

UCP of Tampa Bay
Accessibility Plan
Summary of October 2009 – September 2010 Results
Goals for October 2010 – September 2011

INTRODUCTION: At the request of UCP of Tampa Bay, Inc. Administrative Policies 9000 and 9010, the agency will develop an annual accessibility plan to address architectural, attitudinal, communication, employment, environmental, financial and transportation barriers to service. The plan is developed using input from program participants and staff via surveys, focus groups and other means. The plan is forwarded to the Board of Directors for review and approval.

ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Architectural Barriers Identified 2009-2010 and Accomplishments

- **Barrier:** The playground saf-dek surface was in disrepair and becoming a tripping hazard.
- **Accomplishment:** The playground surface was patched and repaired.
- **Barrier:** The bathrooms in the speech therapy modular were in disrepair.
- **Accomplishment:** The bathrooms were renovated and a family bathroom was created to accommodate families with children with disabilities.
- **Barrier:** The parking lot had pot holes and a limited number of handicapped parking spaces.
- **Accomplishment:** The parking lot was paved, re-stripped and two additional handicapped parking spaces were added.
- **Barrier:** The pool was closed and in need of repair.
- **Accomplishment:** The pool house was remodeled and brought up to code. The pool was resurfaced and repaired and brought up to current code.
- **Plan and Timeline:** UCP will continue to address architectural barriers in the current facility as they are identified. The pool needs a lift to accommodate older children and a new fence to keep children on the UCP property safe. UCP will seek funding to purchase a lift and new fencing.

ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Attitudinal Barriers Identified 2009-2010 and Accomplishments

- **Barrier:** The agency recognizes that there continue to be many attitudinal barriers and that overcoming these barriers is a long term effort.
Accomplishment: UCP collaborated with Circle K of Florida to produce a video about the services provided by UCP and the support we receive from Circle K of Florida.
- **Accomplishment:** UCP donates many hours of staff time towards reducing attitudinal barriers encountered by program participants. Staff and management are active within the community and participated in the following groups and activities:
 - **Community Health Fairs** – UCP’s program staff regularly participate in community health fairs to inform citizens about the availability of health and human services.
 - **Community Outreach** – UCP works with local civic groups to provide food for families with needs at the holidays. This provides a venue to educate members of the groups about children and adults with disabilities. UCP provides speakers for civic groups
 - **DART-** Doulas and Residents Together. Program started via partnership with Dr. Takagishi and University of South Florida Pediatric Residents and the UCP Doula Program. The program objectives are: to increase knowledge about doulas, breastfeeding, and culturally competent care, to assess doula satisfaction with resident linkage, and increase access to medical homes for newborns in high-risk communities.
 - **Early Steps** – UCP staff meets regularly with this early intervention service coordination group to ensure services for children age’s birth to three years.

- **Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities-** UCP is a member of this advocacy group. Early awareness of upcoming changes allows the agency to help prepare program participants and enables them to position themselves in a way that protects their service needs.
- **Parent to Parent Night** – UCP hosts this monthly meeting for parents of children with disabilities. The group is open to the community at large and is facilitated by a volunteer parent of a adult child with a disability. Participants do not have to receive services at UCP to attend. Topics are generated by the parents and include subjects such as long term estate planning for a child with a disability, transition to public school, first aid, and methods parents can employ in order to be an effective advocate for their child.
- **Pediatrician Tours** - Pediatricians from the University of South Florida’s School of Medicine tour the center monthly. The purpose of the tour is to inform them about best practice service delivery for children with disabilities including information about therapy services, developmental preschool, CARF and NAEYC accreditations, respite services and other supports available to children with disabilities and their families.
- **Social Networking-** UCP maintains updated communications on Facebook and Twitter
- **Student Internships** - The Therapy departments work with several college students through internships, practicums, and volunteer experiences to educate future service providers. Therapy department has also provided volunteer and observation experiences for local high school students who are interested in going into allied health fields.
- **Therapy Program Medical Consultant** - A pediatric neurologist meets regularly with the therapy team. He provides input regarding the program outcome report, as well as recommendations of ways to more effectively communicate to physicians and other referral sources regarding UCP’s programs and services.
- **TRAIN (Teens Reaching Animals in Need)** - This is program which educates committed youth on how to train Humane Society Dogs basic obedience. The youth who participate in this program come and volunteer their time to work with the children in UCP’s preschool.
- **UCPA** – UCP is a member of our national organization. UCPA provides advocacy on activities on a national level and promotes the inclusion of individuals with disabilities. this program come and volunteer their time to work with the children in UCP’s preschool.
- **United Way Agency Tours-**UCP tours local employers at the center in order to enable the community to better understand our programs and services.
- **United Way Day of Caring** - UCP hosts work groups at the center in order to enable United Way contributors to better understand our programs and services.
- **Volunteers** – UCP provides volunteer opportunities for children in elementary and middle school to provide them the opportunity to better understand children with disabilities.
- **Barrier:** The agency recognizes that there continues to be many attitudinal barriers and that overcoming these barriers is a long term effort.
- **Plan and Timeline:** UCP will continue our advocacy efforts in the community. The agency is a member of the Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities and participates in advocacy efforts through this organization. Staff participate in networking events to enable community members the opportunity to understand our programs and services.

COMMUNICATION BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Communication Barriers Identified 2009-2010 and Accomplishments

- **Barrier:** Individuals with disabilities and their families often feel isolated and alone.

- **Accomplishment:** The family support staff organizes Parent to Parent Night for parents to meet in a comfortable environment and share the challenges and accomplishments. This group is lead by a volunteer parent of an adult child with a disability.
- **Barrier:** UCP continues to have limited name recognition.
- **Accomplishment:** UCP has partnered with a communications firm to maintain our Facebook and Twitter sites, send out monthly newsletters and develop relationships with local media to promote UCP's programs and services.
- **Accomplishment:** UCP has eliminated the co-branding of UCP/Achieve Tampa Bay. UCP has produced all new marketing materials and letterhead has been changed to reflect a single logo.
- **Barrier:** The agency recognizes that many communication barriers exist and overcoming these is a long term effort.
- **Accomplishments:** UCP donates many hours of staff time towards reducing communication barriers encountered by program participants. Staff and management are active with the following groups:
 - **211 Tampa Bay** - Agency programs and services are listed in the 211 registry for Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando and Citrus counties. Inclusion in this registry is another way the organization attempts to communicate our presence to the community.
 - **Information and Referral Services** - Agency employees respond to requests for information from the public on a variety of issues related to disabilities.
- **Barrier:** UCP recognizes the behavior issues that arise in children due to difficulty with communication of their wants and needs.
- **Accomplishment:** The UCP Preschool continues to be a STARS (Students and Teachers Achieving Real Success) preschool. Via the STAR preschool program the program the teachers use Positive Behavior Support with their students and their families.
- **Barrier:** UCP recognizes that spoken language is often difficult for children with disabilities.
- **Accomplishment:** UCP uses low-tech communication devices such as pictures boards to introduce children to augmentative and alternative forms of communication. UCP accesses Bellow Fellows funding to purchase augmentative and alternative devices for children.
- **Plan and Timeline:** UCP will continue our community awareness efforts and our partnership with our Foundation. Program managers will submit at least one success story every six months which can be used for media stories, Foundation events and mailings, and marketing material. We will also ensure that our website is updated with information relevant to the needs of our consumers, stakeholders and donors. UCP will continue to seek consumer and stakeholder input through satisfaction surveys. In 2011 UCP will seek funding to support a Sibshops program for the siblings of children with disabilities. In 2011 UCP will partner will the University of South Florida College of Communication Disorders students to develop communication boards for young children enrolled in the early childhood education program.

EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Employment Barriers Identified 2009-2010 and Accomplishments

- **Barrier:** The agency recognizes that one of the barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities is finding employers to work for.
- **Accomplishment:** United Way continues to fund Achieve Jobs an employer marketing program.
- **Barrier:** The agency recognizes there are many barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities and that overcoming these barriers is a long term effort.
- **Plan and Time Line:** The agency will commit staff time and resources and continue to actively participate in the groups to promote the employment of adults with disabilities. UCP will submit a grant application to The Able Trust for follow-along funding for adults with disabilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Environmental Barriers Identified 2009-2010 and Accomplishments

- **Barrier:** The agency recognizes there will always be environmental barriers for individuals with disabilities.
- **Accomplishment:** UCP received Bellows Fellows funding from UCPA to assist families with environmental needs such as wheelchair ramps to make their homes and vehicles accessible.
- **Barrier:** The agency recognizes there are limited services for young children (less than three years of age) with autism.
- **Accomplishment:** UCP received funding from the City of Tampa to remodel classroom space to create a special classroom for young children with autism. The room is complemented by an adjoining sensory processing room. The room has been remodeled and furnished.
- **Plan and Time Line:** The agency will continue to commit staff time and resources to securing funding to assist clients with breaking down environment barriers. In 2011 UCP will hire a teacher with experience with young children with autism to staff the new classroom. UCP will seek funding to start community based fitness programs for children and adolescents with disabilities.

FINANCIAL BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Financial Barriers Identified 2009-2010 and Accomplishments

- **Barrier:** Organizations that have historically provided significant amounts of funding have restructured. UCP has realized significant funding cuts over the past 18 months.
- **Accomplishment:** UCP has continued to provide quality services with less grant funding available.
- **Barrier:** Consumers are having more and more difficulty obtaining funding for medical, preschool, therapeutic and employment services.
- **Accomplishment:** The agency has provided the following efforts towards providing or advocating for funding for services essential for individuals with disabilities.
 - **ASO (Administrative Services Organization)**-These funds have been used to help meet family needs which otherwise families could not afford such as car repairs so families can get to appointments, counseling services, etc.
 - **Grant Funding for Therapy** - UCP continues to seek grant funding for services to supplement what the agency receives through third party reimbursement and to assist families who may not have a pay source for services.
 - **Lending Library**-Family support staff manage a lending library of equipment for families to utilize free of charge.
- **Barrier:** The agency recognizes that financial barriers will always exist for individuals with disabilities.
- **Plan and Time Line:** The agency will commit staff time and resources and continue to actively participate in advocacy groups. UCP is open to the possibility of joining new groups as needs are identified. UCP will continue to look for new grant funding opportunities to provide services to clients. UCP will participate with UCPA to identify new avenues of funding for services for individuals with disabilities.

TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Transportation Barriers Identified in 2009-2010 and Accomplishments.

- **Barrier:** It has been identified that adequate transportation for our supported employment and supported living clients to and from appointments and/or work sites can be difficult to find.
- **Plan and Timeline:** UCP will continue to explore transportation options for individuals in the employment program.

SUMMARY

UCP is a strong advocate for individuals with disabilities. The physical facilities were modified to increase access and reduce architectural barriers. UCP remains committed to improving access for individuals with disabilities and other barriers. In 2010-2011 we will seek new funding sources to provide additional programming for children and adults with disabilities.