



## Department of Developmental Services Regional Advisory and Planning Councils

### **ATTENTION DDS INDIVIDUALS, PARENTS AND FAMILIES**

Do you want to have a voice advising the Regional Director on the needs of individuals with intellectual disability? Would you like an opportunity to ask questions about DDS? Would you like the opportunity to speak directly with your Regional Director? Have you heard about the DDS Regional Advisory and Planning Councils (RACs)? Maybe we can help!

### **History of the RACs**

Section 17a-273 of the Connecticut General Statutes allows for the establishment of three RACs. Per statute, “The Commissioner of Developmental Services shall appoint at least one advisory and planning council for each state developmental services region operated by the Department of Developmental Services, which council shall have the responsibility of consulting with and advising the director of the region on the needs of persons with intellectual disability in the region, the annual plan and budget of the region and other matters deemed appropriate by the council.”

### **RAC Membership**

Section 17a-273 further requires the following Council membership and meetings: Each such council shall consist of at least ten members appointed from the state developmental services region. No employee of any state agency engaged in the care or training of persons with intellectual disability shall be eligible for appointment. At least one member shall be designated by a local chapter of the Arc of Connecticut in the region. At least one member shall be an individual who is eligible for and receives services from the Department of Developmental Services. At least two members shall be parents of persons with intellectual disability. Members shall be appointed for terms of three years. No member may serve more than two consecutive terms, except a member may continue to serve until a successor is appointed. Each council shall appoint annually, from among its members, a chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary. The council may make rules for the conduct of its affairs. The director of the region shall be an ex-officio member of the council without vote and shall attend its meetings.

### **RAC Activities**

The RACs engage in education and advocacy on issues regarding individuals and their families in the region. Members facilitate good communication for dialogue and feedback between the RAC, advisory groups, individuals, family members, local citizens, and other organizations. RAC members often engage in legislative advocacy, foster family-to-family connections, and spur grassroots initiatives. Each region may have a different focus area based on the needs of the individuals in that region.

### **Schedule of Meetings**

The RACs meet at least six times annually. All meetings are open to the public. For a schedule of meetings or to review minutes of past meetings, choose the appropriate region on DDS’s webpage. For more information, please contact the Office of the Regional Director:

**North Region: Phone:** (860) 263-2448 **Email:** [ddsct.north@ct.gov](mailto:ddsct.north@ct.gov)  
**Web:** <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2&q=432256>

**South Region: Phone:** (203) 294-5053 **Email:** [ddsct.south@ct.gov](mailto:ddsct.south@ct.gov)  
**Web:** <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2&q=429392>

**West Region: Phone:** (203) 805-7401 **Email:** [ddsct.west@ct.gov](mailto:ddsct.west@ct.gov)  
**Web:** <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2&q=432584>

# FAMILY CONNECTIONS

*Strong Families Build Strong Communities*

Connecting with other families or peers can be an important source of support and information for families who have a relative or loved one who has a disability.

Families greatly benefit from the help and support that other families can provide by sharing experiences, information and knowledge of available resources. Parent advocacy and family support groups offer information, education, advocacy, discussion groups, parent support, and networking to people who share similar experiences raising a family member who has a disability. Family Connections provides information for all types of family members including parents, caregivers, self-advocate siblings, grandparents, and others.

Please visit the DDS website [here](http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=391160) (<http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=391160>) for additional family connection opportunities or visit the webpage at [www.ct.gov/dds](http://www.ct.gov/dds) and select “Family Connections” under the “Resources” column.

*Good Lives are created when Family Members Connect with Other Families or Peers*

**INFORMATION & NAVIGATION**  
I'm looking for information about...

**CONNECTING & NETWORKING**  
 CONNECTIONS FOR YOUTH  
 CONNECTIONS FOR ADULTS

**GOODS & SERVICES**  
 LIFECOURSE  
 HELP LINE  
 ACCESS TO SERVICES