

Reaching More States: Advancing Alternatives to Guardianship Through Youth Leadership

INTRODUCTIONS



Kendra Hummer, IN



Melissa Keyes, IN



Jeanie Rowe, MI



Mary Shehan, MI



Wednesday Jones, SC



Holden Roberts, SC



Alie Springgate, SC



Morgan Whitlatch, DC



CENTER ON
YOUTH VOICE
YOUTH CHOICE

- National resource center founded in Fall 2020 through a five-year grant from the Administration on Community Living
- Supports State Teams in promoting alternatives to guardianship for youth with intellectual or developmental disabilities
- Promotes youth leadership in all levels of its work
- <https://youth-voice.org>

CYVYC PROJECT PARTNERS

- Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI)
- Center for Public Representation (CPR)
- Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)
- Georgia Advocacy Office (GAO)
- Human Services Research Institute (HSRI)
- And more!



Center for Public Representation

GAO

GEORGIA
ADVOCACY
OFFICE



THE CYVYC PROJECT

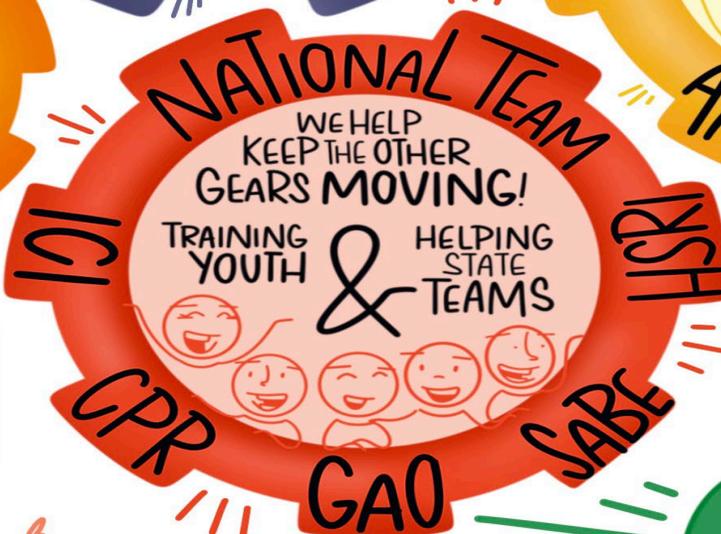
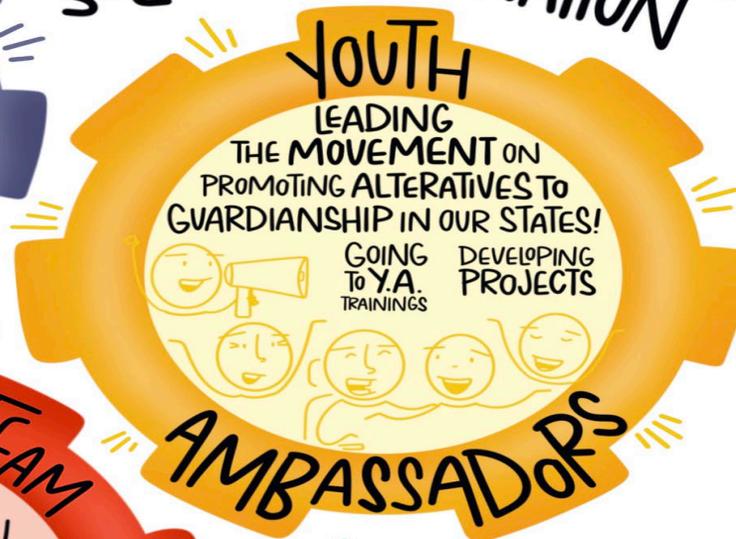
WHAT'S THE GOAL?



2020-2025



LIVING A LIFE OF CHOICE & SELF-DETERMINATION



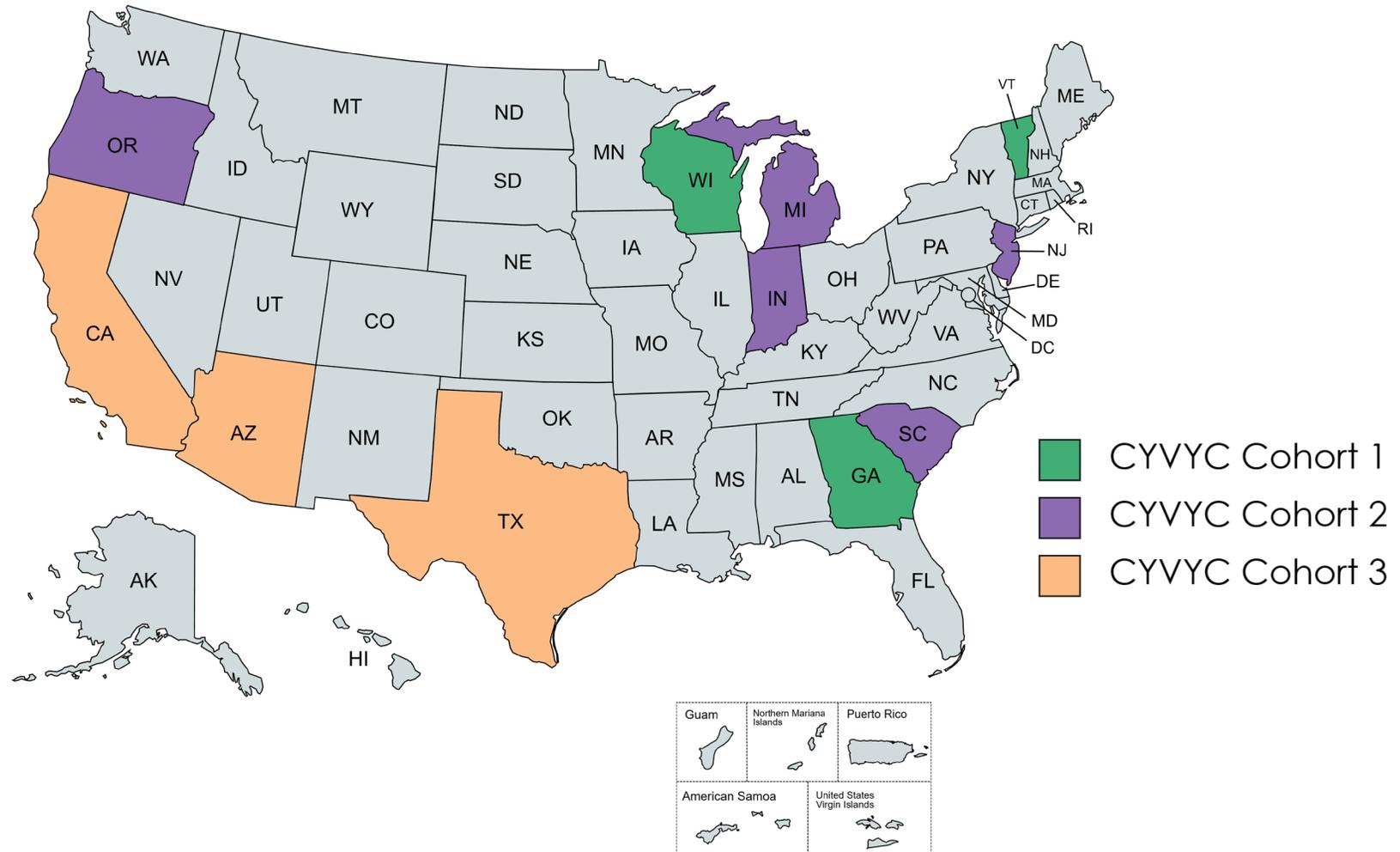
HOW DO ALL THE PIECES FIT TOGETHER...



GREAT QUESTION!



CYVYC COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



MICHIGAN STATE TEAM & CYVYC



Mary Shehan, Co-Lead, Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council
Jeanie Rowe, Co-Lead, Youth Ambassador



PRE-EXISTING SDM WORK

The Supported Decision-Making Coalition was an existing group made up of many organizations who all share the same mission and values around the use of Supported Decision-Making versus guardianship in our state.

Both The Arc Michigan and DD Council were represented in the coalition, along with self-advocates. Members of the coalition wrote for and secured the grant in conjunction with self-advocates who were represented within the coalition.

WHO LEADS THE MICHIGAN INITIATIVE?

Michigan Team Make-up:

Jeanie Rowe-Youth Ambassador and Youth Co-Lead

Jill Gerrie-The Arc Michigan

Mary Shehan-Michigan DD Council

Michigan included youth within the coalition and continues to work with self-advocates at all ages within all the work it completes.

The coalition actively sought diversity of region, disability, and culture when selecting Ambassadors



A FEW WORDS ON BEING A CO-LEAD

- What has it been like co-leading the State Team?
- What project did you pick to advance alternatives to guardianship in your state and why?
- How have you benefited from learning and working with other Youth Ambassadors across CYVYC's State Teams?
- What are your project's future goals?

GOALS SET EARLY-ON

These are the three objectives that Ambassadors created.

- Get the support we need from the State Leads and the Supported Decision-Making Coalition to conduct the projects we choose.
- Reach 1,000 people each year that are youth, family members, or people working with young adults with facts about Supported Decision-Making and alternatives to guardianship.
- Create an on-going social media campaign about Supported Decision-Making and alternatives to guardianship.

CHALLENGES AND PLOTTING NEW TRAJECTORIES FROM LESSONS LEARNED

Challenges

- Meshing schedules with youth attending school/college
- Changing ideas from Ambassadors about projects early-on
- Transportation for Ambassadors to in-person presentations
- Securing technical assistance for social media projects

Lesson Learned

- Involving other organizations within the work,
- Including families of the Ambassadors
- Marketing of the Ambassador's work is critical

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE TEAM & CYVYC



Alie Springgate, Co-Lead, Able SC

Wednesday Jones, Co-Lead, Youth Ambassador

Holden Roberts, Co-Lead, Youth Ambassador



SOUTH CAROLINA STATE TEAM

- Family Connection of South Carolina
- Disability Rights South Carolina
- South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center
- SC Department of Education, Office of Special Education Services
- SC Project Search



DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING SOUTH CAROLINA STATE ACTION PLAN

- Brainstorming collectively once a month
- Leaders within SC SDM Project
- Individual advocacy
- Approaching it within educational sectors, legislation, judicial sectors, discussions with parents, and trainings within other professions.



LESSONS LEARNED

- SDM can look a number of different ways
- Legislative recognition of SDM can have pros and cons
- SDM can be implemented along with a number of alternatives to guardianships



BENEFITS OF BEING PART OF A CROSS-STATE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Seeing what other states are doing is motivating and inspiring.
- Helps understand what works, what didn't work.
- Ideas from how entities interacted with each other and what we can glean from that.



OUR INFLUENCE ON SERVICE PROVIDERS AND POLICY MAKERS

- Providing education and practical tools/resources
- Equipping young people to advocate within service provider groups (who may or may not have a disability perspective) in the context of SDM



YOUTH LEADERSHIP ADVANCING ALTERNATIVES TO GUARDIANSHIP

- Developing tools and resources
- Peer support, networking, data collection
- Expanding partnerships and relationships with other professionals



FUTURE GOALS

- Enhancing resources already established
- Creating new tools and resources to enhance accessibility
- Expanding networks and partnerships
- Developing new opportunities to educate professionals in medical and judicial settings



YOUTH AMBASSADOR CO-LEADS



EXPERIENCE OF BEING A CO-LEAD

- Initially, we provided assistance to the other Youth Ambassadors
- Our role now is as Youth Ambassadors and contributors to the State Team.
 - We keep the State Team informed on the CYVYC Youth Ambassador trainings and YA CYVYC projects.
 - We provide input on other areas of work projects regarding Supported Decision Making in our State.

YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROJECTS

☞ **What project did you pick to advance alternatives to guardianship in your state and why?**

- Wednesday's project is about supporting decision making skills development in children with disabilities age 1-5.
- It is important to begin developing decision making skills early so that children with I/DD are prepared for decision making and more independence later in life and less likely to be seen as needing a guardianship.

PROJECTS CONTINUED

☞ **What project did you pick to advance alternatives to guardianship in your state and why?**

- Holden's is about resource creation, making a series of short videos about Supported Decision Making and alternatives to guardianship.
- It is important for youth and their guardians to understand that guardianship is not the only option. SC law does not prohibit a SDM system. Many people with disabilities have already shown that living an interdependent life is not only possible, but for many, practical and preferable.



BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH OTHER YOUTH AMBASSADORS & STATE TEAMS

- We were able to learn from members of earlier cohorts from their showcases.
- Being able to ask questions regarding CYVYC projects to Youth Ambassadors further along in their projects was helpful in developing our project
- We were able to gather information on what worked and didn't work in their states and use that to inform how we may approach things in our State.

FUTURE PROJECT GOALS

- For Holden's project, once it is completed, using outreach to make sure the resource is readily available to the public will be important. The more people know about it, the more useful it will be.
- For Wednesday's project, the next step is analyzing the results she is gathering from a survey that is being sent out to parents of disabled children 1-5. She has also reached out to professionals in Early Childhood development. Wednesday will use this information, along with information from disabled youth, to create the resource guide.

INDIANA STATE TEAM & CYVYC



Melissa Keyes, Co-Lead, Indiana Disability Rights
Kendra Hummer, Co-Lead, Youth Ambassador

INDIANA STATE TEAM

- Indiana State Plan – 2019 ACL grant – focus on research, education, and policy change.
- State Coalition for Self-Determination – broad membership, IDR oversees progress, entities participate in projects based on interest, scope, and resources.
- CYVYC Partners – Self Advocates of Indiana, Arc of Indiana, Indiana Disability Rights
- CYVYC role within state coalition – focus on education, awareness
 - E.g., implementation of education bill

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KENDRA'S PROJECT

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QUESTIONS?



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This project was supported, in part by grant #90DNDM0004, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy.

Thank you!



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