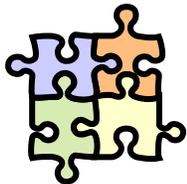


ILLINOIS VOICES LEADERSHIP TRAINING GUIDE

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Illinois Voices: Putting together the pieces of the self-advocacy puzzle.

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This manual was developed by individuals with developmental disabilities in Illinois who are leaders. The manual is designed to develop and support leaders who want to teach leadership skills to others.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Definitions..... 5

Lingo..... 6

Network Meetings..... 8

Statewide Advisory Council Meetings..... 10

Reasons for Taking Part in Meetings..... 12

Taking Part in Meetings as a Leader..... 13

Other Leadership Opportunities..... 15

Maria shares her feelings about leading others and speaking out for self-advocacy:

People have to take responsibility for themselves and speak out. We have to let people know it is okay to speak out. We need to speak out for ourselves and for people who aren't ready or can't speak out for themselves. Just because we are different does not mean we are stupid. We just want to do things that others do. Remember that you are still a person; no matter what kind of disability you have, you are still a person. What matters is who we are inside and how we can help others who have disabilities.

Help is needed to understand how we feel and to say what we need to say. Tell people how you want things to change in Illinois. Together we can change things in Illinois and other places, too, if you do your part. You have to do what is right and say what you think. It's your right to speak for yourself, to tell how you feel and what you want to change.

If we talk to each other, we can get through this and make our dreams come true. Stand up and say what you want to say. Do the right thing and let people listen to you about what you have to say so they will understand how you feel inside.

DEFINITIONS

Here are some of the words that are used in this manual and what they mean:

Advocate is a person who speaks up for what someone else needs or wants.

Empowerment means to help someone have more power and control.

Leader is a person with a developmental disability that takes part in Network and Statewide Advisory Council meetings. A Leader can also choose to show their skills by speaking in front of a bigger group.

Respect means to care about others and to treat them nicely.

Responsibility means to be able to answer for your actions or decisions, to be able to choose between right and wrong.

Self-Advocate is a person who speaks up for himself or herself and may choose to speak up for others as well.

LINGO

More words that are used in this manual and what they mean:

CILA: Community Integrated Living Arrangement. People with developmental disabilities who live in the community and have support staff who help them stay safe while learning new skills.

DD: Developmental Disability

DHS: Department of Human Services

DT: Developmental Training. This is a place where people go during the day to learn work skills.

DUAL DIAGNOSIS: A person who has both a developmental disability and a mental illness.

ICF/DD: Intermediate Care Facility for Persons with Developmental Disabilities. People with developmental disabilities who live in the community and have support staff 24 hours a day who help them stay safe while learning new skills.

IDHS: Illinois Department of Human Services

Illinois Department of Developmental Disabilities: The part of Illinois state government that DHS belongs to. It gives money to agencies which provide services to people with developmental disabilities.

IPP: Individual Program Plan. The yearly plan made at the meeting that tells all about you, the goals you want for your life, and the programs to help you reach your goals.

SAC: Statewide Advisory Council

SOF: State Operated Facility. People with developmental disabilities who have support staff 24 hours a day who help them stay safe while learning new skills. (This is more commonly known as an SODC, or State-Operated Developmental Center.)

Why Have Network Meetings? Each of the seven networks has its own advisory council. The councils meet several times during the year (usually monthly or every other month). The network meetings are open to anyone who wants to go to them. At the meetings, people discuss good things that are happening, problems people are having, and ways to make things better.

If you would like more information about network advisory councils and their meetings, you can talk to the following people in your area:

<i>North West</i>	Kevin Byrd	(217) 524-2517
<i>North Central</i>	Andrea Medley	(217) 524-2520
<i>Central</i>	Pam Gray	(217) 524-2518
<i>Southern</i>	Allan Cherrick	(217) 782-5230
<i>City of Chicago</i>	Katherine Madison	(312) 814-8665
<i>South Suburban</i>	Bruce Anderson	(312) 814-3394
<i>North Suburban</i>	Ed McManus	(312) 814-5981

If you use a TTY because you can't hear on a regular phone, there is a relay system you can use. It's free for local calls but you'll need a long distance calling card to make long distance calls.

Illinois Relay 1-800-526-0844 (TTY) or 1-800-526-0857 (voice)

To find the relay system numbers in all of the fifty (50) states, just use a computer and log on www.notepage.com/dahoh/relay.htm.

What Are Meetings Like? Each network has a Network Facilitator. This is a person who runs the meeting, makes the agenda, and takes notes of the meeting to share with everyone who is there. During the meeting, it is important to stay on topic and to speak one person at a time. You should speak up about things that affect you and other people who have developmental disabilities.

STATEWIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Why Have Statewide Advisory Council Meetings? Formed in October 2000, the Statewide Advisory Council (SAC) gives a chance for people in the Illinois developmental disability services system to come together and give suggestions to the Illinois Division of Developmental Disabilities on many issues. Council members include:

- people with developmental disabilities,
- family members of people with developmental disabilities,
- service providers, and
- other people like doctors and case managers who work to help people with developmental disabilities.

Most members are chosen by their own network advisory councils. There are three (3) members from each network that serve on the Statewide Advisory Council, including a person with a developmental disability, a family member of a person with a developmental disability, and a service provider. There are also alternate members in each of those categories that take part in the SAC meetings when one of the other 3 members cannot attend. Members and alternates serve on the SAC for two years. Members are responsible for:

- taking issues from the Statewide Advisory Council back to their networks for discussion and
- taking issues from their network to the Statewide Advisory Council for discussion.

What Are Meetings Like? SAC meetings are held in Springfield and are open to the public. They are held quarterly (every three months) and are usually scheduled on the fourth (4th) Tuesday of January, April, July, and October. (The next section in red is one that I don't quite know how to explain in easier words. My head exploded)

Members of the SAC follow an agenda which includes roll call of SAC members, introductory remarks, approval of minutes from the last SAC meeting, public comment, committee motions, network issues, unfinished business, new business, announcements, public comment, and adjournment. SAC members do most of the talking, but non-

members can bring up issues during the public comment sections. There is a public comment section in the morning and one in the afternoon. When you talk at a SAC meeting, you should use one of the microphones that are available so that everyone can hear you.

REASONS FOR TAKING PART IN NETWORK AND STATEWIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- To share your feelings about the services you get.
- To learn more about what is happening in Illinois for people with developmental disabilities.
- To tell people what you like and what you don't like.
- To help make changes in Illinois.
- To speak for others who cannot speak or who are afraid to speak for themselves.
- To empower yourself and others.
- Because it is your right to speak up!

TAKING PART IN MEETINGS AS A LEADER

When going to Network meetings or Statewide Advisory Council meetings, it is important to be on time and not be late. This shows respect to the other people at the meeting. It is also nice to shake hands with those people around you and introduce yourself. You can make friendships with people from different parts of Illinois who share something in common with you – speaking up for people with developmental disabilities!

Feelings

You might be nervous about being a leader. You might be:

- nervous about speaking in front of others.
- unsure about what other people expect you to do.
- afraid that people will not take you seriously.
- embarrassed about not knowing what to say or when to say it.

Things to Remember when Speaking in Front of Others

- Speak slowly, clearly, and loudly.
- Bring notes to help you remember what you want to say.
- Be honest.
- Show your feelings.
- Tell your story.
- Use words that are easy to understand.
- Ask people if they have any questions.
- Dress appropriately for the occasion. For people to take you seriously, wear clean and neat clothing.
- Make sure your body, hair, and teeth are clean.
- Use eye contact.
- Stand up when speaking.
- If you don't understand what someone is saying, ask to have it explained in a different way.
- If you disagree with something someone says, tell them why you don't agree and share ideas.

Ways of Getting Ready to Speak in Front of Others

- Respect yourself.
- Think about what you want to say.
- Ask people what their needs are if you will be speaking for them.
- Write down what you want to say.
- Practice talking in front of a mirror or in front of a friend.
- Find a good way for you to relax so you won't get nervous.
 - Take deep breaths.
 - Think about your friends.
 - Picture yourself being successful.
- Bring a friend with you.

OTHER LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

There are lots of ways that you can be a leader besides going to the Network and Statewide Advisory Council meetings. Here are some other ideas:

- Vote in local, state and federal elections.
- Write letters.
- Make phone calls.
- Send e-mails.
- Attend a city council meeting.
- Attend self-advocacy meetings.
- Contact the media – newspaper, television, radio.
- Educate yourself on the things that interest you by reading and researching.
- Include your ideas in employee training at the agency where you get services.
- Be a member of a committee at the agency where you get services.