



### **UPENN Collaborative Named Top Website**

The National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR) has chosen the UPENN Collaborative RRTC website as one of the top “Web Sites You Can Use”. These top websites were listed in a poster format and disseminated nationally. The websites selected were from projects funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). NCDDR performs research, technical assistance and demonstration activities focusing on the dissemination and utilization of disability research funded by NIDRR.

### **UPENN Collaborative National Conference Update**

On September 19 - 20, 2006, the UPENN Collaborative on Community Integration will be holding a National Conference on the State of the Knowledge on Promoting Community Integration of People with Psychiatric Disabilities. On September 21, 2006, UPenn Collaborative faculty will offer half-day and full-day training programs using the latest RRTC training curricula developed out of RRTC research and training and technical assistance experiences. Conference presentations and training programs are planned for a broad stakeholder audience: advocates, family members, service providers, practitioners, researchers and policy makers. This two-day conference (Tuesday and Wednesday) and one-day training program (Thursday) will take place at the Holiday Inn in the Historic District of Philadelphia. The Call for Papers for the Conference has been extended to June 30, 2006. Information regarding workshop proposals can be found on our website at <http://www.upennrrtc.org/callforpapersrevised2006.5.18.pdf>. Registration information will also be available on our website in the next few weeks.

### **Custody Training Offered by the RRTC**

Two RRTC partners and members of the RRTC Training and Technical Assistance Committee, Edie Mannion, of the Training and Education Center at the Mental Health Association of SEPA and Barbara Granger, of the Matrix Center at Horizon House, have recently developed a training program on custody and child welfare issues. This training program evolved out of the research on child custody conducted by Min Park and David Mandell of the RRTC, which indicated that mothers with serious mental illness are more likely to have children involved in the child welfare system.

This new training program entitled, “How Case Managers Can Help Behavioral Health Consumers with Parenting & Child Custody Issues” addresses issues that case managers face in dealing with parents with mental illness, including identifying parent needs, helping parents who are being investigated, helping with family reunification and dealing with the loss of parental rights. A new Custody Assessment Form is also being piloted as part of the training program.

Since the beginning of 2006, training sessions have been conducted with case manager supervisors at Horizon House, the Mental Health Association of Southeastern PA, and the City of Philadelphia. Barbara Granger will also be presenting this training at the USPPA conference in Phoenix, AZ in early June. Also, a modified version of this training will be



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offered for conference attendees at the RRTC Conference Training Day on September 21, 2006. Registration for the Conference Training Day will be available on our website in the coming weeks. A training manual will be available by the end of 2006. If interested in purchasing the manual, please contact Loran Kundra at [lkundra@mhasp.org](mailto:lkundra@mhasp.org).

### **National Education Survey**

The UPENN Collaborative on Community Integration is conducting a study looking at the post-secondary education experiences of individuals diagnosed with a mental illness. Students who are currently enrolled in college or who have completed at least one semester of college are encouraged to complete a brief and anonymous online survey. To date, we have received approximately 484 responses from previous students and current students from over 250 different colleges and universities around the country. Those who respond are eligible to participate in a raffle with cash prizes. The survey will significantly increase our knowledge about the educational lives and experiences of people with mental illnesses. It will inform policy and practice by increasing our understanding of barriers that are experienced in post-secondary educational settings and support needs and desires. If you are interested in completing the survey, please visit: <http://www.upennrrtc.org/research/education.html>. Do so as soon as possible, as data collection for the survey will end on June 30, 2006.

### **Circles of Support**

UPENN Collaborative on Community Integration Offers Two New Tool Kits—Go to the RRTC website at [www.upennrrtc.org](http://www.upennrrtc.org) to download the latest tool kits on Self-Advocacy and Health Care for Older Adults with Mental and The College Experience: Tips for Reducing Stress and Getting the Accommodations You Need.