

Coalition Building

1. **Building Relationships** – with coalition partners, legislators, grassroots, and more
2. **Advocacy Tools** – what you have and where and when to use them

Issue Areas [brainstorm, but to start]:

- Housing
- Legislation
- Assessments
- Stigma/a chance to parent as part of an integrated life
- Sharing best practices (including child welfare trainings)

Opportunities

- Grassroots activists – inform your advocacy
- Coalition partners – there is strength in numbers
- Legislators – can create important policies and STOP bad policy
- Media – get our perspective/stories told
- Business – new opportunities

Legislators (& Staff) In this case, because of existing or proposed laws that are weighted against parents with disabilities.

[Info from Traci.]

- Find a personal connection
 - Look for opportunities to educate and create buy-in
 - Events
 - Do your homework
 - About their background
 - About their district
- Staff level relationships are key
- Consistent contact, not just when you need something
- Awards and recognition go a long way

How: Sharing Stories about Our Lives and Experiences

- Educate about programs and services (and officials on the civil rights/nondiscrimination requirements)
- Make policy “real”
- Give the media a “hook”
- Motivate people to take action!

Build Grassroots Power

Power Mapping

- 1. Target:** Who has the power to fix the problem you want fixed/ where you want more focus & resources?
- 2. Influence:** Who holds influence over that person?
- 3. Where is the overlap?**
- 4. Make a plan!**

Questions for discussion (and information sharing)

- Identify: individuals and organizations who provide successful parenting services. Success stories to amplify.
- When have you successfully built relationships (with legislators? Media? Partners? Activists)? How did you do it?
- Where are opportunities for you to build new relationships?
 - Who is missing from this conversation? Who needs to be at the table?
- Key Message: e.g., presume competence. Start from strengths.
- Identify possible funders.
- Housing support options and existing models.