SARTAC Fellows:
Advancing Self Advocacy through Leadership and Policy
About the Fellow

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Colorado

Exploring why youth and young adults with intellectual disabilities are not joining the self advocacy movement.

Host Agency: The Arc of Larimer County
Engaging the Younger Generation of Self Advocates

• Goal was to identify barriers to youth & young adult participation in self advocacy groups and ways.
• I developed & sent out a survey to various groups and also presented to a couple transition programs.
• Started out big & had to narrow focus.
• Made good progress, learned a lot, still more work to do.
WHAT I LEARNED AS A FELLOW

• How to conduct a research project & develop a survey.
• How to use my network to accomplish my goals.
• How to cope with unexpected changes.
• Improved my public speaking and presentation skills.
• How my project is related to the other projects of my Host.
Survey

- I worked with a local Professor at University of Colorado Coleman Institute to help guide my research and develop my survey questions.

- My survey can be used by other self advocates to help gather information on self advocacy in their community.
RESOURCES CREATED

BARRIERS TO YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN SELF ADVOCACY

- Don't know where to find a group. 33%
- Don't know what they do. 33%
- Don't have support or an ally during meetings? 19%
- Don't know others that a part of a group. 28%
- Transportation 22%

• I developed this tip sheet using results from my survey and feedback I received from my presentations and conversations I had while working on my project.

• This resource should be used by self advocacy groups and advisors who want to increase participation by youth and young adults.

• It is important a self-advocate and advisor co-present to community organizations.
Engaging Youth in The Self-Advocacy Movement. A Tip Sheet for Self Advocacy Groups

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE SELF-ADVOCACY MOVEMENT

Self-advocacy is a civil rights movement for people with disabilities, being a part of your community, speaking up for what you think is important, making your case for what you want, knowing your strengths, being proud & feeling strong, saying what is on your mind, taking risks & trying new things, making mistakes & learning from them, going after your dreams, learning how to use your voice speak up for yourself and others. Self advocacy is about making your own decisions, about your own life. It is knowing your rights and responsibilities. Here are some tips to get involved.

1. Find a local group that you can check out to see if you like it. In the United States, there are more than 1,200 local self-advocacy groups. To find a group you can use online tools like www.selfadvocacyinfo.org, www.sahusa.org, or www.selfadvocacynline.org.

2. Find friend or peer mentor that can help you become more involved.

3. Learn about the disability civil rights movement. This will help you learn what kinds of things are important to you and what you want to use your voice for.

4. Go to community activities and events you are interested in. You can ask if there are grants or scholarships to help you pay to go to these events.

5. Create a self development growth plan. These are sometimes called PATH plans.

6. Work with your mentor or group advisor if you need help to do this.

7. If there is not a group in your area already you can start one. Use toolkits and guides to help you. Some good resources for starting groups are: www.selfadvocacyinfo.org, www.selfadvocacynline.org, and www.sahusa.org.

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"Tips for Youth to Become Involved in the Self Advocacy Movement"

- I developed this tip sheet using results from my survey and feedback I received from my presentations and conversations I had while working on my project.
- This resource should be used by parents, youth and young adults who want to join a self advocacy group and/or learn more about the self advocacy movement.
- It is important to note that getting interest can be a slow process.
“Tips for Youth to Become Involved in the Self Advocacy Movement”

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE SELF-ADVOCACY MOVEMENT

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The Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SARTAC) seeks to strengthen the self-advocacy movement by supporting self-advocacy organizations to grow in diversity and leadership. The resource center is a project of Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), the oldest national self-advocacy organization in the country. SABE is a Developmental Disabilities Project of National Significance, funded by the Administration for Community Living – Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. For information on how SABE or other organizations may assist you in understanding policy issues affecting your life, it is to be used to determine a person's legal rights or an organization's legal responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended or any other federal, state or local laws written to protect the rights of people with disabilities.

• I want to continue working on building legislation to make sure that self advocacy skills are taught in school systems.

• I want to make sure there is funding opportunities for self advocacy groups to operate and continue the movement for future generations.
I learned what it takes to lead and organize a big project from the ground up.

I am using these leadership skills in other work that I am currently involved with.
THE ROLE OF THE HOST

• Support to develop, distribute survey & analyze data. Support during presentations to community organizations.

• Supporting Julian has given us a greater understanding of the importance of continuing to support the crucial work of the self advocacy movement.

• We learned several ways we can work to address the barriers youth reported.
THE ROLE OF THE HOST

- Julian is still very involved with The Arc
- We continue to keep having conversations about how we can support Julian to reach his long term goals.
EMPLOYMENT RESULTS OR GOALS

- I am doing a paid internship at The Arc of Larimer County
- Because of this project I have had other speaking engagement opportunities.
  - UN Civil Society Conference
  - The Coleman Institute
  - Colorado Youth Leadership Forum
  - Rocky Mountain SIBS
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