

X. Community Education

Community education is a program designed to provide communication between Family Outreach, Inc. and communities in Region IV in order to expand the communities awareness of the needs of developmentally disabled, to encourage community action to meet those needs, to convey the philosophy and goals of Family Outreach, Inc. programs and to encourage the acceptance of individuals with developmental disabilities in the mainstream of society.

A. Community Education Content

1. Policy

The content of community education program will be individually developed to best suit the audience.

The content of community education program may include; 1) causes of developmental disabilities, methods of prevention, and intervention strategies, 2) services available to individuals with developmental disabilities such as Montana's Early Intervention Program, as well as needed services, 3) encouragement of community understanding and acceptance of individuals with developmental disabilities 4) rights of individuals with developmental disabilities, including participation in the mainstream of society, and 5) the goals and philosophy of Family Outreach, Inc.

2. Procedure

a. The Director and Program Managers are responsible for developing the content for community education programs. Another staff member may be appointed and/or a Board member recruited to assist in the task.

b. The content of a presentation will be developed according to the audience receiving the information, the method of dissemination, the amount of time or written space available and the information specifically requested.

c. The content of a prepackaged presentation will be reviewed to ensure appropriateness.

B. Methods of Dissemination

1. Policy

Family Outreach, Inc. will utilize a variety of means to disseminate community education information which may include: 1) slide/tape presentations, 2) speakers, 3) media publicity, 4) brochures on Family Outreach, Inc. services, and 5) fact sheets/newsletters.

2. Procedure

- a. The Director and/or Program Manager will utilize the appropriate method of dissemination according to the audience and the information requested.
- b. Separate brochures will be available for all Family Outreach programs of service. The brochures include information on an overview of Family Outreach, Inc., the services provided, eligibility criteria, area served and referral procedures. The brochures will be updated as needed.
- c. Media publicity through newspapers, radio stations, and T.V. stations will be sought out (if not initiated by the media). Favorable publicity will be sought out when special occurrences need publicized, or at least annually to maintain community awareness of Family Outreach, Inc. and its programs.
- d. If Family Outreach, Inc. receives a request to make a presentation or if a certain population is sought for a presentation, the Director or individual recruited/appointed by the Director will develop an appropriate presentation, and provide the presentation.

C. Interagency Cooperation

1. Policy

Family Outreach, Inc. will encourage interagency cooperation in community education.

Family Outreach, Inc. will participate in planning, developing, and presenting community education relevant to the needs of clients and Family Outreach, Inc.

Family Outreach will participate in Montana's Early Intervention Public Awareness Program.

2. Procedure

a. The Director, Program Manager, or his/her designee will work with other agencies in planning, developing, and presenting community education.

b. Working with community agencies is especially crucial immediately before and during state legislative sessions.

c. Working with community agencies is an efficient means of jointly providing information regarding content areas outlined in A. Community Education Content.