

Are you the One?



“OK AIM volunteers make a difference in the lives of people with developmental disabilities.”

**Michelle Brinkley-Jones
OK AIM Program Coordinator**

Find out how you can become the One.

Call us at 918-582-TARC (8272) or 800-688-TARC (8272)
Email: OKAIM@ddadvocacy.net • Visit us online: www.ddadvocacy.net

Regard for the Individual



Physical Setting

Personal Growth



Staff



OK AIM SFY 2015 Annual Report

JULY 1, 2014 TO JUNE 30, 2015

TARC PROFILE

For 63 years, TARC has worked to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities such as intellectual disabilities, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, and autism spectrum disorders. The mission of TARC is to ensure a high quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. The nonprofit agency pursues this mission by providing a network of programs that provide education, information, support, and advocacy. OK AIM is one of those programs

TARC was established by parents of children with developmental disabilities because of their frustration with the lack of services available to them. These founding families passionately advocated for services and supports and it is their passion that infuses the organization today. TARC advocates by:

- Building community awareness of the potential and capability of people with developmental disabilities;
- Helping people with developmental disabilities and their families identify needs and navigate the service system to secure services;
- Encouraging progressive public policies and government regulations to meet the needs of this population;

- Educating the public by providing information, training and technical support on developmental disabilities topics;
- Convening support groups and coordinating the efforts of consumers;
- Coordinating volunteer advocates and guardians for people with disabilities who do not have family members to assist them; and
- Assisting people with developmental disabilities as they learn how to speak up for themselves and participate to the greatest extent possible in their community.

Each year, TARC advocates for families and individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages, from birth to death, through five major programs. In addition to the OK AIM program, they include the Family Support program, the Self-Advocacy program, the ARCCorps program, and Community and Public Affairs.

TARC remains as committed today to fostering the well-being, dignity, and rights of people with developmental disabilities and their families as did those pioneering parents who founded the organization in 1952. The continued operation of the OK AIM program is an example of this commitment.

OK AIM Offices

Area I
3800 N. Classen, Suite C30
Oklahoma City, OK 73106-5450
405-557-1878
866-828-4341 (toll free)
405-524-1058 (fax)

Area II
2516 East 71st St, Suite A
Tulsa, OK 74136-5531
918-582-8272
800-688-8272 (toll free)
918-582-3628 (fax)

Area III
124 South Broadway, Suite 307
Ada, OK 74820
580-421-9441 (phone and fax)
877-255-1196 (toll free)



ENSURING QUALITY

In our own way, we all strive for a good life...

For people with developmental disabilities who live in homes supported by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) funded residential providers, reaching that goal can be more challenging. Surrounded by paid staff and the structure of an organized residential program, their individual needs, desires and interests can get lost. Their pursuit of a good life must often be more purposeful.

Volunteer monitors in the OK AIM program ensure that the focus of residential programs remains on the individuals being served. Their visits to individuals in their homes throughout Oklahoma evaluate the quality of the lives of individuals being served from the perspective of four building blocks that form the foundation of a good life for most individuals. Shown on the cover of this report, those four building blocks are regard for the individual, physical setting, personal growth and staff. Each contributes part of what determines the quality of life for individuals served in residential programs and are the framework volunteer monitors use to access the homes they visit.

This report documents the work of OK AIM volunteer monitors during State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2015 that began on July 1, 2014 and ended on June 30, 2015. Who they saw, what they said, and what became of their findings tells the story of one of the ways Oklahoma strives to ensure a quality life for those individuals with developmental disabilities who entrust their lives to the formal system of residential services operated by DDS. The eyes and ears of OK AIM volunteer monitors assure that quality of life remains an important element of the overall quality assurance system that oversees services.

John F. Gajda

TARC Executive Director



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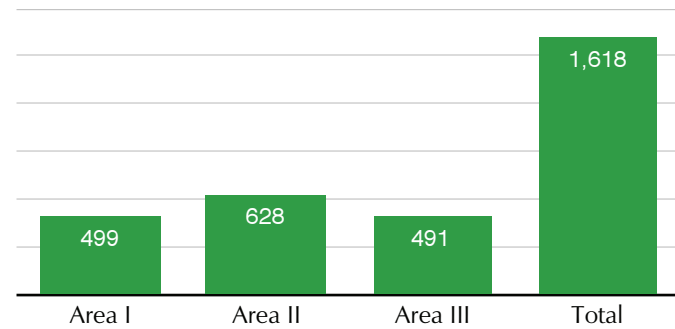
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The OK AIM program is administered by TARC under a contract with Developmental Disabilities Services of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

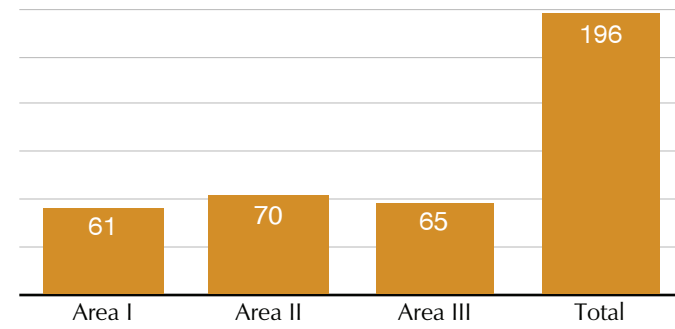
THE HUMAN TOUCH

OK AIM volunteer monitors are the human touch that reaches out to the homes of individuals with developmental disabilities served by DDS throughout Oklahoma. Location, dates and times of visits are arranged by the OK AIM Coordinator. Volunteers make visits, usually as a team of two.

The data below documents the number of visits made by individual volunteers throughout the year:



Last year these new volunteers were trained:



OK AIM has an ongoing need for more volunteers so that more individuals can be visited.



Marti, Mindi, & John,
OK AIM Volunteers

Definitions:

Monitor: A volunteer recruited, trained and supported by OK AIM who visits individuals receiving services from DDS and evaluates their quality of life.

Individual: A person who is a direct recipient or beneficiary of service planning and delivery and is synonymous with client, service recipient, consumer, and member in Oklahoma Health Care Authority policy.

OK AIM Coordinator: An employee of TARC who schedules OK AIM monitoring visits with monitors and individuals, produces narratives from visits and reports to DDS monthly.

Volunteer Visit: A visit conducted by one volunteer to one home. Typically, a team assigned to each visit consists of two volunteers.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF QUALITY

The four blocks depicted on the cover of this report identify the four categories of quality of life that volunteer monitors consider when they visit the homes of individuals. Each category, in turn, includes multiple elements that probe the measures that enable volunteers to evaluate the category. Within the four categories there are a total of 27 items that volunteers evaluate during each visit.

Category 1: Regard for the Individual

1. People like their home – Individuals like their home.
2. Formalized communication – Individuals have a way to communicate.
3. Privacy/control – Individuals have control over their lives.
4. Empowerment – Individuals feel empowered by the decisions they make.
5. Support for relationships – Relationships are encouraged and supported.
6. Recreation and leisure – Individuals have a variety of recreation/leisure opportunities.
7. Relationship with neighbors – Individuals know their neighbors and are involved in the neighborhood.

Category 2: Personal Growth

8. Typical learning – Learning occurs in the setting where activities normally occur.
9. Daily choices – Individuals make as many daily choices as they can.
10. Household tasks – Individuals are included in running the household.
11. Healthy living – Individuals receive information to encourage healthy living.
12. Vocational/educational opportunities – Individuals have meaningful vocational/educational opportunities.
13. Interesting home – Individuals have items of interest available at home to occupy their time.

Category 3: Staff

14. Sensitivity to change – Individuals are provided with support during times of change.
15. Appropriate number of staff – Staffing levels are appropriate to meet the needs of the individuals.
16. Safeguards – Safeguards are provided for a secure and safe home.
17. Interactions – Staff interacts positively and with respect toward everyone.
18. Interventions – Staff uses positive behavior interventions.
19. Health/medical – Staff is knowledgeable about the health and medical needs.
20. Training – Staff has training to meet the needs of individuals.
21. Staff consistency/communication – There is staff consistency in teaching the individuals and communication among all staff.

Category 4: Physical Setting

22. Neighborhood – Home is in a safe, primarily residential neighborhood.
23. Outside – The home's exterior and yard are well kept.
24. Physical needs – Home has adaptations and is accessible.
25. Personalization – The house reflects the personalities of the individuals.
26. Clean/maintained – The house is comfortable, clean and well maintained.
27. Personal space – There is enough personal space for everyone.

Definitions:

Items: An evaluation criterion that monitors review when they visit a home. Twenty-seven items in four categories are evaluated.

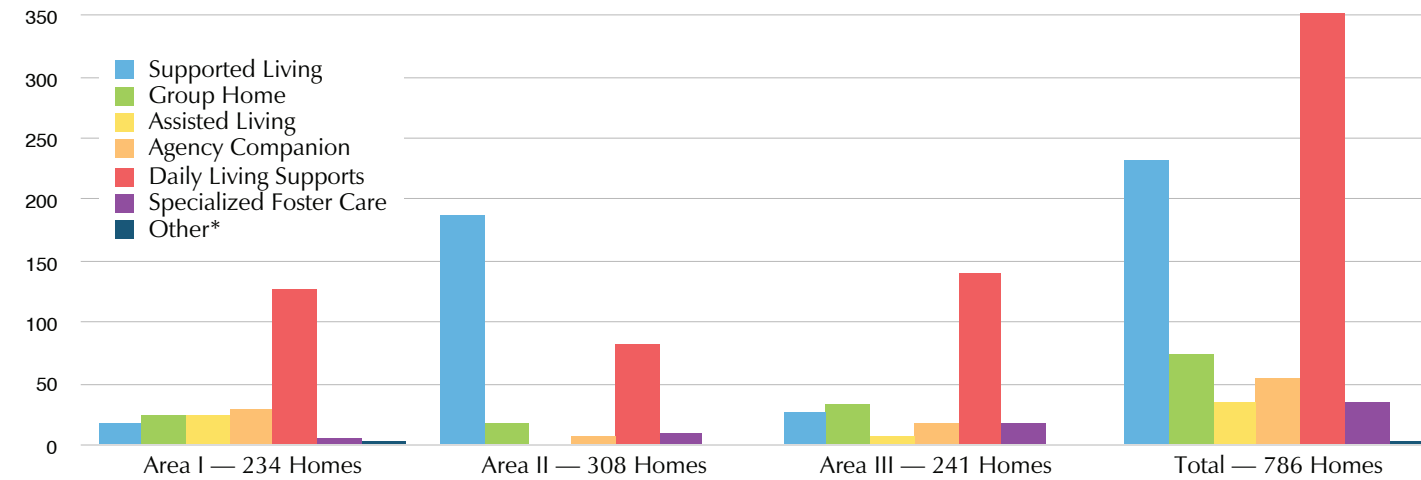
Categories Monitored: All items evaluated by volunteer monitors are grouped in four broad categories: Regard for the Individual, Personal Growth, Staff, and Physical Setting.

Ratings: Monitors assign one of four ratings to assess each of the 27 evaluation criteria (items) in the four categories monitored by OK AIM. The ratings are: *Exceptional*, *Good*, *Needs Improvement*, and *Unacceptable*. On some visits, individual items may not be rated. When an item is deemed Not Rated, it is an item that is not applicable to a given situation. For instance, items that address staff are not rated if staff is not scheduled to be on duty during the OK AIM visit.

HOMES VISITED

The Oklahoma residential service system offers six distinct community options, each with unique characteristics to individuals served. OK AIM volunteer monitors visited this entire range of homes in SFY '15.

786 TOTAL HOMES MONITORED



Definitions:

Agency Companion: A consumer shares a home and living expenses with a companion. The selection of the companion is based on the consumer's needs and compatibility with the companion. The companion is a contract employee with DDS. The Residential Agency is involved only in providing Supportive, Respite Care.

Assisted Living: Individual(s) reside in their own homes or apartments. They may or may not have a roommate. They have a minimal amount of staff support. Other than their SSI, they receive no other financial assistance for their living expenses. The service commonly provided is transportation for shopping, bill paying or banking and medical appointments.

Daily Living Supports (DLS): This is a direct care service provided by agencies contracting with DDS. DLS includes hands-on assistance, supervision, or support in such areas as eating, bathing, dressing, etc. A direct care staff is employed by a residential provider agency and provides daily living supports. DLS service is limited to

eight hours per day. Often three individuals will combine their eight hours of DLS to achieve 24-hour care.

Group Homes: Group homes provide 24-hour supervision for those involved in a more independent living arrangement. The individuals take an active part in the daily running of the home using the skills that they are taught to help them become more self-sufficient. These homes are owned or leased by the residential agency that provides the service, not by individuals who reside in them.

Specialized Foster Care: Allow service recipients in the care of DDS to live in a family home. The foster parents are trained to meet the needs of the individuals they serve. Foster parents are paid by DDS for their services.

Supported Living: This primarily applies to individuals who have exited from the Hissom Memorial Center. Supported Living offers a wide range of individualized support services and habilitation services.

Alternative Group Homes:

A residential setting that serves a very limited number of members who have evidence of behavioral or emotional challenges in addition to an intellectual disability. These individuals require extensive supervision and assistance in order to remain in the community.

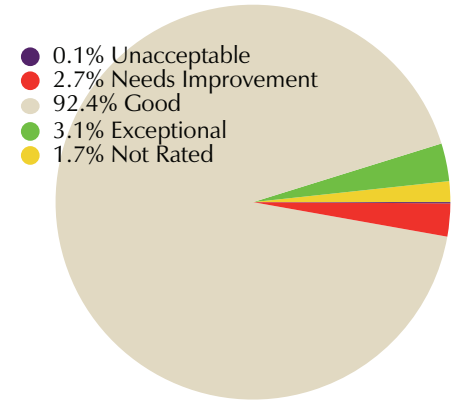
Other: Special funding circumstances.



Emily,
OK AIM Volunteer

WHAT MONITORS SAID

Volunteer monitors assess each home they visit by assigning a rating of one of five possible scores to each of the 27 items that are included in the four categories. Possible ratings include: **EXCEPTIONAL**, **GOOD**, **NEEDS IMPROVEMENT**, and **UNACCEPTABLE**. If an item does not apply to a particular home that item is **NOT RATED**. The information shown in the table below is the percentage of ratings for each item for each category for all the 786 homes visited.



Category 1: Regard For The Individual	Unacceptable	Needs Improvement	Good	Exceptional	Not Rated
People Like Their Home	0.00	1.90	93.00	4.20	0.90
Formalized Communication	0.00	2.70	94.90	2.20	0.30
Privacy Control	0.10	3.30	91.90	4.10	0.60
Empowerment	0.00	0.50	96.40	2.20	0.90
Support For Relationships	0.00	2.20	92.70	4.60	0.50
Recreation and Leisure	0.00	4.70	91.30	3.60	0.40
Relationship With Neighbors	0.00	0.50	97.20	1.40	0.90

Category 2: Personal Growth	Unacceptable	Needs Improvement	Good	Exceptional	Not Rated
Learning	0.00	0.40	97.50	0.90	1.30
Daily Choices	0.00	0.80	96.90	1.80	0.50
Included In Running Household	0.00	0.90	95.80	2.50	0.80
Healthy Living	0.10	4.10	93.40	1.70	0.80
Vocational/Educational Opportunities	0.00	6.50	91.20	2.00	0.30
Interesting Home	0.00	3.40	93.50	2.90	0.10

Category 3: Staff	Unacceptable	Needs Improvement	Good	Exceptional	Not Rated
Sensitivity to Change	0.10	0.80	91.60	2.40	5.10
Appropriate Number of Staff	0.10	4.30	89.40	2.90	3.20
Safeguards	1.00	4.60	92.00	1.90	0.50
Interactions	0.40	2.20	68.00	6.60	4.80
Interventions	0.00	1.10	89.80	2.90	6.10
Health and Medical	0.30	0.40	90.10	4.20	5.330
Training	0.00	1.70	90.70	2.30	5.10
Staff Consistency/Communication	0.00	1.30	90.60	2.40	5.70

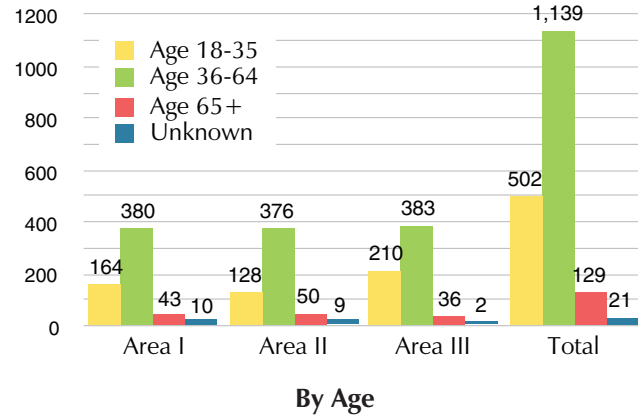
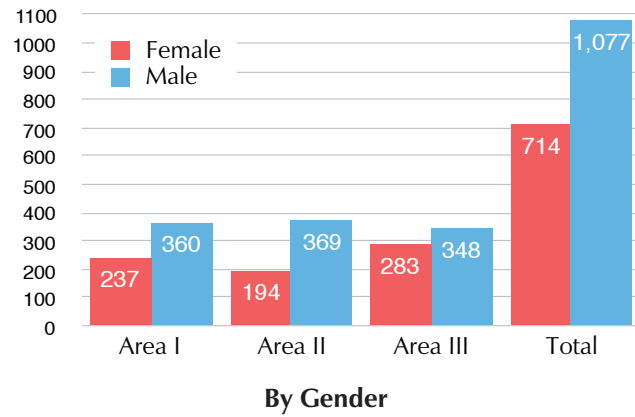
Category 4: Physical Setting	Unacceptable	Needs Improvement	Good	Exceptional	Not Rated
Neighborhood	0.00	0.40	96.70	2.80	0.10
Outside	0.00	4.10	92.40	3.40	0.10
Physical Needs	0.40	5.90	90.10	2.90	0.80
Personalization	0.00	1.90	92.90	5.20	0.00
Clean/Maintained	0.50	11.30	83.20	4.80	0.10
Personal Space	0.00	0.80	94.30	4.80	0.10

Frequency of Ratings Assigned	Unacceptable	Needs Improvement	Good	Exceptional	Not Rated
	0.10%	2.70%	92.40%	3.10%	1.70%

THE LIVES WE TOUCHED

The individuals visited by monitors are the reason the OK AIM program was created. They are a diverse group of people, reflecting the range of individuals served by DDS in residential programs. All are over the age of 18.

1791 Total individuals were visited



Alicia's Story

Alicia resides in a small town in a comfortable home with her foster parent. The home is well-kept and Alicia has a room of her own with numerous items that show her interests. Her foster parent has a pet that Alicia attends to as part of her daily chores, but it is obvious that Alicia does not display any emotional attachment to the animal. Shortly after arrival to the home that Alicia shares with her Specialized Foster Parent, the monitors noted that Alicia appeared to be in physical discomfort. Alicia informed them that she was in severe pain due to a bulging disc and her sciatic nerve.

During the course of the visit, monitors observed Alicia's foster parent instructing her to retrieve recent supermarket purchases from her car. The instruction included the removal of a large sack of dog food. Concerned about her lifting the dog food, the monitors followed her to the vehicle and assisted with not only the animal food, but several other heavy sacked items.

Monitors also noted that Alicia's foster parent often spoke to her in harsh tones. She also appeared to be quite overbearing with Alicia. She would not allow her to talk to the monitors without loud interruptions.

Alicia has been removed from this setting and currently resides in a DLS Home with two other roommates and caring, respectful staff to assist her.

Mary and Cynthia's Story

During a recent visit with Mary and Cynthia, OK AIM monitors noted that both ladies appear to be very comfortable in their homes and have attentive staff. Staff reported that Mary has numerous health issues that prevent her from effectively accessing the community; noting that Cynthia would benefit from more recreational opportunities. Staff also shared several concerns that they felt made a direct impact on Mary and Cynthia's daily care and comfort, noting that the carpet seemed dirty enough to be unsanitary. Cynthia's adaptive stander was broken and needed to be repaired or replaced.

The monitors noted that a guide wheel on Mary's wheelchair had fallen off and continually had to be remounted by staff, rendering it unsafe. The monitors further noted that there was no exterior wheelchair ramp.

Aided by the report from the monitors, the case manager was able to initiate a Problem Resolution Plan with the agency. Mary's PCP is engaged in monitoring and effectively managing her health needs. The agency purchased a van that accommodates two wheelchairs, and both ladies are going into the community more often. Cynthia has received approval to obtain a new stander and Mary's wheelchair has been professionally repaired.

GETTING PROBLEMS CORRECTED

OK AIM records and tracks all problems identified by monitors that could have a negative impact on the quality of life of individuals served. Note that during some visits, more than one concern is identified while during other visits, no concerns are found. These items are presented to DDS case managers for a resolution and the response is tracked. This advocacy to correct concerns after visits makes the OK AIM program a powerful voice for quality services. The table below addresses the outcomes for the concerns identified by volunteers.

636 Number of concerns identified in these visits

RESOLUTION STATUS

	Pending*	Clarification of Status	Action by DDS	Action by Agency
Pending at End of Fiscal Year/Additional Follow-up Needed*	30	-	-	-
Concern Resolved	-	270	60	244
Process in Place for Ongoing/Long-Term Resolution of Concern	-	-	8	18
No Resolution Possible/Reasonable**	-	6	-	-

*Concerns are tracked until feedback is provided by DDS or the Residential Agency. This may take several months after the initial visit occurs, so at the end of the state fiscal year, feedback may be pending on many concerns.

**There are concerns identified that are the result of social/environmental factors that are beyond the control of the service system. Factors such as limited income, for example, may negatively impact the ability of an individual living independently to purchase and maintain adequate household furnishings.

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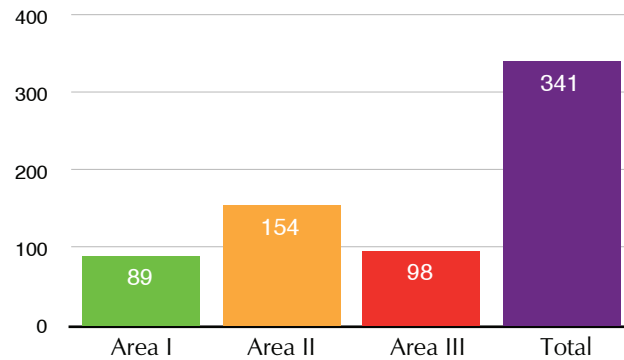
Jesslyn

HOW DID WE DO?

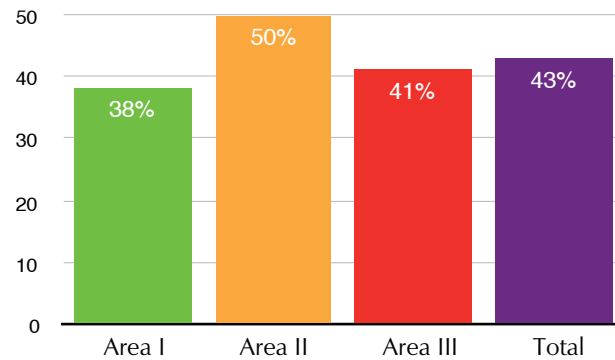
Soliciting feedback regarding monitor visits from the individual(s) and their staff who are visited is essential to ensure the quality of the OK AIM program.

OK AIM monitors leave an evaluation form in the home during each visit. The form is to be completed by the individual(s) visited and/or the staff working in the home.

Evaluations Returned



Percentage Returned



The Evaluation Form consists of five questions, three require a “Yes” or “No” response:

Was this a good time to visit?

Yes: 320 No: 9

Was the team courteous and respectful?

Yes: 324 No: 1

Did you understand the questions asked by the Monitors?

Yes: 327 No: 4

The evaluation form also poses two open-ended question that allow the individual to express more general comments about the visit, the program and the monitors.

What was the most helpful part of the visit?

- The personnel were very pleasant; this was pleasing to the residents.
- We got motivated to share our experience.
- Being able to know if we need help we have someone to call on to help.
- They asked a lot of questions as they were concerned about one client. Which is always good.
- They set down at the table and visited with everyone.
- The personnel were very pleasant; this was pleasing to the residents.
- The team was very nice. Doug and Wade felt very comfortable.

Is there any more information you would like to share?

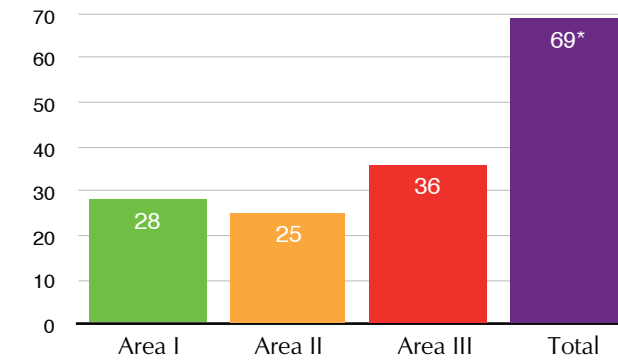
- Please continue to do these visits at least once a year if they cannot be increased to twice a year. These visits are very important as they give an opportunity to the individuals we serve to know that somebody else out there cares about them and about their wellbeing.
- This program gives me as a family member peace of mind simply by knowing there is someone outside of DDS team checking on my sister. Thanks for this program and to all of the volunteers!
- It was very wonderful to know that we have very young men out there (in this case, young ladies) who care so much about the cause of the programs that DDS is engaged in, an effort to promote the wellbeing and the quality of life of the people we serve.
- They were real sweet ladies. It seemed like they love what they do.



Candace,
OK AIM
Volunteer

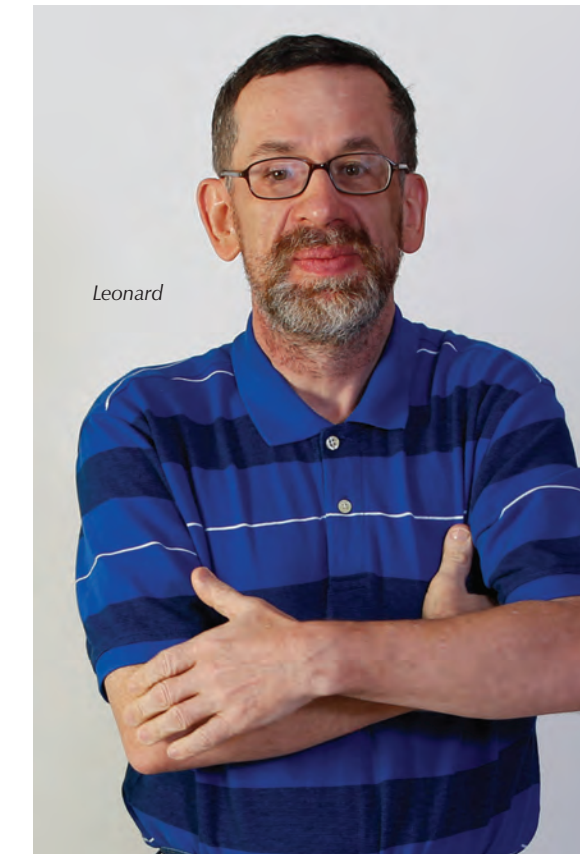
AGENCIES MONITORED

The 786 homes monitored were operated by 69 different contracted private service providers.



*Because some agencies are monitored in more than one DDS Area, the total is less than the sum of the three areas.

- | | |
|---|--|
| A New Leaf | Gatesway Foundation, Inc. |
| Aall Care Living Services, Inc. | HELP Works |
| Ability First | Home Integration, Inc. |
| Able Community Based Services | Home of Hope, Inc. |
| Adept Concepts | INCOR |
| Aid For Individual Development, Inc. | Independent Opportunities, Inc. |
| All About You, LLC | Independent Opportunities, Inc. – Enid |
| APEX, Inc. | Jones Health Care |
| Association of Direct Care Trainers | Kiamichi Opportunities, Inc. |
| Better Life, Inc. | KiBois Community Living Services |
| Big Five Community Services | Magna Community Living Services |
| BIOS | McCall’s Chapel School |
| Brighter Day, Inc. | Meadow Brook Acres Center for Independent Living |
| Care Dynamics, Inc. | MPower |
| Carter County ARC | NCDC Tulsa |
| Center of Family Love | Oklahoma’s Action Rehabilitation Center, Inc. |
| Central State Community Services, Inc. | Opportunity Center, Inc. |
| Chickasha Opportunity Center, Inc. | Panhandle Area Sheltered Workshop |
| Community Access, Inc. | Panhandle Area Sheltered Workshop – Beaver |
| DDS | People, Inc. |
| DJK Enterprises, Inc. | Power Shop, Inc. |
| Dungarvin Oklahoma, Inc. | Premier Community Services, Inc. |
| EARC, Inc. | Quality Enterprises of Lawton |
| Elite Care, Inc. | Reach Out |
| Eton Home Care, Inc. | Renaissance Management Group |
| Evergreen Presbyterian Ministries, Inc. | ResCare, Inc. |
| Fretzpark Homes, Inc. | |
| Garvin County Community Living Center, Inc. | |



Leonard

- Sagebrush, Inc.
- Searchlight Center, Inc.
- South Central Group Homes
- Special Young Adults, Inc.
- Springs, Inc.
- S-Q Specialties, Inc.
- Star Care, Inc.
- Stillwater Group Homes
- Supported Community Lifestyles, Inc.
- Volunteers of America
- Wecare, LLC