



# DIRECT CONNECTION

*Current news from the Missouri Division of  
Developmental Disabilities to keep you informed*

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## ***MISSION ACCOMPLISHED***



Bernie Simons, Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities, visited the Joplin Regional Office on August 11, 2011 and gave a plaque to the employees of the regional office to thank them for going above and beyond the call of duty during the tornado of May 22, 2011.



At the Mental Health Commission meeting in Joplin on August 11, 2011, Bernie Simons, Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities, presented plaques to Alternative Opportunities, ARC of the Ozarks, Community Support Services, Connections Case Management, Easy Living, Jasper Co. SB 40 Board, Joplin Regional Office, Ozark Center TCM, and Skills Unlimited to show the Division's appreciation for their heroic actions on behalf of people with developmental disabilities during the tornado on May 22, 2011.

## ***IN FULL SWING***

### **Self-advocacy and Leadership: Project STIR**

Project STIR (Steps Toward Independence and Responsibility), is a training project to empower people with developmental disabilities, their families, friends, and other supporters, by providing the practical, "how to" tools necessary for anyone who is interested in being a self-advocate and leader in making choices and decisions about how they live their lives. The model supports the development and strengthening of local self-advocacy groups through leadership training. A coalition of university and grassroots self-advocacy organizations has developed this model and accompanying instructional activities and materials and has field-tested them in North Carolina and other states.

Representatives from STIR (Steps Toward Independence and Responsibility), a project team run for and by people with developmental and other disabilities at the Clinical Center for the Study of Development and Learning: A University Affiliated Program, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, provide a 3 day workshop model using the Project STIR curriculum and resource guide, cue cards (which provide trainer scripts), and PowerPoint slides with key points to empower all trainers to share an equal role in planning and presenting training.

After completing the 3 day "train the trainer" self-advocate leaders and their supporters will be able to lead the seven week training course which includes the topics:

- Knowing Yourself
- Communication/Assertiveness

- Problem Solving
- Rules, Rights and Responsibilities
- Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination
- Starting a Self-Advocacy Group
- Being a Part of the Community

You will soon be able to see the training at the Missouri Self-Determination Website [www.mo-sda.org](http://www.mo-sda.org) you currently can see transition youth at <http://www.self-advocate.org/speakUpMaterials/>

**Project STIR Information Webinar - Thursday Oct 27 at 1:30-2:30**

We will have 25 host sites to learn more about Project STIR, the webinar will be directed towards advocates, demonstrate the inter activeness of the training, talk about the need to build upon skills, and end with talking about the 4 day train the trainer.

If you are interested in locations of the local webinars please contact your local Regional Office Advocacy Specialist <http://dmh.mo.gov/docs/dd/advocates.doc> or Kyla Eversman [kyla.eversman@dmh.mo.gov](mailto:kyla.eversman@dmh.mo.gov)

## ***IN DEVELOPMENT***

**Employment Initiatives**

The Division is continuing to work with employment providers and meet with SB40 boards to encourage greater use of the employment “toolkit” available through DD waivers. Concepts such as becoming a Full Service Employment Provider are beginning to create interest across the state. Many facility-based employment agencies are looking at ways to expand their services and to utilize new funding opportunities to find jobs for individuals who want to work in the community.

Look for more information on employment initiatives in the next edition of the Direct Connection.

## ***BRIGHT IDEAS***

**MACDDS Fall Conference**

Once again, the conference planners for MACDDS have an exciting conference planned for October 13-14, 2011 at the Lodge of the Four Seasons at the Lake of the Ozarks. Click on the link below for conference details.



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