

preserving the effective and efficient administration of the program.

During and after the comment period, you may inspect all public comments about this priority in Room 3412, Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW., Washington, DC, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., eastern time, Monday through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

Assistance to Individuals With Disabilities in Reviewing the Rulemaking Record

On request, we will supply an appropriate aid, such as a reader or print magnifier, to an individual with a disability who needs assistance to review the comments or other documents in the public rulemaking record for this proposed priority. If you want to schedule an appointment for this type of aid, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

We will announce the final priority in a notice in the **Federal Register**. We will determine the final priority after considering responses to this notice and other information available to the Department. This notice does not preclude us from proposing or funding additional priorities, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements.

Note: This notice does *not* solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use this proposed priority, we invite applications through a notice published in the **Federal Register**. When inviting applications we designate each priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational. The effect of each type of priority follows:

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority, we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive preference priority, we give competitive preference to an application by either (1) awarding additional points, depending on how well or the extent to which the application meets the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application that meets the competitive priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the competitive priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority, we are particularly interested in applications that meet the invitational priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

Note: NIDRR supports the goals of President Bush's New Freedom Initiative (NFI). The NFI can be accessed on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/freedominitiative/freedominitiative.html>.

The proposed priority is in concert with NIDRR's Long-Range Plan (the Plan). The Plan is comprehensive and integrates many issues relating to disability and rehabilitation research topics. While applicants will find many sections throughout the Plan that support potential research to be conducted under this proposed priority, a specific reference is included for the topic presented in this notice. The Plan can be accessed on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/NIDRR/Products>.

Through the implementation of the Plan, NIDRR seeks to: (1) Improve the quality and utility of disability and rehabilitation research; (2) foster an exchange of expertise, information, and training to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and understanding of the unique needs of traditionally underserved populations; (3) determine best strategies and programs to improve rehabilitation outcomes for underserved populations; (4) identify research gaps; (5) identify mechanisms of integrating research and practice; and (6) disseminate findings.

Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) Program

The purpose of the DRRP Program is to plan and conduct research, demonstration projects, training, and related activities that help to maximize the full inclusion and integration of individuals with disabilities into society and to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (the Act). An applicant for assistance under this program must demonstrate in its application how it will address, in whole or in part, the needs of individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds (34 CFR 350.40(a)). The approaches an applicant may take to meet this requirement are found in 34 CFR 350.40(b).

Priority

Background

This DRRP will provide expertise or information to assist people who have disabilities to fulfill their roles as parents. Dissemination is the systematic distribution of information or knowledge through a variety of ways to potential users or beneficiaries. Utilization relates research findings to practical applications in planning,

policymaking, program administration, and delivery of services to individuals with disabilities.

NIDRR research addresses many aspects of parenting with a disability. NIDRR projects develop and evaluate assistive devices for use in child care; analyze employment and health care benefits and options to enhance families; assess the impact of public and private policies on parents with a disability; and investigate models of home-based care and positive family roles as community integration strategies. The resource center may provide information and technical assistance on custody, prenatal and neonatal, adoption, adaptive parenting equipment, and general parenting information. Information and technical assistance will assist individuals with a wide range of disabilities including, but not limited to, parents with physical, vision, hearing, intellectual, and behavioral disabilities.

In addition to parents with disabilities and their families, individuals in need of information about parenting with a disability may include advocates and personal care providers (especially those working in independent living); legal, social service, and medical professionals; rehabilitation personnel; teachers and school administrators; librarians and information specialists; and members of the media.

Proposed Priority—Resource and Technical Assistance Center on Parenting with a Disability

The Assistant Secretary proposes to fund one DRRP that will focus a dissemination, utilization, training, and technical assistance project to be a "Resource and Technical Assistance Center on Parenting with a Disability." The references for this topic can be found in the Plan, chapter 2, Dimensions of Disability: Disability, Employment, and Independent Living and chapter 8, Knowledge Dissemination and Utilization: Overview. The DRRP must:

(1) Develop quality standards to guide the identification of information for dissemination;

(2) Provide information and technical assistance to people with disabilities who are or wish to be parents. A variety of methods and tools will be developed to provide information and technical assistance. Tools might include such items as: Catalogues and listings of assistive technology, fact sheets, and articles for publication in various media. Methods to reach interested parties might include: interactive features of the Internet, wide area telephone service, presentations at