Supported Decision Making Pilot in Georgia

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Georgia SDM Project

Collaborative Effort

Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities

Partnership with Center for Public Representation and Michael Kendrick

Partnership with John McCarty SARTAC Fellow
Georgia SDM Project

Second Year of Grant

Goals:
- Support people to use Supported Decision Making
- Deflect Guardianship
- Advisory committee to guide the work
- Review GA guardianship statute & current SDM work
- Education/Outreach/Symposium
- Partnership with Citizen Advocacy
Citizen Advocacy

Citizen advocacy is built on:
  one-to-one
  freely given personal relationships
  people whose lives are diminished because of prejudice toward disability

The citizen advocate learns to understand, respond to, and represent that person’s interests as if they were the advocate’s own, thus bringing the person’s gifts and concerns into the circles of ordinary community life, while protecting against abuse, neglect, or social isolation.
Advisory Committee Members

People who experience a disability (multiple people with a variety of experiences)
Director of Adult Protective Services
Director of Public Guardianship
Probate Court Judge
Director of Local Area Agency on Aging
Parent
Citizen Advocate
Education and Outreach

People with Disabilities
Parents/Parent Groups
Providers/Support Staff
Teachers/Schools/Transition Staff in Schools
Medical Professionals
Probate Judges
Probate Attorneys
Division of Aging/Adult Protective Services
Investigators
Department of Public Health
What We Have Found

Ignorance of Alternatives
Belief that Guardianship = Safety (Control)
Simplicity & Convenience is Attractive
Impact on P&A work
  Resource Advocates
  PAIMI
Moving Forward

Continued Education & Outreach
Continued P&A Support to Individual SDM Arrangements
Partner Development
Systemic Impact
Lessons Learned
Curated Resources
   Toolkit for Overturning Guardianship
SARTAC Fellow 2019–2020

Self Advocacy Research and Technical Assistance Center
Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)
One-Year, project focused
Creative Consulting Services, Winder, GA
“It’s My Life: Expanding Supported Decision Making”
Project Reach

Self Advocates
Parents
Attorneys and Paralegals
Support Coordinators

120 SCs representing over 3400 families
Tool Kit

Brainstorming Questions
Sample Letter for Supporters
Personal SDM Plan
Steps to Terminate Guardianship
Attorney List
Impact

“perpetual child”

“I was a thing, with no rights”

need for physical support ≠ incompetence

“I’m gaining experience with each decision I make”

“getting out from under guardianship is a dream...”
Personal Journey

Termination of Guardianship
Too much information?
What did I actually know?
How could I get more information to get the support I want to have more control
Who presumes that I am competent
Conclusions

Critical need
We are having success
Social change requires many shifts