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How CILs Can Support Youth Leadership Development

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>> JUDITH: We have a fun morning and we're starting with the reason we're here and that is the whole idea of how CILs can support youth leadership. And yesterday we talked about a lot of different types of programs, post-secondary and community living and employment. Today we're talking more specifically about supporting youth leadership. So to do that we have the experts with us, Stacey Milbern and Cindy that you heard from yesterday and we have a new expert who is pretending to be young, but he's not as young as he looks. This is Jeff Sheen. He's a colleague of mine at Utah State University. He's been very involved at the state level with youth activities in our state. So I'll turn it over to y'all and have a great presentation. I just asked them to kind of stay in the light so we can keep them on the video.

>> JEFF: My mom has been trying on get me to stay in the light as well. Thank you for that. I'm happy to be here. I have been participating in the back and following what has been happening while you all have been here. A shout out to the Utah folks. I haven't got to meet you yet. We'll be doing some work when we get back:

So I'm on the Utah State Independent Living Council. I'm actually the -- and I am the chair of the youth committee we have in our state plan a lot of things around youth transition and things like that. So we've got plans for the folks from Utah that came out here. We have expectations and all that. I hope you've been told that. If not, fair warning when we get back. So I'm glad to be here.

Really the purpose of this session, you have been given a tremendous amount of information over the last two days. And I'm kind of patterned to speaking slow enough that I don't get myself in trouble. I've seen that happen. You have been given a tremendous amount of information. Everything from supporting youth, independent living transition. Housing. We've talked about employment, postsecondary education, medical transition, all of the things that are part of the comprehensive initiative around youth. And that's a lot to absorb. There are some of you that are really, really actively doing this already and there are those of you such as myself like how am I going to get this started when I get back home? What's the first thing I'm going to do? But the purpose of this session is to really talk about how your center can support youth leadership development. Because you can have a fantastic program, but if you're not nurturing the youth of today, into the leadership roles so that they are going to be the center directors and they are going to be the center staff and the IL specialists and all of those things, then your youth program doesn't have the sustainability that we're really, really looking for as a system of centers, as a movement in the IL field.

So we want to focus this session on how you specifically as individuals and centers can support youth development. And we're going to have some fun with that. But we do want to keep our discussions and all of our activities for this first hour and a half in that ballpark of youth leadership development. Okay, sometimes somebody has a home run question and that ball goes over the field and then we're outside of the ballpark we're intended to be in. If we can keep our discussions -- that's the framing we want to have for this morning.

With that being said, we kind of want to jump in and model some activities that you can do with youth and some of the spontaneity and we'll see how this goes. I'm excited to work on these activities we have planned for you today. So the first activity, you're wondering what it's going to be. Has anybody done a visioning exercise with themselves? Can I get a show of hands? We have some folks around here -- a few of you have.

I am not a trained hypnotist, so nobody is going to be dancing up here like a chicken, so if you're concerned about that, you can relax. What we're going to do is a little visioning exercise about what it would look like if you had the ideal youth leadership development program in place on your arrival home.

Now, to do this, you need to get comfortable, whatever that means for you, kind of get into a comfortable space. You can close your eyes if you'd like to -- you don't have to. You can participate in this activity to the extent that you're comfortable. So none of this is a forced choice. You have the opportunity to either keep your eyes open or closed.

We'd like you to kind of get into a quiet space and a comfortable space, and I'm going to walk you through a little bit of this vision. I want you to really pay attention to your thoughts and your feelings, how it feels as we go through this, kind of the sensations, the smells, the sounds, the sights of this experience. So get comfortable. And there is going to be some quiet moments and sometimes that can be a little disconcerting for folks, but there is going to be a time when I'll stop talking for several seconds. I call that therapeutic silence in my social work field and I can be quiet longer than most people, and it can get uncomfortable, but stay with your thoughts and stay focused.

Okay, so let's begin. As you check out of the hotel today, you walk outside and it's the most fantastic temperature. Just feels right. There is a light breeze. You can smell flowers and trees in bloom. You have the absolute most polite cab driver you've ever met. Very pleasant conversation. Air conditioning is set just right. You enjoy the sights as you wind your way back to the airport.

As you get to the airport, it's the most relaxing experience you've ever had flying. You walk in. They are waiting for you. They have everything that you need to get on to your flight immediately. There is no hour and a half listening to CNN in the terminal. You simply get right on the plane. The most comfortable seat they have available.

They take off immediately. You taxi right out. You're only 100 yards from the taxiway. You are first in line for takeoff. And as you rise in the air, you're invigorated by all of the things you've learned at this session here. You settle in for the best free peanuts you have ever had in your life. The beverage of your choice is there waiting for you. And as you drift off to sleep, you're thinking with excitement how cool it's going to be when you get back to start working with these youth. You've already got some of them in mind. You've been thing about them at the session. And you're excited to get with them and get this thing going.

You arrive home just in time for a wonderful meal with family or friends. You're tired from a day of travel, so you retire in the softest, most comfortable bed you've ever owned. And as you go to sleep, the magic pixie dust from the sky begins to fall. So when you wake in the morning, the ideal youth development leadership program is already in place waiting for your arrival at the center.

Now, think about your morning routine. Everything goes smoother than it ever has. It's the best tasting cup of coffee or juice or whatever you prefer that you've ever had. You know exactly what you're going to wear. You don't have to fret about it. It matches. It's stylish. You're excited to go.

As you arrive at the center, well fed, well rested and excited, you're greeted by a group of 8 to 10 young adults. They are well fed and well rested, which is even better. And they are excited to be there. Now, as you start your discussion in the room, pay attention to the faces of who those youth are. Pay attention to the excitement and enthusiasm that they bring. Get a sense of the energy in the room. You've got a group of youth that have their whole lives ahead of them. They are just coming to a period when they are finding out who they are and what they want to do. And they are ready and willing to learn from you how to navigate some of the difficulties of life and how to enjoy some of the wonderful things in life. And they are there to work with you.

Pay attention to how you feel. What's the first thing you're going to say to them? What are you going to discuss at that very first meeting? Take some time to reflect on things you've learned here and think in your mind how would I start off this discussion, this new experience for these youth, to help them become leaders of the future movement. As you start to speak with them and interact with them, what kind of questions are they asking you? What answers do you have to give? You've got all the support from your center that you need to make this a success. What are some of those supports? Remember the magic pixie dust fell from the sky. You can ask for the supports you need, and they are there. We can only get you into the space to start to envision that, but you've been given some tools from this conference and from the speakers and from the experience of others to help you start to fill out that vision.

Before we start to lose people and we start hearing the snoring, I'm going to slowly kind of ask you to come back into this room and into this space. Open your eyes if they've been closed. Start to move your fingers and toes a little bit. But hold on to the thoughts and the feelings you had, particularly in that room with young adults who bring a tremendous amount of energy and excitement for life. What are you going to do when you get back that's going to help these young adults go from participants in your program to IL specialists, to some day the director of the center?

I'll have everybody come back to the room now, but we wanted to set the stage for the amazing things you can do when you go back. Now, we know that the magic pixie dust isn't going to make this all happen overnight, but as you think about where you want to go from this point forward, dream big. Because I can guarantee you that the young adults you work with dream big. And if you take their energy and their natural tendency to think big and to dream big, your program is going to be led by them from the getgo.

Sometimes our biggest challenge as experienced allies is knowing when to get out of the way and knowing when to kind of let go of the reins a little bit. And that can be a challenge for those of you used to having our vision be everything. The trick for you will be for you to have the youth vision guide what you do. So we kind of have everybody back in the room now. I'm going to turn the time over to Stacey and we're going to -- right -- and we're going to move into some additional exercises, but try to keep with you as we go through this, those thoughts and feelings about how exciting it is to work with young adults and the opportunity you have to impact not only individual lives, but the whole future of your center, the whole future of your community and the whole future of the world of independent living.

>> STACEY: Good morning, everyone. Can everyone hear me? Great. Thank you for being with us today. So just to audio describe what's happening, they rigged up this really cool microphone that is attached to my chair. So you want to do the youth programming, you want to be engaged with your group so there is not like this hierarchy or this odor separation between you and young people. That's one reason why three of us are up here today.

So today the three of us wanted to offer up a prompt to everyone and we'd like you to keep it at the front of your mind for the next hour as we talk about youth leadership development.

So the prompt we want to encourage people to think about is what would it take to turn that youth participant, that camp participant into a CIL director. What would it take for that young person in your project to be able to run the CIL in 10, 15, 20 years?

So we're going to start off with an activity that is about role playing. This activity we're going to ask everyone to think about what is authentic support. And what we're going to do is we're going to break up into pairs. So the person sitting next to you will be your partner. And we're going to act out what authentic support means.

So authentic means real, genuine, true, good authentic support. You

So the way we're going to do it is rather than create something kind of skit, we're going to use our bodies to become one statue. So Jeff is going to be my partner and we're going to show one example of what authentic support looks like.

Cindy, can you audio describe for us what we're doing? Or I can do it. So Jeff just stood up and I'm sitting in my wheelchair. And he's reaching his hand out to me. And we kind of have our hands in a big grasp. And his fingers are red and tight and mine are cold and white and little.

and since he's standing, his arm is raised higher than mine and it's almost as if he's pulling me up.

So this is our statue. And we're just going to stand here for a moment.

Okay, if everybody can break up with a partner, you can just grab someone at your table. I see some puzzled looks. Do people understand what's happening?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: It is like hugging for too long.

>> STACEY: Well, you don't have to be in a statue pose that long I guess. But that's how you make the money when you're statue on The Street.

So if everyone can find a partner, and we're just going to spend five to ten minutes thinking and talking about what is authentic support. So what does it take for a young person to become the CIL executive director, what is your role in that? And of course if you're two young people partnered together, that might be really different from an adult ally and a young person.

and then you're going to create a statue to symbolize what authentic support looks like. So everybody find pairs. We'll come back.

>> CINDY: All right, everybody. Okay, so we have some great, great statues. I want y'all to share them with the other pairs at your tables right now. But wait, don't do it yet. I also want you to talk to your partner -- so do that real quick and we'll have some popcorn.

>> STACEY: So you guys, there is a rule called one diva, one mic, where when one person is talking, everybody is listening. Cindy, can you repeat it.

>> CINDY: Okay, we did some great pairs. What I want you to do is have another pair at your table. I want you to share at your table or the table next to you, I also want you to talk to your partner and decide if you want to share with us. Don't make us point at y'all.

>> CINDY: Hello. We need to wrap it up. So who do we get to see a statue?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: We're ready.

>> CINDY: Fabulous. Wait. We want y'all to come up so that everybody has the best option of seeing it. If y'all could come up in front of here.

>> STACEY: the world is your stage.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: We're not ready for it.

>> STACEY: You are.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Wait a minute. We have to get in position, first.

>> CINDY: We're going to try to audio describe y'all. Hey, everybody! Can we try to be a little respectful of what we're doing. There is a lot of talking. I have the mic and I am that diva.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Do you know what we are?

>> CINDY: I didn't know y'all were something.

Oooohhh,

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Do you like it?

>> CINDY: I like it. Okay, so there are three people standing. So they did not do a pair. They did three. But they were very creative. And all their hands are interlocked amongst each other. And what I have just been told is they represent the IL center, the youth and the parent.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh, cool. [APPLAUSE]

>> CINDY: Thank y'all so much. Do we have another volunteer? Stephen. Stephen is coming but you're next.

>> STACEY: Can we have interested people go ahead and line up so we can go one after the other. So if you're interested sharing, come up.

>> STACEY: and if you can all gather to the right of where I'm sitting past Cindy so we can keep our stage open. Is there anyone else interested in sharing?

>> CINDY: Okay.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: We're doing a leaning on each other shoulder for support.

>> CINDY: We have two people using wheelchairs and they are leaning on each other.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's kind of like the youth can lean on us as mentors and we can kind of give them direction on how they can (inaudible).

>> CINDY: You are best to describe yourselves.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: and then -- we actually --

>> CINDY: Wait.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: and then we actually.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: We know we haven't been using it very much.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Am I on? And then this one, we were doing also in the same respect that working together as partners with the youth and with I guess the adult allies is what we're calling them. That we could provide them with strength and support as they -- if their goal is to be the director one day, just give them the support as they advanced and move on.

>> CINDY: So your arms are sort of interlocked.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: in a link to provide strength. We're linking up together.

>> CINDY: Awesome.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: and the two chairs are sitting next to each other side by side facing the opposite direction. So they were leaning on each other, each other was on the other's shoulder.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good statue.

[APPLAUSE]

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: and we just want to make an announcement. It's Charlotte's birthday today.

[APPLAUSE]

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: You're going to go back on the airplane all by yourself.

>> CINDY: Great. Thank y'all so much.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: You're going to have to audio describe.

>> CINDY: Okay, so we have two ladies facing each other and they are sitting on the floor with their nears up and they have interlocking hands. And they are just holding hands facing each other. And the feet are against each other R and everything is equal.

Great, thank y'all.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: the reason that we decided to do that was because a lot of times I learn the most from my youth, so I've always taken it back to my director and I think when you're starting a young program, that the director -- they have excitement. They have the passion, the staff and the youth, but it's kind of growing together and figuring out where to go and you have to build together. We're on the same playing field trying to get up together.

[APPLAUSE]

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I think I'll audio describe it first before we show it. Judy will be the experienced ally, I'm the youth and we're talking more about emotional support, maybe not so much physical, but our think is she's going to be inspiring me, fostering passion in me to want to achieve more and want to reach higher for goals eventually becoming IL director.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good job.

>> CINDY: One more time.

>> STACEY: So we have one person with his arms in the air reaching forward and then another person is using a scooter and her arms are in the air and she's clapping for him.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I didn't have pompoms.

>> CINDY: All right, awesome. So there is no other volunteers?

>> JEFF: We've got some back here.

>> CINDY: Yeah, come up, please.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: We don't want to come up.

>> STACEY: Well, you don't come up, we can't get you on video.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: We did a table activity. We want to be altogether. And it's kind of hard for you to see it, so that's why we're not going to come up. What we did was we made a circle and from the oldest person, which is (throat clearing) myself, to the youngest person which is Melissa to my left, we put our hands on top of each other, symbolizing that each generation and each age learns from the next and then we kept moving up and moving like you used to do when you were kids and played the hand game. Because just as youth learn from us, we learn from them and it's an ongoing support system that's intergenerational.

[APPLAUSE]

>> CINDY: Awesome. Great. Well, we really appreciate y'all doing that. And we think that visual is always a good way of kind of seeing it, thinking, maybe looking outside the box a little bit. And of course we're youth so we like to be outside the box.

Now we'll have a little bit of discussion, Q&A, things of that nature. And so we're going to k of course, for everybody to use the mic. But do y'all have questions about how y'all can maybe -- as Stacey said -- help your youth leaders one day become CIL directors and sponsor youth leadership and things like that. Questions?

>> JEFF: So for this last little bit, you've got an opportunity before you leave this room to really leave without any unanswered questions. We've got Stacey and Cindy up here that have a tremendous amount of experience in engaging with youth. We've got a lot of allies in the room. So we really want those of that you are just getting ready to start something, a chance to really ask those concrete, nitty gritty questions about, okay, this all sounds good, but... how do I -- you guys fill in the blank. And we really want this to be interactive. We want the questions to come from you. And we would like the answers largely to come from you, facilitated by us, for the next little while.

for about the next 45 minutes. With this prompt that Stacey mentioned about what does it really take? I was really intrigued by the summer camp, by camp cricket, how cool that is. How you have amazing contact and these kids are having amazing experiences. How do you turn that into them being 19-year-old like Christy, working at a center for their summer job and then how do you turn that in to an option to go on to post-secondary ed or some other things so they at some point are the chief operating officer for you or they are the director or they are a very integral part of your center? Because none of us are going to live forever and none of us are going to work forever and as that intergenerational table, how do we do it now let's talk nitty gritty stuff.

>> STACEY: and this conversation is specifically focused on youth leadership development. So if we can kind of direct our questions into that.

So June, I see your hand up over there.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I think that one of the things that has to happen is I've been director of two programs for youth for 13 years. The youth -- the Monday tan a youth leadership program. We need to take conferences like this and everybody commit to having youth from attendance with them.

I don't travel anymore unless I have youth with me. I think that they -- what they have to contribute, the last exercise, it was a table exercise where the youth at the table, the teenagers told us -- gave us some information in regard to how do we get them involved in independent living. So I think that it would be a good commitment of us seasoned individuals to make sure that we never travel without youth.

>> STACEY: Thank you. So right now on the flip chart, we have a little person with funny hair and a big nose. And we're going to put down basically all the things that it would take for this person to become a CIL executive director. So Jeff if you can write down June's idea of youth participation and also equal access to training or a commitment to training.

>> JEFF: Just to follow up on a really concrete question. Some of you may have the same question, maybe I'm the only one. As I think about what we're trying to do in Utah and I've heard about the Youth Leadership Forums and I was looking on line, we don't have a Youth Leadership Forum right now in Utah.

What do I do when I go back home and I want to do it? That's my question. So please, June.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: There is a national organization called the association of Youth Leadership Forums. And one of the things that we've done since its inception was to do state to state mentoring of states that want to beginning a YLF and want to learn about the curriculum. It's been in existence -- the curriculum has been in existence since 1992 and was developed by California. So if a state is interested in learning how to do a forum, get a hold of the association of Youth Leadership Forums. We extended a hand here if somebody wants to learn, come to Montana. We'll house us and feed you and give you the occur I am luck. It's a state to state mentoring program and we'll be glad to help in any way and I know the association would also.

>> JEFF: Thank you. That brings up another question. There has been many attempts in my state to do something that have lost momentum. So as we start these things, you need to be thinking about not just a big bright shooting star that's really bright at the beginning and then kinds of fades out. How do -- once you've made contact with June, how do you really keep things going? Who do you need at the table? Just some thoughts that I've been having. I'm not just up here presenting, I'm having to go back to my state and come up with a very, very specific plan of action. So that's kind of the second hat that I'm wearing while I'm here.

Yes, please.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: with youth transition, just like any kind of federal or state funding, you need to be able to measure it. So my question for the group show do you measure such skills? It's not like get someone a job, it's self-determination, it's self-esteem, all that. So how do you measure that?

>> STACEY: Any people have solutions or ideas, best practices?

>> JEFF: How do you know if a youth is becoming a leader?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello.

>> JEFF: We have e got someone working on the mic over here. That's why we're ignoring you.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: One of the things we do, our people hire someone younger in a job like an IL specialist and our CIL has through the years have taken chances on people who a lot of times, that's the first job they ever had because as a person with disability growing up, you sometimes don't get that kind of experience.

So sometimes they work out, and sometimes they don't, but a lot of our young people start working at our CIL and are now supervise ores, program directors and stuff like that. So give youth a shot at working.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Am I live? Okay, one of the things that we've been doing at our center for independent living that I think I mentioned in one of my presentations yesterday, that the peer mentor coordinator in our office made it very clear during her interview that she wants my job some day. So one of the things that I've been doing is actually assigning her specific tasks and giving over certain responsibilities to her to begin to build some of her competencies. Because she has such a strong interest to moving into that leadership role. Next year for your program, for the peer mentor program, it's your responsibility to draft the budget for that program.

Prepare the budget, the rationale for it, et cetera, and then we'll fold that into a larger organizational budget. So to begin -- just activities and tasks like that to begin to build some of those elements of leadership that are required when you move into an E. D. position. So that might be a strategy that some of us current E. D.'s can do to pass along some of those responsibilities.

>> STACEY: and I would also suggest having young people either create or collaborate in the creation of the metrics. And so like what is important to them, how they think it can be measured.

It's like self-assessments, whether that's like a form of what are two areas you feel you've really improved on in the last year kind of thing can be really helpful. Sierra has her hand up.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I had a question about the bringing in the young people to work. We've done that quite a bit now and it's been hard because a lot of times it's their first job. And we are an office setting. And if they are part of my youth program, my youth program is not an office setting kind of thing. We're doing games. We're having discussions. We're eating junk food. We're doing all that kind of stuff, but how do you bring a youth -- this is so much fun. This is exciting. Oh, I want to come in and do this and they have the passion and then they realize, oh, you have to do a lot of paperwork and have to do that training background. Whereas then they have the passion to do it, but the follow through from the experience that I've had with some of the people that I have e worked with isn't there. Because they just don't have the skills yet.

and it would take such a long time to build those skills. That's a problem

>> CINDY: Also maybe not put them in such a high position yet. Have job shadowing. Have something -- give them -- let them learn their skills without it costing the CIL. You know, hurting the CIL's work.

Because it is a lot more than what the people on the outside realize. So that's what I would say is let them job shadow. Let them maybe start out as an assistant first. So then they can move up.

I mean, that's the way we all started, on the bottom. So that will be possible. Also for your question about measuring, what we do usually is we just kind of -- okay, this is the goal. Let's break it down to some tangible things, some measurable things. And then -- so they have met a lot of mini goals which ultimately gets to that long term goal.

So also that helps with the frustration side. You're like, hey, we've got this goal. We've got that goal. And you're not having one goal that's just eight years long. And it's still not completed yet.

Also you're going to want to -- like what I do a lot is we have our youth advisory council. That teaches a lot. We have different activities, different things that you know is going to help teach them. So if they participate in those, you can put that on the measure. Well, they did this and they were successful. They weren't shy the whole time.

They weren't -- you know, not popular there. So just things like that. Just kind of think tangibleness, like how can I see that this youth is growing?

>> JEFF: Can I jump in. Just think of some of the things we did in our becoming leaders for tomorrow project and I think it was Sierra, what you were saying, it's a real challenge when you go from our activities we start out by having pizza and play the wii and you have this special experience, but what we tried to integrate into that was a topic of discussion. And sometimes we would spend 20 minutes on that discussion. But we would talk -- going back to measurement -- what does it mean to them as youth to be a leader and have them identify what they think the traits of a leader are and for some much them it was like -- those that were more shy, well, in six months I want to be the one that runs the agenda instead of Justin. Because we have somebody that really, really likes to run the agenda and it was kind of hard to work that out, so for us when that individual actually ran the agenda and ran the meeting, that was kind of a measure for us that they had shadowed, seen how that was done, and then had been on their own time ready to take that position over and with some support and that was kind of how we measured.

but I do agree the transition from being really fun and actually having them come work on a day to day basis in the center is something you have to think about and not just expect because then everybody gets frustrated. You go from group participant having a great time to, I've got to do what with that paper? Why do I have to -- you have to do it before you leave today. And if you don't set up those expectations and that transition, you're kind of asking for frustration.

>> STACEY: to the back and to the left. I want to share some things I was thinking. Keeping in mind that disability really offers an opportunity to redefine what we mean by work. And the youth bring a loft creativity to CILs and I think it's really important. So I think a fellow youth member where it's not their strength to write a grant report, but they are the most carries mat particular person ever and they are totally able to call 40 people every week for a year and maybe that's something you can put people N.

and the other two things I was thinking is just really keeping in mind that any time -- any time you do mixed ability, cross-disability work, youth work, anything that you really have to think about, the capacity it's going to take to support that person. People don't just show up and you sit them at a desk and they are good to go. Who is going to be on staff to support that person and being able to fully participate? And then planning that into the work, planning that into your schedule. Planning that into the job description is really critical to having people in the workplace.

and then the third thing I was going to suggest is I don't even remember. So Christy and then Richard.

>> CHRISTY: I understand what y'all are saying about the measuring. Unfortunately, what I've learned in the last couple of years really is that to get money, private foundations particularly, are much more interested now in your deliverables. So if you can't show them how you're going to measure the success of a program that you want them to fund, they are not going to give you any money.

and my suggestion would be in terms of measuring is, first of all, we have Research and Training Centers for independent living. We're sitting in one -- well, we're not sitting in one. But we're ten blocks away from one. They can help with that. Also your university affiliated programs or your centers for excellence that are typically connected to some university in your state. That's a lot of what they do is evaluation.

and would probably be really happy to work with you, particularly if you've got some funding from somewhere and you were able to contract out to them and let them figure out how to measure the success of your program.

but you can't -- if you don't come up with a really tangible means of measuring the success of it, you're not going to continue to be funded because more and more people are looking at what your deliverables and you've got to be able to show them that and you can't just give them warm fuzzy feeling anymore like we used to do 20 years ago. So I think that the measurement thing is really important and I think that you have to really, really get a handle on it. And I'm not going to speak for all the centers for independent living. I can tell you as a direct for of a center for independent living. I hate research. I hate evaluation. I've never been good at it. And so I'd just as soon turn around and contract that out to our university affiliated program and let them help me with that because I know that it's one of the things they do. They do it well. They know how to do it. And chances are you'll get funding quicker and easier if you're able to measure it better like that. Thanks.

>> RICHARD: Stacey and Jeff came very close to what I wanted to say, but I might just add just a little bit to what they said. This issue of bringing young people in to the world of work and to some of the parts of the world of work that we don't like. None of us I would venture to say.

and the first thing is -- and Jeff alluded to this -- is use that as an opportunity to look at what you're doing in a creative way with people who have fresh minds about how you go about what you're doing. And maybe there are ways to simplify it and streamline it and do things differently, differently than you've done them before so that they are not the drudgery that they could be.

That having been said, there is paperwork and there is documentation and there is -- there are things that need to be done in the world of work. And not everyone is well suited to that. And not everyone who comes from to our centers is an ideal candidate to work in our centers.

and so there may be people who find some of the things that we do too frustrating and too challenging, not because it's not something they are not capable of, but because it's something we need and they would prefer to be doing something else. So remember that, that centers are not the only avenue in the world of work for folks. And there are other opportunities. So those are I think two sides of that coin. Probably worth thinking about and I think Darrell wanted to say something.

>> DARRELL: I just recall a resource that we can make available to you. Two years ago we did a youth leadership training, Stacey was one of our presenters at that, and another person who presented was Amber (inaudible) from access living in Chicago. And I'm going to stand up so I can see you guys.

and one of the things that Amber passed out to the group was a tool that they had developed at access living for how they do measure leadership development with their youth programs. And it's a well thought out tool that they have developed over a period of many years and refined.

and I think it's an excellent place for you to start to know what questions to ask to develop your own tool or to take it and adapt it. And we'll make sure that it gets posted to the wiki page for this training and when we write to you all with the other resources that we promised to share, we'll let you know that it has been posted. And if at any point you have any questions about the tool, we can put you in touch with Amber.

>> JEFF: So again you folks who had hand up, we'll get to you. Christy said something I wanted to chime back in on the measurement thing. We've danced around it but not goat een real specific. I feel this is the nitty gritty concrete stuff.

a couple of things we track in our youth program, we didn't track how many pizzas were consumed, wii bowling scores, that's what the young adults track internally, but what we track for our grant money was number of external boards that we got youth on, number of panel presentations that they did for various groups on disability awareness, whether that was disability etiquette or disability and sexuality for young adults. The products -- we did a series of YouTube videos so we can say we did this panel as a video. It's had this many hits. And the encouraging thing is we're three years outside of that project and we have youth that are on the boards for local centers. We have youth that are on the SILC with me, helping to run the youth committee. We have young adults -- we also attract employment opportunities and things like that that was kind of showing youth had progressed. And we have folks that now have jobs for three solid years in a row with benefits. And we had? Amazing things that came out of this little group of ten, but those are the kinds of things we tracked so we could say to the funders, this is the progress we're making. And we have een though we're not still tracking those things, those things have stayed in place largely for loot of those. Youth. Not everybody that goes through your program is going to be running a program ten years from now.

but they are going to be further along their road to their independence and to what their goals are than if you don't start with them. Does that get a little bit more specific? Then we will get to June and some others.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: It does, but a lot of us don't have the funding or the budgets that some of the presenters do. So it's a little hard -- I know for us in Connecticut all the centers have a pilot program and we're $15,000 per year. That's not a lot. That's not enough for a part-time staff person. So that's why we can't contract with any oft. We don't have the funding. We're looking at scraping just like what most IL centers are known for, trying to find what we can for free resources. To do the best we can. So it's very hard. We don't have the time or the resources to do the hiring, inform follow them throughout their whole life. It's very hard and they want something within a year that we can measure.

>> JEFF: Good point. And a lot of us are in that same boat. When I talk about the state SILC, we have $10,000 for three years. So roughly $3,500 a year to do something big and so we get that. But we have some comment here from Judith.

>> JUDITH: Universities are really good sources and university students always need projects. Almost in any department there are projects for them.

What you have to do is start making connections and find some allies at your nearest university. It doesn't have to be the big university around. It can be a smaller university. It's the same thing.

We have students that need projects that are in human resources, in business, always some special ed, in psychology, and if you've got a project that's dated, they can collect and use and they are often willing to.

Now, remember they are students, you know, and when vacation time comes, when it's spring break they are gone, but if you work with the faculty, they are very anxious to have their students have some real world experience.

and this is part of what the students are trying to learn to do anyway, so making those connections is very low cost. Sure, if you have money to attract someone, that's great, but if you don't, the students still need to do the projects.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I was just going to reiterate that you don't necessarily have to pay them. I'm sorry, we have contracted with our university before, but you don't necessarily have to pay them. They may be doing a research project and they want to involve people with disabilities and so you scratch their back and they'll scratch yours. And like Judith said, students are wonderful and they are supervised. So the data, while it may be pulled together a little differently, will still be data because they are supervised.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Just to dove tail on that a little bit, one of the things we've done at NCIL with the University of Minnesota is to have some of those kinds of studies or on work done in return for internship. We use internships from local universities and colleges at NCIL on a fairly regular basis.

They contact you looking for an internship and you say this is what we'd like in return for that and that is that relationship building.

>> JEFF: I come from the university side and what we'll do is we give the money to the centers because we need community partners. So don't go into it thinking you're going to need to give the university money to partner with you. Look for opportunities where you benefit them as a community partner and they'll give you $5,000 to run a portion of their program because you're helping them with their research and their training initiative. And that's how we've always approached it. I came from the university side and we found centers that, hey, if we were able to give you $5,000, could you do X. Y. and Z. for us. So there is opportunities to do it that way as well.

We've kept June waiting for quite a bit. I wanted to give her a chance and there is other hands. And then I'll shut up.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: a couple of specifics that we did in the small budget issue that affects all of us, but one of the biggest issues had a we went to funders with was the issue of the drop out rate. And so with a number of youth that we came into contact with in the beginning and we continue to attract to this date is the retention rate. The number of youth that we believe we can derive a direct correlation with our training to them staying in school. So the retention rate is huge.

the other one is post-secondary outcomes, what are the youth doing after they leave school?

And the third thing that we use because funders, legislators and everyone likes the peer yals of the youth themselves and those three things have been instrumental in helping us -- peer testimonials -- and to track to be able to present a retention rate to either the Department of Education or VR, or anybody, has been significant.

the last thing that we do that we do track that I think is important, particularly in our state is we have seven reservations. And so we track diversity, and so that's one of the statistics that we also gather. So those are turned into the state on a quarterly basis.

>> CINDY: Awesome. That's great. Do we have more questions or thoughts? I see hand in the back.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Actually you guys got me brainstorming in the talk here, and I have a suggestion to kind of go along with talking with the universities and things.

I know from my experience, I went to a four year university and they have what's called a dis program, and it stands for directed independent study, and I participated in that and basically the teacher is more of a mentor and did students are allowed to basically just pick what they want to study and research and their job is to -- is basically come up with their question, come up with the whole project and go out and do the research and do the reporting and everything. So that might be a good resources to find the dis mentor professor in the colleges and also in our state, which I'm from North Carolina, we have -- our high schools now require seniors to do senior projects. That might be an option if you could find some seniors that are willing to do that because they are required to do a senior project before they graduate.

and then I had a question also. I'm trying to start in our center a job shadowing program. If anybody can give me any suggestions on how to -- how to kind of get that off the ground, I'm open to any suggestions at all. That would be great. Thank you.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I really cannot emphasize how much your local universities and colleges are an asset to you as a CIL.

We utilize our university, and they have a lot of research grants that they do for people with disabilities. Like Jeff said, they will come to you with certain stipends that they can support certain volunteers as far as people with disabilities that might be your consumers that will participate in it.

Like we have one that we're doing now to find out what the barriers are as far as health care in the community with people with disabilities. And we're doing another one with UNKC and KU as far as the drop out rate of the disabled youth in high school.

So you have to get well known to them and that way when stuff comes up, they can come back to you. And I guess on the job shadowing thing, we are starting one up in my CIL and the first things we have done is we started going out to the different jobs and stuff out there and actually doing like an MOU with them to see if they will volunteer their time for some of our students or our consumers to go and do job shadowing with them.

Right now, we have a veterinarian that has agreed to do one. So we have one student that really wants to grow up to be a veterinarian just to see if they would like to do that. We all know that being a veterinarian is not just cute and cuddly kittens and stuff. We want to do the job shadowing so they can see exactly is that what they want to do.

So I think just getting out in the community, making your CIL well known and just building those partnerships with other agencies and jobs out there is the key.

>> STACEY: Thank you so much.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Stacey you can tell me if I'm right about there or not, but there is national mentoring day. And I believe Michael Murry is the one who kind of coordinates that in D. C. So it's one day that they do like a jab shadowing, but I know in the past I've reached out to him and said, okay, I want to do this on this day, not the national mentoring day. And he's given me a how to do it on that day and you can kind of copy those things however you want to implement that in your center.

and I have a question --

>> STACEY: Just on that, the disability mentoring day and if you go to their website they have all kinds of tools you can download. So a lot of it is like a cover letter that you can mail out to businesses. I don't even remember, but it's like tons and tons of --

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: What is that website?

>> STACEY: It's through the American Association of People with Disabilities. So if you type in like AAPD, or disability mentoring day and Google it, you should pull something up. They collaborate with a lot of partners.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I don't know how to ask it. So I understand that reaching out to the universities and getting students in there and we have two interns right now, high school intern and a college intern, but when working with the youth, I don't want somebody -- because a lot of those students haven't been involved in my program, some of them have, but some of them haven't, so I want them to kind of go through a training of understanding what a center is. And if you're going to be going and doing work with youth, you need to understand how to facilitator if this question comes you, how would you direct that. That takes a lot of training and right now I'm the only youth person and I'm running seven different things plus consumers. And so how do you guys -- I know we talked about Mississippi for youth and they said you guys were pretty spread out. How do you manage -- do you have the youth coming in for you to train? And if so, how are you managing that time? And how do you guys do the training for these interns that are coming in? Right now we're such a small center that it's kind of a one-on-one-basis which takes up a lot of time.

>> CINDY: I myself do have one person coming in once a week and what I do is I just make an appointment like it's an appointment and we've done little bits and pieces.

but also it's kind of one of those things where I let them know, okay, you're not quite ready to answer the big questions, so if you get asked a question, please put it to one of us. And then I want them there though when I'm answering it. Because I do want them to be able to answer those questions.

So it's kind of letting them know that you start out small and go big. And I know Christy has more to say about that.

>> CHRISTY: Well, actually, when we were meditating a little while ago, and when we got through meditating and Jeff brought us back out of our little trance, one of the things that we were actually discussing is we're some of your presenters here and, yeah, we believe that we do a really good job in providing services to young people with disabilities, but we do a good job in providing those direct services to young people with disabilities.

When we came out of our trance, the first thing I said was we've got to do better when it comes to teaching our history of independent living, both in this country and in the state of Mississippi, to young people with disabilities and we've got to start doing more to bring them together as groups and provide them with the skills that they need to become leaders.

We used to do that years ago, and funding dried up for that. And frankly, as with many centers, we got busy doing other things. So while we do have a good youth program and we're proud of it and we provide a lot of good services to young people with disabilities, that is one area frankly that we're not very good in terms of providing good quality training and education to our young people in a group type setting. And so we sat around this table holding hands and singing kumbaya and saying we were going to do better.

>> STACEY: I would just really add and be reflective, on the training piece it feels important to me at least to first begin talking about the models of disability. So talking about the charity model, the medical model, the social model, you know, moving into what is ableism, moving into what is self-determination, interdependence, independence, talking about disability history, so making sure people know about that. And making sure people know about the rolling pods? The legacy that we have and what brings us into this room.

and on the other piece, I am really reflecting on what Richard said about that not everybody is going to be designed to be a CIL E. D. and we wrote a very specific prompt, but when you're doing youth leadership work, it's really great to think about like what are we creating in terms of the next generation of the disability rights movement and then also keeping in mind that youth with disabilities really, really, really challenge traditional ideas of leadership. And so when we look at traditional ideas of leadership, we know that it means oftentimes, you know, white men many suits standing in the front of the room talking and that's really able bodied and it's really racialized and that when you're doing work at your CIL, we have an opportunity to change all of that. Leadership can mean the person that follows up with everybody, the person that plans things, the person that orders the pizza and oftentimes it's a question of like figuring out who has the skills and the interest, where they want to plug n and then creating like a collective agreement for what accountability looks like.

So those are a few thoughts.

>> CINDY: I wanted to touch a little more when I do have the person come in, when you have your intern come in, when you're the only youth specialist, doesn't mean you're the only one that has to work with that person though. Because you want that youth or that young adult to feel a part of that office.

So you definitely want to make sure you encourage the rest of the office members and hopefully you have those type of office members, to embrace this person and just talk to them -- like they are just another staff member. So that's something to take the weight off your shoulders is if you can encourage the rest of your members to help you with that person, to guide that person. And it's not -- you may have like a few speed bumps and go, oh, I didn't notice -- but it's okay.

>> STACEY: One more thing I wanted to add is I keep thinking of Sierra's question of how to bring in people to the workplace and a common scenario I see at CILs is they'll bring in a young person. That young person will be excited and sipe up for something and then whatever that person signed upped to do won't happen and then that person won't take that person seriously anymore. And rather than having a conversation like you would with a co-worker about like, hey, why didn't that happen? What kind of support do you need? You know, it really messed other people up when you said you were going to do something and you didn't. That person gets dismissed and like how can we create a culture where we have actual high expectations for young people and we hold young people to the standards and then when people do mess up -- because we know that as people with disabilities and young people with disabilities that we live in a culture of low expectations. And people don't hold us accountable for things and as someone that works in a youth organization that's often the biggest challenge is people not doing what they say they are going to do because people are used to not being held to their word.

and so like in trying to think about how we can support people in moving into employment, that goal is really important.

>> CINDY: and we are (inaudible). She's telling us to stop.

>> JUDITH: I want to give our presenters a big hand. [APPLAUSE]

>> JUDITH: and you know how to track them all down. They are all in your programs. So I appreciate all of the information and the ideas and the enthusiasm and I haven't done statues before. So I enjoyed that.

for those of you who may have individuals who are visually impaired who are Braille at your centers, we have some additional copies of the materials in Braille. They are at registration desk if you'd like to take them to your centers. We'll have a 15 minute break and then we'll conclude.