

UCEDD Leadership: Pay it Forward

2014 TA Institute – Facilitated Session Notes

Friday, March 21, 2014: 9:45 – 11:00AM

Packaging Research Findings to Inform Policy Makers

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- Sharon Lewis, Principal Deputy Administrator at the Administration for Community Living (ACL), and Secretary Sebelius' Senior Advisor on Disability Policy

Discussion Notes/ Strategies:

- Know timing—not just years, but hours and weeks after –think about this at front end of work
- Policy makers think in days/weeks, not years
 - research may not be complete, but in the process
- Policy happens in real time and course of our lifetime
 - Relationships matter more than victories
 - Tone matters
- Issue and story = worked → If there is no story, it won't work
 - right place/right time
- Think about how you deliver the message—people turn off if someone believes you are a biased advocate
- Always be credible—Do not misrepresent
- What is or isn't a credible source
- Public outreach—not just academic bubble---not everyone goes to NIRS
- Policy makers - decision/feelings based on how they feel when they are with you
 - Make policy maker feel loved and valued
- What do we want policy makers to know
 - What is important?
 - What have we learned?
 - What is return on investments?
 - What happens if we stop?
- What is evidence based research—what do people want to hear
- Make research accessible to all –No Greek/Latin jargon.
- Format research in a way that can be communicated with policy makers—digest material quickly
- Not just the facts, but why do I need to care?

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- Fact Sheets to start—not just whole article—catch people with story
 - Photo—why does this matter?
 - Catch them with first 30 seconds, not every fact and figure
- Catchy subheads—people skim through paper
- Stories combined with research letter
- Always include recommendations
- We need to translate research into practice more
 - Relevant reach - people can use it in real life
- Attend to what is happening in member's states
 - Connect Federal to State work
 - What is working in different states

- Be perceived as a resource –on the Hill and in person
- Always stick to your talking points/message—but listen as well
- People call upon you because they like your expertise—“Based on my understanding...”
- Think both Federal and State who you can partner with to talk about your message
- “Effectual combination of messengers”
 - Always have a person affected by policy and a person who conducted research
- “You can't teach anyone anything unless they are asking.”
 - How to get policy makers to ask the question we can answer? How do we resource to answer problem?

- Listen to public—not just packing data/evidence—but about what do they need
- “Real People” –life experience
- Don't underestimate “who matters”
- Hear what advocates need to tell your story

- How do we involve trainees?
 - Use your people (trainees)—“Does this message make sense”
 - young trainees/adults are more interesting to policy makers
 - peer to peer relationship
 - Trainees come w/relationships already (as in, who do they know...)

- Conflict within a coalition?
 - bring whole coalition in to meet the new member, not just the staff person

- Involve emerging leaders—next reign of champions
 - understand history of DD and why it matters (help trainees understand)

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- Help trainees to connect and encourage w/ coalitions
- Help young parents with kids on ASD - broader issues than just ASD

- Peer to Peer:
 - Kennedy Fellows—they go back to the community
 - Not just diversity /legislative committee
 - Convene and all take care of—its everyone's business
 - policy is everyone's business and pay attention

- Use AUCD as your microphone—we depend on you all as our research pieces
- AUCD can help by:
 - TA/webinar that goes through steps of how to increase policy at your center/program
 - navigate
 - bring literature into it
- When written to policy makers plop in AUCD logo (branding)
- Stronger AUCD is = Strong Network and vice versa
- AUCD can help with elevator speeches
 - legislative briefing available to legislators
 - top 3 points