Lifespan Respite Washington

“Music to their Ears: Creating a Statewide Respite Voucher System”
A longstanding dream...

- Respite coalition formed in 2002 to establish respite in Washington State
- Acknowledged the importance of existing respite options
- Administered a statewide survey of caregivers
  - Learned family-driven respite is a top need
- Collaborated with known programs to expand services

- Family Caregiver Support Program
- Developmental Disabilities Administration
- Exceptional Family Members Program
- Veterans Administration Caregiver Program
- Creative Respite Options
With three grants from the federal Administration on Aging, through WA State, DSHS/Aging & Long Term Support Administration--

2011 - Collaboration with existing programs:
- Aging & Disability Resource Center
- The Arc of King County (host site)
- Volunteer Chore Services
- Girl Scouts of Western Washington
- Child Care Aware

2013 - Develop a PILOT respite voucher system
- Across the lifespan, statewide
- For caregivers supporting those with special needs
- Not receiving respite from other public services
- And not receiving care services; e.g., Medicaid Personal Care
- Providing 40 hours or more of unpaid caregiving per week
- No income limitations
- Initial use of a Random Selector Process

2014 - Use lessons learned to enhance voucher system
- Increase options and collaboration with—
  - Military
  - Faith-based
  - Cultural/ethnic
- Focus on sustainability
We also...

- Formed a voucher oversight committee;
- Developed policies, procedures, forms and marketing materials;
- Met routinely as a coalition of respite advocates and...
...launched our website

www.lifespanrespitewa.org

[Note the respite summit announced on the website!]
Something was missing:

Respite for...
...unserved family caregivers
Through Easter Seals
Washington, LRW contracted with 25 Respite Provider Agencies representing:

- In-home care;
- Day programs;
- Camps;
- Parks & Rec;
- Specialized case aides
Lifespan Respite Washington training standards:

Respite Provider Agencies ensure workers are trained according to Washington State Statute where applicable; e.g., long-term care providers.

Those not required to receive this training; e.g., camps, recreation programs, etc., must at least meet the following training standards for their staff/volunteers:

1. First Aid/CPR for the population served;
2. Proper care instructions for the special care needs of the intended respite receiver;
3. Mandated reporting requirements;
4. Basic cultural and population-specific sensitivity;
5. Any other certification or licensure required to conduct the RPA’s specific line of business services related to proper care instructions.
No independent providers were used....

Contracted with proven agencies that could provide certain assurances:

- Criminal background clearance process;
- Insurance requirements according to State standards;
- Uphold confidentiality / HIPAA laws;
- Maintain disability awareness standards;
- Meet Washington State’s training standards under Statute, RCW titles 18.88A and B and Title 74; and
- Meet program “standards of excellence”.

www.app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=18.88a&full=true;
www.app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=74.34&full=true
March 14, 2014:

Announced our respite voucher system!
Policies and Procedures

and Forms
a simple application process...
Outlining eligibility requirements.
Vouchers are awarded

Awarding about 100 vouchers @ $1,000 each

Based on caregiver choice

30% of anticipated applicants were received within the first week
Continued honing the process

- Family Caregiver Agreements
- Pre-survey of family caregiver
- Challenges included—
  - Respite Provider Agencies (in-home) not required by statute to have 1st Aid/CPR training--
    - required all new inter-agency agreements three months into the program
    - Which reduced options in some communities, creating supply-demand inequity
  - Caregiver reluctance to follow through with services
    - Misunderstanding of available options and process
    - Need more intensive case management to walk through the options
    - Attrition rates due to death, disability, out-of-home placement affected follow-through
A married couple from Spokane had been unable to receive publicly-funded respite. They were reluctant to explore respite until now, believing their son could not be left alone. Plus they “did not feel comfortable leaving him with standard babysitting options”.

They were willing to try the voucher system because it involved Easter Seals and its caregiver options. During respite they planned to:

8. Please list 2-3 plans/goals you might have while taking this respite break; e.g., self-care, household errands, etc.

1) ERRANDS / SHOPPING
2) TAKING OTHER KIDS TO SUMMER EVENTS
3) LEARN HOW SYSTEM WORKS AS WE PLAN TO CONTINUE ONCE WE FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH WORKING WITH OTHERS / CAREGIVERS

Anything else you wish for us to know? "LONG-TERM OPTIONS,"
The father was almost giddy…

...as he explored options through the voucher system. He settled on in-home companion care for his son.

Nearing the end of their respite opportunity, he stated:

“The $1,000 grant for A's respite was wonderful. Thank you so much. It opened our eyes about how to find respite and care for our son which we hope to continue for many years. Thank you.”
And that is what it is all about....

Music to their ears!
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ARCH National Lifespan Respite Conference, 10/7-9, 2014
Nashville, TN