

Connecting with School Partners

Perspectives from Okanogan, Spokane, Pend Oreille, and Island Counties

Okanogan County 2022

- Population: 50,000
- School Districts: 9 largest graduates = 333 smallest = 22
- Employment: 19
- CI: 8
- DDA Grads / year: 1 to 4 on average, none last year
- DD staff: 1 + Parent to Parent
- Unique fact: Largest Xcountry Ski Trail _____ miles?
- Typical day – Forecast: Sunshine _____ days of the year

Key Partners...
Okanogan County

Hide and Seek: --- Hidden Populations

Okanogan County

- Focusing on networking to reach under-accessed, underserved populations
- Key Partners: School Staff, Homeschool Groups, DDA, DVR, Parent to Parent and Local Support Groups, Tribal Community, DVR & Schools, Hispanic Community, Community Members
 - Connect with schools and groups that have an affinity with your county but are outside county borders.
 - Brainstorm who might not be getting information or have difficulty understanding available information
 - Find the “helpers” to get you into those communities

➤ Biggest Challenges:

Large geographic region with low per capita per square mile

Overcoming the status quo (perceived and real) of Rural Service Expectations

Island County 2022

Mike Etzell mikeet@islandcountywa.gov

-
- Population: 80,000
 - School Districts: 4 largest graduates = 350+, smallest = 50+
 - folks in Employment: 75+
 - Folks in CI: 8
 - DDA Grads / year: avg 4 since '15, 4-8 typical total grads range 3-17
 - DD staff: 1 + Parent to Parent
 - Unique fact: How many miles of shoreline exist? _____
 - Typical day – how many deer would you see on Main street in Coupeville-
the county seat? _____

Key Partners...
Island County

School staff + Families

School staff + Families

Island County

- Focus on Transition: HIGH priority: we have found that success ripples up and down the age spectrum
- Key Partners: School staff and families. specifically Directors of Spec. Ed, then Lead Transition teachers, Families.
 - Most of time have SPED directors on board. Exception: district in transition – Asked families if wanted \$paycheck\$ prior to graduation? FAMILIES drove the process (group interview night). created options for future....
 - New directors engage engage engage: support **success** of your staff/families.
 - Biggest Challenge: Turnover in school staff means summer connections with hiring, ultimately new staff.
 - South Whidbey Lead Transition teacher Luke Hodson and ½ time School Psych Sonja Ringsrud.

Spokane County 2022

- **Population:** 546,040
- **School Districts:** 13
- **# of Adult Individualized Employment Participants:** ~528
- **# of Community Inclusion Participants:** ~251
- **# of School to Work Participants:** 41
- **# of Job Foundation Participants:** 7
- **DDA Grads / year:** avg. 86/year since 2015
- **County DD staff:** 5
- **Unique fact:** Spokane is the birthplace of what nationally-recognized day of celebration?

Pend Oreille County 2022

- **Population:** 13,886
- **School Districts:** 3
- **# of Adult Individualized Employment Participants:** 3
- **# of Community Inclusion Participants:** 1
- **# of School to Work Participants:** 0
- **# of Job Foundation Participants:** 2 eligible in 2022
- **DDA Grads / year:** avg. 2/year since 2015
- **County DD staff:** 5
- **Unique fact:** The origin of the name Pend Oreille comes from _____.

Spokane and Pend Oreille Counties
Urban and Rural Realities

Connecting with Schools

- Initial contact: Top-down and bottom-up connections
- Engagement tactics:
 - Attend school staff meetings
 - Volunteer to tour and present at transition programs
 - Create and consistently distribute succinct messaging
 - Keep your email lists up to date
 - Seek out open school partners
 - Attend Parent Info Nights
 - Coordinate with partners ahead of time

-
- **Corina Radford** – Developmental Disabilities Contract Administrator
 - Okanogan Behavioral HealthCare
 - cradford@okbhc.org
 - Office (509) 826-8476 / Cell (509) 322-6388

 - **Jason Stariwat** – Transition Specialist
 - Spokane County Developmental Disabilities Division
 - jstariwat@spokanecounty.org
 - Phone (509) 403-0163

 - **Mike Etzell** – Developmental Disabilities Coordinator
 - Island County Human Services
 - mikeet@islandcountywa.gov
 - Office (360) 678-7883 / Cell (360) 499-5401