Oklahoma Partners in Policymaking

Disability Advocacy Training and Support

For:
Parents & Family
Self-Advocates
Professionals

A program
funded by

Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council

The diagnosis doesn't matter.
The age of your child doesn't matter.

How much education you have doesn't matter.

What matters is that you are ready and willing to change the world.

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Trust yourself as a parent –
You owe that to yourself.

Advocate for your children –
you owe that to them.

– Pattye

Partners learn how to work individually and together, along with public officials and professionals, to promote positive change in public and private systems that support people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Partners in Policymaking is Designed For

- Adults with disabilities
- Parents of children with disabilities who are too young to advocate for themselves
- Advocates for persons with disabilities

Partners Goal: Systems Change

- Partners training and support will
  - Educate participants to be active partners with those who make policy.
  - Foster development of positive relationships with policymakers.
  - Help you prevent the loss of basic rights for people with disabilities.
- You will advocate for support and services to increase independence, productivity and inclusion into the community for people with disabilities.

Partners Provides

- Training in best practice state-of-the-art information from national experts in the field of developmental disabilities;
- Books, suggestions and resources related to issues important to people with developmental disabilities; and
- Role playing and direct experiences in influencing public policy at local, state and federal levels.

Partners in Policymaking Topics Include

- Advocacy Strategies
- Assistive Technology
- Behavior and Non-Aversive Interventions
- Employment
- Grassroots Organizing
- Guardianship & Other Legal Issues
- History of Services and Perceptions
- IEPs and School Advocacy
- Inclusive Community Living
- Inclusive Education
- Medicaid and Medicare
- Natural Family Supports
- People First Language
- Person-Centered Planning
- Sexuality and Disability
- State and Federal Legislative Processes
- State Systems and Service Coordination
- State & Federal services including Social Security, TEFRA, etc.
- Working with the Media

"Because of Partners in Policymaking, my son now has a mom who is more aware of what I can do to be a better advocate for him … he's going to have a better opportunity to do everything that he wants to do in life."

– Heather

Partners Commitment to YOU

* Outstanding fellowship, access to the nation's best speakers on disability issues and dozens of print and video resources – at no cost to you!
* All meals provided during class time.
* Financial assistance with travel expenses, child and respite care, as appropriate.
* Free hotel rooms to students, as appropriate.
* Prompt reimbursement for trainees, following receipt of the reimbursement request, for:
  - Travel costs to training sessions at the current government mileage reimbursement rate, plus toll charges;
  - Childcare or respite services;
  - Personal assistant/facilitator services.

As a parent, what did Partners In Policymaking mean to you?

I learned how to make change, speak to legislators and volunteer to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

– Charlotte

YOUR Commitment to Partners

- Submit a completed application by May 31 (for the class beginning the following September)
- Actively participate in one-day orientation and all eight two-day sessions – lasses meet one weekend (Saturday-Sunday) per month between September and May, except December. There is a mandatory orientation one Saturday in August.
- Complete all homework and group assignments.
- Complete one major assignment to be conducted during the training program.
- Participate in effectiveness evaluations.
- Maintain records of advocacy efforts.
- Participate in post-training follow-up surveys.
- Be willing to have your perspectives widened and preconceptions challenged.
- Be committed to systems change beyond your own family's needs.

Partners in Policymaking Graduates Learn ...

About people with developmental disabilities and how services and perceptions have changed over time.

How to tell others about people with developmental disabilities.

Positive ways to talk about the significant contributions of the parent, self-advocate and independent living movements.

Why using People First Language is so critically important.

The importance of a quality inclusive education and things they can do to make it happen.

How to be assertive in team meetings.

The concepts of person-centered planning and what supports are necessary for people with disabilities to be fully included in the community.

The different kinds of supports necessary to create a positive home environment.

That a flexible, responsive system of supports for families of children with disabilities is the foundation for a true community support system for all people with disabilities.

About and understand the need for all individuals to experience changes in lifestyle across their life spans.

That home ownership or control is one of the defining characteristics of adult life in our culture.

The principles and strategies used to support people with developmental disabilities, in their own homes, for their entire lives.

The concepts of supported and competitive employment, including the use of natural supports.

About the service coordination system and the state service system. Graduates know how to tell others about what services may be available.

The importance of positive approaches to behavior change.

How a bill becomes a law at the state and federal levels.

To prepare and deliver testimony for legislative hearings.

To identify critical federal issues and the process by which people can personally address their concerns.

How to meet a public official and express views and concerns.

To knowledgably discuss a vision of the future for people with developmental disabilities.

About assistive technology for people with disabilities.

Successful techniques to advocate for services to meet the needs of unserved and underserved individuals.

How to begin and sustain grass roots level organizations.

How to use the media to promote issues effectively.

"There's just so much you learn in such a short time, it's like a crash course in parenting and advocacy all in one, and it really did change my life."

– Traci

How Do I Become a Partner?

Complete the application request form in this brochure or call the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council (ODDC) office at (405) 521-4984, or 1-800-836-4470 toll-free, to request an application. Applications are due late May each year.

Selections are made by early July for each year.

Orientation is in August; classes meet one weekend (Saturday-Sunday) per month between September and May, except December.

When you have completed the application, return it to the ODDC office by the specified deadline. (Mail, e-mail or fax.)

A selection committee composed of Partners graduates and staff reviews applications.

Class size is limited to 30 participants. To be fair to other applicants, send in your application only if you are serious about making this full eight-month commitment.

Not all applicants to Partners in Policymaking are accepted, and we encourage you to apply again if you are not accepted.

Have more questions? Need more applications?

Contact & submit applications to:

Erin Taylor, Mom &
Partners in Policymaking Graduate 2011
Adult Advocacy & Training, ODDC

www.okddc.ok.gov<– Find downloadable Partners in Policymaking applications here!

Erin.Taylor@okddc.ok.gov
(405) 521-4967 Fax: (405) 521-4910

Offices located at:
2401 N.W. 23rd St., Suite 74
Oklahoma City, OK 73107

As a parent, what did Partners In Policymaking mean to you?

In Partners, I met others that are on this path of raising a child with a disability. We got to spend several months of learning, bonding and growing together. I also learned that being a "take charge" kind of mom could get in the way of my son, Jacob, learning to advocate for himself. It was an experience like no other – we left Partners with a special bond, which means a lifetime of support for all of us.

– Kerri

Send me a

OKLAHOMA Partners IN POLICYMAKING

application!

Name _____

Address _____

_____

City State _____

Zip _____

Cell _____

Home Phone _____

E-mail _____

Mail this form to

P.O. Box 25352
Oklahoma City, OK 73125

Or call (405) 521-4984 (V/TDD)
1-800-836-4470 (Toll Free V/TDD)

OKLAHOMA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

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Oklahoma City, OK 73125

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