

**Training Module**

# **History of Disabilities**

*Presented by*

**Kaleidoscope Family Solutions, Inc**

# History of Disability

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One of the first special schools in the country was the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-Minded, an "experimental school for idiots" at the Perkins Institute for the Blind. This private school was opened in 1848 by Samuel Gridley Howe.

Also in 1848, Dr. Hervey B. Wilbur founded the "Institution for Idiots" in Barre, Massachusetts. The Institution was in a modest house where Dr. Wilbur instructed up to twelve "idiots." Imagine the words we used to describe people.

## What words do we use now?

- Consumer
- Client
- Individual
- Person

# Statistics About States

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*Pennsylvania*

*New York*

*New Jersey*

## Pennsylvania

Many schools, like the Pennhurst State School in Pennsylvania and the Randall's Island School, had print shops. Students could learn the intricacies of the printing process and were fully involved in the production of school newspapers and other media items.

Pennhurst was constructed and opened in 1908 as a state school for the mentally and physically disabled. Pennhurst's property was vast, covering 120 acres. Pennhurst was one of the largest institutions of its kind in Pennsylvania. Originally named Pennhurst Home for the Feeble Minded and Epileptic, it finally was just called Pennhurst State School. Pennhurst was an essentially self-sufficient community, its 1,400-acre site containing a firehouse, general store, barber shop, movie theatre, auditorium and even a greenhouse. Pennhurst was often accused of dehumanization and was said to have provided no help to the mentally challenged. The institution had a long history of staff difficulties and negative public image, for example, a 1968 report by NBC called "Suffer the Little Children".

Pennhurst State School was closed in 1986 following several allegations of abuse. These allegations led to the first lawsuit of its kind in the United States, Pennhurst State School and Hospital vs. Halderman, which asserted that the mentally retarded have a constitutional right to living quarters and an education.

Terry Lee Halderman had been a resident of the school, and upon release she filed suit in the district court on behalf of herself and all other residents of Pennhurst. After a 32-day trial and an immense investigation, prosecutors concluded that the conditions at Pennhurst were not only dangerous, with physical and mental abuse of its patients, but also inadequate for the care and habilitation for the mentally retarded.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania also concluded that the physical, mental, and intellectual skills of most patients had deteriorated while in Pennhurst.

In 1986, Pennhurst was ordered closed, and began a program of de-institutionalism that lasted several years. Once the buildings were closed, they began to rapidly deteriorate from lack of heating, moisture invasion and vandalism.

Thousands of people began to illegally tour the property spray painting everything in sight and breaking all the glass in the place. Theft was rampant and the destruction of the property was in full swing. Patients were thrown out and a large homeless contingent developed in the area.

## **New York**

James B. Richards opened a private institution in Harlem, New York in 1856. After working with Samuel G. Howe in Massachusetts, and at the Pennsylvania Training School, Richards embarked on his own using his educational methods.

"The Idiot School" at Randall's Island House of Refuge opened in 1866. Randall's Island is located in the East River between Manhattan and Queens, N.Y. Here in a classroom, students are receiving lessons in choral singing. The origins of the Syracuse State School date back to 1853 when New York appropriated \$20,000 for the purchase of land. The institution was completed and occupied by 1855. The objective of the Syracuse State School was to train "improvable cases" with as much academic work as possible. Children ages 6 to 16 were taught in the classroom. From there children were trained in either domestic arts or farm work.

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## **New Jersey**

Opened as an experimental branch of Syracuse State School in 1878, Newark State School became an independent institution in 1885. The original intention of the institution was to instruct females only. Due to the growing numbers of people being identified as intellectually disabled, this changed when the first boys were admitted in 1932.

Schools for the disabled often advertised in popular magazines and newspapers. The ads featured here are from The Outlook and Harper's respectively. The New Jersey Training School in Vineland, New Jersey

was advertised in Harper's.

The New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities administers seven residential developmental centers (DCs). They are:

- Green Brook Regional Center in Somerset County
- Hunterdon Developmental Center in Hunterdon County
- New Lisbon Developmental Center in Burlington County
- North Jersey Developmental Center in Passaic County
- Vineland Developmental Center in Cumberland County
- Woodbine Developmental Center in Cape May County
- Woodbridge Developmental Center in Middlesex County

The DCs are home to approximately 2,700 individuals. Residents have intensive needs related to their developmental disabilities, and many also have co-occurring mental health, behavioral and/or medical needs. The average age is 51, and a recent survey indicated that more than 80 percent of the residents have lived in a DC since childhood. Many residents are non-ambulatory and must use a wheelchair for mobility.

- More New Jersey citizens with developmental disabilities live in out-of-home placements (22.1%), compared to their peers nationwide (16.1%). Fewer NJ citizens with developmental disabilities live in their own homes.
- New Jersey also has the largest number of individuals in out-of-state residential placements of any of the states. Seven-hundred and thirteen (713) individuals, 2% of the DDD caseload, are placed out of state.
- New Jersey is one of only ten states that have over 2,000 people living in public institutions.
- In New Jersey, 2,725 individuals live in state operated developmental centers.
- Proportionately, this represents three times the percentage of individuals who reside in large state-run facilities across the country.

## **Experience with Deinstitutionalization in NJ and the US**

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- In 1980, 7,262 resided in New Jersey's developmental centers, three then called "State Schools and Hospitals." In the period between 1980 to 2008, the population living in developmental centers decreased by 59.4% while the population in large state facilities nationally decreased by 72.8%.
- Our neighboring state of Pennsylvania, whose institutional population in 1980 was comparable to ours at 7,290 people, from 1980 to 2008 decreased the number of people in large congregate settings by 82.4%, while we in New Jersey only decreased our population by 59.4%.

- New Jersey's pace of reducing the numbers of people living in state run institutions has consistently been below the national rate. In the period 2005-2008, New Jersey decreased its institutional population by 4.8%, while nationally, the institutional population decreased by 11.8%.

## Interesting Facts

- There are now 11 states that no longer have any state operated large institutional settings: Alaska, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.
- Eleven states now have only one state institution.
- Currently, five states are in the process of closing institutions: California, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts and Tennessee.
- The most recent developmental center closure was that of the Fort Wayne Developmental Center in Indiana in April of 2007, making Indiana the most populous state in the nation without any institutions for people with developmental disabilities. Fort Wayne Developmental Center had 120 residents at the time its closure was announced in October 2005. It took Indiana one year and six months and \$95 million to close Fort Wayne Developmental Center.

## Some Thoughts

- Now that you know the history of disability and I know what some of the challenges you are having in the field as well as what you enjoy about the field, I think it is important to help you understand how you can be effective at your job.
- Increase your motivation and willingness to help.
- Be happy about going to work every day!
- This work is challenging! Be good at what you do and love what you do, it will in turn, make for a happy, healthy employee!

## Effectiveness

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**The following statements can be answered True or False:**

1. I can be creative in finding solutions to problems on the job.
2. I am responsible for the results of my decisions.
3. I take responsibility for what I do.
4. I am responsible for the outcomes of my actions.
5. I am personally responsible for the work I do.

For anyone that answered False, re-evaluate how you can be more responsible. When we feel responsible for someone or something, research states that you take ownership, you take pride, and you value your work more.

**Can anyone give me an example of when people don't take responsibility and how that effects other staff as well as the individuals we support?**

# Feeling Confident in Your Abilities

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7-point response scale, ranging from very strongly agree to very strongly disagree

- The work I do is meaningful.
- The work I do is very important to me.
- My job activities are personally meaningful to me.
- I am confident about my ability to do my job.
- I am self-assured about my capability to perform my work.
- I have mastered the skills necessary for my job.
- I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job.
- I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work.
- I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.
- My impact on what happens in my department is large.
- I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department.
- I have significant influence over what happens in my department.

## Reward Factors

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**Instructions:** Think about your job right now and indicate on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 4 (extremely) to what extent, if at all, each of the following is a rewarding part of your job.

### Helping Others

- Helping others
- Being needed by others
- Having an impact on other people's lives

### Decision Authority

- Being able to make decisions on your own
- Being able to work on your own
- Having the authority you need to get your job done without having to go to someone else for permission
- The freedom to decide how you do your work

## Job Reward Factors

### Challenge

- Challenging or stimulating work
- Having a variety of tasks
- The sense of accomplishment and competence you get from doing your job
- The job's fitting your interests and skills
- The opportunity for learning new things

### **Supervisor Support**

- \_\_\_ Your immediate supervisor's respect for your abilities
- \_\_\_ Your supervisor's concern about the welfare of those under him/her
- \_\_\_ Your supervisor's encouragement of your professional development
- \_\_\_ Liking your immediate supervisor

### **Recognition**

- \_\_\_ The recognition you get
- \_\_\_ The appreciation you get

### **Satisfaction with Salary**

- \_\_\_ The income
- \_\_\_ Making good money compared to other people in your field

## **Job Satisfaction**

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- I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.
- I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.
- I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.
- I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.
- I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.
- This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.
- I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.
- I really care about the fate of this organization.
- For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.

***What can you do to feel this way about the agency you work for? This is so important to job satisfaction. Remember, you can only control and change the way you think about things, not how other people think.***

## **The End**

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- ✓ Love your Job
- ✓ Love what you do!
- ✓ And, make a difference to people.
- ✓ Make the difference to people you support