



# Abilities

of Northwest Jersey Inc.

Opportunities • Growth • Independence

## ANNUAL REPORT FY 2008

### MISSION STATEMENT

**Abilities of Northwest Jersey, Inc is dedicated to improving the employability and quality of life for people with disabilities by providing training and individualized services.**

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Michele Underhill ~ Corporate Compliance Officer / Director of  
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Jennifer Travormina – Tavent Hospitality

# ABILITIES' PROGRAMS

[www.abilities-nw.com](http://www.abilities-nw.com)

## Hackettstown Employment Center

999 Willow Grove Street  
Hackettstown, NJ 07840

908-850-8214

e-mail: [hec@abilitiesnw.com](mailto:hec@abilitiesnw.com)



## Phillipsburg Employment Center

340 Anderson Street  
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865

908-454-2579

e-mail: [pec@abilitiesnw.com](mailto:pec@abilitiesnw.com)



## Individual Specialized Program

22 Kayhart Lane  
Washington, NJ 07882

908-689-4674

e-mail: [isp@abilitiesnw.com](mailto:isp@abilitiesnw.com)



## Mary Apgar Employment Center

22 Kayhart Lane  
Washington, NJ 07882

908-689-2063

e-mail: [mec@abilitiesnw.com](mailto:mec@abilitiesnw.com)

## Washington Employment Center

264 Route 31 North, PO Box 251  
Washington, NJ 07882

908-689-1118

e-mail: [wec@abilitiesnw.com](mailto:wec@abilitiesnw.com)



## Medical Special Needs Program

264 Route 31 North, PO Box 251  
Washington, NJ 07882

908-689-6677

e-mail: [msn@abilitiesnw.com](mailto:msn@abilitiesnw.com)

## Employment Pathways

150 Boulevard, Suite 2  
Washington, NJ 07882

908-689-7460

e-mail: [employmentpathways@abilitiesnw.com](mailto:employmentpathways@abilitiesnw.com)



## Community Rehabilitation Program

264 Route 31 North,  
PO Box 251  
Washington, NJ 07882

908-689-1118

e-mail: [info@abilitiesnw.com](mailto:info@abilitiesnw.com)



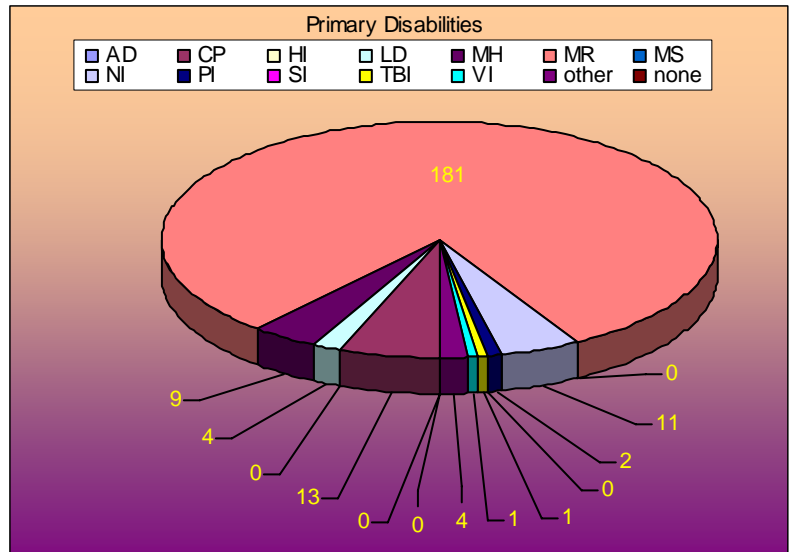
The Abilities Annual Report reviews outcome measures based on survey results from various stakeholders - service recipients, caregivers, family members, staff, and funders. This information is provided to the leadership and is utilized in making programmatic and agency decisions.

## PERSONS SERVED

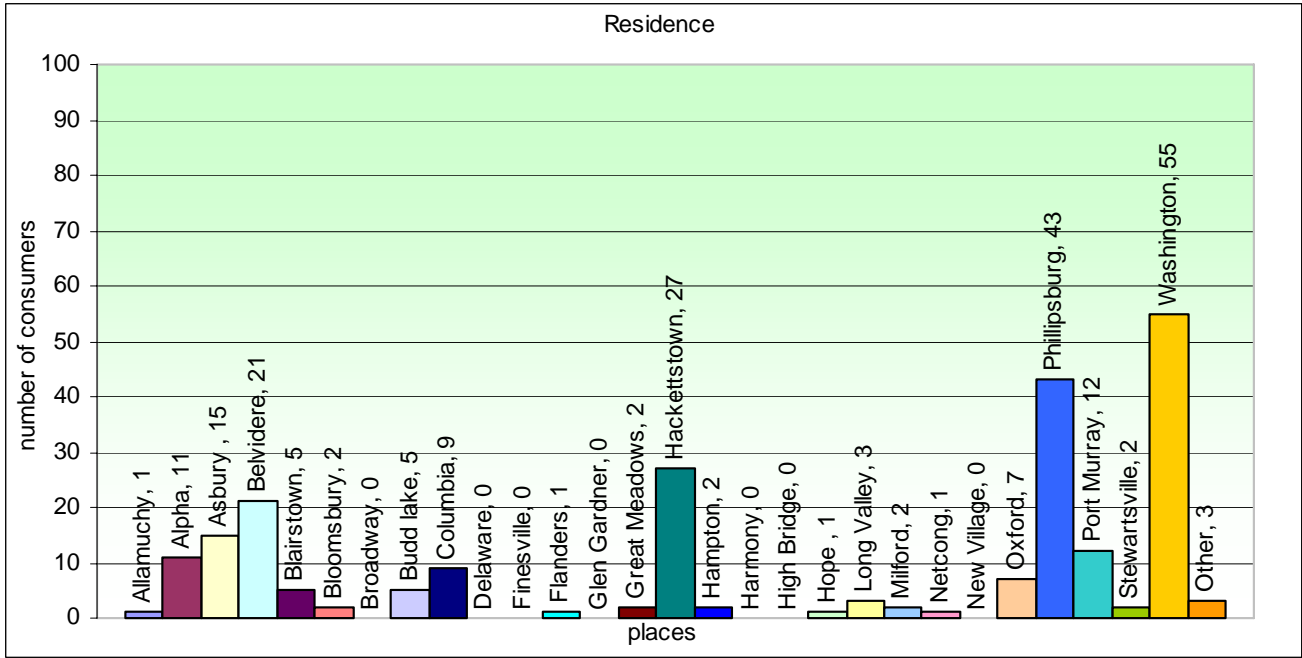
In 2008, Abilities provided vocational rehabilitation and community employment services to over 363 individuals throughout Warren, Morris, and Hunterdon Counties. Abilities operates nine programs which include four adult training, medical special needs, behavioral support, adult habilitation, extended employment, work adjustment training, vocational evaluation, supported employment, and transitioning services.

Abilities tracks the consumer's primary and secondary disabilities in order to provide appropriate program services. Out of the 227 consumers in day program at the end of FY 2008 – 80% had a primary disability of mental retardation, 6% have Cerebral Palsy as a primary disability, 5% are neurologically impaired and 4% have a primary disability of mental health concerns. The following is a breakdown of the disabilities that are charted.

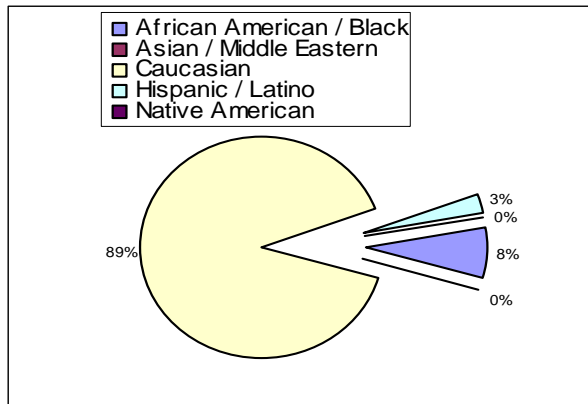
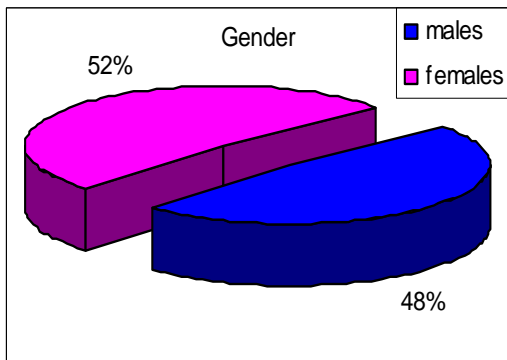
- Alcohol /Drug dependency AD
- Cerebral Palsy CP
- Hearing impairment HI
- Learning disabled LD
- Mental health MH
- Mental retardation MR
- Multiple Sclerosis MS
- Neurological Impairment NI
- Physical impairment PI
- Speech impairment SI
- Traumatic Brain injury TBI
- Visual impairment VI
- other
- none



Sixty-four percent of consumers live in four towns: Belvidere, Hackettstown, Phillipsburg, and Washington. The other thirty-six percent live in any one of more than twenty-five other towns or villages in the catchment area.



There are 110 males and 117 females. 89% of consumers are Caucasian, eight percent are African American/Black and three percent are Hispanic/ Latino.



## COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

Abilities of NW Jersey, Inc. makes every effort to incorporate community integration into their program options. In 2008, the majority of employment centers participated in community integration on an individualized basis.

Community integration options by program in 2008 were as follows:

### Hackettstown Employment Center

\*~\* Participated in the Meals At Home volunteer program twice per week.

\*~\* Seniors attended a nutrition program on a weekly basis

### Mary Apgar Employment Center

\*~\* Volunteered weekly at the Norwescap Food Bank sorting and cleaning food items (contingent upon staff availability)

\*~\* Environmental Stimuli Program - collected pet supplies then staff and consumers went to animal shelters to donate what was collected.

\*~\* Seniors attended a nutrition program on a weekly basis

\*~\*Volunteered shredding paper and delivering it to shelters for pets

### Individual Specialized Program

\*~\* Volunteered weekly at the Norwescap Food Bank sorting and cleaning food items (contingent upon staff availability)

\*~\* Volunteered weekly delivering meals for Meals on Wheels.

### Phillipsburg Employment Center

\*~\* Operated the Branching Out Food Pantry providing a much needed resource to the community. Consumers went to the local food bank to get food for the pantry, stocked shelves, and bagged food the two days each week the pantry is open.

\*~\* Participated in weekly swimming and bowling in the community.

\*~\* Seniors attended a nutrition program on a weekly basis.

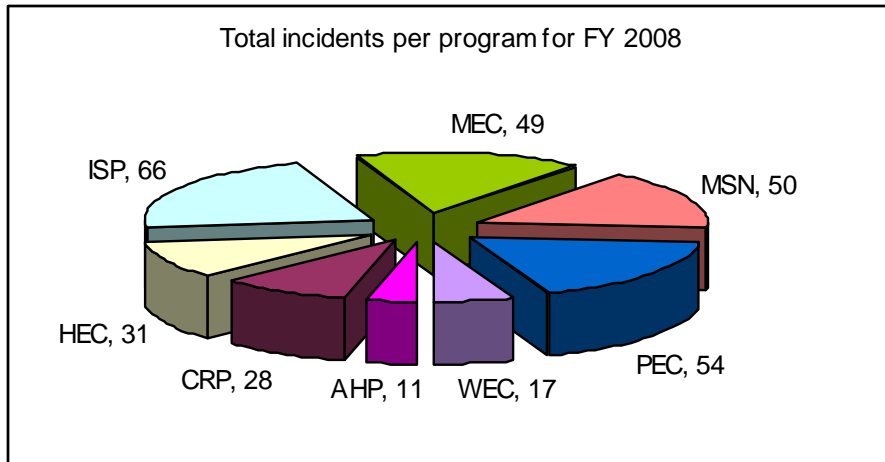
### Medical Special Needs

\*~\* Seniors attended a nutrition program on a weekly basis.

## INCIDENTS

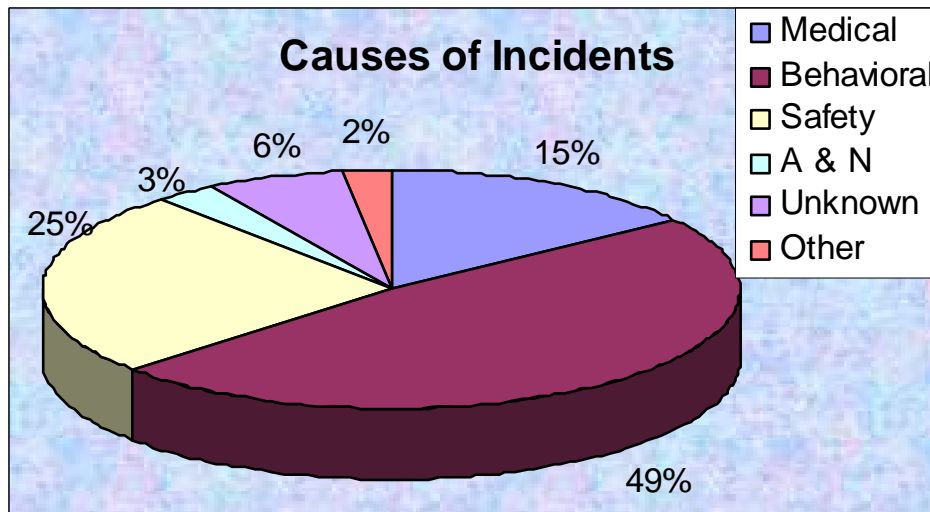
In FY 2008 there were a total of 306 reportable incidents. Overall, 241 Abilities In House Incident Reports were completed and 53 DDD Unusual Incident Reports filed. Abilities In House Incident Reports are completed when a situation occurs that does not meet DDD UIR reporting requirements, but is still considered unusual.

Incident reports are reviewed by the Incident Review Committee. Trends are noted, recommendations are made and when necessary information is given to one of the other Abilities Committees to take action.



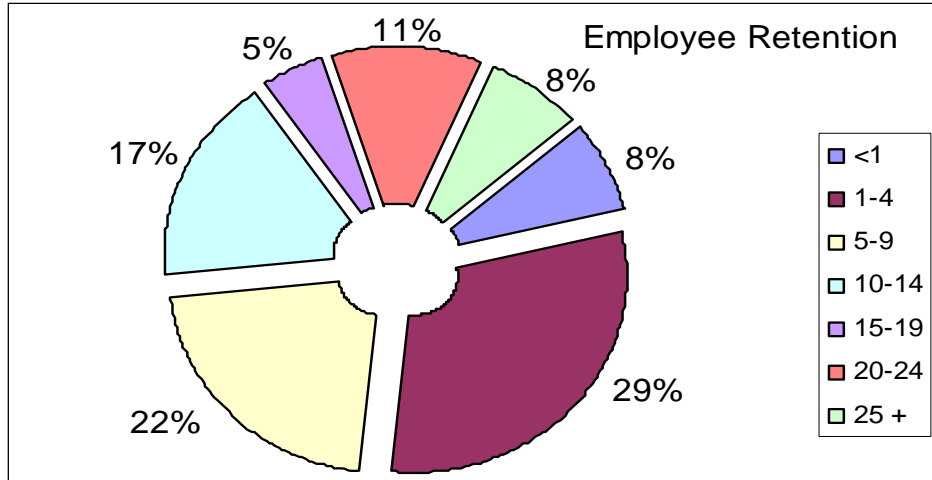
Trending of Incidents:

The top three leading causes of incidents in 2008 were 148 behavioral incidents (aggressive episodes, inappropriate physical activity), 77 safety incidents (falls, injuries, etc.), and 46 medical incidents (health conditions that warranted attention). There were 47 '911' calls in FY2008 out of 306 total incident reports.



## HUMAN RESOURCES

At the end of FY 2008 Abilities had 106 employees. Twenty staff members have been employed by Abilities for twenty years or more, eight of whom have been employed for 25+ years. Twenty-three have been employed for 10-19 years. Fifty-five employees have been with Abilities for 1-9 years. Eight staff members were hired this year.



Thirty-seven employees (35% of the staff) participate in one or more of seven groups or eight committees.

## FUNDRAISING

Abilities has several regularly scheduled fundraisers through out the year. Most proceeds go toward the general operating budget. Some, however, are earmarked for specific programs or services. The following is a list of fundraisers and the proceeds for FY 2008.

Special Events - \$25,900  
Golf Tournament – \$13,800  
Tricky Tray - \$8,300  
Quilt Raffle - \$1,600

Fundraisers for the Branching Out Food Pantry:

Cut-a-Thon - \$600

Plant Sale - \$600

Thrift Shop Sales - \$60-\$100 monthly

## TRANSPORTATION

Abilities of Northwest Jersey, Inc. has served a transportation dependant population since the inception of service delivery. Less than 1% of the service recipients can self-transport.

Several methods are utilized to provide curb-to-curb service. Abilities provide 19 fixed routes daily throughout the entire catchment area. Twelve vehicles are lift equipped, which includes five mini-buses granted to the agency by NJ Transit, through the Federal Transportation Administration Section 5310 program. The fleet carries approximately 225 consumers daily. In fiscal year 2008 (July 1, 2007- June 30, 2008) 317,751 miles were logged.

A second option is the County of Warren paratransit service currently operated by First Transit. The agency is under contract with the paratransit operator to provide six daily runs. Most times of the year, 60 to 70 consumers use this service.

Paratransit also offers the Route 57 Shuttle, a low cost to no fare shuttle service, operating in looped runs, with hourly stops at Abilities. Consumers can elect to meet the shuttle anywhere along the route and arrive at Abilities within agreed upon arrival times.

The Agency was recognized for its exemplary transportation service by CARF, an international accreditation authority. The accreditation outcome summary stated, "although many persons served reside in rural communities, Abilities of Northwest Jersey has been successful in assisting persons served in overcoming this barrier to employment."

## SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

### **Consumer Survey:**

The consumer survey was distributed in March 2008 to 220 consumers in all of the employment centers and the CRP (Employment Pathways conducts their own survey). One hundred three surveys were returned for a forty-six percent response rate, down from sixty- four percent in 2005.

Eighty-six percent of the consumers who responded stated they are happy at Abilities, down two percent from last years' survey. Ninety-two percent felt safe in their programs, down from ninety-six percent last year. Seventy eight percent noted that they get along with their co-workers and eighty-three percent said that

going to work made them feel good about themselves. Eighty-seven percent said that the staff was nice to them, down from ninety-six percent in 2005.

Seventy-one percent stated they were satisfied with the amount of work/activities they were given to do. This is down from ninety percent last year. Seventy percent also said they were satisfied with their paycheck, sixteen percent fewer than last year. Dissatisfaction was due to inconsistent or lack of contract work. Many noted they would like to earn more money.

Fifty-seven percent of respondents said they did not want to work in the community.

Consumers were asked what they thought would make Abilities better. Several noted that they liked things just the way they are. However others had some ideas that involved lunches –get a microwave for the consumer’s use during lunch, have a hot lunch program (like in the schools) and allowing the consumer to order out when the staff does. There were many comments regarding getting more consistent and varied sub-contracts.

### **Caregiver Survey:**

The caregiver surveys were sent out in March, 2008 to one hundred forty one caregivers with individuals in the employment centers and the CRP (Employment Pathways conducts their own survey). Ninety-one surveys were returned for a sixty-four percent response rate, up from forty-six percent in 2006.

Ninety-five percent of the respondents stated they were satisfied with the Abilities programs that their individuals attend, up from eighty-four percent in March 2007.

A majority of the caregivers agreed that the staff is courteous and respectful to them, ninety-eight percent said yes, and two percent said sometimes.

Satisfaction with communication between Abilities staff and caregivers remained high at ninety-one percent. Only nine percent of respondents stated that they were sometimes satisfied.

One new question on this year’s survey was –“are your concerns addressed in a timely manner?” Ninety-nine percent of respondents stated that their concerns were addressed in a timely manner.

The number of caregivers who support community employment for their consumers increased to sixty-eight percent. Twenty-one percent said they did not support community employment and stated several reasons for this: several felt the individual receiving services did not have the skills, was not ready or required

more supervision, and a few noted that their individual was happy at the day program.

Satisfaction with transportation remained steady at eighty-seven percent this year. Three noted that they thought their drivers were outstanding.

### **Staff Surveys:**

Seventy-nine surveys were distributed in September 2007 and thirty-nine surveys were returned, this was a decrease of 15% from last year. The staff was asked to comment on issues involving their programs and consumers, and issues involving personnel. The drivers were given a separate survey.

#### Consumer and program issues

Seventy-seven percent of the staff agreed that the consumers were getting the proper services from Abilities. Two thirds of respondents said there was enough staff coverage. The majority of respondents felt that the staff, in general, are qualified caring individuals. Ninety percent said that they would recommend Abilities to a family member because the services offered are well rounded and of good quality.

#### Personnel issues:

Eighty-seven percent of the staff said they felt they are part of the team and a valued employee; this represents a marked increase over last year.

#### Drivers:

Seventeen surveys were distributed and only seven were returned; for a forty-one percent response rate.

One hundred percent of respondents stated they felt like a valued employee and eighty six percent said they felt they are part of the team.

### **Business Services Survey:**

One hundred twenty surveys were sent out in March 2008 and thirty-three were returned for a twenty-eight percent response rate. Not all respondents answered all questions.

The majority of respondents rated Abilities at a level of excellent or better in all questions asked. All respondents said their jobs were completed on time, one noted that their job was completed ahead of schedule. All comments were positive and several stated they would be contacting Abilities for future needs.

## **Funder's Survey:**

(Satisfaction Survey for Funding Sources)

Forty-four surveys were sent out in March 2008 and ten were returned for a twenty-three percent response rate. This is an increase from twenty-two percent last year; however it is still not an ideal response rate. These results may not be an accurate account of how well Abilities functions in regards to Program Service delivery. Not all respondents answered all questions.

The majority of respondents rated Abilities at a level of excellent or better in all questions asked. However, one area of concern is communication and information exchange. The other area is the initiation of services in a timely manner. The respondents from DVR were dissatisfied with the time line for the initiation of services/service provision. Both noted that it takes too long to get a consumer started in the vocational evaluation program after the initial steps have been completed.