

What is Public Policy?

Council Role in Public Policy and Systems Change



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Public policy is an attempt by the government to address a public issue through laws, regulations and programs developed by governments to solve problems.

Policy analysis is the process of finding possible solutions to public problems. This involves using research and statistics to evaluate programs, analyze budgets, look for best practices and review the rules of the law.

Being involved in public policy means informing, educating, and advising the general public and policy makers about the nature of problems, what changes are needed to address problems, and the funding required to provide services or conduct research.

1. **What is the Problem?** It is important for the real issues to come to the attention of our decision makers so they can discuss the problems and needs for improvement in the system.
2. **What Can We Do About It?** Public policy is not just raising awareness of issues, but is using expertise from research and best practice to tell decision makers what changes need to be made.
3. **How Can We Do It Better?** Once the problems and possible solutions have been identified, it is up to our leaders to make the changes a reality in the daily lives of individuals with disabilities.

What Do Councils Do?

North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD) has a responsibility to “inform, educate and advise policymakers” to improve the services and opportunities available to individuals with I/DD and their families.

NCCDD works on behalf of over 177,000 North Carolinians with I/DD and their families to “assure that people with I/DD and their families participate in the design of, and have access to, needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all areas of community life, through culturally competent programs.”

NCCDD is guided by the federal Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act) which directs us to “engage in advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities” that “contribute to a coordinated, consumer and family-centered, comprehensive system of community services, individualized supports.” These activities enable people with I/DD to “exercise self-determination, be independent, be productive and be integrated and included in all areas of community life.”

For more information on Public Policy, visit the Policy Analysis Page at www.nccdd.org