

# Employment First

## Strategic Plan



**What is Employment First?** Expecting, encouraging, providing, creating, and rewarding integrated employment in the workforce:

- ◆ At minimum wage or competitive wages and benefits;
- ◆ As the *first and preferred* outcome for working-age youth and adults with disabilities;
- ◆ Especially for individuals with complex and significant disabilities, for whom job placement in the past has been limited or traditionally has not occurred.

### Why is Employment First a Priority?

- ◆ Utah's HB240, *Employment First Priority*, passed in 2011 (32 states have legislation)
- ◆ Nationally, 19% or less of people with IDD served by states agencies work in integrated, competitive employment<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ Utah's national rank for supported employment has declined from 7th to 12th since 2008<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from The National Report on Employment Services Outcomes, versions 2009–2012, by the Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts, Boston



**When individuals are employed in the community earnings increase, social opportunities and relationships expand, self-determination is heightened, and people report a higher quality of life.**

### Our Vision:

for every person who receives services from DSPD to achieve his or her career possibilities.

### Our Mission:

to ensure services offered by DSPD emphasize, promote, and support competitive, integrated, and community-based employment for people with disabilities.

### Our Strategic Issues:

- ⇒ Stakeholder Education
- ⇒ Financing and Contracting Methods
- ⇒ Services and Service Innovation
- ⇒ Performance Measurement



### What can parents and others do to help?

- ◆ Encourage self-advocacy and leadership
- ◆ Support Communication
- ◆ Encourage Participation
- ◆ Foster *INTEGRATED relationships and social connections*
- ◆ Model important skills and behaviors
- ◆ Provide reinforcement and feedback
- ◆ Partner and Plan with schools and other services *EARLY!*
- ◆ Connect with others
- ◆ *HOLD HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND POSITIVE ATTITUDES!*

**UTAH DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES—DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? CONTACT: TRICIA JONES-PARKIN @ (801) 538-4498 OR TLJONES@UTAH.GOV