



Community Action

Alicia Buono

Jill Prakop

Mike Poulin

Samantha Walker

Deborah Richardson

Gabrielle Grossman

Darienne McGuinness

Erin Pospychala

Leadership Mentor: Linda Quintanilha

- Our task was to learn about “Building Power through Community Organizing”
- We discussed a number of possible approaches, including:
 - Forming a chapter of ABLE NH
 - Regional?
 - Focusing on one issue?
 - Leadership 15?
 - Partnering with ABLE NH to raise awareness
 - In Home Supports
 - Safety on buses
- After several meetings we chose a primary focus issue, In Home Supports

Our Journey begins

What are In Home Supports?

- “NH’s best kept secret”!

Why In Home Supports?

- Our group had formed partly through a merge of 2 Action Groups- In Home Supports and Community Organizing
- We knew families, including one within our group, for whom IHS is essential for kids to live safely at home
- We knew of many stories of families struggling while remaining on the “waiting list”, including two families within our group
- We were learning of inconsistencies in access to and awareness of IHS, resulting in a lack of support to families in need

Refining Our Focus

- Early in the process, we
 - Hardly knew one another.
 - Did not have a shared vision or a group identity.
 - Were uncertain of our own roles within the group.
 - Knew very little about what work we would be doing.
- We “met” weekly for hour-long conference calls, and emailed/ texted frequently

A “Green” Team

With Linda's support and guidance...

- We began to learn how to have efficient and effective meetings that included all 8 voices
- We purposefully
 - rotated roles preparing meeting agendas, facilitating meetings, and keeping/ sharing minutes.
 - established actions to be taken after each meeting, and divided tasks among team members.
 - learned how to ensure each person's ideas were heard when we met.

A Skilled Mentor



- We began to collect information to better understand what the In-Home Support waiver is all about
 - Families
 - Area agencies and other support agencies
 - Internet
- The more we searched for information, the less we felt we understood because we heard many conflicting reports

In Home Supports

- We needed to know more-
 - how many people qualify for IHS, receive IHS, are waiting for IHS in NH?
 - How will managed care affect administration of IHS?
- We requested a meeting with Senator Andy Sanborn, Chair of the Health and Human Services Committee to ask that he request a study to define the scope of the IHS need in NH

In Home Supports

- We met as a team in Concord with Senator Andy Sanborn, who was joined by his wife Representative Laurie Sanborn.
- Because the deadline had passed for submitting an LSR, he could not immediately act on our request to ask for a study.
- They both expressed interest in learning more about our work.



The Sanborns

- We continued with our meeting agenda
 - Describing what In Home Support Waiver is
 - Sharing why availability of IHS is essential for some families
 - Explaining our difficulties obtaining consistent data about the need in NH
- Senator Sanborn expressed support for our efforts to improve access to IHS.
- He committed to looking into the issue and to meeting with us again. He planned to gather information from Nick Toumpas, Commissioner of DHHS.

The Sanborns

We managed to ruffle some feathers but apparently we got some attention!!



- We reconvened to determine next steps, and to further define our focus.
- As a group and individually, we encountered reactions from others about the work we were doing.
- Together we considered what we'd learned, what we hoped to accomplish, and we remained committed to the work we set out to do together.

Regrouping

- Team members met twice with John Norton from Gamaliel. He provided guidance on:
 - Community Action
 - Overcoming adversity
 - Forming a cohesive group, specifically a chapter of ABLE NH
 - future leadership development opportunities.



We decided our next steps would be:

- Meet with State Representative who is a member of the House Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee
- Meet individually with the Directors of the 10 Area Agencies
 - Gather information about IHS within each agency
 - Partner with agencies to take action on improving IHS access and funding
 - Share ideas

New plans

- Team members met with State Representative Tom Sherman (Democrat representing Rye/Newcastle).
- Agenda focused on:
 - IHS
 - House Budget
 - Medicaid Managed Care
- He shared his vision for how NH must evolve in order for our most vulnerable citizens to be cared for.



Representative Sherman

- We have had meetings with 4 of the 10 Area Agency Directors. We plan to meet with the remaining six soon.
- We will reconvene to discuss actions to take based on what we learn.



Area Agencies

Tangible results...

- We've become members of ABLE NH
 - 4 members of our group testified before the House regarding the
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- The logo for the Concord Monitor, featuring the word "CONCORD" in a bold, serif font on the left, a stylized illustration of the New Hampshire State House dome in the center, and the word "MONITOR" in a bold, serif font on the right. A blue horizontal line runs beneath the text and the dome illustration.
- 3 members of our group shared our stories for an article about the impact of the proposed budget cuts
 - Darienne's son was moved off the waiting list and now receives IHS Waiver supports.
 - One of Jill's daughters was moved off the waiting list and is now awaiting IHS Waiver supports.

Intangible results...

- Conversations are underway with “major players” about IHS
- Our group is committed to continuing our work
- A cohesive team was formed
- We each grew personally
 - Understanding our own strengths and value within the group
 - Gaining courage to speak up even in adversity



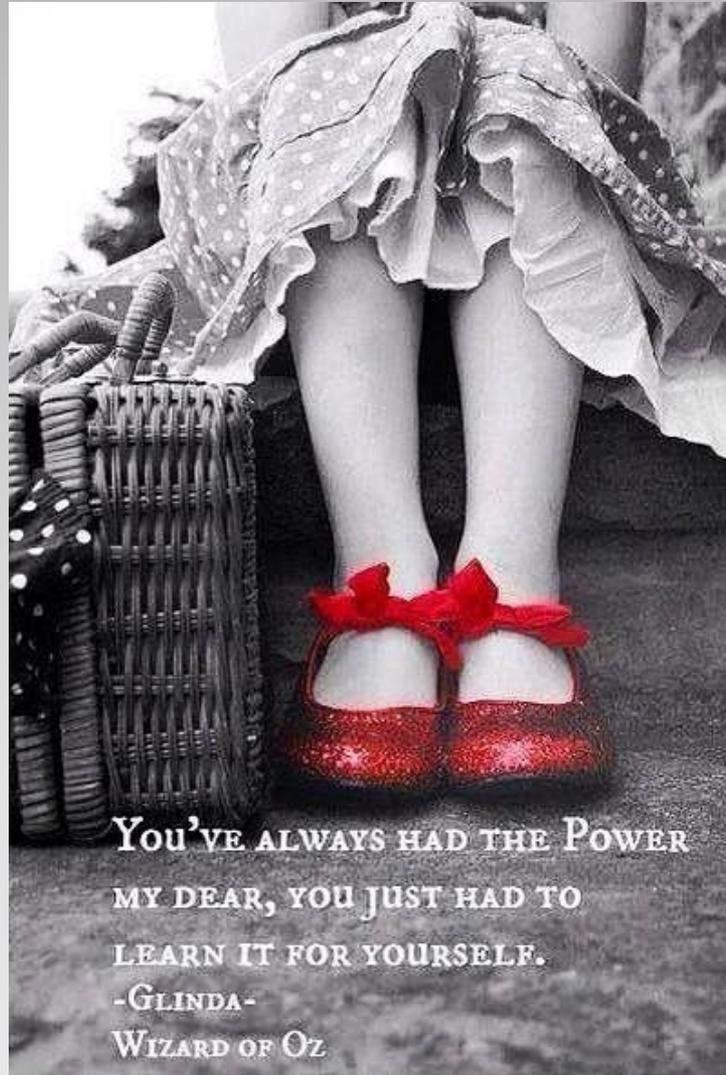
We became a cohesive group with a shared vision.

- We each brought different and important strengths to the group.
- We moved toward natural roles rather than assigning rotating meeting responsibilities as we learned each other's strengths.
- We developed accountability, respect, support and shared goals.

Facing adversity together resulted in a greater commitment to the group's goals and to each other.



A Great Team!



YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD THE POWER
MY DEAR, YOU JUST HAD TO
LEARN IT FOR YOURSELF.
-GLINDA-
WIZARD OF OZ