

GEORGIA COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



BENCHMARK STUDY QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Prepared For:

Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities

Atlanta, Georgia

Prepared By:

V&L Research & Consulting, Inc.

Atlanta, Georgia

July 2010

Corporate Office: 8075 Mall Parkway,
Suite 101-102, Atlanta, GA 30038
770-484-5889 ♦ 770-484-5863 (fax)
vlresearch@mindspring.com
www.vlresearch.com

Accounting Office: 1853 Kanawha Drive, Stone
Mountain, GA 30087
Focus Facility: Dynamic Research,
1800 Century Boulevard NE
Suite 1000 - 10th floor, Atlanta, GA 30345

Table of Contents

Background and Methodology.....	2
Summary of Findings.....	5
Detailed Findings.....	8
Respondent Characteristics.....	9
Awareness of Developmental Disabilities.....	15
Perceived Exposure to Persons with Developmental Disabilities.....	17
Perceptions about the Capabilities and Needs of Persons with Developmental Disabilities.....	20
Awareness of the Americans with Disabilities Act.....	24
Awareness of GCDD and Other Organizations that Serve the Developmental Disabilities Community	26
Support for Increased Government Funding to Assist Persons with Disabilities.....	28
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	30



Background

On behalf of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD), PRecise Communications, Inc. recently contracted V&L Research and Consulting, Inc. to conduct a benchmark study to gain insights from key stakeholder groups that will assist with the development of a new awareness and marketing campaign for the federally funded state agency. The objectives of the research were to understand awareness and attitudes of the general public on the topic of developmental disabilities, as well as obtaining insights from the developmental disabilities community and partners of the organization. This information will be used to develop communications that will effectively promote awareness of GCDD and developmental disabilities community.

Methodology

V&L Research and Consulting, an independent research firm, was contracted to conduct a two-phased research study: focus group research followed by a quantitative survey. This report presents the findings of the quantitative survey that was conducted from June 16th to July 2nd, 2010. A total of 379 surveys were collected from the following two groups:

- A random sample of 200 Georgia residents who were interviewed by telephone. (“General Public” group)
- 179 surveys submitted online by individuals living with developmental disabilities and their families, members of advocacy organizations and service providers who work directly with disabilities. This sample was derived from subscribers of GCDD’s statewide list-serv database. Participants from this group represented the disabilities community. (“DD Community Participants” group)

To ensure that the survey was accessible, V&L used a multi-mode methodology that included telephone, an online survey, mail and fax. Respondents from both the General Public and DD Community Participants



groups were given the option of using any of these methods to participate in the study.

The rationale for surveying representatives from the DD Community was to compare opinions of the public-at-large with a group of individuals who were likely to have more knowledge and experience with developmental disabilities issues. The survey questionnaire was developed after conducting the first phase of the research - focus groups among the general public, members of the developmental disabilities community, and GCDD partners and opinion leaders. (A summary of focus group findings is presented in a separate report.) The survey took eight to ten minutes to complete and covered the following topic areas:

- Awareness of and issues related to developmental disabilities (DD) and issues related to DD
- Perceptions about employment, educational settings, and living environments for persons with developmental disabilities
- Awareness of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities and other organizations that provide services
- Awareness of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Support for increasing taxes in order to support persons with developmental disabilities in their communities



Summary of Findings

Respondent Characteristics

- The survey sample was comprised of two groups:
 - A random sample of Georgia residents (General Public)
 - Individuals living with developmental disabilities and their families, members of advocacy organizations and service providers who work directly with disabilities (DD Community Participants)
- The DD Community Participants differed from the General Public sample on demographic characteristics that included age, education, and income.
- Members of the DD Community Participants had a higher level of awareness of issues related to developmental disabilities, even when compared to members of the General Public with disabled family members.

Awareness of Developmental Disabilities

- Respondents most frequently associated the phrase “developmental disability” with a mental, cognitive, or learning disability.
- Respondents from the DD Community Participants were able to name a broader range of medical conditions associated with developmental disabilities.

Perceived Exposure to Persons with Developmental Disabilities

- More than three-fourths (79.8%) of respondents from the DD Community Participants group interact with persons with disabilities every day.
- Members of the General Public are far less likely to say that they come across (or notice) persons with developmental disabilities in their everyday lives (33.3%), even if they have a family member with a disability (44.3%).

Perceptions about the Capabilities and Needs of Persons with Developmental Disabilities

- Only about one-fourth of the total sample (26.4%) believed that it was very likely that persons with developmental disabilities could have careers with opportunities for advancement.



- Most agreed that adults with developmental disabilities should be able to live on their own with services and supports (78.2% of the DD Community Participants and 54.5% of the General Public).
- Less than 5% believed that adults with developmental disabilities should live in institutions or segregated settings.
- Slightly more than half of the respondents from the DD Community Participants group believed that children with developmental disabilities should be in general classrooms with regular education students (58.4%).
- About half (52.8%) of the General Public sample felt that children with developmental disabilities should be placed in special classes or special schools.
- When asked to describe the types of issues that people with developmental disabilities face when trying to participate fully in community life, the most common answers referred to prejudice, discrimination, and /or a lack of acceptance (38.9%).
- Members of the General Public were far less likely than respondents in the DD Community Participants group to mention issues such as accessibility, a lack of supports, job opportunities, funds, communication problems, and social isolation.

Awareness of the Americans with Disabilities Act

- Almost everyone in the DD Community Participants sample (97.2%) and 79.5% of the General Public sample had heard of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Respondents were most familiar with regulations related to the accessibility of public places and telecommunication services.

Awareness of GCDD and Other Organizations that Serve the Developmental Disabilities Community

- Before taking the survey, 86.5% of DD Community participants and 26.5% of the General Public had heard of the GCDD.
- When asked to name organizations that provide services or serve as advocates for people with developmental disabilities, respondents mentioned a wide variety of organizations.



- GCDD was mentioned most often by respondents in the DD Community Participants group (24.6%) and the United Way was the most frequent mention from the General Public group (10.5%)



Support for Increased Funding to Assist Persons with Disabilities

- A large majority of respondents agreed that they would support increasing state government funding to support people with disabilities in their communities (87.0%).
- Support was highest for an increased tax on items such as cigarettes or alcohol (78.0% of the DD Community Participants and 49.7% of the General Public).



Detailed Findings



Respondent Characteristics

As mentioned in the Methodology, the survey sample was comprised of two groups: a random sample of Georgia residents (*General Public*) and a sample of individuals living with developmental disabilities and their families, members of advocacy organizations and service providers who work directly with disabilities (*DD Community Participants*). Tables 1 through 10 provide a description of sample characteristics that include demographics, experience with developmental disabilities, and self-reported awareness of issues related to developmental disabilities.

Individuals who were invited to participate in the study as DD Community participants included managers and administrators of service organizations, government agencies, and advocacy groups. This may explain why respondents from the DD Community Participants differed from the General Public sample on many demographic characteristics, experience with developmental disabilities, and awareness of issues. Differences that were observed included the following:

- The DD Community Participants sample skewed somewhat older
- The DD Community Participants sample included a higher percentage of females (the sample as a whole was predominantly female – 71.2%)
- There was greater representation among African-Americans in the General Public sample (37.0%) compared to the DD Community Participants sample (9.5%)
- The DD Community Participants reported higher educational levels (59.8% had graduate degrees) and higher incomes
- More than two-thirds (68.7%) of DD Community Participants either had a developmental disability or a member of their extended family had a developmental disability. Among respondents in the General Public sample 48.5% reported having a disability or a family member with a disability.

The survey sample was comprised of two groups:

- *A random sample of Georgia residents (General Public)*
- *Individuals affiliated with organizations related to developmental disabilities (DD Community)*

The DD Community differed from the General Public sample on demographic characteristics that included age, education, and income. This may be explained by the inclusion of organization managers and administrators in the DD Community sample.



- Eight out of ten (81.0%) of DD Community participants described themselves as being *very aware* of issues related to developmental disabilities, while only 38.5% of respondents from the General Public sample described themselves as being *very aware* of these issues. Among members of the General Public who reported that someone in their extended family had a developmental disability, less than one-half (47.4%) were *very aware* of issues related to developmental disabilities.

Members of the DD Community had a higher level of awareness of issues related to developmental disabilities, even when compared to members of the General Public with disabled family members.

Forty percent of the sample (42.0%) lived within the five-county core metro-Atlanta area while the remaining respondents lived in counties throughout the rest of the state. The distribution of urban and non-urban respondents was similar for both the DD Community Participants and General Public samples. A comparison of urban Atlanta versus non-Atlanta responses was conducted for every survey question and few differences were observed. These differences are noted in the report.

Please note that the tables and graphs that appear throughout the report contain notation that indicates where significant differences were observed between groups. In the tables, values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction. Column proportions that are equal to zero or one are excluded from the tests. The notation used in the tables also appears next to the data labels in the graphs.



Figure 1: Geographic Distribution of the Survey Sample

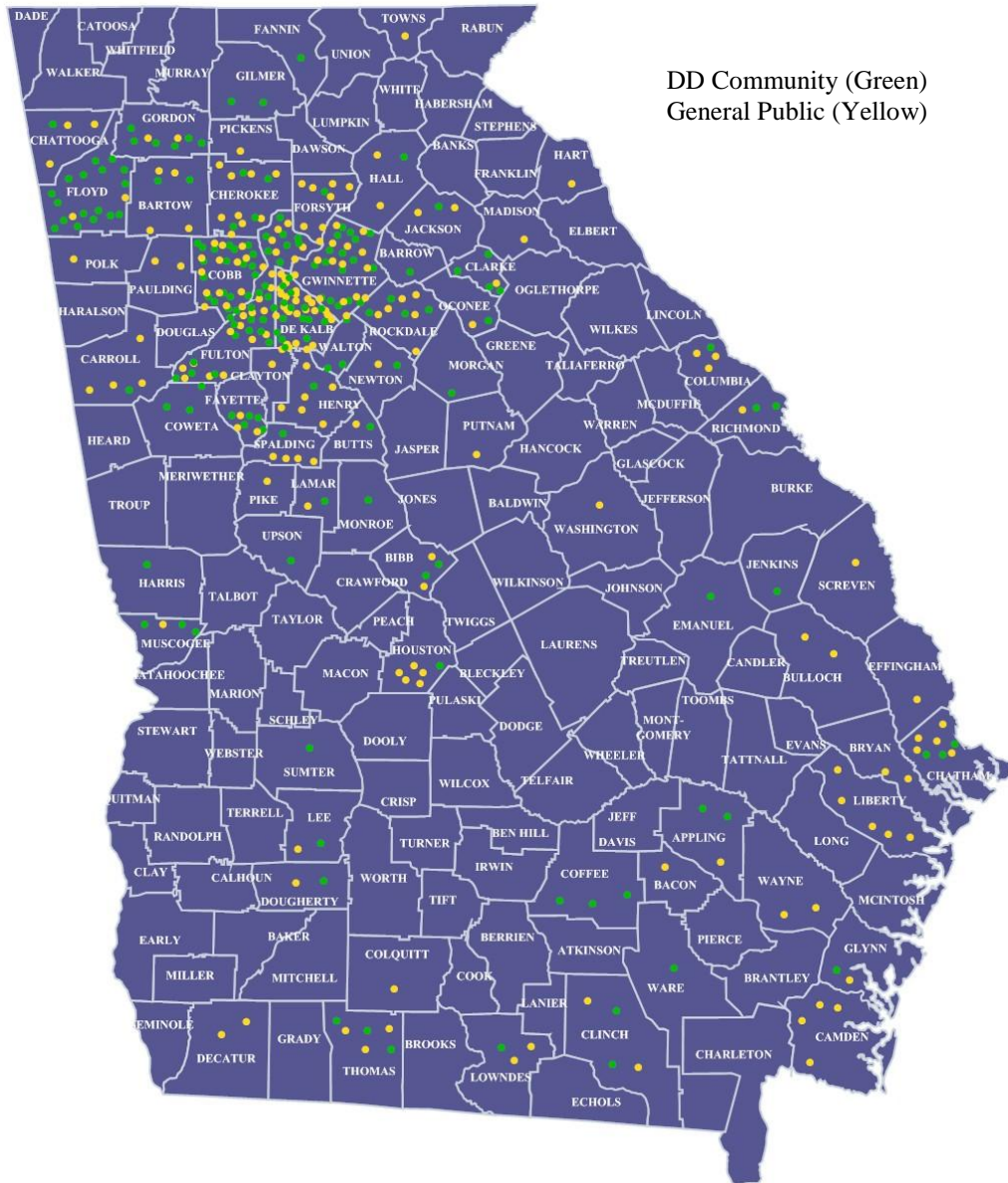


Table 1: Age

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Between 18 and 29	2.8% _a	10.5% _b	6.9%
Between 30 and 44	21.8% _a	29.5% _a	25.9%
Between 45 and 64	75.4% _a	59.5% _b	67.0%
No Answer	.0%	.5%	.3%

Table 2: Gender

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Male	16.2% _a	37.5% _b	27.4%
Female	82.1% _a	61.5% _b	71.2%
No Answer	1.7% _a	1.0% _a	1.3%

Table 3: Ethnicity

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Caucasian	84.9% _a	57.5% _b	70.4%
Hispanic/Latino	1.7% _a	3.0% _a	2.4%
Middle Eastern	.0%	.5% _a	.3%
African-American	9.5% _a	37.0% _b	24.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.1% _a	.0%	.5%
American Indian	1.1% _a	1.0% _a	1.1%
Other	1.1% _a	.5% _a	.8%
No answer	.6% _a	.5% _a	.5%

Table 4: Marital Status

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Single	8.4% _a	18.0% _b	13.5%
Married	74.3% _a	67.0% _a	70.4%
Divorced	10.6% _a	9.0% _a	9.8%
Single living w/significant other	2.2% _a	1.0% _a	1.6%
Widow	2.8% _a	4.0% _a	3.4%
No answer	1.7% _a	1.0% _a	1.3%



Table 5: Education

	DD Community		
	Participants	General Public	Total
Some high school	.0%	3.5% _a	1.8%
High school graduate	2.8% _a	15.5% _b	9.5%
Some college	11.2% _a	27.5% _b	19.8%
College graduate	24.6% _a	34.0% _b	29.6%
Graduate school	59.8% _a	14.5% _b	35.9%
Trade/Technical school	1.1% _a	3.5% _a	2.4%
No Answer	.6% _a	1.5% _a	1.1%

Table 6: Annual Household Income

	DD Community		
	Participants	General Public	Total
Under \$30K	7.8% _a	17.0% _b	12.7%
\$30 to 39K	4.5% _a	7.0% _a	5.8%
\$40 to 49K	6.7% _a	9.5% _a	8.2%
\$50 to 74K	18.4% _a	16.0% _a	17.2%
\$75 to 99K	20.1% _a	12.0% _b	15.8%
\$100K+	35.2% _a	18.5% _b	26.4%
No answer	7.3% _a	20.0% _b	14.0%

Table 7: Employment Status

	DD Community		
	Participants	General Public	Total
Working full-time	71.5% _a	53.0% _b	61.7%
Working part-time	14.5% _a	8.5% _a	11.3%
Unemployed and seeking employment	3.9% _a	10.0% _b	7.1%
Unemployed or retired and not seeking employment	7.8% _a	24.5% _b	16.6%
No answer	2.2% _a	4.0% _a	3.2%



Table 8: Respondents with Developmental Disabilities or Family/Extended Family Members who have Developmental Disabilities

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Blind/visually impaired	11.2% _a	4.0% _b	7.4%
Hearing impaired	11.7% _a	9.0% _a	10.3%
Has a mental, cognitive or learning disability	52.5% _a	19.0% _b	34.8%
Was born with a congenital disability, a disability acquired at birth	27.4% _a	12.5% _b	19.5%
Other physical disability	25.1% _a	16.5% _b	20.6%
No one in the family has a disability	31.3% _a	51.5% _b	42.0%

Note: Column percentages may total more than 100% due to multiple responses.

Table 9a: Respondents' Ratings of their Awareness of the Issues Related to Persons with Developmental Disabilities

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Very aware	81.0% _a	38.5% _b	58.6%
Somewhat aware	17.9% _a	48.0% _b	33.8%
Somewhat unaware	1.1% _a	10.5% _b	6.1%
Not at all aware	.0%	3.0% _a	1.6%

Table 9b: Respondents' Ratings of their Awareness of the Issues Related to Persons with Developmental Disabilities

	General Public Respondents with Disabilities or Family Members with Disabilities
Very aware	47.4%
Somewhat aware	44.3%
Somewhat unaware	7.2%
Not at all aware	1.0%

Table 10: Region of Residence

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Metro Atlanta (5-County Core)	44.9% _a	39.5% _a	42.0%
Areas Outside Metro Atlanta	55.1% _a	60.5% _a	58.0%





Awareness of Developmental Disabilities

At the beginning of the survey, respondents were presented with the following definition of a developmental disability:

A developmental disability is a chronic mental and/or physical disability that occurs before age 22 and is expected to last a lifetime. It may require supports in three or more of the following life activities: self-care, language, learning, mobility, self-direction, independent living and economic self-sufficiency.

After being given the definition above, respondents were asked to name the types of medical conditions or impairments that came to mind whenever they heard the phrase *developmental disability*. Respondents provided answers without the aid of a list. On average, DD Community Participants were able to name a broader range of medical conditions (2.4) when compared to General Public respondents (1.5).

Answers were coded into the categories shown in Table 11. Respondents most frequently associated the phrase “developmental disability” with a mental, cognitive, or learning disability (e.g. autism, ADHD). However, DD Community Participant members were far more likely than respondents from the General Public to also mention other impairments such as congenital disabilities, other physical disabilities, visual impairments, and hearing impairments.

Table 11: Based on this definition and any knowledge you may have, when you hear the phrase “developmental disability,” what types of medical conditions or impairments come to mind?

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Visual Impairment	22.9% _a	4.5% _b	13.2%
Hearing Impairment	20.7% _a	4.0% _b	11.9%
A mental, cognitive or learning disability	84.4% _a	64.0% _b	73.6%
A congenital disability acquired from birth	54.7% _a	24.5% _b	38.8%
Any other physical disability	45.3% _a	39.0% _a	42.0%
Other	2.8% _a	4.0% _a	3.4%
None, Do Not Know	7.8% _a	7.0% _a	7.4%
Average Number of Responses	2.4	1.5	1.9

Note: Column percentages may total more than 100% due to multiple responses.

Respondents most frequently associated the phrase “developmental disability” with a mental, cognitive, or learning disability.

Respondents from the DD Community were able to name a broader range of medical conditions associated with developmental disabilities.



Perceived Exposure to Persons with Developmental Disabilities

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 14.6% of non-institutionalized Georgia residents over five years of age have some type of disability.¹ To put this number into perspective, consider that the percentage of Georgia residents with disabilities is higher than the percentage of . . .

. . . senior citizens ages 65 or older (10.1%)

or

. . . children under the age of 5 (7.6%)

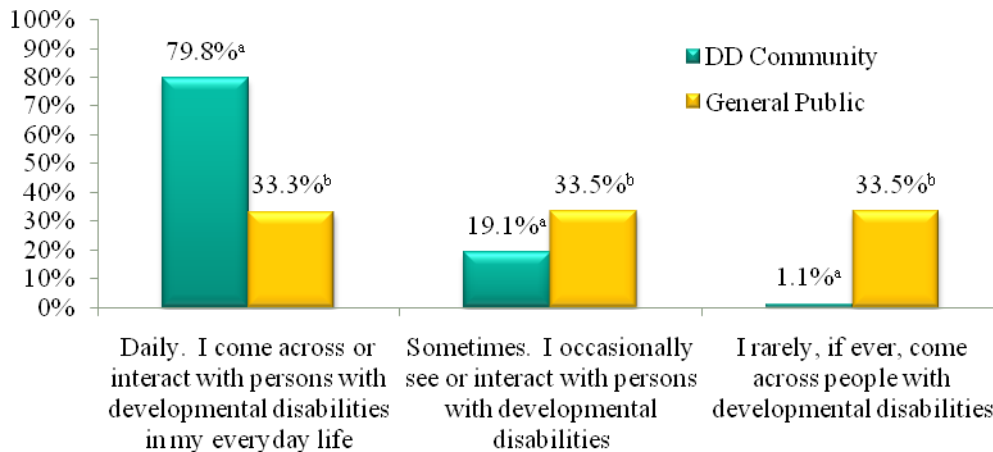
Yet, in the course of their day-to-day activities, only one-third (33.3%) of Georgia residents from the General Public sample reported that they *come across or interacted with persons with developmental disabilities in their everyday lives*. Equal proportions of the General Public reported that they either *sometimes* or *rarely* saw or interacted with persons who have developmental disabilities. (See Figure 2.)

Respondents from the DD Community Participants sample typically responded that they came across or interacted with persons with developmental disabilities on a daily basis (79.8%).

79.8% of respondents from the DD Community interact with persons with disabilities every day.

Members of the General Public are far less likely to say they come across (or notice) persons with developmental disabilities in their everyday lives, even if they have a family member with a disability.

Figure 2: How often do you see or interact with persons with developmental disabilities?



¹ 2005-2007 American Community Survey. Percentage only includes non-institutionalized civilians.



Among respondents with disabled family members there was still a large disparity between members of the DD Community Participants and the General Public on how frequently they interacted with persons with developmental disabilities. As shown in Table 12, the percentage of respondents from the General Public sample who interacted with persons with developmental disabilities in their everyday lives only rose to 44.3% when there was a developmentally disabled person in the family.

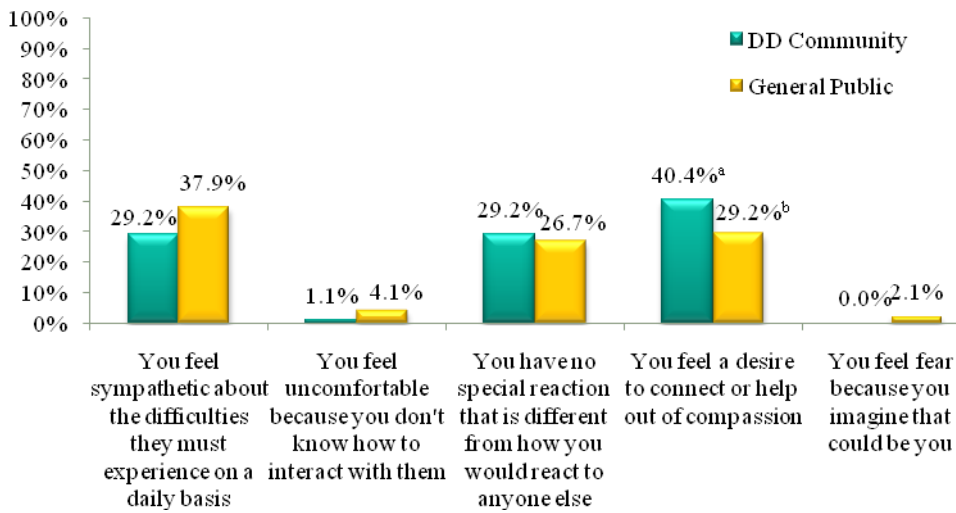
Table 12: How often do you see or interact with persons with developmental disabilities?

	Respondents with a Developmental Disability or an Extended Family Member with a Disability		
	DD Community Participants	General Public	Total
Daily. I come across or interact with persons with developmental disabilities in my everyday life	82.8% _a	44.3% _b	65.8%
Sometimes. I occasionally see or interact with persons with developmental disabilities	16.4% _a	35.1% _b	24.7%
I rarely, if ever, come across people with developmental disabilities	.8% _a	20.6% _b	9.6%

Respondents were presented with a set of possible reactions that they might experience whenever they saw a person with a disability and were asked to select the reaction that best fit how they typically felt. As shown in Figure 3 below, responses were mixed. Among respondents in the DD Community Participants, the most frequent reaction was that they felt a desire to connect or help out of compassion (40.4%). Respondents in the General Public sample most often reported that they felt sympathetic about the difficulties persons with disabilities must experience on a daily basis (37.9%).



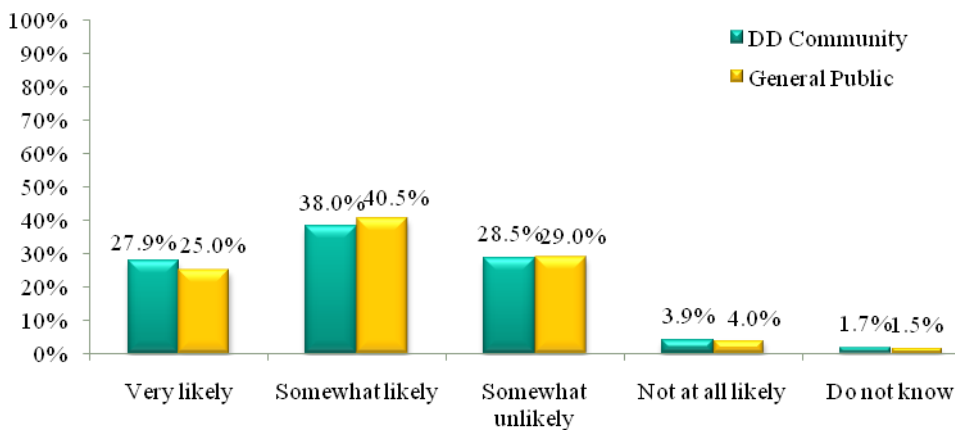
Figure 3: When you see a person with a disability, how do you immediately feel?



Perceptions about the Capabilities and Needs of Persons with Developmental Disabilities

When asked to rate the likelihood that persons with developmental disabilities could have careers with opportunities for advancement, answers were mixed. The pattern of responses was similar among the DD Community Participants and the General Public. For the two groups combined, only 26.4% believed that persons with developmental disabilities could *very likely* have careers. About one-third indicated that it was either *somewhat unlikely* or *not at all likely* that persons with developmental disabilities could have careers.

Figure 4: How likely is it that persons with developmental disabilities can have careers with opportunities for advancement?



More than three-fourths of the DD Community Participants (78.2%) agreed that adults with developmental disabilities should be able to live on their own with services and supports. Among members of the General Public, about one-half (54.5%) indicated that this was the best living environment for adults with developmental disabilities. The second most common response from General Public was that individuals with developmental disabilities should live at home with full-time assistance from family members or loved ones (39.5%). Almost no one believed that adults with developmental disabilities should live in

Only one-fourth of the total sample (26.4%) believed that it was very likely that persons with developmental disabilities could have careers with opportunities for advancement.

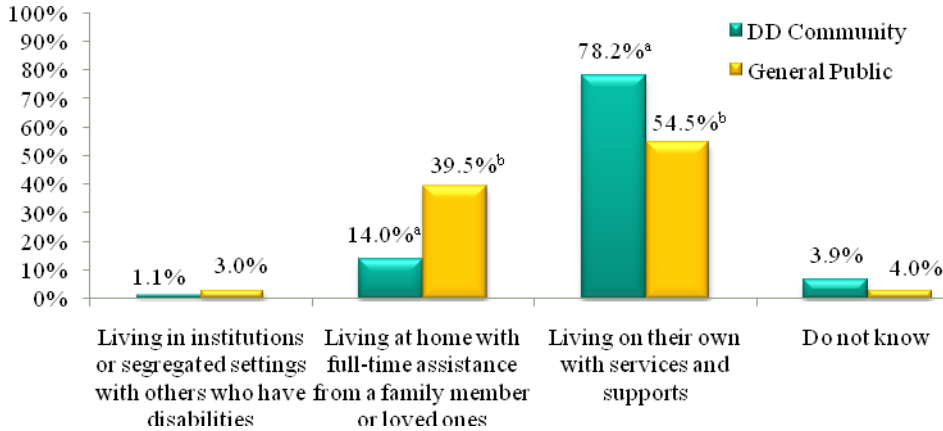
Most agreed that adults with developmental disabilities should be able to live on their own with services and supports (78.2% of the DD Community and 54.5% of the General Public).

Less than 5% believed that adults with developmental disabilities should live in institutions or segregated settings.



institutions or segregated settings with others who have disabilities (2.1% of the total sample).

Figure 5: What is the best living environment for adults with developmental disabilities?



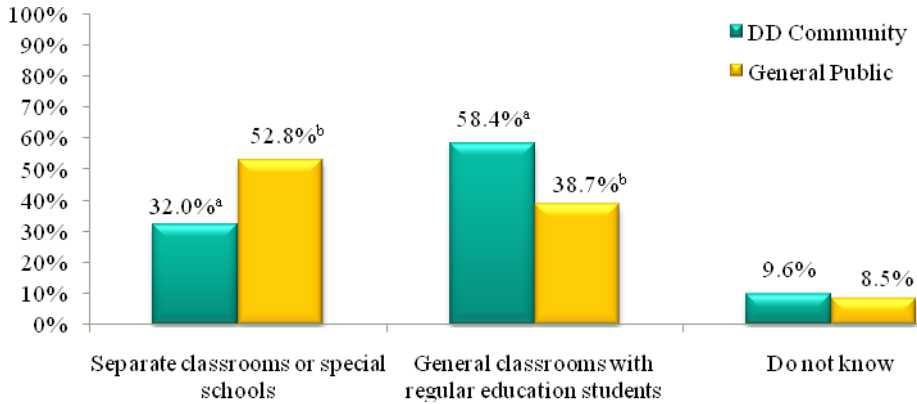
Most respondents from the DD Community believed that children with developmental disabilities should be in general classrooms with regular education students (58.4%).

52.8% of the General Public sample felt that children with developmental disabilities should be placed in special classes or special schools.

When asked about the best learning environment for children with developmental disabilities, opinions were somewhat divided. Among the DD Community Participants, 58.4% believed that children with developmental disabilities benefit most from learning in general classrooms with regular education students. About half of the respondents in the General Public sample felt that children with developmental disabilities should be placed in separate classrooms or special schools (52.8%).

Figure 6: Do you think that children with developmental disabilities benefit most from being in separate classrooms or special schools or learning in general classrooms with regular education students?





Respondents were asked to describe, in their own words, the types of issues that people with developmental disabilities face when trying to participate fully in community life.² The most common answer was *prejudice, discrimination and/or a lack of acceptance* (38.9%). Respondents indicated that there was a stigma associated with having a disability. One outcome of this stigma was that persons with disabilities were often not given an opportunity to demonstrate what they could contribute. Some respondents who mentioned prejudice also elaborated that persons with disabilities still face cruel comments and harassment. Some respondents indicated that this prejudice was associated with fear.

Among respondents in the DD Community Participants sample, accessibility was the second-most common issue (39.5%). Problems with accessibility were said to include transportation within the community, accessible housing, and access to public buildings and facilities. Members of the General Public were much less likely to think of accessibility as an issue (13.9%). Members of the DD Community Participants were also more likely than the General Public to mention issues associated with having the necessary supports; job opportunities; having the funds to support themselves; problems communicating; and social isolation (see Table 13).

When asked to describe the types of issues that people with developmental disabilities face when trying to participate fully in community life, the most common answers referred to prejudice, discrimination, and /or a lack of acceptance (38.9%).

Members of the General Public were far less likely than respondents in the DD Community to mention issues such as accessibility, a lack of supports, job opportunities, funds, communication problems, and social isolation.

General Public respondents living outside the 5-county Metro Atlanta area were more likely to mention a lack of job opportunities (10.3%) than Atlanta residents (1.5%).



² This question was limited to respondents who had reported being either *very aware* or *somewhat aware* of the issues related to developmental disabilities (see “Respondent Characteristics”).

Among respondents in the General Public sample, those living outside the 5-county Metro Atlanta area were more likely to mention a lack of job opportunities (10.3%) when compared to respondents in Atlanta (1.5%).



Table 13: What types of issues do you think people with developmental disabilities face when trying to participate fully in community life?

	DD		Total
	Community Participants	General Public	
Prejudice, discrimination, lack of acceptance, fear, stigma	41.2% _a	36.4% _a	38.9%
Accessibility (buildings, transportation, access to others in the community; safe accessible housing)	39.5% _a	13.9% _b	26.9%
General public's lack of awareness, knowledge	21.5% _a	19.1% _a	20.3%
Job opportunities; ability to earn a living	17.5% _a	6.9% _b	12.3%
Funding (need money to support themselves, pay medical bills, etc.)	17.5% _a	2.9% _b	10.3%
Communication; ability to communicate; difficulty socializing	16.9% _a	8.1% _b	12.6%
Access to necessary supports (to live independently)	26.0% _a	5.8% _b	16.0%
Social isolation; not enough inclusion	10.2% _a	5.8% _a	8.0%
Lack of job training; education system does not meet their needs	8.5% _a	1.2% _b	4.9%
Physical and/or cognitive limitations (ability to handle money, take care of themselves)	7.9% _a	5.8% _a	6.9%
Vulnerable; others can take advantage of them	1.7% _a	.0% ¹	.9%
Other	14.1% _a	13.9% _a	14.0%
Do not know; No answer	7.3% _a	8.1% _a	7.7%

Note: Column percentages may total more than 100% due to multiple responses.



Awareness of the Americans with Disabilities Act

July 26, 2010 will mark the twentieth anniversary of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. At this point in time, overall awareness of the ADA is high. Almost everyone in the DD Community Participants sample (97.2%) and eighty percent of the General Public (79.5%) reported that they had heard of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Almost everyone in the DD Community sample (97.2%) and 79.5% of the General Public sample had heard of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Table 14: Are you aware of the ADA – the Americans with Disabilities Act?

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Yes	97.2% _a	79.5% _b	87.8%
No	2.8% _a	20.5% _b	12.2%

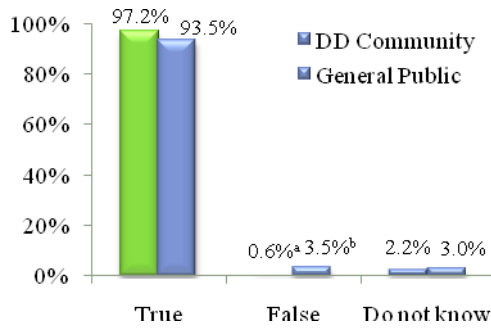
Respondents were most familiar with regulations related to the accessibility of public places and telecommunications services.

To test their knowledge about specific regulations, respondents were presented with six statements and were asked to indicate whether each was true or false. (All of the statements were, in fact, true.) As shown in the graphs under Figure 7, respondents were most familiar with regulations related to the *accessibility of public places and telecommunications services* (Figure 7a, 7e, and 7f). Respondents were somewhat less likely to recognize regulations regarding *employment decisions* (Figure 7b); the *accessibility of electronic communications* such as websites (Figure 7c); and the requirement that *public transportation must include paratransit services* (Figure 7d). While there were several statistical differences between the responses of the DD Community Participants and the General Public, these differences were not large and the patterns of responses were similar for both groups.

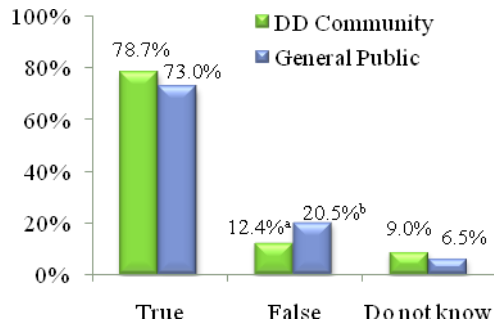


Figure 7. Please indicate whether each of the following statements is true or false:

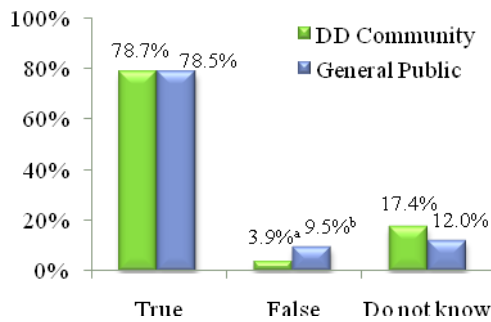
a. *New buildings that will be used by the general public, such as grocery stores or malls, must be accessible to persons with disabilities.*



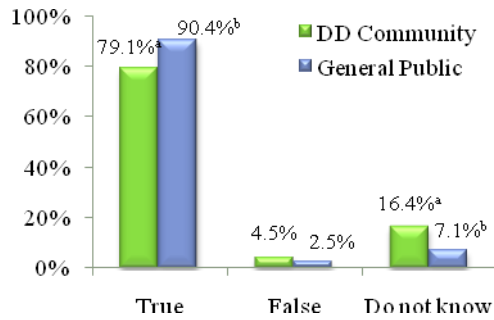
b. *Employers cannot consider a person's disability as a factor in deciding whether or not to hire or promote that person*



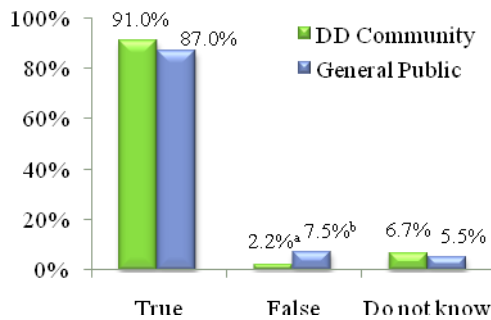
c. *All federal agencies are required to make electronic communications such as websites and information kiosks accessible to persons with disabilities*



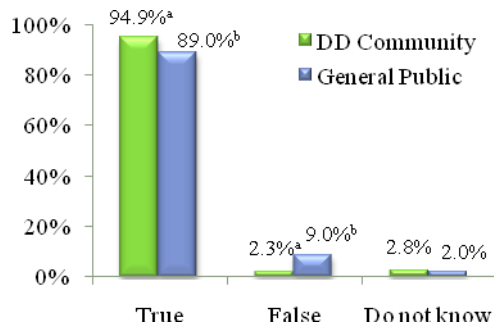
d. *Public transportation must include paratransit services*



e. *Telecommunications must provide services to those that are hearing impaired*



f. *Public places are required to provide handicap parking spaces and wheelchair ramps*



Awareness of GCDD and Other Organizations that Serve the Developmental Disabilities Community

Before taking the survey, more than 8 in 10 DD Community Participants had heard of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (86.5%). Awareness of GCDD was lower among General Public respondents (26.5%).

Table 15: Before today, had you ever heard of the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities?

	DD Community		Total
	Participants	General Public	
Yes	86.5% _a	26.5% _b	54.8%
No	13.5% _a	73.5% _b	45.2%

Respondents were asked to name any organizations they could recall that provided services or served as advocates for people with developmental disabilities. Many organizations were mentioned, particularly among respondents in the DD Community group. Table 16 lists organizations that were mentioned by at least 5% of either the DD Community or General Public sample. GCDD was mentioned most often by respondents in the DD Community (24.6%). However, the percentage of DD Community respondents who named GCDD in this question was much lower than the percentage who previously stated that they had heard of the organization before taking this survey (86.5%). The United Way was named most frequently by respondents in the General Public group (10.5%). Among respondents in the General Public sample, 42.5% could not name one organization that serves persons with developmental disabilities.

Before taking the survey, 86.5% of DD Community members and 26.5% of the General Public had heard of the GCDD.

When asked to name organizations that provide services or serve as advocates for people with developmental disabilities, respondents mentioned a wide variety of organizations.

GCDD was mentioned most often by respondents in the DD Community (24.6%) and the United Way was the most frequent mention from the General Public group (10.5%)



Table 16: What organizations can you think of that provide services or serve as advocates for people with developmental disabilities?

	DD		Total
	Community Participants	General Public	
GCDD	24.6% _a	4.0% _b	13.7%
Babies Can't Wait	6.1% _a	2.5% _a	4.2%
The Georgia Advocacy Office	6.7% _a	3.0% _a	4.7%
United Way	4.5% _a	10.5% _b	7.7%
Jerry's Kids/Jerry Lewis/MDA	1.7% _a	5.0% _a	3.4%
Easter Seals	11.2% _a	.5% _b	5.5%
March of Dimes	1.7% _a	5.0% _a	3.4%
Parent to Parent	10.6% _a	.5% _b	5.3%
ARC	10.1% _a	1.0% _b	5.3%
Public School System	11.7% _a	2.0% _b	6.6%
AADD	12.3% _a	.0% ¹	5.8%
Vocational Rehabilitation	8.4% _a	.5% _b	4.2%
Government Agencies	3.4% _a	7.5% _a	5.5%
GAO	6.1% _a	.0% ¹	2.9%
None, No Answer	18.4% _a	42.5% _b	31.1%



Support for Increased Government Funding to Assist Persons with Disabilities

Almost all of the DD Community Participants sample (97.8%) and three-fourths of the General Public respondents (77.5%) agreed that they would support increasing state government funding to support people with disabilities in their communities. Among those who would support increased funding, the vast majority were at least *somewhat supportive* of a statewide special purpose sales tax (see Figure 8). Almost two-thirds (63.0%) of the DD Community Participants were *strongly supportive* of a special purpose sales tax, and 41.9% of the General Public were *strongly supportive*. Respondents reported a higher level of support for an increased tax on items such as cigarettes or alcohol (78.0% of the DD Community Participants and 49.7% of the General Public were *strongly supportive* of such a tax increase).

A large majority of respondents agreed that they would support increasing state government funding to support people with disabilities in their communities (87.0%).

Support was highest for an increased tax on items such as cigarettes or alcohol (78.0% of the DD Community and 49.7% of the General Public).

Table 17. Would you support increasing state government funding to support people with disabilities in their communities?

	DD Community		
	Participants	General Public	Total
Yes	97.8% ^a	77.5% ^b	87.0%
No	2.2% ^a	22.5% ^b	13.0%

Figure 8: If lawmakers proposed a statewide special purpose sales tax that would be used to support people with disabilities, how supportive would you be?

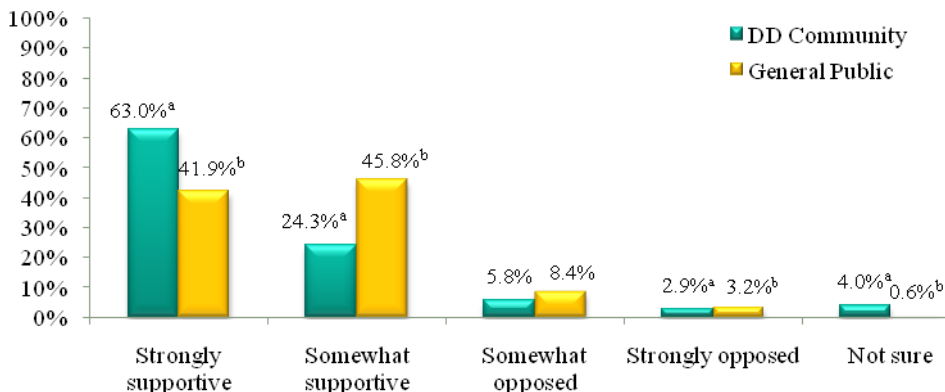
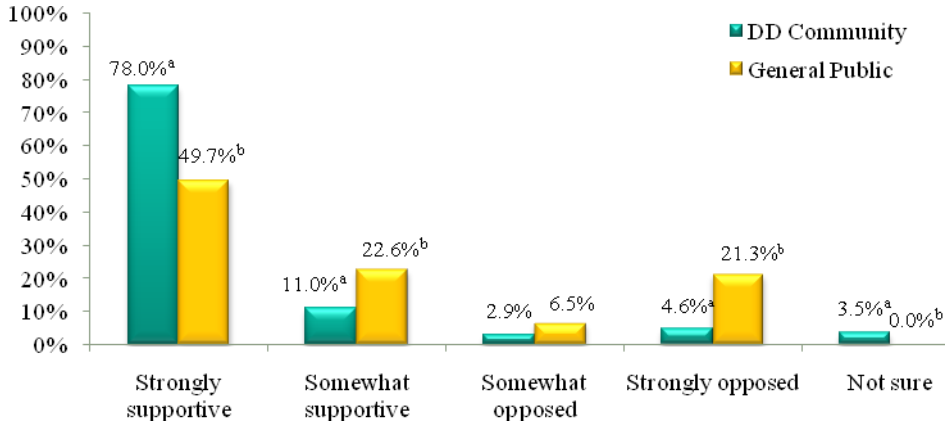


Figure 9: How about an increased tax on items such as cigarettes or alcohol?



Residents living outside the 5-county Metro Atlanta area were more likely to *strongly oppose* an increase in taxes on cigarettes or alcohol (16.1%) when compared to residents of Atlanta (7.5%).



Conclusions and Recommendations

- Outside of the DD Community, awareness of the variety of medical conditions associated with developmental disabilities is low. Few respondents from the General Public sample mentioned hearing or vision impairments, and many associated developmental disabilities primarily with mental, cognitive or learning impairments. Communications to the General Public should include educational information about the medical conditions that should be included when referring to developmental disabilities.
- The lack of awareness and knowledge about developmental disabilities among the General Public may partially explain why many did not say that they come across persons with disabilities in their everyday lives. This lack of understanding compounds the extent to which persons with developmental disabilities may go unnoticed when combined with issues of community access and communication difficulties that can contribute to social isolation.
- A notable percentage of the General Public and the DD Community Participants agreed that persons with developmental disabilities continue to deal with discrimination. However, members of the General Public were much less likely than members of the DD Community Participants to mention significant issues faced by persons with developmental disabilities such as:
 - Accessibility to public buildings, transportation, and safe and accessible housing (the General Public may believe that the ADA has sufficiently eliminated accessibility issues)
 - Job opportunities/ability to support oneself (less than one-third of the sample agreed that persons with developmental disabilities were very likely to have careers)
 - Access to the services and supports needed to live independently
 - Difficulties with communication/social isolation



- There was a high level of agreement that adults with disabilities should be able to live independently with services and supports. Almost no one felt that persons with developmental disabilities would benefit from living in institutions or other segregated settings. There was less agreement about the most beneficial learning environment for children with developmental disabilities.
- When members of the DD Community Participants group were asked about their awareness of GCDD, a high percentage indicated that they had heard of the organization. However, a much lower percentage mentioned GCDD when asked to name all of the organizations they could think of that provide services or serve as advocates for persons with developmental disabilities.
- There was a high level of support for increasing government funding to assist persons with developmental disabilities. At the same time, neither of the two proposed revenue sources (special purpose sales tax, sin tax) was strongly supported by a majority of respondents outside of the DD Community. However, survey responses indicated that members of the General Public do not understand the variety of issues and funding needs faced by persons with developmental disabilities. Additional, specific information about how increased funding would be used to assist persons with disabilities should be incorporated into messaging.

