

# AAIDD Interest Network Annual Plan & Yearly Report: 2021

Planning and reporting on Interest Network activities designed to fulfil their purpose.  
(See the *Interest Networks Leadership Manual* for the purpose of the Interest Networks.)

**Interest Network:** Family Interest Network

**Lead Contact Person:** Michelle “Sheli” Reynolds ([reynoldsmc@umkc.edu](mailto:reynoldsmc@umkc.edu))

## Annual Report

*For the year that **just ended** (July 1-June 30), indicate objectives met, activities completed, and funds used.*

The AAIDD Families Interest Network (FIN) switched leadership in March of 2021. This resulted in a necessary meeting of interested AAIDD members on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, to discuss and determine the purpose and goals of the FIN moving forward.

The participants focused on identifying areas of need, both within the AAIDD network and the field of developmental disabilities, which present opportunities for the FIN to contribute, such as:

- Supporting researchers and other professionals in considering and engaging families in their work
- Identifying best practices for family support
- Providing practical guidance and leadership development for families as professionals
- Enhancing the “family friendliness” of AAIDD conferences and events
- Developing a research agenda and contributing to the literature related to family support
- “Championing” the publication of studies and literature to develop an evidence based for family support and engagement practices, despite what may be perceived as a lack of rigor (i.e.: supporting inclusion of well-designed program evaluations in journal publications)

This meeting highlighted the need of the FIN to redefine and rebrand itself for the upcoming year. This will be accomplished by first building consistent member engagement and second by gathering member input and feedback to identify priority areas for the next year.

## Annual Plan: Goals, Objectives, Activities, and Strategies

*For the **coming year** (July 1-June 30), describe the planned objectives, activities, and proposed expenditure of funds.*

The April AAIDD Families Interest Network (FIN) Meeting highlighted the importance of the group to redefine and rebrand itself for the upcoming year. This will be accomplished by first building consistent member engagement and second by gathering member input and feedback to identify priority areas for the next year. Going forward, the leadership’s objective is to survey current members to establish key priority areas and to assess the level of desired engagement from members.

The second objective is to conduct an analysis of the AAIDD (and, potentially other) conference sessions (and potentially publications) to understand how concepts related to families are included/represented.

- Sessions of interest may include those:
  - Focused on learning about the family
  - Focused on best practices
  - Presenters who were family members
- A methodology and criteria will be developed that may be able to be expanded to analyze other networks.
  - Coding and criteria will be centered around conceptual underpinning or “values” (or the things we want to see present within all networks/topics/disciplines). Inclusion criteria will be identified.

Due July 23, 2021