

Welcome!

Today's webinar:

Youth Councils – Steps to Success

Presented by the YEAH Council, Family Voices of New Hampshire:
John Jackson, Nicole Tucker, Matthew Burton

Welcome Leslie Carroll of Family Voices and Ronald Tasker of KASA.

Note: If you dialed into the conference line (rather than entering your number and having it call you) be sure to enter the code to identify yourself. You can enter it anytime after connecting to audio. This will connect your online presence with your phone presence. The code to identify yourself can be found through the information icon (a small blue circle with an "i" in the upper right corner of your screen).



KASA MISSION STATEMENT

Kids As Self Advocates [KASA] is created by youth with disabilities for youth to educate society about issues concerning youth with a wide spectrum of disabilities and healthcare needs. KASA believes in supporting self-determination, creating support networks and proactive advocacy for all youth with disabilities in our society.

For more information and resources, please visit www.fvkasa.org



Youth Councils: Steps to Success

Presented by

The YEAH Council – Family Voices New Hampshire
John Jackson, Nicole Tucker, and Matthew Burton

About the YEAH Council



- Founded 2007-08
- Youth Educating Adults about Healthcare (YEAH)
 - Working to help the transition from Pediatric Medical Care to Adult medical care
 - Transition to adulthood when living with a chronic condition
- Facilitator: Karin Harvey-Olson
- Current Members: Nicole T, Zach H, Matt B, Brandon E, Sarah F, John J, Karen S, Kalie W

What have we done?

- Resources and Tools
 - Ready? Set! Go!!
 - Taking Charge, What do you know?
 - Speak Up!
 - Ticket to Healthcare



What have we done?

- Panel Presentations
 - NH Pediatric Society
 - NH Summit on Transition
 - Multiple Years



What have we done?

- Conferences
 - How to Get Healthcare into Your Transition Plan
 - Jonathan Mooney
 - Climbing the Ropes to Independence
 - No Judgment Zone
 - Partnering for Strength – Finding Your Voice



Why Have a Youth Council?

- 15% of children have a disability or chronic health care need
- Special health care needs
- Special Education needs
- Special Transition needs
- Their Voice needs to be heard



Steps to Success - Commitment

- Everyone must try to attend every meeting, no excuses except hospitalization
- Everyone must be working toward a common goal
- Everyone must stay engaged and alert, offer ideas and solutions
- Everyone must be made to feel welcome and supported
- Everyone must pull their own weight and follow through when they are given a task to do
- Behind the scenes work must be done to ensure completion of tasks



Steps to Success Communication



- By Laws and a Mission Statement are put together in order to prevent general chaos at every meeting
- Everyone must have equal opportunity, time, and means to speak their minds, and offer suggestions
- Everyone participates in order to get that equal opportunity, don't let one person talk through the entire meeting
- Facebook, Pinterest, and Twitter, are utilized in order to get work down quicker outside of normal meeting times
- Participants actively use these tool once they are shown how
- Meeting must be organized, a clear agenda must be used for every meeting

Steps to Success- Funding



- Stipend
- Shouldn't be a factor in wanting to attend
- Does help with transportation and expenses
- Helps the facilitator have the time and resources to tie things together after meetings, type up the minutes
- Helps with carpooling, gas, general expenses etc.

Steps to Success - Passion



- People are passionate about at least one topic in the meeting discussion
- Different topics are discussed as to not bore participants, and bring out others passions
- Do not just have projects to have them, do projects that will bring out people's different passions in areas, and assign parts of them to the people most passionate in that subject
- This way they will speak more, and "get into" the meeting
- Hold fun events outside of the meeting that are not meeting related, this will help people bond and discover each others passions, and more about the other members in general

Steps to Success- Patience



- The ability to act calm under pressure
- Recognize different people's maturity levels (they don't always correspond with age)
- Make sure they are given the best way possible to respond
- Prevent arguments
- High tolerance for working with different people/situations
- Don't be afraid to share your feelings – everyone must be given a chance to share their thoughts
- Don't be afraid to question things, or the facilitator if you did not understand a question. Do it many times if you must and other members must be tolerant of this

Steps to Success- Facilitator



- Must be friendly, calm, and kind to all
- Must hold the group together, keep order in meetings
- Must teach the youth how to speak not only in front of other youth, but also in front of Dr.'s and other professionals as well, or find someone who can teach
- The Facilitator is a key part of the group

Steps to Success –Alternate Plans



- Emergency Plan
- In case of weather events
- Alternate online meeting should be held
- Facebook, Google + hangout
- GoToMeeting etc.
- Do not just cancel a meeting because of a weather event only

Obstacles to Success- Lack of Communication



- Not open
- Not flowing
- Barriers with communication between people creates a lack of understanding
- One person takes over the meeting
- Facilitator does not keep order or direct meeting in a specific direction
- Solution: Facilitator directed meeting so that everyone who wants a say gets one in every topic on the agenda

Obstacles to Success- Lack of Passion



- Group becomes dull, boring and uninteresting
- Leads to uninterested members, could leave group
- Leads to lack of participation which also could cause a decline in members
- Solution: Introduce new topics to interest different people's passions

Obstacles to Success – Taking Things too Personally



- Taking things too personally, hurt feelings, decreases passion, and attendance
- Maturity level, not tied in with age, may contribute to hurt feelings
- Views that are too black and White
- May lead to confrontation and hurt feeling when shades of grey are revealed
- Solution: Accept all views and maturity levels and make sure everyone gets their views across

Obstacles to Success – Topic Field



- Strict topics for projects
- Constricts freedom
- Decreases passion for other topics
- May lead to hurt feelings and alienation among group members who do not want to work on that specific topic
- Solution: Pick a topic and give a lot of latitude in which direction participants want to go

Obstacles to Success- Too Much Adult Involvement



- Parents/Professionals
- Sometimes become too involved/think they know better
- Take over for participant even though they clearly can articulate their own thoughts, just to push their own agenda
- Fine line to walk, due to some professionals needing to be in the room with the participant
- Solution: For those participants that can articulate themselves without help, maybe ask parent to leave the room during the meeting?

Obstacles to Success

- Lack of Participation/Follow Through/Behind the Scenes work
- Online and in meetings
- Things do not get accomplished
- Meetings become stagnant
- Promises not Kept
- Solution: monitoring needs to occur via social media or email in between meetings to be sure there is follow through on work that needs to be done. This could be done by council members, facilitator or a combination.



Obstacles to Success

- Lack of Transportation
- No Rides/Gas
- Too far to travel to meetings
- Solution: Hold meetings closer to where most of the members live, the rest can carpool, or attend the meeting online
- Solution: vary meeting space to different locations around the state



Conclusion

- Every youth council, we believe, can be successful
- Follow these basic steps and your goals will be accomplished



Contact Info

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- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/232504170105610/> - for youth
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Questions

