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The conceptualization and measurement of quality of life: Implications for program planning and evaluation in the field of intellectual disabilities

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Abstract

The concept of quality of life (QOL) is increasingly being used in the field of intellectual disabilities as a conceptual and measurement framework for program planning and evaluation. This article describes the development of a QOL conceptual and measurement framework, and summarizes how this framework is currently being used both nationally and internationally to assess and report personal QOL-related outcomes, to guide quality improvement strategies, and to evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies. Implications of such use are discussed, including those related to understanding mental models, developing internal data systems, supporting organization change, and building on current public policies. The article concludes with reference to the evolving nature of the QOL concept and the impact of this on model development and transdisciplinary research.

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