



DDS

Self Advocate Coordinators

SPEAK UP SPEAK OUT!

End of Year Report

2017

Self Advocate Coordinators at Work!

Who are the SACS?

- Legislature Supported
- A voice of the people
- Making a difference
- 5 new Self Advocates joined us!



What do they do?

- Promote Self Advocacy -Spread the Word!
- Promote individual involvement
- Develop leaders
- Support Regional and State activities



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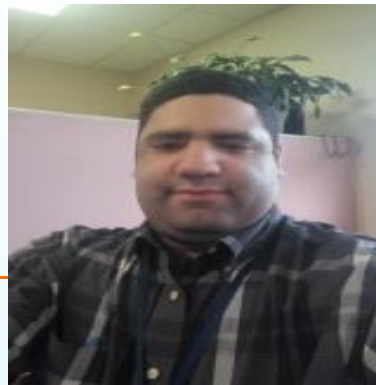
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The Voice of DDS – Self Advocate Coordinators

- ▶ CT Legislature Supported DDS in Creating State Position - 2004
- ▶ State Employees representing the voices of the people supported by DDS
- ▶ SACs lead the department in Making A Difference!



Continue to PROMOTE: 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 challenged everyone to Take the pledge!

- ▶ SACs invited everyone to take the Disability Awareness Pledge
- ▶ Reaffirms a commitment to seeing the person and not the disability.
- ▶ **Over 1200 people have taken the Pledge**
- ▶ The SACs are challenging each one of us to be the change that makes a difference.

PLEASE 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.

Commissioner Scheff's testimony to the Appropriations' Committee

The DDS Self-Advocate Coordinators (SACs) unveiled a new initiative in February 2015, supporting and recognizing “People First Language” with a visual message and a Disability Awareness Pledge. The “We are People – Call Me by My Name” campaign requests that everyone be called by their given name, hence, eliminating negative words and terminology. The “Disability Awareness Pledge” reaffirms a commitment to seeing the person and not the disability. To date, more than 1200 people have taken the pledge.

<http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=3589&Q=591110>





Gov. Malloy & Lt. Gov. Wyman Applaud Final Legislative Passage of ‘Person First’ Legislation

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Dannel P. Malloy and Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman are applauding the Connecticut House of Representatives for voting today to give final legislative approval on a bill the Governor introduced that updates outdated language within the Connecticut state statutes that are in reference to persons with disabilities and replaces them with person-first, respectful language.

The idea to make these modifications first came to the Governor’s attention through the Department of Developmental Services, which pointed out several areas of state statute that use words that are out-of-date and do not promote inclusion and respect for any person who has a disability.

Governor Malloy said, “Connecticut has a long history of being at the forefront of issues concerning equity and respect for all of our citizens, and this legislation should be seen as a step forward and an evolution of those efforts. The language we use within the laws we create in our statute books should reflect our inclusive mindset and respectfulness for all the people of our state, no matter their ability. I want to thank the overwhelming, bipartisan group of lawmakers who agreed that the words we use matter and that these are changes we should support.”

Lt. Governor Wyman said, “This legislation is part of a larger commitment to people with disabilities and ensuring that they are defined first by their character and their commitment. Dignity and respect matter, and this legislation is one small way to move that conversation forward, and modernize our statutes and our thinking. I thank Governor Malloy for his work to make Connecticut more inclusive, and the legislature for passing this bill.”

The legislation is [**Senate Bill 796, An Act Concerning the Use of Respectful and Person-First Language**](#). It next moves to the Governor’s desk for his signature.

Self Advocacy- Building the Voices



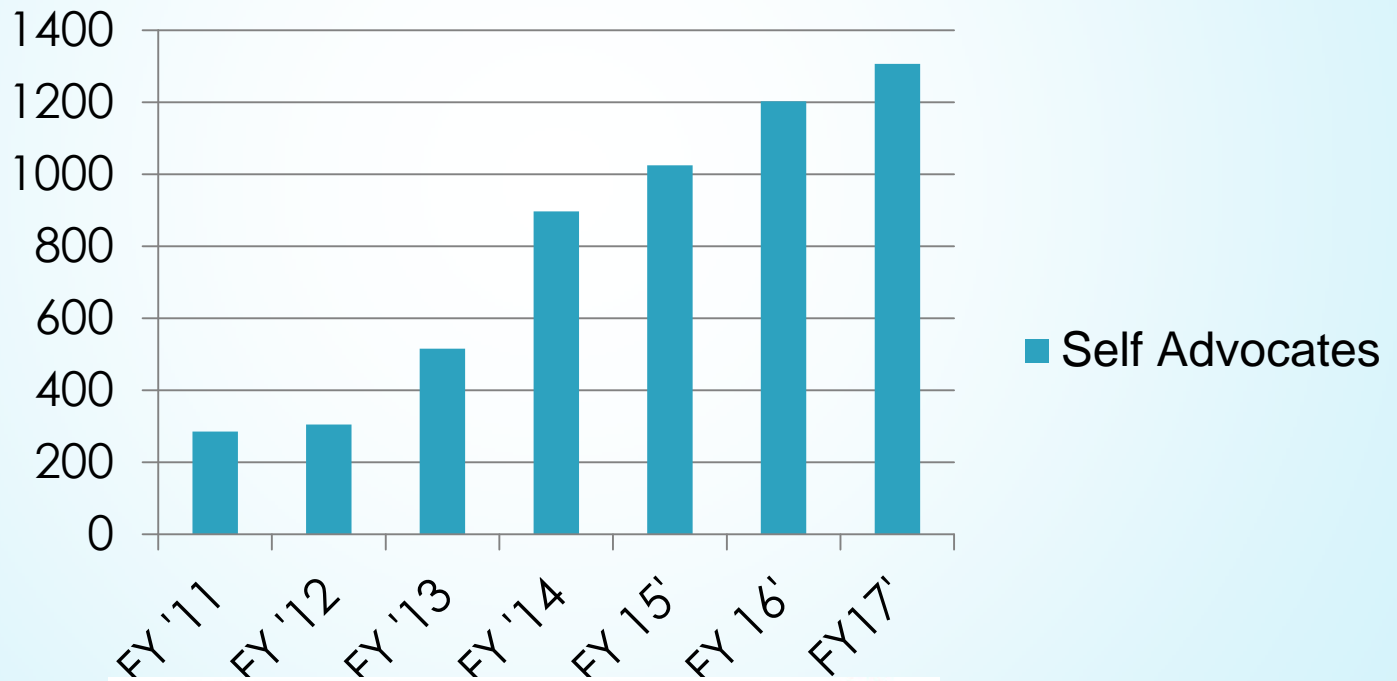
Empowering Others to Speak Up!

- 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
- Developing, supporting, and expanding Self Advocacy Groups in CT
- Working with all of the CT Private Providers to make sure advocates have a voice
- Developed a Self Advocacy Advisor Manual to share with all of the SA group Advisors to support stronger voices
- Trained new and existing Advisors statewide

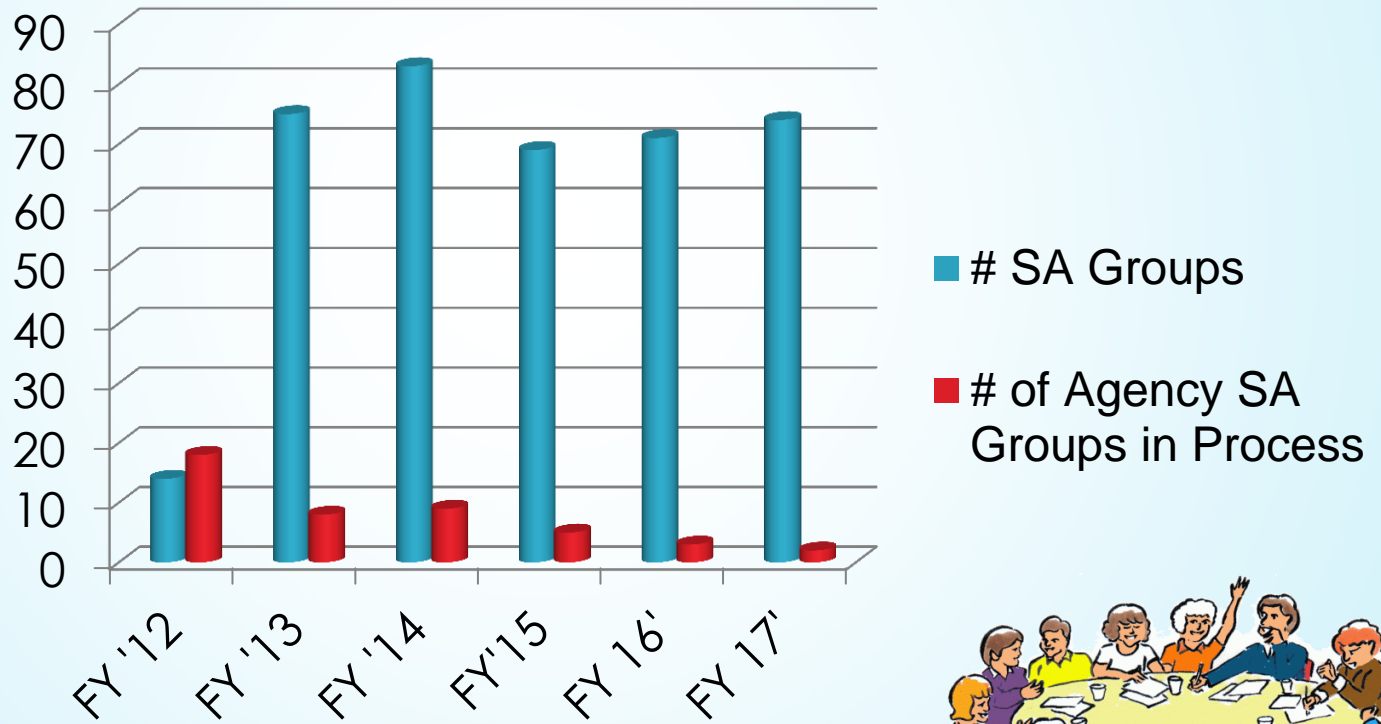


Growing Self Advocacy Statewide

Self Advocates



Statewide Self Advocacy Groups



THEN and NOW



Over the years....



- Throughout the years SAC's have been making a difference and supporting people within the department to have a voice
- SACs pushed for the name change from DMR to DDS
- SACs promoted a person's right to all healthy relationships and partnered with PPSNE 2010
- SACs supported and witnessed the signing of the People First Language Bill signed by Governor Malloy 2011
- SACs promoted and wrote and applauded the DDS Healthy Relationship Policy approved and put in effect June 2014
- SACs have been members of state and regional committees to assure the disability voice is heard

Promote Self Advocacy

Spread the Word!

Knowledge is Power!

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

Fun

Advocacy

Brain Power



Knowledge is power.

SAC FOCUS AREAS



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:

- **Special Olympics & Healthy Living**
- **Healthy Relationships**
- **Housing, CCH, Living Options**
- **Public Safety**
- **Employment**
- **Aging**
- **ADA/Assistive Technology**
- **Self Determination/Self Direction**
- **Transportation**
- **Self Advocacy**



Leadership

- SACs lead the way by supporting and participating in conference presentations, general trainings and presentations to individuals, families, providers and DDS staff. All SAC's are board members for various organizations and various Regional and Statewide Committees
- Some Committees include: Healthy Living Conference, Hiring Interview Committees, Qualified Provider interviews, Provider Qualification Review Board, Community Companion Homes, Community Of Practice, CT Coalition for Aging and Developmental Disabilities, Employment Steering, Family & Mentoring Leadership, APSE Board, Cross Disability Lifespan Alliance Committee and Abuse and Neglect Oversight Committee



SACs Provide Education & Training

- Regional Leadership Forums
- Cross Disability Lifespan Alliance
- Peer 2 Peer Support
- DDS New Employee Training
- Supporting the DDS Advocates' Corner website
- Developing videos to post on our websites to promote various DDS initiatives
- DDS Council
- Job Development Leadership Network
- CT Family Support Network
- Presented National and State Ongoing trainings for Healthy Relationships
- SA Volunteers
- People First Conference
- Developed Success Stories to post on the DDS Advocates Corner Website
- Abuse and Neglect Oversight Committee



SAC Presentations



- Ongoing Trainings Provided – SAC Tool Chest
 - “10 Steps to Being a Great Self Advocate”
 - “Employment Now!”
 - “Peer 2 Peer Support”
 - “Advisor Training”
 - “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”

Speaking UP

SAC's teach and promote the 10 Steps of Being a Good Self Advocate

10 Steps for Being a Good Self Advocate

1. Believe in Yourself
2. Realize YOU have Rights
3. Discuss YOUR Concerns
4. Get the FACTS in writing
5. Use the Chain of Command
6. Know your appeal rights
7. Be Assertive and Persistent
8. Use Communication Skills
9. Ask for help
10. FOLLOW-UP



Learn to be a
STRONG
Self Advocate!

SACS Leading the Way!

- Developed new Jet To Success topics
- Youth Leadership Forum
- National Core Indicator Surveys – Interviewers
- Individual Plan Buddies
- Annual Mentoring Day
- Presenters at National and State Conferences
- People First Conference - Presenters for Real Work For Real Pay, Being My Own Boss and I Have a Voice Presentations.



Self Advocacy



SPREADING THE WORD!

Self Advocacy within DDS- Promoting to individuals and all supporting staff the importance of self advocacy and how it empowers people to **“Make their life Happen”!**

Public Speaking

- State Conferences – Aging, People First, Employment First Trainings, Regional and State Presentations
- Mentoring Day – Promote Employment
- Disability Awareness Month
- Promote DDS Mission and Vision
- New Provider Orientation Material to promote self direction, self determination, self advocacy and employment!
- NCI interviewers

Self Advocacy -

SPREADING THE WORD

Presentation Boards

- Special Olympics summer games, Regional Resource Fairs, CT Youth Leadership Project/Forum, Transition Fairs, School Fairs, Family Forums



Special Olympics -
Spreading the
Word!



Self Advocacy



SPREADING THE WORD

- Advocates' Corner Website
- Developed new JET To Success topics
- Create and Update Bulletin Boards in DDS offices with FAB topic, Advocacy and Employment information
- Share FAB Topics with all SA Groups around the state
- Spreading the word through email and social networks
- Brown Bag Lunches to share information
- Sharing with high 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

Self Advocacy within DDS & Special Olympics



- SAC is the head coach for the Special Olympics Torrington Advocacy Fit Club
- Advocacy Fit club members have currently earned 15 pins.
- <https://youtu.be/8qCG5oHslQ8>



AGING



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

- SAC Board Member of CCADD
- Attended the Annual Aging Conference – “Aging Matters”
- The Aging Conference celebrated its 30th year! The “Theme was aging Matters”
- Since 1987 (that’s 30 years!) CCADD has worked to bring the aging and the disability communities together to share knowledge, create opportunities and ideas to support the individuals served, and network to make a difference both on a local and state level.
- Increased education and knowledge about senior statewide Centers.

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.

- Understanding ADA and Rights
- Technology to promote independence and reduce staff assistance – tech cars/vans, robotics, stair lifts, computers
- Resources:

CT Tech Act, NEAT Market Place,
Assistive Living Technology Inc., Sengistix



Employment

Employment for all- promoting employment goals in IP, increase employment activities and interviews, promote review of benefits with Level Up Counselors.

Spread the Word - Employment is Empowerment!

- SAC on APSE Board – Association of People Supporting Employment First.
- SACs members of JDLN -Job Development Leadership Network
- Promote Employment at Transition Fairs, Provider Meetings and Staff Meetings.
- Incorporate Employment in our existing SA groups
- Brown Bag Lunches in Regional Offices
- SAC member of Employment Steering Committee
- Attend Diversity Employment Fairs
- Attended the Customized Employment Conference
- Interviewed candidates for New Self Advocate Coordinators

REAL WORK FOR REAL PAY!



JET TO SUCCESS

Spreading knowledge about Employment

JET – Job, Education, and Training is Success to Employment!

- Dress For Success 
- American Job Centers 
- Interviewing Skills 
- Workplace Etiquette & Social Skills 
- Networking 
- How to look for a job 
- ADA/Accessibility 
- Internships and Education 
- Volunteering 
- Resume Writing 

Healthy Relationships

- Promoted Healthy Relationship Policy that provides the Right of all individuals of DDS to have and enjoy a Healthy Relationship
- Collaborated with PPSNE and DDS to promote health care supports in the PPSNE Clinics in CT
- Established ongoing training collaboration with PPSNE to train Clinic Staff
- Attends Parents with a Voice groups in the SR

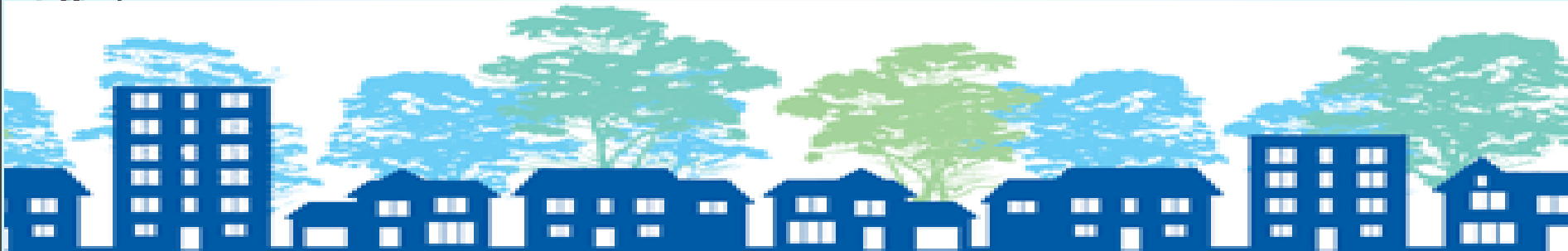
Ongoing Healthy Relationship Series – Trained over 1000 people within the past 7 years

- Three 6 session trainings held in each region
- Up to 25 participants in each session
- Peer teaching by SACs with PPSNE Educator
- PPSNE expanded their educators to meet the demand of the series



Housing

- SAC was a member of the “How to be a good roommate” committee.
 - Looked at different ways people could be good roommates, tenants and neighbors.
 - Discussed creating roommate agreements for individuals to use when looking for a potential roommate
 - Created material for being a good roommate and is posted on the DDS website
- SAC member of The Arc of Connecticut roommate matching committee.



Sibling Advocacy



Sibling Advocacy -Promoting more involvement with siblings of people with intellectual disabilities and supporting them to advocate together to make a difference

- SAC attends sibling advocacy groups at the Arc of Southington.
- SAC attended the Sibling Leadership Network National Conference on 6-24-17
- SAC attended a workshop on self advocacy perspectives from siblings with disabilities
- SAC attended AAIDD Conference on 6-27-17
- SAC member of the How to be a good roommate committee
- SAC member of The Arc of Connecticut roommate matching committee





Coming -Fiscal Year 2018

Continue to promote advocacy voices and create new Self Advocacy Groups

- Continue to promote **REAL WORK for REAL PAY** and Employment for ALL
- Promote Living a Self Determined Life
- Promote Peer 2 Peer Employment Opportunities
- Continue to provide further education and training
- Develop, Promote, Train & Educate individuals, families, staff and providers about helping individuals live a Self-Determined life and advocating to make life happen
- Create Abuse & Neglect Brochure for individuals
- Create new YLF material and support at the forum
- Promote outreach to individuals and transitioning youths
- Continue to support Healthy Relationships
- Continue to promote Aging in Place
- Continue to promote assistive technology



DDS Self Advocate Coordinators Making a DIFFERENCE!



SPEAK UP and SPEAK OUT!