

Montana

Montana *self-advocacy organizations*:

- Rural Institute Consumer Advisory Council
 - Emerging Leader Project; create a vision for what is possible for community membership of people with DD
 - Out reach and training in the area of Transition from school to adult life
 - Special Projects as determined by Youth Board members
 - Advising UCEDD projects and activities

Montana *self-advocacy organizations:*

- Montana People First
 - Working to eliminate the marriage penalty with SSI
 - Eliminate the R word
- Neuro Networking Club
 - Work to correct stereotypes about autism by supporting informational speakers at state conferences,
 - Brought the HBO Temple Granden film the University of Montana

Montana *self-advocacy organizations*:

- Disability Rights Montana: remove barriers to full community participation
- seeks to guarantee due process in the involuntary commitment process
- Works to abolish involuntary commitment
- seeks to improve standards of psychiatric and therapeutic care at MDC
 - trauma informed care
 - Evidence based treatment
 - Increased capacity of staff by training
 - End casual violation of basic rights
 - Recognize, support, build on abilities, assume competence

Montana self-advocacy organizations:

- **Montana Youth Leadership:** a leadership training program for high school students with disabilities
- **Montana Youth Transitions:** to improve transition services and increase the number of youth with disabilities who achieve their desired post-school outcomes
- **Montana Council on DD:** Plan, advocate and implement new and innovative services in 9 Areas of emphasis. Advise local, state and tribal governments on issues surrounding developmental disabilities. The Council has financially supported self-advocacy since it's inception at a funding level of \$570,000.

Montana self-advocacy organizations:

- PLUK (Parents lets Unite for Kids)
- The Alternatives to Guardianship Project in collaboration with the Rural Institute and DRM
 - PLUK provided training, information, and houses a web site about transition including alternatives to guardianship for young adults.
 - Support students, schools and families to encourage student led IEPs.

Montana Self Advocacy organizations:

- Summit Independent Living Center
 - Youth self advocacy skills training in local schools
 - YODA Youth opening doors through advocacy
 - Peer mentoring Projects

What are the resources for the self-advocacy organizations?

Name of self- advocacy organization	Who provides the resource(s)?	What resource(s) is provided?
MYLF	State of Montana	Funding
MYTranstions	Partners/Sponsors	Funds, time, in-kind support
SABE Board Member	MT Council on DD	Financial and logistical aid support
People First	DRM used to--- currently not funded	
CAC at Rural Institute	UCEDD core grant,	Funding for stipends, travel of youth members

** Please add additional rows if there are multiple sources that provide resources*

What has worked in your state for self-advocacy organizations?

- Training at a young age in conjunction with mentoring;
- Montana DD program has offered 2 options of self-directed waiver services and is training case managers and agencies on Person Centered Planning;
- Self-advocacy chapters being aware of and responsible for managing their funds and organization.

What has worked in your state for self-advocacy organizations?

- Ability of facilitators, advisors and other helpers to “let go”, accept the dignity of risk, don’t try to fix people or organizations,
- Self-advocacy organization becoming and independent 501 (c) 3 entity.

What are some challenges or struggles that your state self-advocacy organizations have faced?

- Funding
- Reaching all areas of the state due to the vast distance between towns.
- Hostility towards advocates and self advocates by providers.
- Ignorance of needs, capabilities, humanity of people with developmental disabilities.
- Prejudice.
- Self advocates fear of how others will feel when they advocate for their needs and rights.

What are you most proud of in regards to self-advocacy currently in your state?

- Creating a vision of what living, learning, working and playing can look like for youth with DD in Montana (Emerging Leader project),
- That we have created a model of partnerships from the public and private sector that work together to advance transition needs of youth with disabilities. This does not put the financial burden on just one organization or agency,
- That we are recognizing that self-advocacy is part of a continuum. Many “non disabled” professional advocates need to recognize that we have to advocate for ourselves and others at the same time.

What goals or dreams does your state have for self-advocacy?

- All youth with DD will have the opportunity of paid employment in the community.
- That people with disabilities will have the opportunity for self advocacy skills training regardless of where they reside.
- That adequate, trauma informed, evidence based therapies and treatments be made available through publicly funded community based support and crisis centers.
- That full citizenship, real jobs, real income, real homes and real human dignity become the rule, not the exception.
- That (presently) non-disabled individuals come to understand, support and celebrate their common humanity and inter-dependence with all persons with disabilities.

MONTANA TEAM MEMBERS

- Maclaen Burningham- Rural Institute CAC member
- Isaac Baldry- Rural Institute CAC member, MYLF Staff
- Theresa Baldry- Parents Lets Unite for Kids, PLUK
- Mike Beers- Summit Independent Living Center, MYLF
- June Hermanson- MYLF
- Chris Craigwick- Neuro Networking Club
- Deborah Swingley- Montana Council on Devel. Disabilities
- Tom Dooling- Disability Rights Montana
- Joli Schroader- Montana Developmental Disabilities Program
- Jason Billehus- SABE & People First
- Rocky Hughes- People First
- Ellen Condon- Rural Institute on Disabilities (UCEDD)