open communication, the Council will build trust, demonstrate best practices in governance, and help other organizations learn from its approach to inclusive decision-making, while maintaining a balance between internal capacity and outward-facing leadership.**

### **Activities**

Provide training, mentorship, and leadership opportunities that strengthen Council members' ability to represent their communities.

Conduct annual reviews of Council operations using diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles and **community and partner** feedback.

Publish public-facing updates, meeting summaries, and data dashboards that show progress and promote accountability.

Share governance tools and practices that other organizations can use to strengthen inclusion and transparency.

Host community briefings and listening sessions to ensure the Council's work remains connected to local and statewide priorities.

*We'll know it's working when the Council is recognized as a model of transparent, inclusive leadership; members feel supported and prepared to lead; and community partners report increased trust and engagement with the Council's work.*

## **Performance Measures**

### **Outputs**

Number of trainings, mentorship opportunities, and leadership-development activities provided for Council members.

Number of annual reviews of Council operations that incorporate DEI principles and stakeholder feedback.

Number of public-facing updates, meeting summaries, or data dashboards produced and shared.

Number of tools or resources on governance and inclusive leadership shared with other organizations.

### **Outcomes**

Council members report feeling more prepared, supported, and confident in their leadership roles.

Community partners and **community members** report increased trust in the Council's transparency and responsiveness.

Other organizations adopt or adapt Council governance tools and practices to strengthen inclusion.

### **Sub-Outcomes**

Increased participation of community members, partners and people with lived experience in Council meetings, listening sessions, and input opportunities.

Feedback from Council members indicates improvements in meeting structure, information flow, and decision-making.

Public-facing materials clearly show progress on goals and how input was used.

DEI reviews lead to concrete changes in Council operations, membership support, or outreach.

### **Council Initiatives: Membership & Governance Committee | Public Engagement | Transparency Tools**

### **Objective 3.4 — Promote Autonomy, Healthy Relationships, and Personal Safety**

The Council will build the capacity of communities and organizations to support personal autonomy, healthy relationships, and safety for people with developmental disabilities across the lifespan.

This objective connects to ongoing self-advocacy and leadership development efforts (see Goal 1.1) and supports education, resources, and community learning that affirm dignity and informed choice.

### **Activities**

Provide grants or partnerships that support personal and bodily autonomy, sexual health, healthy-relationships, consent and personal-safety education within community programs.

Share resources on supported decision-making and communication tools that promote autonomy and reduce unnecessary guardianship.

Collaborate with partners to strengthen local response networks for rights protection and safety.

*We'll know it's working when community organizations demonstrate increased awareness and readiness to support autonomy and safety, and people with DD report greater confidence in making informed personal choices.*

## **Performance Measures**

### **Outputs**

Number of grants, partnerships, or trainings focused on healthy relationships, personal safety, and autonomy.

Number of resources created or shared on supported decision-making and communication tools.

Number of partners engaged in strengthening local response networks for rights protection and safety.

### **Outcomes**

Community organizations and partners demonstrate increased readiness to support autonomy, healthy relationships, and safety for people with DD.

People with DD report greater confidence in making informed personal choices about relationships, health, and daily life.

Families and supporters report better understanding of how to balance safety and autonomy.

### **Sub-Outcomes**

Partners adopt or expand curricula and practices that center consent, safety, and self-determination.

Increased use of supported decision-making tools and reduced reliance on unnecessary guardianship.

Documented examples show improved local responses to abuse, neglect, or rights violations.

Participants report feeling more informed about how to seek help and exercise their rights.

### **Council Initiatives: Allies in Advocacy | Self-Advocacy Leadership | Community Training**

### **Objective 3.5 — Strengthen Supports for Aging Individuals with IDD and Aging Caregivers**

The Council will enhance statewide and local capacity to meet the needs of older adults with developmental disabilities and aging family caregivers, ensuring that planning, housing, and services are sustainable across generations.

This objective complements the system-coordination work in Goal 2.1 by promoting replication, innovation, and capacity building at the community level.

#### **Activities**

Support pilot projects that build sustainable models for aging-in-place, intergenerational housing, and long-term care planning.

Share promising practices and toolkits that help families and caregivers plan for aging transitions.

Facilitate learning partnerships between DD providers, aging networks, and family organizations.

#### **Performance Measures**

#### **Outputs**

Integrate findings from these initiatives into Council recommendations and state policy planning.

*We'll know it's working when families, caregivers, and aging adults with DD report improved access to planning resources and community supports that promote independence and stability throughout the lifespan.*

Number of pilot projects focused on aging-in-place, intergenerational housing, and long-term care planning.

Number of toolkits, guides, or planning resources developed and distributed to families and providers.

Number of learning exchanges or partnership activities between DD providers, aging networks, and family organizations.

## **Outcomes**

Families, caregivers, and aging adults with DD report improved access to information and supports for planning across the lifespan.

More communities pilot or implement sustainable models that help individuals with DD age in place with stability and choice.

Systems and providers show increased collaboration around aging and lifelong supports.

## **Sub-Outcomes**

Pilot projects report measurable improvements in stability, housing, or continuity of supports for aging adults with DD.

Increased uptake and use of planning toolkits by families, case managers, and providers.

Cross-system partners report specific changes in practice or policy related to aging and DD.

Findings from pilots and learning exchanges are incorporated into Council recommendations and state-level planning.

## **Council Initiatives: Family Support Partnerships | Community Mini-Grants | Aging & Lifespan Learning Exchange**

### **Objective 3.6 — Building Skills and Confidence for Civic Engagement**

Through training, mentorship, and partnership, the Council will build confidence, civic knowledge, and the practical skills needed to make change in communities and the Legislature.

#### **Activities**

Provide plain-language, interactive trainings on how government works and how to advocate effectively.

Partner with local and statewide organizations to host workshops, advocacy days, and mentorship opportunities.

Create accessible materials and online resources that explain legislative and policy processes.

Connect participants with policymakers, agencies, and advocacy coalitions to share their experiences and influence change.

Encourage participants to remain active after training through ongoing peer-learning and leadership opportunities.

*We'll know it's working when participants report greater confidence in advocating for themselves and others, community organizations integrate advocacy skill-building into their programs, and local and statewide advocacy networks grow stronger and more connected.*

#### **Outputs**

Workshops, trainings, and mentorship activities provided each year.

Number of participants, including people with DD and family members, who complete activities.

Number of accessible materials and online resources created to explain legislative and policy processes.

Number of partnerships with local and statewide organizations to host advocacy days and community events.

## **Outcomes**

Participants report increased confidence and knowledge in advocating for themselves and their communities.

More community organizations integrate advocacy skill-building into their ongoing programs and supports.

Local and statewide advocacy networks grow stronger and more connected through partnerships.

## **Sub-Outcomes**

Participants engage in specific advocacy actions after participation in related Council activities (e.g., contacting legislators, attending hearings, joining coalitions).

Organizations report that the tools created and implemented and approaches help them support ongoing civic engagement.

Increased diversity of participants across regions, cultures, and disability experiences.

Stories and examples show how participation leads to longer-term leadership and involvement in policy work.

## **Council Initiatives: Leadership Training | Community Outreach**

### **Cross-Cutting Priorities**

**Expansion: Ensuring every person — regardless of background, identity, or location — has a fair chance to be included and can access supports across connected systems, not in isolation.**

**Tribal Partnerships: Working side by side with Washington’s Tribal Nations to share knowledge, resources, and leadership through sustained, government-to-government relationships.**

**Rights and Safety: Promoting human rights and ending restraint and isolation across systems, including justice, crisis-response, health, and long-term care systems.**

**Health and Lifespan Inclusion: Promoting access to sexual-health education, wellness resources, and aging supports that respect dignity, safety, and self-determination across the lifespan, especially during key life transitions.**

**Evaluation: Using data and community feedback to learn, improve, and share lessons across partners and communities about what is working and where gaps remain.**

**Innovation: Supporting new ideas and replicating effective models through the Dan Thompson Memorial Trust and other funding opportunities, with attention to sustainability and broader community impact.**

## **Looking Ahead**

The Council’s 2026–2031 State Plan reflects both a vision and a promise: that people with developmental disabilities and their families will have the power, support, and opportunities to shape their own lives and communities.

**Through advocacy, systems change, and capacity building, the Council will continue to listen first, act collaboratively, and move from coordination to shared action that reduces silos and improves real-world outcomes.**

**As Washington grows and changes, the Council will remain a trusted partner — learning from experience, adapting to new challenges, and advancing inclusion and equity for all people**

**with developmental disabilities in ways that are practical, measurable, and responsive to lived experience.**