The Collaborative on Disability, Religion, and Inclusive Spiritual Supports

BACKGROUND

For many people with disabilities and their families, faith communities can be a powerful source of natural community support and connection, as well as a doorway to other important outcomes in areas of relationships, work, community living, recreation, and service. There is a compelling need for coordinated and concerted efforts to support people with disabilities and their families in this dimension of their lives and to better equip service systems to draw on natural partners in the community. We are developing a national Collaborative which would develop and provide coordinated training, technical assistance, research, and product development to people with disabilities and their families, clergy, congregations, and service providers (both professional and direct support staff) in the arena of inclusive spiritual supports.



OUR VISION

People with disabilities and their families will have compelling opportunities and supports to develop and express their spirituality, engage in congregational life, and share their gifts and talents in ways that are personally valued and that strengthen communities.



OUR MISSION

The mission of the Collaborative will be to assist people with disabilities, their families, and those who support them by providing national and international leadership in the areas of research, education, service, and dissemination related to disability, religion, and inclusive spiritual supports.

ANTICIPATED COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

The Collaborative will implement activities designed to...

- Develop and support an interdisciplinary and interfaith network of scholars and leaders who are addressing the intersection of disability, religion, and/or spirituality in their work.
- Foster rigorous, collaborative, and interdisciplinary scholarship, including research, policy analyses, theological reflection, and program evaluations.
- Develop educational materials, programs, and technical assistance fostering collaboration among, or building the capacity of, religious leaders, human service professionals, service providers, congregations, individuals with disabilities, and families to address spirituality and build inclusive spiritual supports.
- Produce and disseminate compelling resources based on research and state-of-the-art practice in both disability services and inclusive spiritual supports.
- Provide national and international leadership by speaking to policy initiatives, cultural developments, and other emerging issues related to disabilities, religion, and spirituality.
- Serve as a central and visible "clearinghouse" for resources, research, trainings, conferences, programs, and organizations.
- Provide an accessible and engaging link between academic, professional, and lay communities.
- Support and enhance the efforts of other organizations, faith networks, and groups carrying out work in related areas.
- Pursue large-scale funding to carry out the work of the Consortium.

This poster represents an early draft of our ideas for this proposed Collaborative. The name, vision, mission, and activities of the Collaborative will be determined in consultation with our partners, with the goal of identifying language and activities that will resonate with and have relevance to diverse stakeholders within an interdisciplinary, interfaith, and multicultural arena.

ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK

Since many of the collaborating partners will be affiliated with UCEDDs and seminaries, our overarching framework of this Collaborative is organized into the four key missions of both:

- Research and scholarship
- Education and training
- Fechnical assistance and service
- Dissemination

With six potential initial focus areas as a starting point, activities would be planned in the various cells on this matrix.

| | | Research and Scholarship | Education and Training | Service and Technical Assistance | Dissemination |
|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|--|---------------|
| | Supporting people with disabilities | | | | |
| | Supporting families | | | | |
| | Congregational inclusion and supports | | | | |
| | Theology and clergy training | | | | |
| | Service systems | | | | |
| | Religious education | | | | |

COLLABORATING PARTNERS

As many as ten UCEDDs will serve as founding institutions for this Collaborative, each collaborating with local seminaries and divinity schools on some activities. Other UCEDDs, colleges and university programs, and individual scholars would be invited to affiliate with the Collaborative in various activities. In addition, the Collaborative would seek to work in conjunction with other national organizations whose work intersects with the Collaborative's mission (e.g., AAIDD, AAPD, AAR/SBL, ATS, NOD, TASH, denominational and faith-based groups, etc.).





University. DISABILITY

Institute on
Community Integration
University of Minnesota





UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
Human Development Institute



Institute for Human Development
A University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)



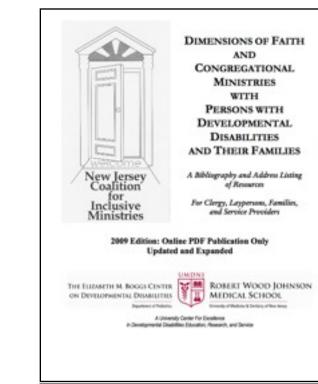


RESOURCES

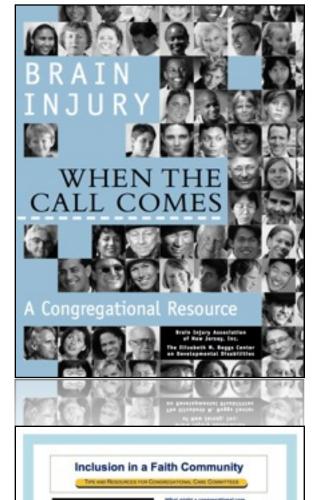
Autism and Faith:

A Journey into Community

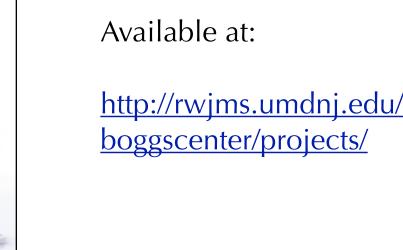
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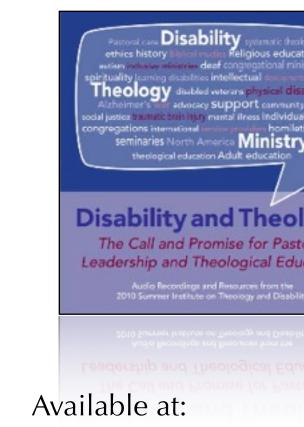












http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/site services/disabilityservices/ page.aspx?id=20