

## Best Buddies Promotes Health & Safety of Workers with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities in New Collaboration

*During a recent training, Best Buddies staff developed an increased awareness of health disparities and health promotion strategies which highlighted the need to help people with IDD be healthier and safer. Armed with this new knowledge, training will be expanded to reach workers with IDD.*

The New Hampshire Disability & Public Health Project (NH DPH) created an online training to educate Best Buddies' Staff about health disparities, health risk factors, and health promotion strategies for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The presentation, *Be active, eat healthy, have fun: Promoting the health of people with IDD*, (now publicly available on [YouTube](#)) has been disseminated to a national audience. The video discusses health disparities among people with and without IDD, common barriers to health experienced by people with IDD, and shares strategies and best practices to promote health and wellness.

"NH DPH's presentation was highly informative and of great value to our staff," Best Buddies' Director of Training & Development, Corey Yugler, exclaimed. "Their approach was collaborative and fit well with our organization's goals. NH DPH met us where we are at and provided us information and knowledge to raise awareness about health disparities among people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. Learning about the barriers people encounter helps us to bridge the divide between people with and without disabilities."

This success opened the door to additional opportunities to provide training for Best Buddies.

NH DPH Co-Investigator, Karla Armenti, led a webinar with Best Buddies' Jobs Program staff to introduce them to *Staying Safe at Work: A Curriculum for Teaching Workers with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities about Health and Safety on the Job*. Workers with IDD are some of the most vulnerable in the US – commonly employed in low-wage, high hazard industries and occupations resulting in higher injury rates than their peers without disabilities. Recognizing this, the Director of the National Jobs Program identified health and safety training as a significant need for the staff of their Jobs Program. Dr. Armenti will work with Robin Dewey, the author of the *Staying Safe at Work* training curriculum, which helps employees with IDD develop the necessary health and safety skills to understand and avoid risks at work.

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