

Spring 2011

THE COMPANION



For people with developmental disabilities and their families, Indiana is in a state of quiet crisis!



INquietCrisis.org

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President's Corner

A Salute to Bona Vista Staff!

Bona Vista is the midst of one of the most challenging budgetary periods in our long history. Organizations like ours have been cut deeply the last two years and for some of our program areas, we have been notified that the cuts will hold until 2013. We are very happy that the State Revenue is improving, but we will see no increases in funding this budget cycle.

Given that fact, Bona Vista does respond to living within our means and we are doing so. To get to this point, it takes a great deal of support and loyalty from our staff. Our staff members live and breathe the mission of Bona Vista Programs, and I salute them for all that they do.

The Bona Vista staff exudes creativity, focus and determination. All treat the people that we serve with respect, dignity and patience, and work every day to provide the upmost quality of care. The simplest task such as taking a bite out of a sandwich or drinking a glass of water is not always easy for the people that we serve in our adult services; however, the staff makes it as easy and pleasant as possible for each person to experience. Exercise, cooking, visual arts, music and dance are all part of the curriculum to round out an experience for the many adults that we serve.

Again, I want to thank our staff for thinking big, out of the box and creatively when it comes to curriculum development. I have the greatest respect and admiration for our staff that are always focused on our mission.....BUILDING THE FOUNDATION OF SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS OF ALL ABILITIES.

Joe Dunn



IN Quiet Crisis—Needs to be heard!

For people with developmental disabilities and their families, Indiana is in a state of quiet crisis.

- People with disabilities and their families need the support of a proactive and sustainable service network to meet basic health and safety needs as well as to participate fully in their communities.
- Indiana is one of only nine states where people with disabilities are served largely by private community providers, rather than in segregated state institutions. This system is better for individuals and far more cost effective for taxpayers. To be effective, it requires the support of entire communities.
- In our current economy, many government programs are being cut or eliminated at the same time as other sources of funding are harder to obtain. Without funding, provider organizations have been forced to cut staff and eliminate programs. Some may even have to close their doors completely. Without these organizations, who will serve the needs of our most vulnerable citizens?

There are five key areas that contribute to Indiana's quiet crisis.

- The Waitlist – Over 20,000 Hoosiers with disabilities are on a wait list to receive services. Many have been waiting for more than 10 years. The current response to reducing the wait list is to serve more individuals with the same amount of resources. This approach jeopardizes the health and safety of individuals currently in services by reducing the resources available to them.
- High Unemployment - Nationwide, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is 70%.
- Employment opportunities for people with disabilities allow individuals to become more self-sufficient and to contribute to their local economies.
- Indiana stands to lose approximately 12 million dollars in federal funding for employment training programs, because it is unwilling to contribute a fraction of that cost as a state investment. This loss will likely result in thousands of individuals being unable to access or retain essential employment services.
- Employers who value the contribution of individuals with disabilities can help lessen the effect of funding reductions by learning more about hiring people with disabilities.
- Infants and Toddlers - 50% of children with developmental delays can achieve age appropriate milestones by Kindergarten with early intervention services, but a recently proposed bill would eliminate safeguards limiting the total amount a family is required to pay to participate in the program. At the same time it would increase the cost per service for some families.
- Workforce Crisis - Over one-third of Direct Support Professionals earn entry wages below the Federal Poverty Level for a family of three. Studies show that continuity of care— having the same direct support professional week after week —enables individuals with disabilities to achieve more. Yet, because of low reimbursement rates, provider organizations are struggling to retain quality staff and satisfy this most basic need.
- Duplicative Regulation - In one year, a disability service provider may be audited or inspected 60 times by government agencies, reviewing and re-reviewing many of the same processes. The time investment by providers and the state of Indiana is in excess of 850 annual hours per provider, the expense for a provider alone can range from \$30,000-\$100,000 annually.

It is part of the state's responsibility to protect and nurture people with disabilities— a responsibility rooted in our State's constitution. All Hoosiers can support people with disabilities, their families, and the organizations that provide life-changing services.

Visit inquietcrisis.org to learn more about the issues and how you can help.

INquietCrisis.org



**Save
the
Date**

May 14: The Greatest Spectacle in Tasting on the grounds at Bona Vista's Laguna street facility. Enjoy an evening of live music, a very large silent auction and tasting the wares of 33 restaurants and multiple wines and micro brews all for one low price.

July 24: Bona Vista's Art Show in the Gardens. Indiana Senator and Mrs. Buck will hold an Art Gala for Bona Vista Programs in the beautiful gardens on their estate.

August 26: The Cinderella Ball is an evening for Father and Daughter bonding while helping to benefit Bona Vista Programs. Fathers will be able to escort their daughters to the ball where they will enjoy dancing, entertainment and a horse drawn carriage ride. Cinderella and Prince Charming will be there to greet and mingle with their young guests too.

For information about these and many of our other special events, call Brianne Boruff at 765-457-8273.



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"Cultivate Inclusion" is the 2011 Disability Awareness Month Theme!

The Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities picked the theme "Cultivate Inclusion" for this year's month of awareness, and organizations like Bona Vista Programs work extra hard to educate our communities about issues surrounding disability awareness. During the month of March, Bona Vista Programs was in various schools in our communities presenting materials on these topics. Our goal was to educate as many children as we could about what it might be like for an individual with a disability, how important it is to have a positive attitude about those with disabilities, and how Bona Vista, through its many programs, can provide services to those with disabilities.

Coin Harvest is a way for our schools and businesses to get involved in raising money for an organization in their community that helps those around them. Each year, coin collection buckets are placed at participating schools or businesses and individuals are asked to "harvest" their loose change and add it to the buckets! The buckets are out for the entire month of March, and Bona Vista's community Education Coordinator, Troy Bowers, promotes the disability awareness theme by conducting presentations and tours, and by encouraging the collection of coins to help support the services provided by Bona Vista Programs. We can schedule a presentation for your group, organization or business if you would like to learn more about Bona Vista Programs and the many programs and services we offer by contacting Troy at 765-457-8273. You may also request a tour of one of our various facilities. We hope to see you here!

