

# People with Disabilities

1 in 5 adults in US have some type of disability



1 bedroom unit  
**\$1544**

Individual on SSI can afford  
**\$221 rent**

43.5 million provided unpaid at home care to an adult or child in past 12 month.

3.7 million of those cared for a child.



Children 0-3 in BSD received early intervention services

214 in 2014  
287 in 2016



# PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990 and in 2015 celebrated its 25th anniversary. The ADA insures the civil rights of people with disabilities and establishes a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The City of Bellevue has consistently and diligently worked to make all its programs, services and facilities accessible to people with disabilities. For over 30 years, the city has provided adaptive recreation programs as well as other accommodations and access to general recreation, and has other examples such as an evaluation of sidewalks and curb ramps throughout the city using innovative techniques. In developing the Diversity Advantage Plan in 2014, the City is responding to the changing demographics with the goal of equity, access and inclusion for all.

Note: This chapter will deal primarily with issues related to developmental and physical disabilities. For more information on mental illness, please see *Goal 4: Health Care to Be as Physically and*

*Mentally Fit as Possible.* For more information about *Older Adults or Veterans*, please see these sections under Specific Populations.

## What's Working?

- AtWork! is a non-profit agency that provides employment and community inclusion services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. AtWork! successfully transformed from a provider of sheltered workshop and facility-based services to integrated community employment and inclusion and is now recognized as a national leader in that movement. Today, AtWork! is serving more people than ever (52 new people in the first half of fiscal year 2017, more than any other full previous year). Since AtWork! began its transformation in 2006, they served 410 new people with disabilities and developed over 350 jobs; people with disabilities have earned nearly \$9 million at an average hourly wage of \$12.48.

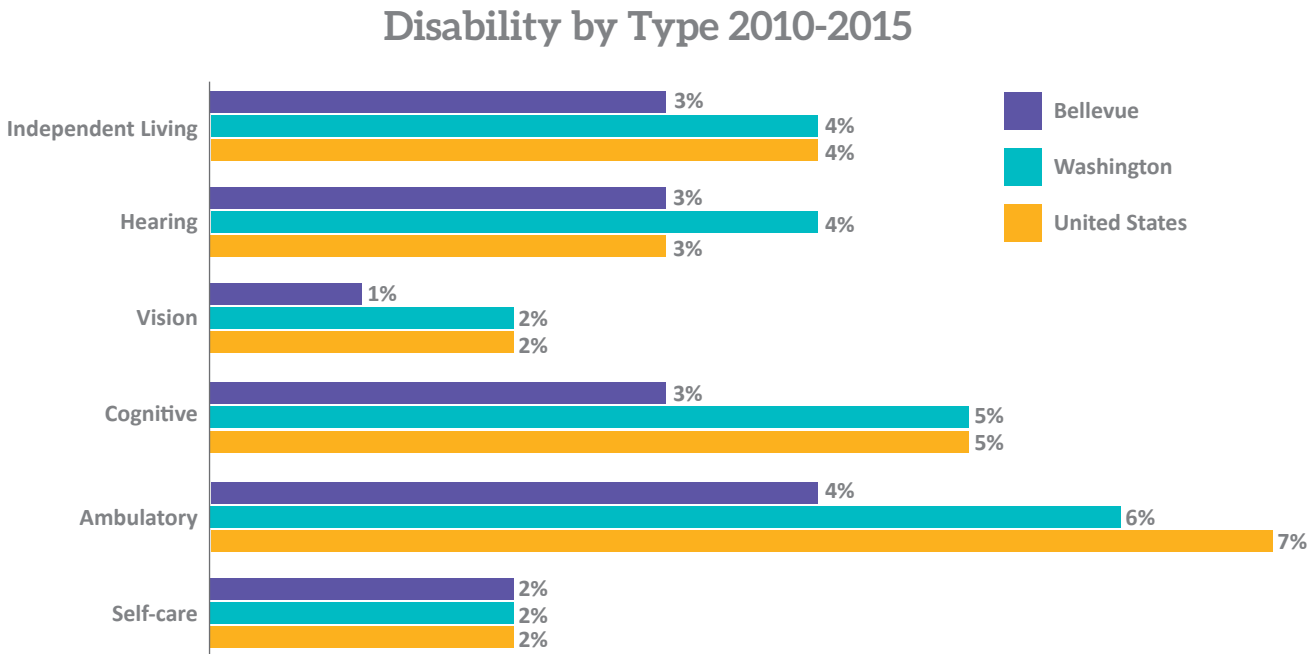


Figure 1 | Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

- Kinderling Center, a neuro-developmental center for children birth to five in Bellevue, provides a support group for siblings of children with special needs, called Sibshops. These are fun, action packed workshops in which siblings are encouraged to share their challenges and celebrate the joys with brothers and sisters in similar situations. The workshops are held at their Bellevue and Bothell locations monthly.<sup>1</sup>
- As a result of the City of Bellevue's Diversity Advantage Plan, a new Supported Employment Program was implemented in 2016. This program provides opportunities for individuals with disabilities, assisting with job placements at the City that range from filing to stocking supply rooms.

to provide a network of supports. A top priority among many people with disabilities, and those who help care for them, continues to be improving community-based services, including access to information about services, affordable housing, after-school programs, respite care, employment support, and accessible transportation to facilitate their inclusion in all activities of daily life.

- Developmental disabilities are severe physical and/or mental impairments that occur before adulthood, are permanent and limit an individual's ability to function. Washington State's current definition includes epilepsy, autism, cerebral palsy and intellectual disability. The prevalence rate of developmental disabilities, as defined in federal law, has been estimated to be 1.2% of the non-institutionalized U.S. population. Based on this rate, the estimate of King County residents who have development disabilities is 24,533.<sup>3</sup>
- Older adults have the largest share of people with one or more disabilities. About one third of older adults have one or more disabilities compared to five percent of people ages 18 to 64 and 3% of children.<sup>4</sup>

## Prevalence

### Adults

- **It is estimated that 1 in 5 adults or 53 million adults in the U.S. has some type of disability.**<sup>2</sup> With medical advances helping more people survive longer with disabilities than in the past, there is a greater need for communities

Developmental Disabilities Client Trend

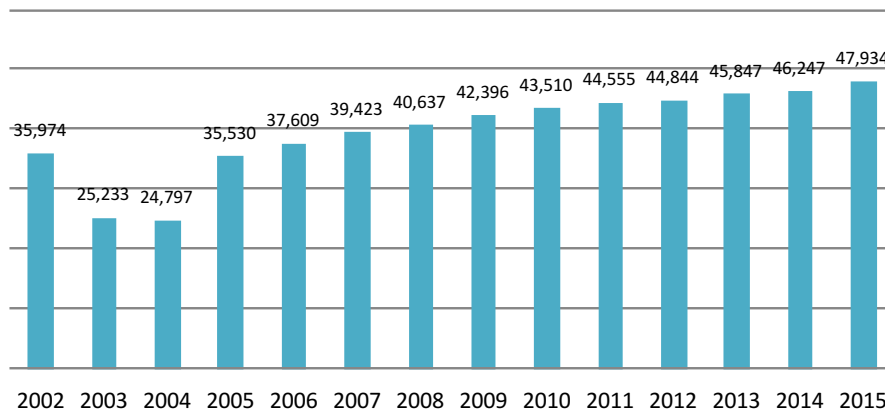


Figure 2 | Source: Washington State DSHS Client Participation Report

| BELLEVUE RESIDENTS ENROLLED IN DSHS/DDD AS OF JULY 1, 2017 BY AGE GROUP |   |         |
|---|---|---------|
| Age Group   | No. og Individuals Enrolled in DSHS/DDD, Region 4 | Percent |
| 0-2   | 232   | 27.7    |
| 3-5   | 106   | 12.4    |
| 6-9   | 50  | 5.9     |
| 10-13   | 35  | 4.1     |
| 14-17   | 44  | 5.2     |
| 18-20   | 32  | 3.8     |
| 21-61   | 332   | 39.0    |
| 62-79   | 2.3   | 3.92    |
| 80+   | 1   | 0.1     |
| Total   | 852   | 100.0   |

Figure 3

## Service Trends

### People with Developmental Disabilities

- The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Division of Developmental Disabilities' (DDD) most recent client participation report indicates that there were 47,934 persons in the state who were enrolled in their services at the end of June 2015, about 5% more than the 45,847 enrolled in 2013.<sup>5</sup>
- Enrollment has also increased over the last few years for services offered by the King County Division of Developmental Disabilities (KCDDD). In the last five fiscal years, total annual enrollment has grown from 2,543 to 3,419 children served, representing a growth rate of 34 percent. Despite this growth in numbers of children served with Early Intervention (EI) services in King County, the percentage of infants and toddlers who receive EI services has remained fairly flat. Analysis of King County birth data by race and ethnicity indicates that some communities are more underserved than others.<sup>66</sup>

- As shown in Figure 3, as of July 2017, there were 852 people with developmental disabilities in Bellevue enrolled in the State program through the Department of Social and Health Services and the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DSHS/DDA) in King County. DSHS/DDA authorizes services for a subset of the enrolled population. Across King County, there were 12,532 residents as of July 2017 who were authorized for services.<sup>7</sup>

## Support Services with and without Waiver Plans

- The State DDD replaced its Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) and Community Alternatives Program (CAP) Waiver with five waivers. Waivers are agreements between the State and the Federal agency responsible for Medicaid. The State receives Federal matching funds for services provided under the waiver plan. There are four waivers - Basic Plus, Core, Children's Intensive In-Home and Community Protection that were renewed effective June 2015. Also approved was the Community First Choice Program.

| BELLEVUE RESIDENTS ENROLLED IN DSHS/ DDD AS OF JULY 1, 2017 BY AGE GROUP |                       |                                 |                           |       |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Age Group  | Paid Service Caseload | Clients Enrolled on HCBS Waiver | No-Paid Services Caseload | Total |
| 0-2  | 178                   | 0                               | 54                        | 232   |
| 3-5  | 99                    | 9                               | 7                         | 106   |
| 6-9  | 36                    | 23                              | 14                        | 50    |
| 10-13  | 27                    | 20                              | 8                         | 35    |
| 14-17  | 33                    | 30                              | 11                        | 44    |
| 18-20  | 27                    | 20                              | 5                         | 32    |
| 21-61  | 277                   | 239                             | 55                        | 332   |
| 62-80  | 15                    | 12                              | 5                         | 20    |
| 81+  | 1                     | 1                               | 0                         | 1     |
| Total  | 693                   | 354                             | 159                       | 852   |

Source: DSHS Case Management System

Figure 4

Each of the waivers provides an array of services tailored to the specific populations they serve. However, the capacity of the waiver program is limited based upon State funding.<sup>8</sup> As a result, there are many more clients who are eligible and want to participate in the waiver programs than there are available slots. This is shown in Figure 4, in which the number of clients not on waiver plan, especially for those 0-20 years old, is less than those on a waiver plan.

- Services for clients who have waivers include Adult Residential Care, Emergency Assistance, Employment Services, Personal Care, Respite Care and a long list of other opportunities. Services for clients without waivers include some of the same programs, such as Respite and Employment Services, but access depends on eligibility and funding availability.

## Residential Habilitation Centers (RHC)

- Since the 1960s, there has been a decrease in the number of people with all disabilities living in institutions and an increase in the number living in the community. The civil rights movement was a motivator for people with disabilities to seek jobs, housing and activities in their own communities instead of institutions. The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law in 1990, eliminating discrimination in housing, employment, transportation, and public accommodation, and celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2015. More recently, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that states must place people with disabilities in community settings when appropriate.
- Statewide, the number of persons with developmental disabilities living in residential habilitation centers (RHCs) and nursing homes, which are facilities which provide intensive nursing care and skill development for those who are severely disabled, has

decreased dramatically. As of July 2013, there were about 1,000 individuals in one of these 4 facilities in the State, compared to 4,145 at their peak in 1967. The average annual cost per client living in RHCs is \$174,407 compared to \$20,351 per client annually to receive personal care services in the family's home or community residential facilities.<sup>9</sup>

## Residential Services

- **In Washington State, the majority of people with developmental disabilities (97%) live in the community, most with their families.** The remaining 3% either live in their own homes receiving non-facility supported living services or in licensed group care, such as adult family or nursing homes. For those who can't live independently, supported living services offer instruction and support to persons who live in their own homes in the community. Supports may vary from a few hours per month up to 24 hours per day of one-to-one support. Clients pay for their own rent, food and other personal expenses. Adult family homes (AFH) (licensed facilities for six residents or more) are available as an intermediate level of care. Nursing homes support people who need the assistance of 24-hour nursing staff. In 2017, there were 129 AFH licensed by the State in Bellevue.<sup>10</sup> Some of these facilities also serve frail elderly people and individuals with other disabilities, such as those related to head injuries, strokes or chronic diseases.
- Of the 13,731 DDD clients living in King County as of August 2017, 3,317 live in the City of Seattle with 10,414 living outside of the city; 924 live in Bellevue. The vast majority of the 10,414 clients who live outside of the City of Seattle live in their parents homes: 9,772. The remainder receive residential services in a variety of

settings such as Supported Living (992), Adult Family Homes (528) and Group Home (110). “Residential services” are comprehensive housing support services provided in community based housing by agencies that contract with the Washington State DSHS/DDD.<sup>11</sup>

## Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Living with Aging Parents

- Many providers believe there is a crisis emerging regarding the increased support needs of aging people with I/DD who live at home with older adult parents. As of July 1, 2017, 1,112 (8.9%) individuals enrolled in DSHS/DDA Region 4 are age 55 and above. Of these clients, 122 clients live with a parent or relatives. As of July 1, 2017, 2,445 (19.5%) individuals enrolled in DSHS/DDA Region 4 are age 40 and above. Of these clients, 465 clients live with a parent or relative.<sup>12</sup> Families who are caring for this population are aging, and need assistance with transition planning, including legal, financial and residential information.
- AtWork! staff report that some of their clients have received services from this agency from several years to over 30 years. As they age, many are developing additional disabling conditions and seeing increased impact from their disabilities. Individuals with Down Syndrome are living longer and developing early onset dementia. This results in decreased independence and increased reliance on staff and other supports to maintain employment and community living. AtWork!'s Community Inclusion program provides individualized supports so that people can access community activities and avoid the effects of isolation. Many older adults with disabilities are living with elderly parents who are struggling to

maintain their own level of independence and continue to care for their adult child with disabilities. There is a growing need for supportive and affordable housing for both the individual with disabilities and their parents. In addition, younger adults with more complex disabilities such as autism and their families are finding it difficult to obtain the services they need: services that help them successfully work and access their communities when they aren't working; and affordable housing and residential support services that enable them to live as integrated and independently as possible outside of their parents' home. Services are segmented and the options are often limited by lack of resources and funding. Medicaid funds 50% or more of community-based services for people with disabilities living and working in their communities. Potential Medicaid cuts and changes will have a significant impact on the quality of life of all people with disabilities and put additional stress on other systems.<sup>13</sup>

## Affordable Housing for Independent Living

- Finding affordable housing in the community is challenging for many people, but those with disabilities who seek an independent living arrangement, such as an apartment, have additional barriers. There were roughly 8.2 million individuals receiving federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) because they are elderly, blind or disabled and have few economic resources.<sup>14</sup> With the maximum federal monthly payment of \$735/month in 2017, **an SSI recipient could only afford \$221/month rent (30% of income). There is not one county in the U.S. where even a modest efficiency apartment is affordable for someone receiving**

## SSI. The Fair Market rent for a one bedroom apartment in the Seattle-Bellevue Metropolitan area is \$1,544/month.

more than the entire check.<sup>15</sup> For individuals who rely solely on their SSI check for income, or even who receive supported employment services that pay higher wages, market rate housing is not an option.

- In 2003, KCDDD created the Housing Innovations for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (HIPDD) funding program to expand the affordable housing options that are available for persons with developmental disabilities in King County. To date, the program has funded over 40 housing units, with the goal of providing ongoing funding for housing projects. HIPDD assists non-profit housing developers with capital funding in Seattle and King County that reserves the lowest income units in new affordable, multi-family housing for their clients, and also come with an additional operating subsidy, like Section 8, to ensure that units are affordable.<sup>16</sup> In 2016, on the Eastside, there were 274 units set aside for disabled persons in 21 multi-family projects funded through A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH). Eight of these are specifically for persons with Developmental Disabilities. In addition, a total of 163 beds in 23 facilities for Special Needs or Disabled populations funded in part by ARCH. Of these, 13 facilities with 69 beds are designated for people with developmental disabilities. These include group homes in Redmond, Issaquah, Kenmore, Bothell and Bellevue as well as condos in Bellevue and apartments in Bellevue and Redmond. There was no change from 2015 numbers, however one new project received predevelopment funding in 2016 which will likely include an additional 8 units for people with developmental disability.<sup>17</sup>

## Employment: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- The State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is the primary funder of services for people with disabilities to obtain and keep employment. DVR eliminated its waiting list for services effective February 11, 2008. At its peak, the waiting list had over 14,000 individuals. In 2010, DVR received 12,500 applications with 10,964 determined eligible; in 2015, there were 9,450 new applications, with 8,616 determined eligible. The decrease in applications is attributed to steps taken in the past few years to increase coordination between DVR and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) which had a practice of mandatory referrals of its clients in the Aged, Blind, and Disabled

### Types of Disabilities of Customers Successfully Employed

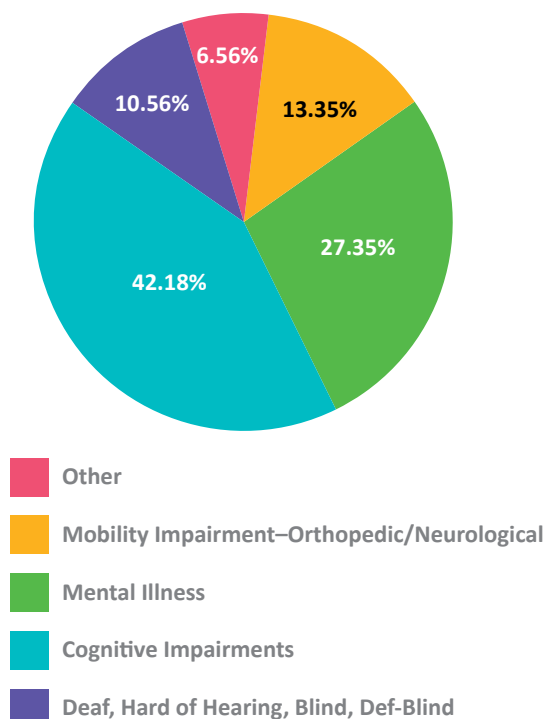


Figure 5 | Source: State of Washington Department of Vocational Rehabilitation August, 2017

Program to DVR. This practice began in 2009 and was discontinued in 2012. DVR staff is doing additional outreach to return referrals back to the 2009 levels of 10,000 to 11,000 referrals/year. In 2013, DVR reported 8,667 total rehabilitations, at an average cost of \$6,775 per client, an 11% increase in cost compared to 2010.<sup>18</sup>

- Bellevue clients represent 2.2% of the open DVR cases in Washington State as of August 30, 2015, slightly less than 2 years ago. Between October 2015 and September 2016, 281 applications for services were received at the Bellevue DVR office. Bellevue DVR clients had a somewhat higher rate of rehabilitation compared to the State (59.6% vs. 59.0%). Average hourly wages for Bellevue clients when they are placed in jobs are \$12.75, somewhat higher than the State average of \$12.57.<sup>19</sup>
- Though the unemployment rate after the recession has decreased, it still can be challenging for people with disabilities to find jobs. In a competitive environment, job developers need to be more creative to find work for their clients. Figure 5 shows the percentage of clients statewide within each disability category who were successfully employed in 2017 through DVR. These percentages remain relatively unchanged from two years ago.<sup>20</sup>

## Employment: King County DDD Contracts

- KCDDD funds long-term employment services for adults with developmental disabilities (ages 21 and over) who are enrolled with the Division Employment Vendors in the community, to provide ongoing support, job coaching, and job placement services as needed. In 2013, 2,166 individuals were served in all employment programs funded by KCDDD; there was a significant increase in the number of adults who received individual

employment programs from 2010-2012 due to a change in state policy which eliminated the Person to Person service category and moved those individuals to an appropriate employment category.<sup>21</sup>

- AtWork! empowers people with disabilities to find and keep jobs that match their talents and interests. These “dream jobs” transform the lives of people with disabilities because they earn money and are working to escape poverty; they have an opportunity to contribute, demonstrate their value to a business, and be included in community life. Their customized and supported employment programs include volunteering, work trials, and one-on-one job coaching; as each person establishes vocational goals and builds a resume that demonstrates skills needed by employers. AtWork! works with businesses to identify job opportunities that take advantage of an individual with disabilities’ unique talents while meeting a critical business need. More and more businesses are employing people with significant disabilities. Their placements have increased to over 70 per year, with a total of over 350 for the last ten years. In the last 7 years, 220 businesses have hired, for the first time, a person with a disability supported by AtWork!.<sup>22</sup>

## Transition Programs for High School Graduates with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

- If high school students with disabilities do not have appropriate work experience and transition services while still in high school, they are often unsuccessful at finding employment. In King County, an estimated 150-180 students with I/DD graduate each year. To address this need, KCDDD, in collaboration with a series of partners, provides the *King County School to Work*



*Project, (S2W)* a program that helps young adults ages 20-21 with developmental disabilities transition from high school to the community, hopefully to a job. The percentage of students who are enrolled in this program ranged from 60% to 77% between 2010 and 2013. Based on the data collected, KCDDD is anticipating major changes in the demographics for transition students graduating from high school in the future. For example, in 2013, about 60% of the students in the S2W program were White, but a significant portion of students who are not White with ID who are school age now will be graduating in the next few years and KCDDD projects that S2W will be serving a much more diverse population.<sup>23</sup>

- AtWork! provides School to Work Transition services to students in local school districts through KCDDD and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Working with high school staff, AtWork! professional and certified Employment Consultants serve the needs of individual students through community work experience, job trials, resume development, job search, job placement and on-the-job coaching while in school and after graduation. AtWork! is the “embedded provider” for the Bellevue School District. Staff reports that schools are asking them to work with younger students to help them and their families understand the system and access services. It is a growing need as families can have a significant disruption when school ends and the student does not have a job or services. In 2017, the program served 20 Bellevue residents.<sup>24</sup> Another organization, Alliance for People with disAbilities, has a Youth Transition Program that focuses on preparing students age 14-24 for work, school or volunteer opportunities. The program is currently rebuilding its program outreaching to youth, parents and school districts.<sup>25</sup>

## Increasing Cultural Diversity

- The 2014-2017 King County Plan for Developmental Disabilities Services identified a need for culturally competent services and outreach for the increasing number of people from diverse ethnic and cultural communities and with limited English language skills, including families of children and adults with I/DD. In preparing for the 2014-2017 plan, KCDDD conducted a series of web-based surveys, focus groups, community meetings and individual interviews to determine how to address this need. A recurrent theme was that language and cultural barriers prevent many families from understanding what services they might be eligible for or accessing services in King County. For some cultures, early intervention services may be a new concept and these families may not understand B-3 services as a positive opportunity. In King County, 18.09% of clients enrolled for DDD services speak a primary language other than English. In East King County, less than a third of the population enrolled in DDD services speaks English as a second language.<sup>26</sup> According to the 2011-2015 ACS, King County as a whole has about 21% of its population age 5 and older who are foreign born and 27% speak a language other than English at home.<sup>27</sup>
- In Bellevue, some providers of services for people with disabilities describe a growing trend of diversity among their participants. Kindering Center reports an increasing number of diverse families and has added more bilingual staff, is using more interpreters, and has several classes in Spanish and one in Russian.<sup>28</sup>

- The SOAR Promotores Program works with KCDDD countywide to provide bilingual and bicultural outreach to families, links them with bilingual bicultural communities and conducts developmental screenings with families. The Arc of King County and Open Doors for Multicultural Families also conduct multicultural outreach to families with young children.<sup>29</sup>

## Need for Additional Recreational Opportunities

The City of Bellevue Department of Parks and Community Services provides specialized recreation opportunities for those living with disabilities as well as inclusion support to participate in general recreation. The majority of specialized programs occur at the Highland Community Center and several programs are based at the Northwest Arts Center, Tennis Center and the Aquatics Center. The Bellevue Youth Theater, Kelsey Creek Farms, and the Crossroads Community Center experience a high number of participants living with intellectual and physical disabilities. In 2016, 350 individuals participated in 128 different programs at the Highland Community Center, which is one of the highest drop-off and pick-up sites for the Metro Access ride service. There has been an increase of kids living with disabilities participating in general recreation programs. Primarily in the summer day camps although they have seen a slight increase year round. A Recreation Inclusion Coordinator is in place to assist with accommodations or adaptations to reinforce successful experiences in general recreation programs. Bellevue has a financial agreement with Mercer Island to provide specialized services to their residents. Highland Center staff report that children living with autism attending summer camps have higher needs than in previous years. As a result of more children with severe autism and the need for more care, a higher child to staff ratio is needed. Other specialized recreation programs in Bellevue are offered by Special Olympics of Washington, Special Care and Outdoorsforall.<sup>30</sup>

## Transportation Gaps

- The demand for transportation for special needs populations, defined as older adults, people with disabilities, youth and people with low-incomes, is growing steadily. The King County Mobility Coalition (KCMC) is a group addressing this need. After new legislation was passed in 2005 by the Federal Transit Administration, called *Safe Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users*, (SAFETEA-LU), this group was formalized as the King County Coordinated Special Needs Transportation Steering Committee. KCMC works with the Puget Sound Regional Council to update the Regional Coordinated Human Services Plan. In 2014 KCMC drafted a Special Needs Transportation Assessment that outlined resources and gaps in the system of transportation for disadvantaged populations in King County. In 2015, it developed its 2015-2020 Action Plan which has a number of initiatives focusing on key areas of need including access to healthcare, access to work and school, and suburban and rural access.<sup>31</sup>
- King County Metro's Access program fills some of the need for door-to-door service for eligible people with disabilities, but continues to have gaps for many customers. In 2011, the King County Accessible Services Advisory Committee and the King County Transit Advisory Committee were merged and became the Transit Advisory Commission. This body advises Metro and King County on issues related to transit service in the county, including matters of concern to the elderly and persons with disabilities. Some of the topics addressed include safety, better transit access for specific populations such as people who are blind, and customer service issues.<sup>32</sup> In 2016, the Access program was funded to evaluate its services. Some changes, such as scheduling drop off times no more than 30 minutes from appointment time have already been implemented.

# Prevalence

## Children

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that in the United States, 13% of children 3-17 years old have a developmental or behavioral disability such as autism, intellectual disability, and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. In addition, many children have delays in language or other areas, which also impact school readiness. However, few of these children are identified as having a problem before starting school, by which time significant delays may have already occurred and opportunities for treatment have been missed.<sup>33</sup>

## Service Trends

### Need for More Funding for Early Intervention Services

- All children age birth to three who have disabilities are guaranteed early intervention services under a federal regulation called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C. King County Developmental Disabilities Division is the Local Lead Agency that contracts to provide these services to children and families. As of July 2014, 3,419 children age birth to three were served in King County Early Intervention (EI) Services. As Figure 6 shows, this number has grown significantly since 2010. The percent of the birth-to-three population served as of a day in time count has remained fairly flat from 1.9% in 2010 to 2.1% in 2013; the current state target for services level is 2.5% of the

birth-to-three population of King County. This means that King County would need to serve 269 additional children for the day in time calculation to reach the state target of 2.5% of births in 2013. Though there are challenges in making comparisons about who are underserved by race or ethnicity, several ethnic groups were more underserved than others: children who were identified as Black/African American, Asian, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Within the growing number of children served, there is also an increasing diversity of languages spoken; Spanish is the more frequently spoken home language other than English, followed by Chinese, Vietnamese, Somali, Russian, Arabic and Hindi.<sup>34</sup>

- In **2016, 287 children aged birth to three living in the Bellevue School District were receiving services compared to 214 in 2014.** In 2016, of the 2,101 children who exited EI services countywide, 780 (37%) no longer qualified for special intervention services. High quality early intervention services can change a child's developmental trajectory and improve outcomes for children, families, and communities.<sup>35</sup> Since 2008 DSHS/ DDD funding for this entitlement service has been capped so even though there has been a substantial increase in the number of children served, there has been no increase in state funding.

| Year                | Total Number of Children | Increase in Number of Children | % Increase Over Previous Year |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| July 2009-June 2010 | 2,543                    |                                |                               |
| July 2010-June 2011 | 2,956                    | 413                            | 16%                           |
| July 2011-June 2012 | 3,134                    | 178                            | 6%                            |
| July 2012-June 2013 | 3,277                    | 143                            | 5%                            |
| July 2013-June 2014 | 3,419                    | 142                            | 4%                            |

Figure 6 | Source: King County Department of Community and Human Services, Plan for Early Intervention Services, 2014-2017

- Kinderling Center, one of two Eastside providers of early intervention services, reports that their monthly enrollment of infants and toddlers with disabilities or delays continues to increase for a very intense, customized set of services.<sup>36</sup>

## More Support and Information for Caregivers

- According to the King County Early Intervention Service Plan, the early intervention system and referral process is confusing for many individuals, and many families of infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities are not

“There are pockets of people living in Bellevue who are disabled or caring for their disabled relatives and the caregivers need support.”

— Bellevue Neighborhood Outreach Program Staff

accessing quality information to help with their decision-making. Families also may not be interacting with community and health care providers who know about early intervention services or how to make referrals. To address this need, KCDDD Early Intervention Services Plan outlines a number of strategies, including providing more training and partnerships with providers, physicians, clinics, childcare staff; strengthening partnerships with systems that provide universal screening; and improving public awareness and reducing negative connotations of disabilities.<sup>37</sup>

- As more people with disabilities choose to live at home, respite care for their caregivers is a growing need. A study

conducted in 2015 found that an estimated **43.5 million adults in the U.S. report that they have provided unpaid care to an adult or a child in the past twelve months; of those about 3.7 million cared for a child**, roughly 1.6%.<sup>38</sup> Many families are not eligible for public funds to pay for respite care, and cannot afford to pay privately for it. Due to State cuts, fewer hours of respite care are being funded.

## Community Perceptions

- In the 2017 phone/online survey, 24% of respondents indicated that *lack of services for people with disabilities* was a major or moderate problem in the community. In 2017, 14% of respondents stated that *not finding programs for someone with a disability* was a major/moderate household problem and 14% stated that *not being able to find affordable care for a person with a disability* was a major/moderate problem, up from 9% and 8% in 2015, respectively.
- Families at the Special Needs Resource Fair held at Highland Community Center saw gaps in training for childcare staff and babysitters on how to work with special needs children, and the availability of sports and special needs afterschool and summer programs.
- Providers on a recent panel who work with adults with disabilities identified lack of affordable housing, employment and transportation as major issues for their clients. Parents of the adults with disabilities say there is an increased need for supported housing options when they can no longer be the primary caregivers.
- In the NextDoor Survey 28% of respondents stated the lack of services for people with disabilities was a major or moderate problem.

## Implications for Action

- Funding for services to people with all types of disabilities continues to lag behind the growth of this population in the State, in King County, and in Bellevue. The result is that there are wait lists for certain services such as housing and family support. And for those programs in which waiting lists are not allowed, agencies are strapped to find additional resources to fill the funding gap. This trend is predicted to continue over the next several years due in part to the higher life expectancy of the aging population with developmental disabilities, the increase of referrals of children with disabilities, and the continued development of medical procedures that now save the lives of those who in the past may not have survived trauma or complications at birth.
- Lack of affordable housing is as much of a problem for people with disabilities as it is for the rest of the population, if not greater. The need is growing faster than housing stock is produced. It is especially critical for people with disabilities to find housing in familiar neighborhood settings, near support systems and convenient amenities in order to maintain their independence to whatever extent they are able. Another growing need is for more paid and volunteer positions for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.
- Early intervention services for children birth to three with disabilities are underfunded. Early intervention saves costs later; for some children whose special needs are identified when they are older, critical time is lost. All sectors of the community—medical, business, education, public and non-profit—could increase their efforts to promote early screening and make it easier for parents and caregivers to find help.
- There continues to be a lack of programs for families with children with special needs that do not speak English as their first language. Especially when dealing with issues of disabilities, which can be viewed differently by various cultures, it is critical that more multilingual, multicultural providers are available to work with families.
- Childcare for children with special needs continues to be in very short supply in the community, as are programs appropriate for children age 12 and older. Community-based organizations already providing such services to typically developing children could, with training and support, help to fill this gap.
- Inclusion of people with all disabilities in all communities needs to be a priority. People with disabilities who experience inclusion early in their lives are more likely to live in and actively contribute to their community as adults.
- People with disabilities have challenges in finding employment. Community support of jobs for people with disabilities is much needed.

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## Endnotes

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