Collaboration - The Solution to Increasing Respite, Recreation, and Healthcare Providers in Your State

Lynn Robinson
Meghan Baskett
*Denver, Colorado*
What is Discovery Club?

• Saturday respite and recreational program
• Kids of ALL abilities including children with extensive needs and their siblings
• Ages 6 -18 years
• Offered during school year across Denver Metro and Fort Collins (northern Colorado)
Early Phases

• Began in 2004
• Prompted by parents looking for recreation options for kids
• Realized families were desperate for a break
• Began looking for partners
• Started with one site to create affordable respite for parents
Early Partners

• Parents
• Easter Seals Colorado
• Volunteer providers – used camp counselors
• Church in Highlands Ranch, CO
• Local funder
Next Steps

• Slowly began expanding to other sites
• Searched for funding for each location (local, state and private dollars)
• Partnered with nursing schools to provide a one-stop, consistent care worker source and increase providers
Training Opportunities

• Nursing schools
  – Pediatric clinical hours for students
  – Exposure to a child first rather than as a patient with a disability
  – Exposure to range of disabilities

• Physical therapy schools

• Minimum 1:1 care
Current Status

• Five sites across Front Range
• 151 of families served annually via 5,240 hours of respite service (2013-14)
• 908 of students trained via 7,264 hours of training.
• 10 nursing schools, 1 physical therapy school
• Demand for expansion outside of Denver Metro Area and Fort Collins
How to Start In Your Community

• Identify need
  – Consider catering to different populations (i.e. older adults)
  – Find partners (building space, volunteers, students, funder)

• Develop fee structure

• Start operating with one site
Lynn Robinson  
Easter Seals Colorado  
President & CEO  
lrobinson@eastersealscolorado.org

Meghan Baskett  
Project Manager, Colorado Respite Care Project  
mbaskett@eastersealscolorado.org

http://www.easterseals.com/co/ourprograms/childrens-services/discovery-club.html