

Tennessee



Self-Advocacy

Tennessee Self Advocacy Organizations & Their Major Activities

- **People First of Tennessee**
 - Statewide private nonprofit started in 1981
 - Has 27 chapters and 282 members (December 2010)
 - Serves as an outlet for people with disabilities to air and alleviate their concerns about disability related issues and work together to address issues
- **Centers for Independent Living**
 - 6 statewide nonprofit organizations
 - Provides services that will maximize the independence of individuals with disabilities and the accessibility of the communities in which they live
- **People Planning Together**
 - Self-advocates training other self-advocates in taking control of their service planning process, plan objectives
 - 4 self advocates trained as trainers and in the process of training others, additionally 4 People First staff are trainers
- **Partners in Policymaking & Youth Leadership Forum**
 - Free annual advocacy training programs for individuals with disabilities provided by Council on Developmental Disabilities



Tennessee Self-Advocacy Organizations' Resources

Name of self- advocacy organization	Who provides the resource(s)?	What resource(s) is provided?
People First of Tennessee	Department of Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities and Council on Developmental Disabilities	Funding
Centers for Independent Living	Department of Rehabilitation Services	Funding
People Planning Together	Council on Developmental Disabilities	Funding
Partners in Policymaking & Youth Leadership Forum	Council on Developmental Disabilities	Staff & Funding

What Has Worked in Tennessee

- Local community chapters that have strong community agenda



- State level facilitators to support local community chapters



- Closing institutions



Challenges & Struggles of Tennessee Self-Advocacy Organizations

- State geography
- Providing local self advocacy opportunities in communities across TN
- Lack of community support
- Fragmented organizations
- Recruiting young leaders, self advocates to self advocacy organizations



Tennessee is Most Proud of...

- State funding/support of self advocacy organizations



- Person-centered training



- Closing institutions and moving residents into community living settings





Tennessee's Dreams for Self-Advocacy

- More community involvement
- People First Chapters in school
- Strong network of Self-Advocates & organizations working together
- Self-Advocacy Resource Center
- Self-Advocacy leads to Employment

Tennessee Team

- Nicole Anderson, National Youth Leadership Network & disAbility Resource Center
- Leanne Boyce, People First of Tennessee
- Gina Brady, Disability Law & Advocacy Center of Tennessee
- John Chase, Autism Society
- Suzanne Colsey, People First, UT Boling Center & Vanderbilt Kennedy Center UCEDD
- Megan Hart, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center UCEDD & Arc
- Courtney Kelly, TN Department of Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
- Gatha Logan, People First of Tennessee
- Jenness Roth, University of Tennessee Boling Center UCEDD
- Wanda Willis, Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities