

BREAKING BARRIERS:

Reaching the hard to reach

Presented by the New York Region I Parent
Training and Information Center Collaborative

incluye nyc

Amor, equidad, y acceso para jóvenes con discapacidades

TARGET POPULATION

Spanish-speaking families in New York City

- Dominican
 - Mexican
 - Puerto Rican
 - Central Americans: Guatemalan, Salvadoran, Honduran, Nicaraguan
 - Others
- Communities are distinct and geographically dispersed throughout New York City

INITIAL CHALLENGES

- Fear of exercising parental rights and due process due to immigration status (e.g., Public and Private Schools, Medical Professionals, Social Service Agencies, Government Agencies)
- Information and supports from private and public organizations that is available is not culturally and linguistically appropriate
- Cultural stigma associated with disability
- Unaware that services and supports exist because they were unavailable in the country of origin

COMPONENTS OF THE MODEL

- Information resources developed in Spanish, not translated from English
- Robust online and social media platforms that are predominately used by Spanish-speaking community (What's App)
- Bilingual staff in every part of organization, including intake/outreach, communications, and program
- Leveraging hyper local media and grassroots organizations to reach families



SUCCESSSES

Measurements of success:

- 38% increase in Spanish-language Help Line calls year to year
- 268% increase in attendance at Spanish-language only workshops year to year
- Increase social media following (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)
 - INCLUYE Facebook reach from 4,824 to 18,443 year to year

Success Story: The Bonifacio Family



CONTINUING CHALLENGES

- Educating families on their rights and how to exercise them without fear of ICE involvement
- Reaching Spanish-speaking families in tight knit neighborhoods with information to make informed decisions
- Spanish-speaking community is culturally fractured by country of origin, so need to outreach to multiple communities
- Keeping communications linguistically neutral to transcend regional dialectal differences
- Receiving information in their native language (e.g. IEP, Medical Reports, Evaluations, Clinical Progress Notes, Public Benefits)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Having only Program staff who can serve families is insufficient—need to support families in native language at every step of process
- Partnering with private and public organizations to help them become more culturally and linguistically responsive to Spanish-speaking families
- Need to understand both cultural/immigration and disability family circumstances
- Connect with families through local community organizations and houses of worship



Advocates for Children of New York



Protecting every child's right to learn

TARGET POPULATION

Parents who are incarcerated

- More than 2 million children in the United States have an incarcerated parent.
- Approximately 10 million children have experienced parental incarceration at some point in their lives.
- 1 in 15 black children, 1 in 42 Latino children, and 1 in 111 white children has a parent in prison.

INITIAL CHALLENGES

- Working with many agencies.
- Incomplete data from DOE on percentage of families impacted. Students and/or parents do not always want to report if have a family member incarcerated.
- Training staff about the rights of birth parents who are incarcerated to make education decisions for their child.
- Overcoming stereotypes about incarcerated parents- inaccurate beliefs that they cannot be involved in child-rearing, lifestyle will be passed on to children, no legal rights to make certain decisions, etc.
- Obtaining permission to do parent trainings within facilities.

COMPONENTS OF THE MODEL

- Identify need to assist hard to reach population in a more proactive manner. Special education issues for youth in foster care was the impetus for initially reaching out to partner agency for guidance.
- Establish partnerships with reputable CBOs who are experts in the field and can provide access to population.
- Learn as much as possible about issues facing incarcerated parents. Regularly attend partner meetings and events that are crucial for networking.
- Stay up to date on policy and legislative issues.

SUCSESSES

- AFC facilitates trainings within local facilities at least twice a year.
- Birth parents who are incarcerated are more aware of their legal rights.
- Foster care staff receive ongoing training/guidance on how to work with incarcerated parents. AFC created a fact sheet for distribution, which is also posted on our website.
- AFC participates in ongoing subcommittee with CBOs, ACS & DOE staff on how to best serve needs of incarcerated parents. Long terms goals include updating DOE website to include resources for families & training DOE staff to interact with incarcerated parents in a more impactful way.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES

- Increasing trainings/outreach to more incarcerated parents while trying to work with certain agencies that have many bureaucratic hurdles.
- Streamlining the sharing of data between many agencies, especially when confidentiality must be maintained.
- Staff turnover at foster care agencies; constant need to do same training for new employees.
- School staff often unaware of birth parents' legal rights to make education decisions.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Importance of partnering.
- Persistence and patience in collaborating with multiple agencies.
- Impacted parents should have an active voice in programmatic planning and legislative advocacy efforts
- Remain committed to reaching parents, despite high staff turnover and bureaucratic challenges.



sinergia

Providing Multicultural, Lifespan Services for People with Disabilities

TARGET POPULATION

Parents of children and youth in foster care

- Parents' attorneys, legal service social workers, parent advocates
- Children's attorneys, legal service social workers, education advocates
- Foster care case workers and service providers
- Attorneys representing the child welfare agency, public officials administering the system
- Family Court judges
- School personnel

INITIAL CHALLENGES

- Outreach
 - Difficulty of reaching parents
 - Competing pressures relating to Family Court involvement
- Clash of cultures between systems
 - “Doing compliance” versus participating in planning and decision-making
- Need for customized content and groups
- Getting buy-in from potential collaborators

COMPONENTS OF THE MODEL

- Partnerships to facilitate outreach and group formation
- Analysis of access to stakeholders, power relationships and organizational needs
- Bi-directional flow of information
- Adaptable, high-quality curriculum—The APPLE Academy (Advocacy for Parents Providing Leadership in Education)
- Networking for APPLE Academy Alumni

SUCCESES

- Memorandum of Understanding with Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP) to collaborate on customized training, recruitment
- Agreement of the NYC Administration for Children's Services to support outreach to stakeholders
- Development of branding and marketing plan

CONTINUING CHALLENGES

- Labor-intensity of activity and need to build bigger groups while remaining timely
- Complexity of interactions between systems slows training
- Outreach generates complex individual assistance requests
- Ongoing professional development needs

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Child welfare context influences every aspect of parent center activity
- Collaboration is most effective when institutional needs of each collaborator are understood and addressed
- Never underestimate the value of a good acronym, and APPLE Academy is a damn fine acronym!

"Let Us Help
You Aim High"



Long Island Advocacy Center...

FOR THE LEGAL RIGHTS OF
STUDENTS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

TARGET POPULATION

Native American families on Long Island

- Shinnecock
- Poospatuck

INITIAL CHALLENGES

Building or sustaining working relationships with nearby tribes or villages, especially Native parents of children with disabilities

COMPONENTS OF THE MODEL

KNOWLEDGE

- Expand self awareness
- Learn about Native history & background
- Understand values

SKILLS

- Increase the number of NA contacts locally
- Outreach to local tribes
- Train Parent Center coworkers on Native content

ATTITUDES

- Remain open to new ideas
- Extend awareness of and respect for NA culture
- Increase comfort level when outreaching and talking to Native parents & youth

SUCSESSES

- Connected with Chair & Chief of local tribe to build rapport
- Attended & had a table at Health Fair on reservation
- Attended & had a table at POW WOW
- Communicated with Chairpersons locally with high population of Native students
- Workshop for Native families on FBA/BIPs

CONTINUING CHALLENGES

- Lack of cultural brokers or bridges
- Lack of continuous communication
- Lack of accurate contacts
- Establishment of trust; due to lack of availability for face to face meetings
- Lack of confidence from parents to engage and seek support from Parent Centers

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Do research; gain knowledge of tribe
- Conduct PD for all staff
- Use resources from NAPTAC
- Build rapport; be persistent & consistent
- Be promise keepers
- Keep the momentum going
- Create plans; build into budgets, set new goals
- Seek out new funding sources

THEMES ACROSS MODELS

Commitment

- The usual outreach methods are not enough.
- You need to make a targeted outreach plan.

Partnerships

- Partner with organizations and agencies that connect you with the families.
- Partner with families to make sure you're responding to their needs.

Dialogue

- Continuing communication between all parties is key.
- Seek out, and listen to, diverse perspectives.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1) Do you have any interesting partnerships or models that help you reach families that have historically been underserved?
- 2) What has been successful? What challenges have you encountered?
- 3) In the panel's presentation of successes, challenges, and strategies, what resonated for you?
- 4) How can parent centers support each other in reaching the hard to reach?