



# DDS SELF ADVOCATE COORDINATORS

Fiscal Year 15' Report  
August 2015



# SELF ADVOCATE COORDINATORS AT WORK!

- Who are the 10 DDS Self Advocate Coordinators (SACS)?
  - Legislature Supported
  - A Voice of the People
  - Making a Difference



# SELF ADVOCATE COORDINATORS AT WORK

- **What do SACs Do?**
  - **Promote Self Advocacy -Spread the Word!**
  - **Promote individual involvement**
  - **Develop leaders**
  - **Support Regional and State activities**



# CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

## WE ARE PEOPLE. CALL ME BY MY NAME!

- February 2015 The DDS Self Advocate Coordinators (SACs) unveiled a new initiative, supporting and recognizing "People First Language."
- We are People –Call Me by My Name campaign - asks everyone to be called by their given name
- SACs Hope to eliminate the words and terms:

"client"

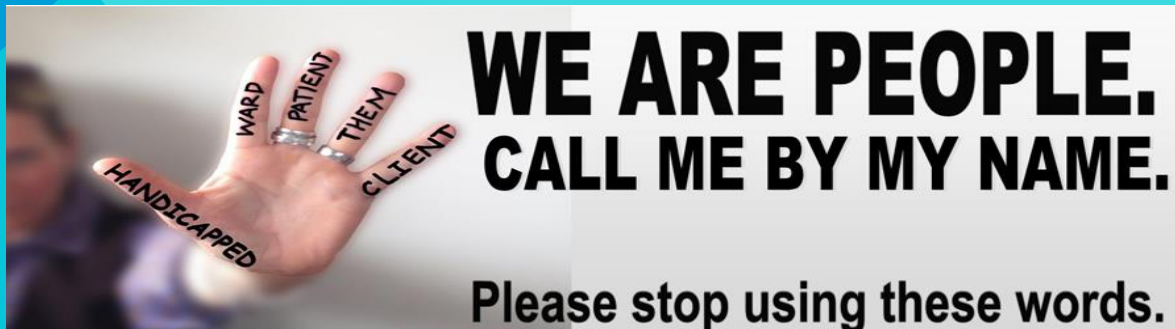
"patient",

"ward"

"them"

"handicapped"

and the "R" word - "retarded".



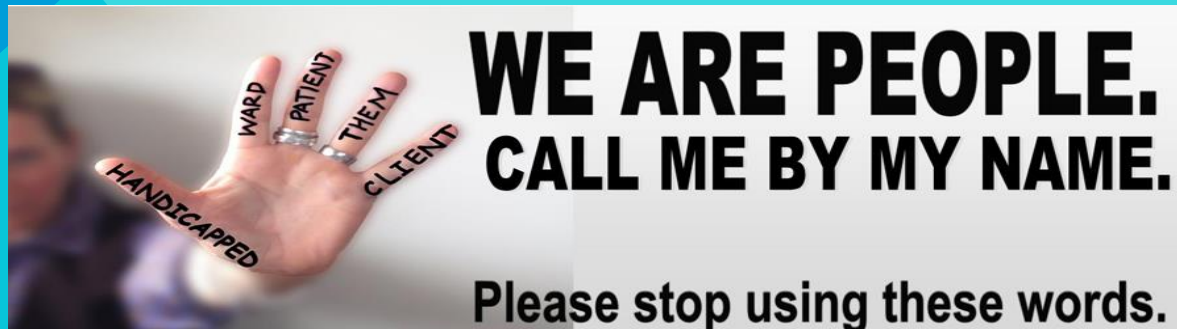
# SACS CHALLENGE EVERYONE TO TAKE THE PLEDGE!

SACs invite everyone to take the

Disability Awareness Pledge

Reaffirms a commitment to seeing the person and not the disability.

The SACs are challenging each one of us to be the change that makes a difference. – TAKE THE PLEDGE!



## Disability Awareness/People First Language Pledge

### I PLEDGE:

- To advocate and accept my responsibility to be respectful to the individuals I work with and for.
- To RESPECT and treat all individuals equally.
- To Call each person by their name and refer to them as “INDIVIDUALS/PEOPLE” and stop using the word “CLIENT”
- To Support self-advocacy and stand up for individuals’ human rights.
- To be an advocate for “No More R Word” in my work place and everywhere I go.
- To Assist and make sure that each person that I work with can make their own choices, be part of a community of their choice, and feel accepted to be themselves.
- I will use People First Language, which means seeing THE person NOT the disability, using words and terms that are easier for people to understand.
- To be an ambassador for Self Advocates, Speak up for People First Language, and Be the voice for change that makes peoples’ lives happen!
- To the best of my ability I solemnly swear to live by the this pledge.



# SELF ADVOCACY- BUILDING THE VOICES



- Empowering Others to Speak Up!
  - Developing and Expanding SA Groups
  - Working with all of the CT Private Providers
  - Increasing the number of Self Advocacy Groups and the number of Individuals attending Self Advocacy Groups.
  - Working with Private Providers to have advocates on their boards and an advocacy group within their agency.
  - SA Groups for individuals in Public supports, STS, Regional Centers/Group Homes



# SELF ADVOCACY- BUILDING THE VOICES



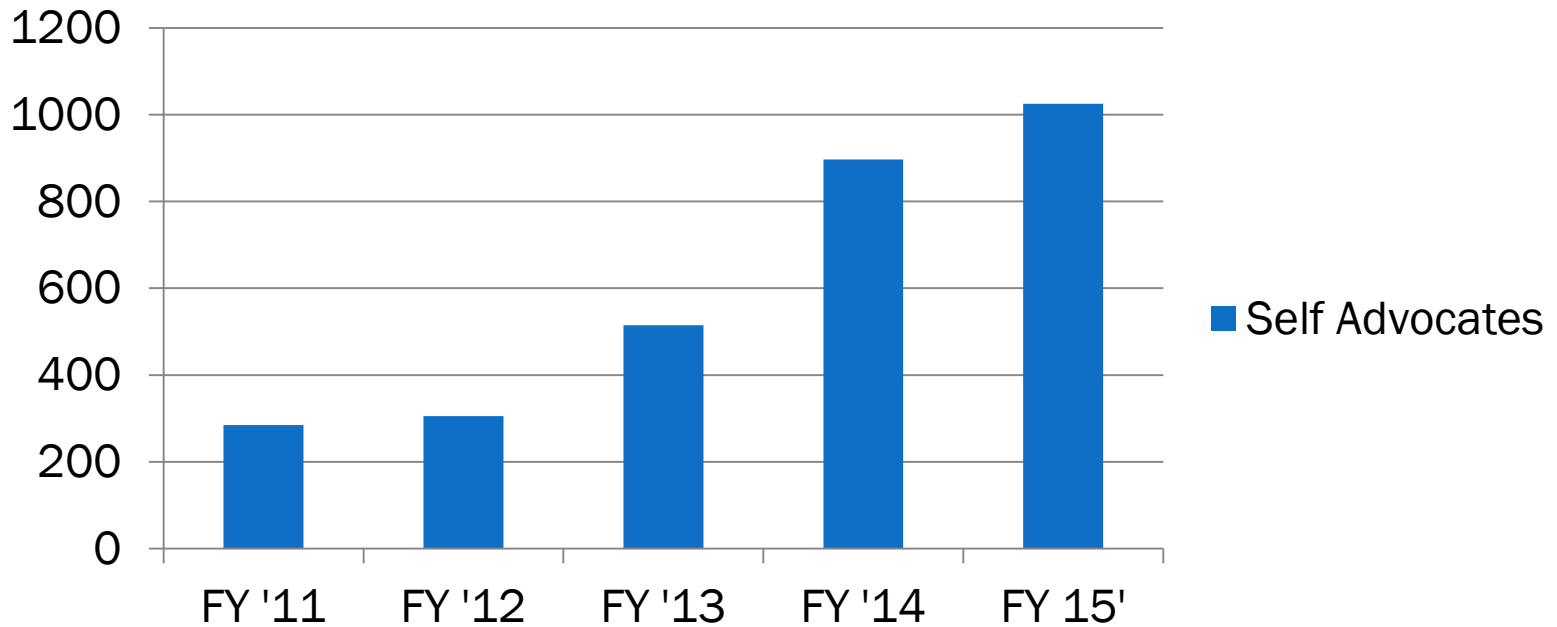
- Empowering Others to Speak Up!
  - Being an IP Buddy and developing IP Buddies to support individual advocacy
  - Developing Self Advocate Volunteers to help Spread the Word!
  - Supporting and participating in “CT Cross Disability Alliance”
  - NCIs – Peer Interviewing and sharing SA Information



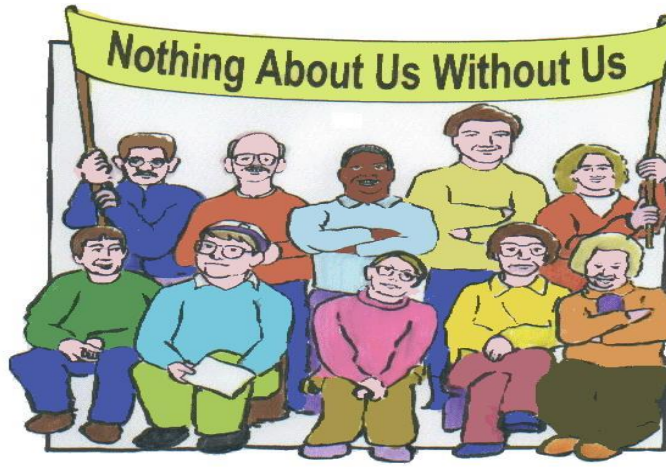
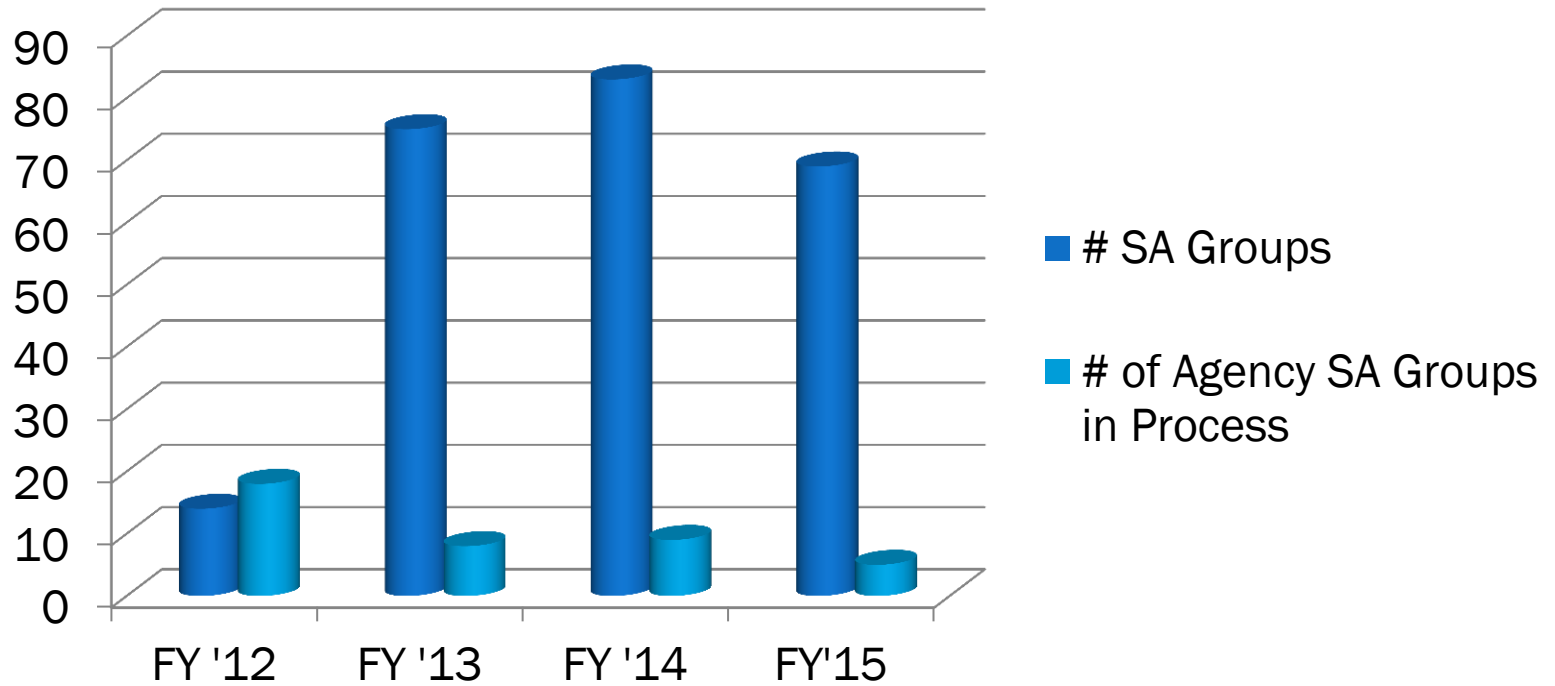


# GROWING SELF ADVOCACY STATEWIDE

## Self Advocates



# SELF ADVOCACY GROUPS



# ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Changes Happen: SA Groups have gone through some changes which have showed a difference in our “growing” numbers

- Groups have merged – to support location and transportation
- Staff support has changed
- Agencies have closed – no longer have SA Groups
- Refer SA groups to other local community based organizations who support individuals with disabilities
- Inclusion Groups established in local communities – combining several disability support groups



# PROMOTE SELF ADVOCACY – SPREAD THE WORD!

## Knowledge is Power!

- All SACs have a Focus Area
- Regular meetings with the Commissioner to discuss issues that are important to everyone who receives services from DDS
- **FAB** Topics – Shared with the SA Groups
  - Fun
  - Advocacy
  - Brain Power



# SAC FOCUS AREAS



- **Leadership Responsibilities** – Each of the SACs support all of the Focus Areas and are responsible for “Spreading the Word” with all of the topics. They each coordinate the following Focus Areas:
  - Carlos – Leadership
  - James – Self Advocacy within DDS and Special Olympics
  - Varian – Sibling Advocacy
  - Josh – Spreading the Word at STS
  - Ivan – Aging
  - Carol – Women’s Issues
  - Latasha- ADA and Assistive Technology
  - Genna – Employment
  - Jamar – Youth Advocacy and Transition
  - Jossie – Healthy Relationships



# SAC FOCUS AREA

## LEADERSHIP



- **LEADERSHIP** - SACs lead the way by

Supporting and participating in various

Regional and Statewide Committees, conference presentations, general presentations/trainings to individuals, families, providers and DDS staff, and are board members for various organizations

- Some Committees include: Healthy Living Conference, Hiring Interview Committees, Qualified Provider interviews, Community Companion Homes, Community Of Practice Committees – all 10 have SAC representation, CT Coalition for Aging and Developmental Disabilities, Aging Committee at STS, Employment Steering, Family & Mentoring Leadership, and DDS various LEAN groups

# **SAC FOCUS AREA – LEADERSHIP**

## **PROVIDING EDUCATION/TRAININGS:**

Regional Leadership Forums  
CO Quality Service Review Staff  
Cross Disability Lifespan Alliance  
Peer Support  
DDS New Employee Training  
Supporting the DDS Consumer Corner website  
Developing videos to post on our websites to promote various DDS initiatives

DDS Council Member  
Job Development Leadership Network  
CT Family Support Network  
Presented for National Webinars  
Presented National and State Conference  
Ongoing trainings for Healthy Relationships  
SA Volunteers





# SAC FOCUS AREA - LEADERSHIP

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Ongoing Trainings Provided – SAC Tool Chest
  - “10 Steps to Being a Great Self Advocate”
  - “Employment Now!”
  - “Next Steps- Speak Up! School Days to Pay Days”
  - “Speak Up! Speak Out! – Self Advocacy”
  - “Self Determination – Make Life Happen”
  - “We Have Human Rights!”
  - “What’s So Important About Having A Job?”
  - “Degrees of Mean”
  - “I Have an Intellectual Disability: Do I Need a Guardian?”
  - “Employment First – Real Work for Real Pay!”
  - “Provider Orientation”



# SAC FOCUS AREA - LEADERSHIP



- **SACS Leading the Way!**
- Youth Leadership Forum – Counselors
- National Core Indicator Surveys – Interviewers
- Individual Plan Buddies
- Mentoring Day – October 2014
- Presenters at National and State Conferences
- People First Conference – “Everyday Leadership”

# SAC FOCUS AREA

## SELF ADVOCACY

### **Self Advocacy – SPREADING THE WORD!**

- **Self Advocacy within DDS-** Developing and supporting SA groups for people living in DDS supported homes and out reach to community SA groups. Promoting to DDS Staff the importance of self advocacy and how it empowers people to “Make their life Happen”!



# COMMISSIONER CHATS

- The DDS CT Self Advocate Coordinators invited self advocates from around the state to share information about their SA Group, and share their thoughts, ideas, success stories, and concerns with our new DDS Commissioner, Morna Murray.
- Three Chat Nights scheduled – one for each region
- 30-40 advocates and advisors participated in each of the Commissioner Chat Nights



West Region  
Commissioner Chat  
Night



North Region  
Commissioner Chat  
Night

## New Self Advocacy Banners!

# SAC Focus Area -

## Self Advocacy - **SPREADING THE WORD!**



- **Public Speaking**
  - **State Conferences – Aging, Healthy Living, People First, Employment First Employer Seminar, Regional and State Trainings**
  - **Mentoring Day – Promote Employment**
  - **Disability Awareness Month**
  - **Promote DDS Mission and Vision**
  - **Promote DDS Five Year Plan**
  - **Developed New Provider Orientation Material to promote self direction, self determination, self advocacy and employment!**
  - **Self Advocacy Tour Recruitment**





# SAC FOCUS AREA - SELF ADVOCACY - SPREADING THE WORD!

- Presentation Boards
- Special Olympics summer games, Regional Resource Fairs, DDS Staff Retreats, CT Youth Leadership Project/Forum, Transition Fairs, School Fairs, Family Forums



Special Olympics – Spreading  
the Word!



# SAC FOCUS AREA - SELF ADVOCACY - SPREADING THE WORD!

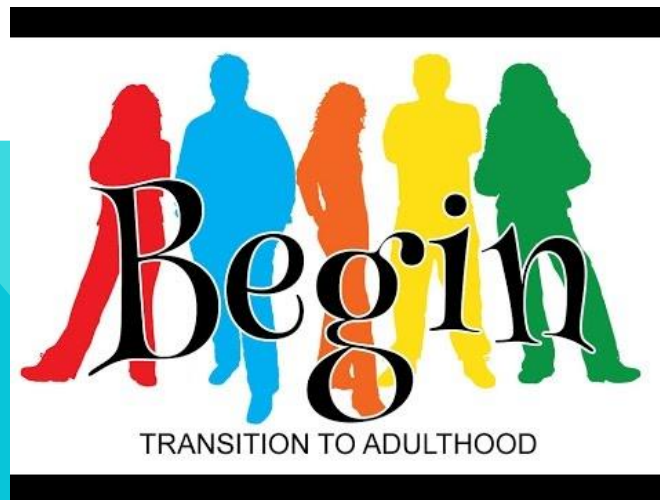
- “Making the Connection”
  - Consumer Corner Website
  - Create and Update Bulletin Boards with FAB topics
  - Share FAB Topics with all SA Groups around the state
  - Spreading the word through email and social networks
  - Blog for NCI
  - Brown Bag Lunches to share information
  - Sharing with school students how to speak up and advocate!
- On Board Training – New DDS Employees and employees who have been out of work for over one year
- Collaboration with CT Family Support Network



# SAC FOCUS AREA

## Youth Advocacy and Transition

- Transition Fairs
- Presentations at high schools and transition academies
  - Tips for transitioning into adulthood
  - Promote Employment – Real Work for Real Pay!
  - Information about DDS
  - Promote starting SA groups in High School



# SAC FOCUS AREA

## SELF ADVOCACY

### **Self Advocacy - SPREADING THE WORD!**

- **Sibling Advocacy** -Promoting more involvement with siblings of people with intellectual disabilities and supporting them to advocate together to make a difference
  - Share website information with SA Groups



# SAC FOCUS AREA

## SELF ADVOCACY - SPREADING THE WORD!

**Spreading the Word at STS** – supporting consumers living at STS (state institution) to understand their rights and how to advocate for the life they want

- **Spreading the Word through – 10 Steps for Being a Good Self Advocate**
- **Developed 3 advocacy groups each having people with common interests**
- **SAC is member of the STS Human Rights Committee**
- **SAC is assisting with people transitioning to community living**
- **SAC is providing 1:1 self advocacy to promote self esteem and educate**



# SAC FOCUS AREA

## AGING ISSUES

**Promoting healthy aging and advocating for services as we age across the Life Span**

- SAC Board Member of CCADD
- Support the Annual Aging Conference – “Aging Matters”
- Provide information on Money Follows the Person
  - Assist individuals to know there are options to move out of long term care
- Promote Elder Abuse Awareness Day in June
- Promote Older Americans Month in May
- Provide materials to support aging in place



# SAC FOCUS AREA

## WOMEN'S ISSUES

**Women's Issues – Addressing women's issues and advocating for healthy supports and services**

- Providing Women's health information and promoting breast exams
- October promoted Breast Cancer Awareness
- Provided monthly information about women's issues in relationship to the FAB topics

**Researched important trends and issues – presented the facts!**



# **SAC FOCUS AREA**

## **PROMOTING ADA AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**

**Exploring the world through technology. Voices can be heard if the right support/technology is used. SAC's explored various forms of technology and have shared with individuals, families and staff to assist people to live and work independently.**

- **Resources:**
  - **CT Tech Act, NEAT Market Place, Assistive Living Technology Inc., Sengistix**





# SAC FOCUS AREA

## PROMOTING ADA AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY



Promote:

- 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ADA
- ADA Service Animals
- Understanding ADA and Rights
- Technology to promote independence and reduce staff assistance – tech cars/vans, robotics, stair lifts, computers
- The Assistive Technology Loan Program assists CT citizens



# SAC FOCUS AREA

## EMPLOYMENT



**Employment for all- promoting employment goals in IP, increase employment activities and interviews, promote review of benefits with Benefits Counselors, Spread the Word - **Employment is Empowerment!****

- SAC on APSE Board
- SACs members of JDLN -Job Development Leadership Networks
- Employment Idol for 2015 Developed
  - 4 Employment Idols selected



# SAC FOCUS AREA

## EMPLOYMENT

- Promote employment at Transition Fairs, Family Forums, Private Provider meetings, and DDS Staff meetings
- COP – Employment Steering Committee
- Brown Bag lunches to promote Employment and Show the Employment Idol
- Promote and support American Job Centers, Capital Regional Workforce Partnership, Connect-Ability, and CT Department of Labor
- Always promoting:



## REAL WORK

## FOR REAL PAY!



# SAC FOCUS AREA

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



- Promoted the New Healthy Relationship Policy Signed By DDS Commissioner on June 3rd, 2014 promoting the Right of all individuals of DDS to have and enjoy a Healthy Relationship
- DDS and Planned Parenthood of SNE collaborate to create a Healthy Relationship Brochure
- Collaboration between the PPSNE and DDS to promote health care supports in the PPSNE Clinics in CT
- Established ongoing training collaboration with PPSNE to train Clinic Staff



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, Inc.

# SAC FOCUS AREA

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



- **Ongoing Healthy Relationship Series**
  - Three 6 session trainings held in each region
  - 20-25 participants in each session
  - 1 Series done in Spanish
  - Peer teaching by SACs with PPSNE Educator
  - PPSNE expanded their educators to meet the demand of the series



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, Inc.



# COMING THIS YEAR - FY 16!

- ▶ **Continue to Meet with the Commissioner to discuss issues that are important to all consumers who receive services from DDS**
- ▶ **Continue to promote REAL WORK for REAL PAY and Employment for ALL**
- ▶ **Expand Self Advocate Volunteers – Focus on NCI Interviews and IP Buddies**
- ▶ **Continue Family Support Network Collaboration**
- ▶ **Promote the DDS Vision and Mission**
- ▶ **Promote the DDS Five Year Plan**



# COMING THIS YEAR – FY 16!

- ▶ Continue to promote advocacy voices and creation of new Self Advocacy Groups
- ▶ Continue to work with PPSNE to educate “Health Centers” in supporting people with ID/DD
- ▶ Continue to promote “People First Language”
- ▶ Continue Campaign to promote WE ARE PEOPLE CALL ME BY MY NAME
- ▶ Update SAC “Focus Areas”





# COMING THIS YEAR - FY 16!



- ▶ Continue to support NCIs for all individuals and peer interviewing
- ▶ Support and assist with implementation of QSR for individuals who self direct their supports
- ▶ Promote DDS Initiatives through DDS Media Center by creating videos
- ▶ Promote Peer to Peer Support
- ▶ Promote IP Buddy to assist people to

**SPEAK UP And SPEAK OUT!**





# DDS Self Advocate Coordinators Making a DIFFERENCE!



**SPEAK UP AND SPEAK OUT!**