

**Fostering Friendships for  
All Abilities in All Activities  
TIES – Together Including  
Every Student**



promotes the participation of children and young adults with developmental disabilities in extracurricular and community activities by providing effective support.



**Two legacies, one future...**

**The Advocacy Center and LDA Life and Learning Services were founded by people who wanted better opportunities for their loved ones with disabilities.**

**History**

- Two parents of children with developmental disabilities
- Interest in activities
  - Attendance with a parent
  - No support to attend
- Effectiveness and necessity of peer interaction
- Value of Recreation – Community, Health, Socialization, Involvement, Connections, Friendships, Opportunities

**Funding**

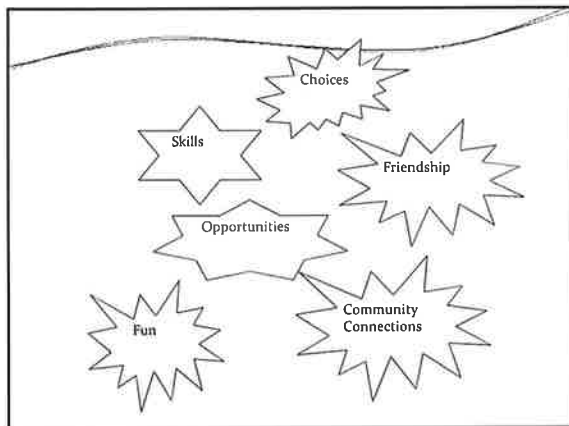
- Field Initiated Ideas from the DDPC (Developmental Disabilities Planning Council)
- Continued Interest
- RFP through Family Support Services
- Current funding through Starbridge
  - One year funding through grant with commitment from school district for continuation

## Working with School Districts

- Hire a Coordinator
  - Recruitment
  - Parent of a child with a disability
- Training
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- Continuation

## Participants

- Students and young adults
  - Grades 3 through age 21
  - After 21
- Choices
- First year of program
- Continuation by school district

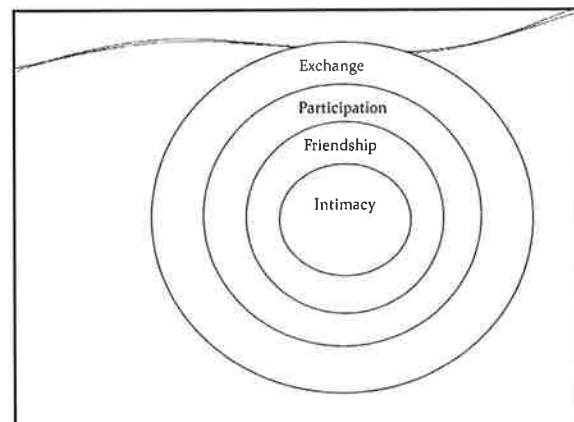


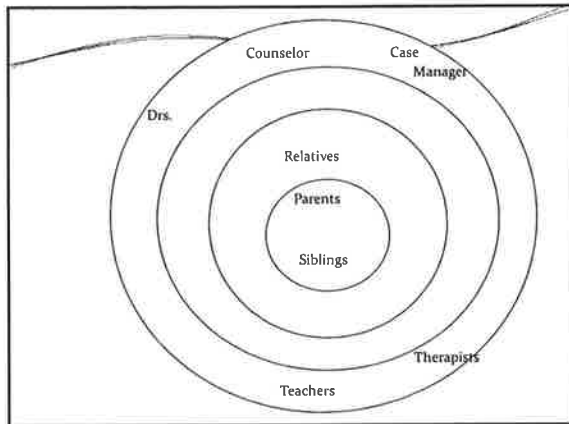
## Volunteers

- Grades 8 -12
- College
- Training
- Recreation departments
- Increased self esteem

## Volunteer training

- Person first language
- Developmental disabilities
- Value of inclusive activities
- Samples of support strategies
- Problem solving
- Confidentiality
- Fun!!!





### Facilitating Friendships

- Highlight similarities
- Emphasize complimentary strengths and differences
- Interpret behaviors
- Teach/model interaction skills
- Use conversation starters

### Volunteer Perspective

- “Disabilities do not change who a person is and how eager they are to learn.”

### Examples of Effective Support

- Encourage conversation by discussing mutual interests
- Give one or two step verbal directions
- Model appropriate social behavior
- Actively involve participant to prevent distraction & promote belonging
- Demonstrate instructions
- Allow for positive choices

### Activity Leaders

- Create an experience where all talents and needs are included
- Opportunity to include people with developmental disabilities in their group
- Individual support plan with information provided
- Inclusive group

### Perspective

- “TIES puts us in a position to model acceptance and appreciation of differences among people. Our staff have benefitted from an enriched understanding of diversity.”
  - Donna Fauth, former Director of Webster Recreation Department

## Implementation Process

- Participant and volunteer applications
- Pairing participants with volunteers
  - Based on mutual interests, abilities and availability
- Individual support plans
  - Provide details about the chosen activity
  - Describe the participant's strengths and how to meet their needs

## Evaluation

- Written surveys
- Phone calls
- Input
  - Families
  - Volunteers

## Benefits

- Opportunities
- Acceptance
- Increased knowledge
- Build relationships
- Inclusive recreation departments and schools benefitting all members of the community
- Increased membership

## Leadership Development

- TIES is a catalyst for culture change and leadership development within our community: both local and school.
- TIES provides the opportunity for all involved: volunteers, participants and activity leaders, to develop their leadership skills and change the culture to be more inclusive and accepting of differences.
- TIES trains student volunteers how to use their "social capitol" effectively not only to benefit the participants but also themselves.

## Examples of Activities

- Programs at the YMCA and Community Recreation Departments, dance classes, Boy and Girl Scouts, School of Religion, arts and craft classes, drumming circles, cooking, Outrigger Canoeing, Junior Prom, Senior Ball, school clubs (drama, community service, interest), Orientation days, lunch, school dances, fitness club, swimming, football and basketball games, pep rally and any activity that is of interest to the participant and has an adult supervisor

## School Districts and Communities

- Webster, Brighton, Hilton, Brockport, Geneseo, Honeoye Falls-Lima, Fairport, East Rochester, Greece, West and East Irondequoit, Pittsford, Avon, Livonia, Attica, Wayne, Watkins Glen, Hornell, Penfield, Corning-Painted Post, Palmyra-Macedon, Rush-Henrietta, Newark, Horseheads, Rochester, Elmira, Williamsville, Amherst, Pioneer, LeRoy, Cattaraugus-Little Valley, North Tonawanda, Dunkirk, Starpoint, Hamburg
- SUNY Brockport and SUNY Geneseo

### How Do I Get TIES in my School District?

- Families' interest
- Inform school district administrators
- Funding opportunities
- Emphasize cost saving and inclusive practice
- Contact Kathy Costello – 585-414-5345 or [kcostello@starbridgeinc.org](mailto:kcostello@starbridgeinc.org);
- [www.starbridgeinc.org/TIESProgram](http://www.starbridgeinc.org/TIESProgram)

### KEYMAKERS

Some people see a closed door, and turn away. Others see a closed door, try the knob and if doesn't open...They turn away. Still others see a closed door, try the knob, if it doesn't open, they find a key, if the key doesn't fit...They turn away. A rare few see a closed door, try the knob. If it doesn't open, they find a key, if the key doesn't fit...  
THEY MAKE ONE.