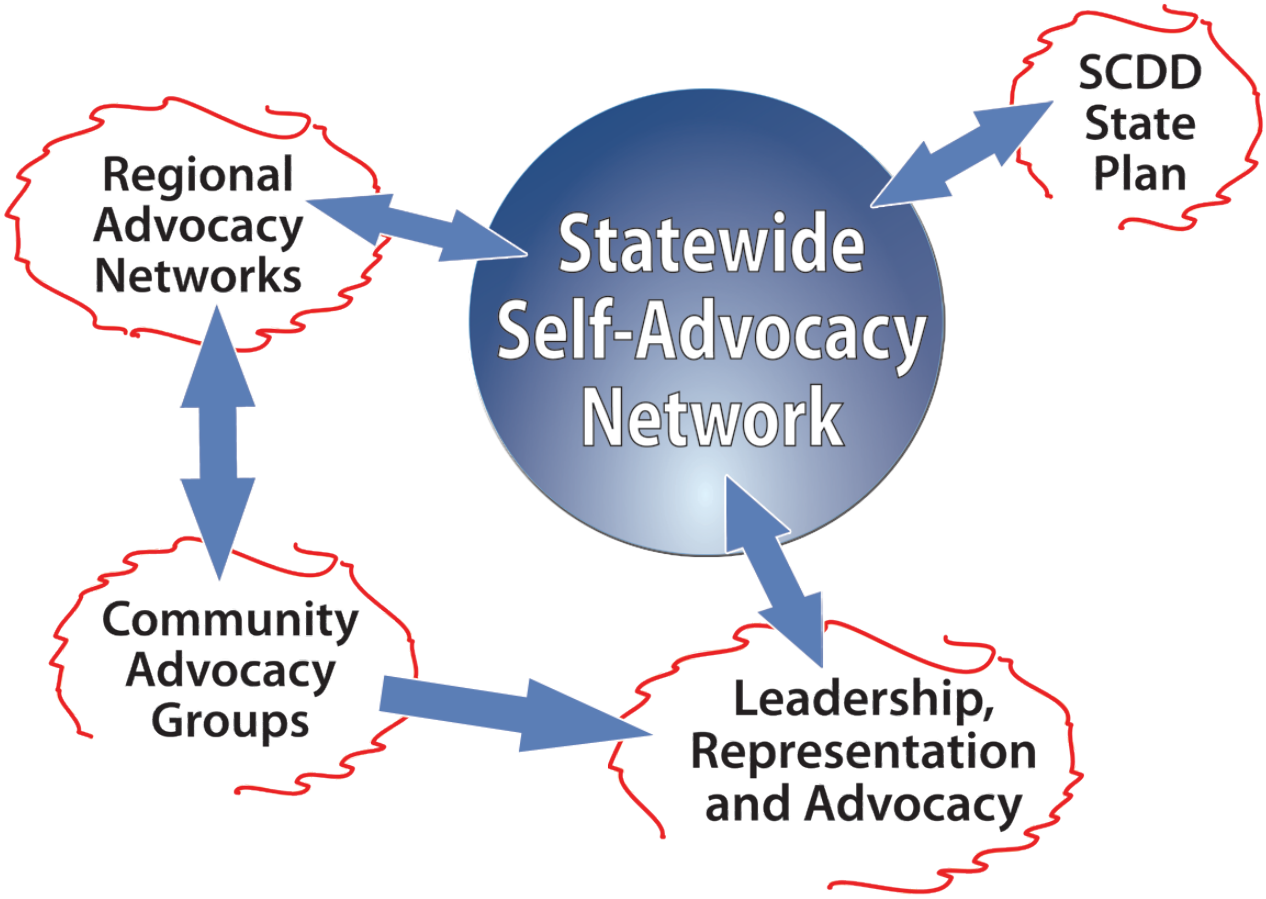
SSAN

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network



Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

Plain Language Version

SCDD

1507 21st Street, Suite 210 Sacramento, CA 95811

©2012 State Council on Developmental Disabilities

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities and regional area boards are firmly committed to supporting and enhancing self-advocacy throughout California through a Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN). The self-advocacy network is composed of self-advocates from each area board region along with representatives from statewide self-advocacy organizations and groups. Particular focus is paid on engaging youth, cross disability representation and cultural diversity. The goal is for self-advocates to assume leadership and impact systems. This booklet describes the Statewide Self-Advocacy Network.

Carol Risley, Executive Director

Mission Satement

State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) is established by state and federal law as an independent state agency to ensure that people with developmental disabilities and their families receive the services and supports they need.

Acknowledgements

State Council on Developmental Disabilities

State Council Self-Advocates Advisory Committee

Area Boards on Developmental Disabilities

Booklet contributors:

Jennifer Allen

Lisa Cooley

Molly Kennedy

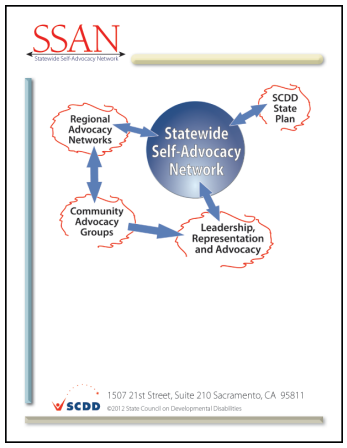
Jimmy Lee

Robert Taylor

BOARD RESOURCE CENTER
PO Box 601477, Sacramento, CA 95860
916-574-1023 • www.brcenter.org

The California State Council on Developmental Disabilities advocates, promotes and implements policies and practices that achieve self-determination, independence, productivity and inclusion in all aspects of community life for Californians with developmental disabilities and their families.

The Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (Network) will connect self-advocates, their communities and statewide organizations to increase leadership by persons with disabilities.



This booklet shows how the Network links leadership with successful advocacy across the state.

Table of Contents

Introduction 6–7

Purpose. 8–9

Partners. 10–11

How It Works 12–13

Support 14

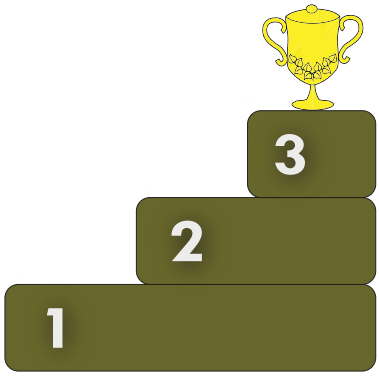
Outcomes 15–16

Frequently Asked Questions. 17–19

State Council State Plan

The Council develops a five year plan to carry out activities that improve the quality of services to persons with disabilities. Because California is so large, 13 area boards help develop and carry out the plan.

State Plan Goal #1 Advocacy



"Individuals with developmental disabilities have the information, skills, opportunities and support to advocate for their rights and services and to achieve self determination, independence, productivity, integration and inclusion in all facets of community life."

What this means:

The Network is a way for people with disabilities to:

- Get information in ways they understand
- Learn about leadership
- Have a stronger voice in advocacy together

Molly Kennedy

"Everyone with a developmental disability needs to see themselves as an advocate. Understand what it takes and how to build these skills.

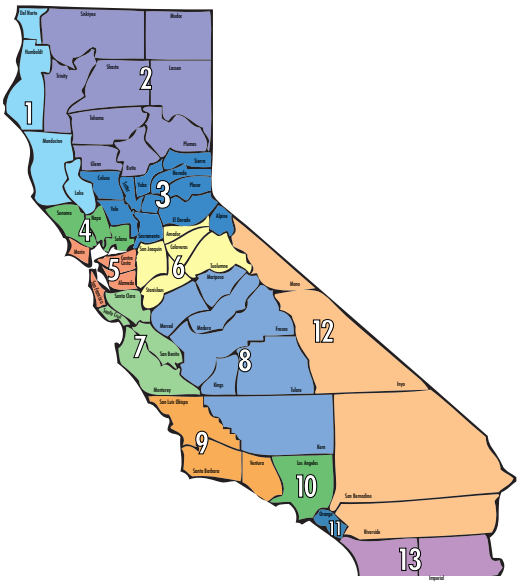
Advocate not only for your own needs, but for system changes that benefit everyone."

Introduction

What does the State Council do?

The Council works to improve access to good quality services for persons with developmental disabilities. The Council builds statewide partnerships, educates policymakers, provides trainings and breaks down barriers to inclusion. Most important is the Council's commitment to leadership by persons with disabilities.

Area Boards on Developmental Disabilities



The Council's 13 area boards help carry out community-based advocacy and training to ensure people with developmental disabilities receive the services they need.

Central to accomplishment of the Council's mission is an active commitment to leadership by persons with disabilities in personal and public advocacy.

By supporting the development of the Statewide Self-Advocacy Network—**Network**—with strong local roots and effective regional representation, the Council seeks to strengthen pathways to change led by persons with disabilities.

Lisa Cooley

"We have, for too long, only been included because it is the legal thing or the feel good thing that we should do.

I want the world to do better than that."

Purpose

The Network is a partnership that creates a stronger united voice around the state. It links advocates with community, regional and statewide leadership.

- **Personal Leadership**

  Choosing direction for your life and taking action.

- **Community Involvement**

  Making a difference in your community and developing the knowledge and skills to make a difference.

- **Peer Representation**

  Speaking or acting on behalf of other people with disabilities.

- **Advocacy**

  Making your voice heard about what is important to people with disabilities in your community and state.

Jennifer Allen

"It will bring together self-advocates and organizations around the table to create a new avenue in the advocacy community."

Statewide Partnerships

Successful advocacy means building relationships and helpful partnerships. Invited Network partners include:

Association of Regional Center Agencies

13 area board regions

California Foundation for Independent Living Centers

Department of Developmental Services

Disability Rights California

People First of California

State Council on Developmental Disabilities

University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

UCLA

USC

UC DAVIS

Robert M. Taylor

"If you are a leader that sets the example, people will follow your lead."

How it Works

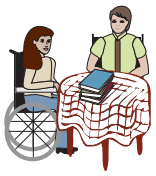
Each area board region and statewide advocacy group selects a representative to:

Attend two-day statewide meetings 4 times a year

- Learn about leadership
- Share advocacy interests
- Create plans and take action

Member Responsibilities

- Help develop advocacy plans and outcomes for each region
- Share information and leadership tools
- Reach-out to students and multi-cultural groups
- Contribute to statewide Network plan and progress reports
- Work on individual leadership plans



Support

The Council believes people with disabilities should lead advocacy efforts in their communities and statewide.

The Council will support the Network by providing:

- Travel related costs
- Meeting facilitation and leadership training
- Online resources in easy-to-understand formats
- Training for facilitators who support Network members
- Annual summit to share resources and leadership

Area boards and statewide organizations will:

- Provide facilitation support to carry out activities
- Help create advocacy plans
- Support advocacy activities

Jimmy Lee

"I will make the unheard voices be heard. I will speak loud and clear for those who can't."

Outcomes

Network members increase:

- Personal leadership
- Community involvement
- Peer representation
- Advocacy

SSAN
Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

Network :

- Has strong membership with operating rules
- Uses easy-to-understand information
- Increases participation in advocacy
- Conducts annual Summit to review successes and future plans
- Produces an annual report to the Council

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Network?

The Network is an active group of self-advocates who represent statewide organizations and area board regions.

It advocates regionally and statewide for persons with disabilities to have a better life.

What does the Network do?

The Network links advocates, their communities, regions and statewide groups to build a stronger advocacy voice. With persons with disabilities taking the lead, the Network will advocate with local, state and national policy-makers.

How are Network representatives chosen?

Each statewide organization and each area board region selects a person to represent them and participate in Network meetings and activities.

What do Network representatives do?

They attend meetings, create advocacy plans and take action. Each Network member practices leadership skills. They lead by their own example and share what they learn.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will the Network make a difference?

The Network will work towards persons with disabilities leading advocacy in their communities and statewide. It will address issues important to advocates and help change services and laws so life is better in the future.

How can I participate, if I am not a Network representative?

Get to know the Network representative near you. Contact your Area Board to find out how to do this. Join community and regional advocacy groups , community councils or boards of directors.

What does "lead by example" mean?

By learning successful ways to be in charge of your life and your advocacy work, you are leading by your good example.

Sharing your experiences and how you became successful with other people, helps them learn from you and change things for themselves.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do I find tools and videos the Network uses?

Websites:

State Council on Developmental Disabilities
http://www.scdd.ca.gov

State Council Advocacy Resource Site
http://scddadvocacy.org/

Your Area Board
http://www.scdd.ca.gov/Area_Boards.htm

Board Resource Center Library
http://brcenter.org/lib_library.html