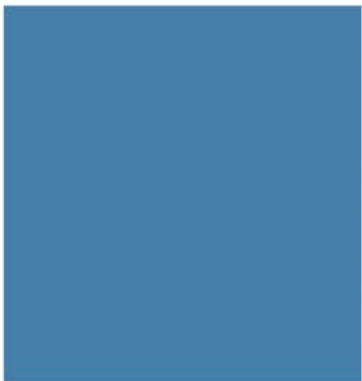
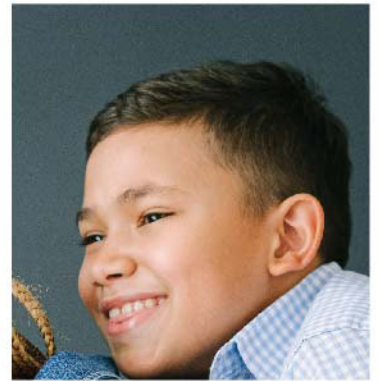
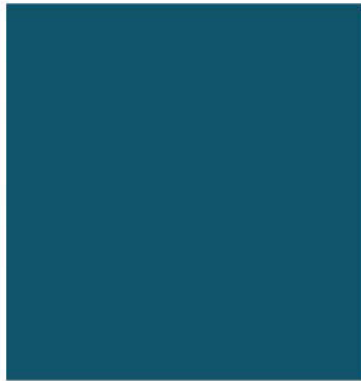
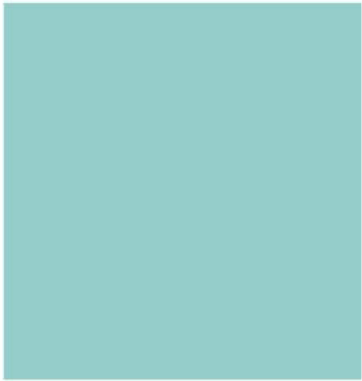
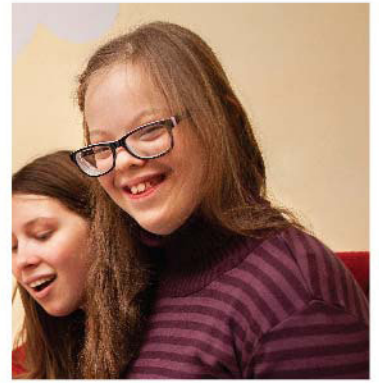
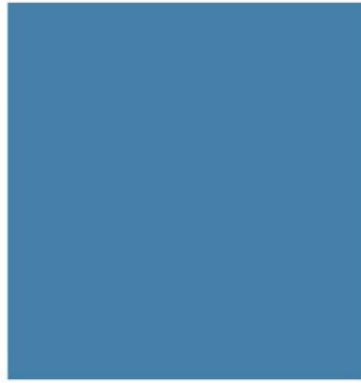


20|21

Annual Report



Empowering Families and Engaging Professionals In Unprecedented Times



spanadvocacy.org

Our Mission, Vision and Commitment

Our Vision

SPAN's vision is that all families will have the resources and support they need to ensure that their children become fully participating and contributing members of our communities and society.

Our Mission

Our mission is to empower and support families, and inform and involve professionals interested in the healthy development and education of children and youth.

Our Commitment

Our foremost commitment is to children and families with the greatest need due to disability or special health/mental health needs; poverty; discrimination based on race/ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, immigrant or homeless status; involvement in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems; geographic location; or other special circumstances.



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20/21 Annual Report

Letters to the Community



“Resilient” does not go far enough!

The past 20 months have been almost unprecedented in the challenges they have posed for the SPAN Parent Advocacy Network and the children, youth, young adults, families, professionals, and family organizations we serve. The pandemic and resultant economic stress placed on our organization, our staff, and our communities have required unparalleled commitment and dedication on the part of our staff and parent volunteers. And we have risen to the occasion!

In future years, we will look back on this time and ask, “How did we do it? How did we not only survive, but thrive?”

The fact is, dedicated people with deeply entrenched social justice values got things done at SPAN that not only benefited our family and professional constituents, but also our communities. In the midst of COVID shut-downs, we managed to expand the number of constituents we reached by optimizing the use of digital interactions; we directly impacted legislation that will support thousands of lives; we built our social advocacy skills and voice as our society dealt with racial violence against Black Americans and Asian community members; we managed staff turnover and the departure of Debra Jennings from her long-time Executive Co-Director role; and we dealt with grief and loss - not just from COVID - but also from other illnesses that took the lives of family members and one foundational leader, the irreplaceable Albert Pelham.

We are proud to have served as Board President and Vice-President of SPAN throughout this difficult time. We are both moved by how our organization has responded to the times we have been living through and excited by the increased capacity we have built to serve our constituencies and communities and deliver on our mission into the future. You will see over the ensuing pages a story of success across our complementary family, family organization, and professional serving programs. The thread that weaves these programs together is our commitment to social justice and to access and equity for those with the greatest need.

But we need your help as we move forward - your shared energy and your donations. Non-profit grant funding is never a sure thing and we rely on the generosity of our supporters to help with those operational expenses that our grant funding may not cover. We know that with this impressive Annual Report you will see just how good an investment your donations will be.

We would finally like to offer our personal thanks for the hard work put in by all of the parent-professionals at SPAN, our partners, and to those who support us.


John Morel, CPCU, ARM
Board President, Board of Trustees
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network


John Pennett
Vice President, Board of Trustees
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network

“Empowered Parents: Educated. Engaged. Effective!”

These words are the heart of SPAN’s work. Our vision is a society in which every family has everything they need to ensure that their children become fully participating and contributing members of our communities. Our mission is to empower and support families and involve professionals to partner to enhance the healthy development and education of children and youth. And our foremost commitment is to children and families who face the greatest challenges – disability and special health/mental health needs; poverty; discrimination based on race/ethnicity, language, immigrant status, gender, gender identification, or LGBTQA+ status; involvement in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems; homelessness; geographic location; or other special circumstances – that limit their equitable access to a seat at the table, high quality services, and positive outcomes.

Over the past nearly two years, we have persevered through the most difficult challenges in our 34-year history. But our values and belief in the power of the parent voice at all levels, our staff, parent leaders, volunteers, partners, and our funders have sustained us. Our commitment to social justice has only strengthened. And our optimism and hope for a brighter future is greater than ever.

In this annual report, you will see the fruit of our hard work. You will hear stories from families, professionals, and family organizations. You will read about the numbers of individuals and family organizations served, and the quality, relevance, usefulness, and impact of our services. You will learn about how we have leveraged what we have learned on the ground from families and used it to advocate for improved policies at the federal, state, and local level. You will see our vision, mission, foremost commitment, and values in action.

If what you read inspires and moves you, please help us continue our work. Your financial contribution – of whatever size – will ensure that we continue to create and support empowered parents who are educated, engaged, and effective!

With love and appreciation,


Diana Autin
Executive Director
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network

DE&I, Social Justice and Taking a Stand



SPAN has always been a diverse organization, majority staffed by parents of children with disabilities and representative of the families we serve. In 2020, our organization formed a volunteer Diversity, Equity & Inclusion committee to formalize and institute practices that will enable SPAN to make the most of its staff and parent leader diversity by supporting a sustainable culture and an equity-focused work environment. These practices will demonstrate a clear commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice to both staff and the parent leaders with whom we work, as well as to the parents, caregivers, youth, young adults and professionals we serve. This commitment is consistent with SPAN's mission to empower and support families with the greatest need and its vision of an economically productive, equitable and just society.

SPAN's DE&I Plan includes three goals:

Goal 1:

Create a culture of inclusion by ensuring mutual respect and authentic appreciation for diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and identities; and by providing opportunities for safe sharing of varied viewpoints.

Goal 2:

Provide staff training on key concepts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion; effective anti-racism practices; the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace; and the importance of SPAN's equity and anti-racism work across systems.

Goal 3:

Promote active, actionable allyship as a core value of SPAN.

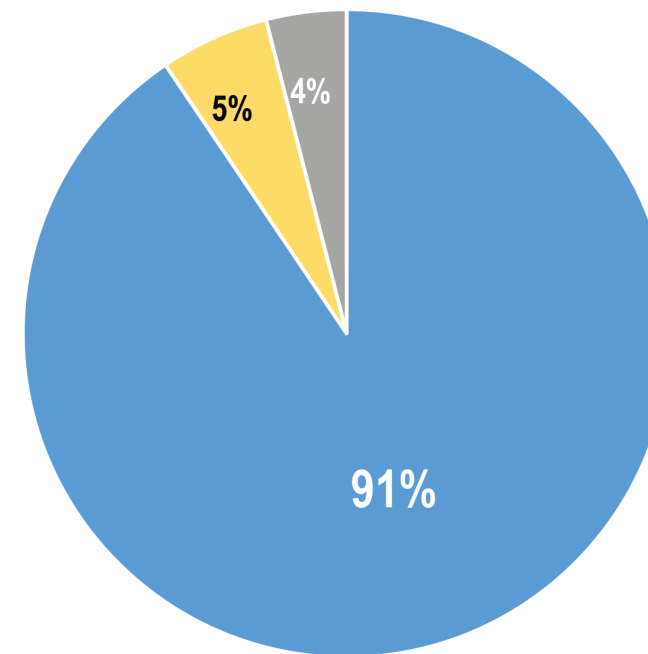
In order to fulfill our commitment to children and families with the greatest need, we address our work with a social justice lens. This focus has made it necessary for SPAN to take a stand several times over the last year and release public statements under Diana Autin's authorship. These have included a [Statement on the Derek Chauvin Verdict](#), a [Statement in Support of the Asian American Pacific Islander Community](#), and a [Statement on the January 6th U.S. Capitol Insurrection](#).

2019-2020 Fiscal Year By the Numbers

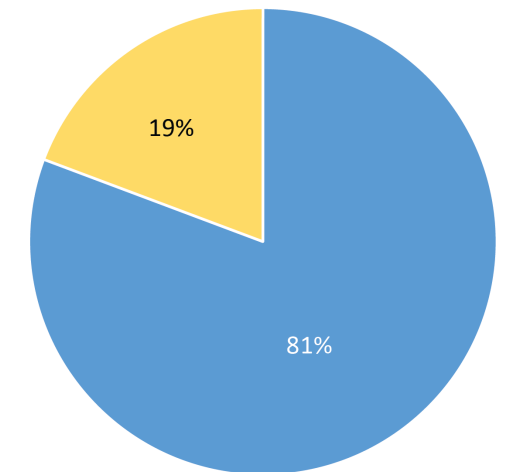
SPAN is primarily funded via state and federal government grants. This has been the case for many years and while it is a testament to our ability to deliver successful program outcomes year after year, such money may be restricted and can limit our ability to be as flexible as we need to be in order to meet the quickly changing needs of our families and professional partners. A higher percentage of donations from individuals and organizations will allow us to broaden our services and more quickly pivot to meet the evolving needs of the communities we impact.

Total Funds \$4,463,913

REVENUE ALLOCATION



EXPENSES



■ Program services ■ Management and general ■ Fundraising - -

■ Grants and contracts ■ Program fees and other revenues
 ■ SBA-PPP advance revenue ■ Interest income

36.4K

Individual Assistance contacts with both parents and professionals in 2020, including parents like Jose and Michelle Perez

The Perez Family

“We are Michelle and Jose Perez, proud parents of two sons with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder). We moved to N.J. four years ago from N.Y. to Mercer County. Learning to navigate new laws was overwhelming while parenting children with different needs.

Standing alone when we came to New Jersey was a big change, although we knew this move was best for us all. Our sons have daily challenges as well as beautiful strengths. Wanting them to thrive was always our goal.

We contacted SPAN to enrich our education in order to advocate for our sons. SPAN was embracing and very well rounded with knowledge. One of our sons was declassified as the school district decided to remove his IEP (Individualized Education Program) and we were blindsided in believing that this was best for him. We contacted SPAN desperately to help us prepare for this uncertain journey ahead. Our son was not ready to take that step. As parents without much information, we felt sad and out of our element.

SPAN was lifesaving with their professionalism and empathy. They offered immediate technical assistance and set us up with the tools needed as we moved forward to get our son’s IEP back in place. The SRP and SEVA programs were amazing in supporting our case and we successfully regained our son’s IEP.

We became educated and confident to advocate on our children’s behalf. The amount of information provided by SPAN is priceless. We not only gained our son’s IEP back, but also respect from the school.

SPAN is the best guidance to have when facing uncertain circumstances with our children’s academic future. They have been amazing and are always here to give us the most updated information and tools. SPAN continues to grow while keeping families and their children’s best interests at heart. Empowering our communities is a beautiful gift and SPAN gives us this gift with purpose as they encourage us to see our children’s bright future ahead.”



“We became educated and confident to advocate on our children’s behalf.”

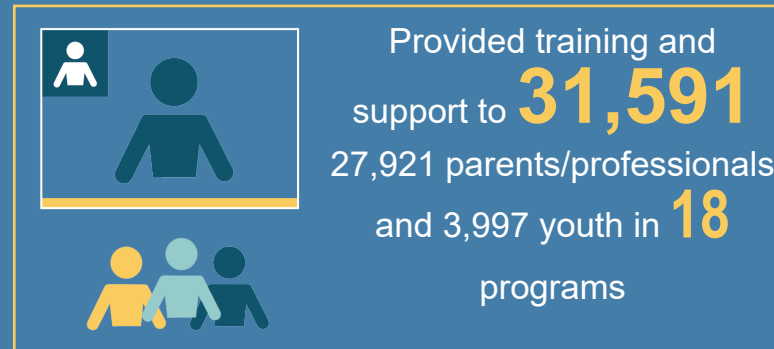
Michelle and Jose Perez, Mercer County, NJ

OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS

SPAN takes a holistic approach to empowering families and engaging professionals across New Jersey, the United States, and around the world. We manage and/or partner in more than two dozen programs at any given time that engage tens of thousands of families - parents and youth/young adults - and professionals each year. From prenatal care and support, to early childhood development, to youth education and healthcare advocacy, all the way to young adult transition guidance; our programs follow the lives of those with the greatest need.



Individual Assistance, Training and Support



Capacity Building for Family Organizations

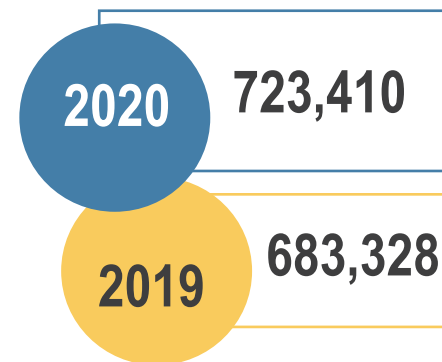


Parent and Professional Leadership Development and Systems Change

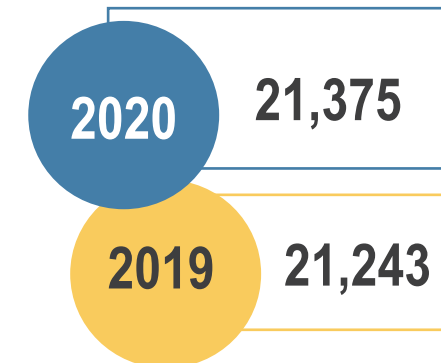


Information Dissemination

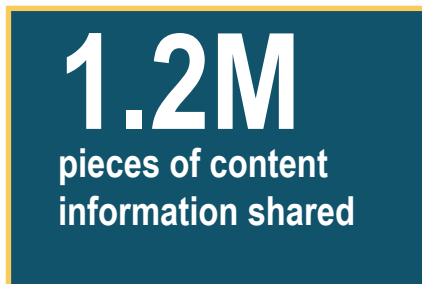
Individuals reached about our services



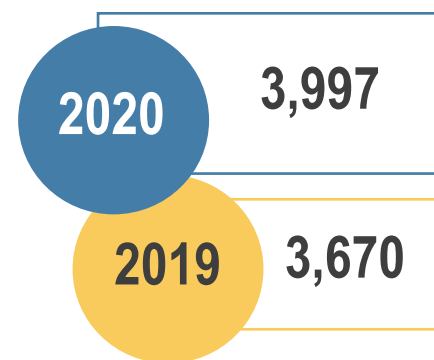
Total number of parents trained



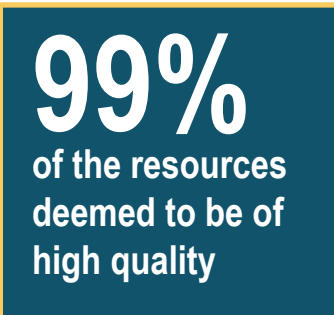
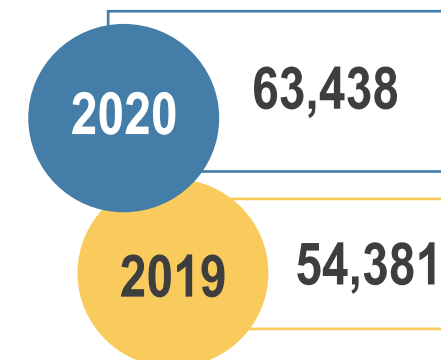
Information and resources shared



Total number of youth trained



Total number of Individual Assistance Contacts (parents and professionals)



Key resources available in over 8 languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Haitian, Hindi, Korean, Portuguese and Russian.

AWARENESS HIGHLIGHTS

2021 Website Traffic



Top 5 Countries

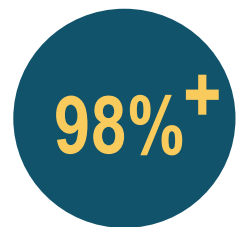
1. United States
2. China
3. India
4. Canada
5. Philippines



Top 5 Countries

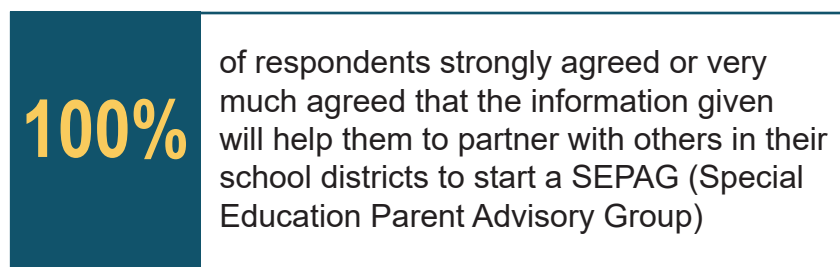
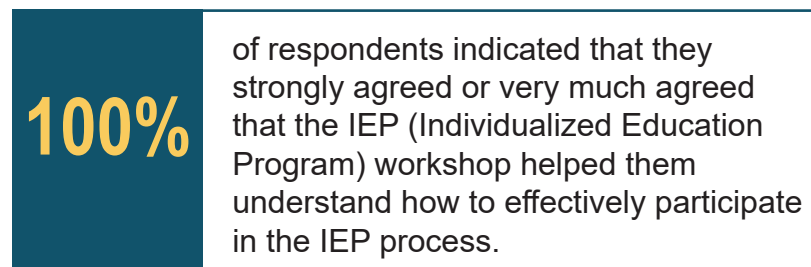
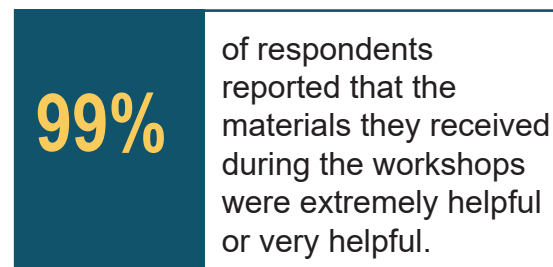
1. United States
2. Mexico
3. Philippines
4. India
5. Colombia

High Marks: Survey Results for Training and Resources Provided in 2020



- Parent Centers deemed technical assistance, information and resources to be of high quality, relevant and useful
- Parents found resources to be of high quality
- Attendees found our training to be highly relevant

Our critical parent empowerment workshop training in 2021 received excellent reviews.



TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

SPAN Biannual Parent Leadership & Advocacy Virtual Conference

Our statewide conference for and about meaningful parent leadership across New Jersey's education, health, mental health, family support, human services, and child welfare systems took place in May 2021. Survey feedback from our attendees has been stellar.

4.6 out of 5 stars!

Quality, relevance and usefulness



"I am now going to become a Support Parent."

"I will stay more informed about the legislative process that impacts the special needs community."

"I will Share info with the parents I serve."

"The action I would take is to become a parent partner to organizations to bring awareness and access to families and bring families voices to the table."

2021 Annual RAISE Summit

RAISE Center was created by SPAN to provide support to individuals with disabilities through the transition from secondary school and into competitive employment and independent living, as well as technical assistance and support to eight RSA (Rehabilitation Service Administration) funded parent training and information centers.

In June 2021, more than **330** people attended the RAISE Summit, which focused on professional development, networking, and sharing information in order to help improve positive outcomes for young adults with disabilities in the age of COVID.

The Center also presented six webinars in the 2020-2021 period, educating **600** participants on topics like Youth Development, Youth Empowerment and Accessibility.

National Parent Center Capacity Building Conference

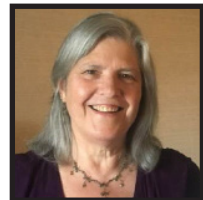
SPAN houses the Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR) that serves as a central “hub” of information and products created for the network of almost 100 Parent Centers across the U.S. and U.S. territories and jurisdictions serving families of children with disabilities or at risk of inappropriate identification.

In September and October 2020, CPIR, in collaboration with the four regional parent technical assistance centers, hosted a National Parent Center Conference for **750** attendees. Information and resources on a variety of topics was shared, including equity, early learning, youth empowerment, education and healthcare advocacy, and non-profit management.

National Federation of Families Conference

In the fall of 2020, SPAN partnered with the National Federation of Families to facilitate a national conference for family organizations, families and professionals interested in children’s mental health.

Employees Recognized



Diana Autin
Executive Director

- 2021 Family Voices Health Equity Champion Award



Lauren Agoratus, M.A.
State Coordinator – Family Voices NJ @ SPAN

- Named One of 50 Advocate Heroes (“50 for 50”) by EP Magazine (June 2021, Golden Anniversary Edition)



Dr. Josie Badger
RAISE Center Director

- National Disability Mentoring Coalition Hall of Fame Class of 2020 by the National Disability Mentoring Coalition
- Richard Meritzer Award (September 2021)
- Achieva Excellence in Advocacy Award (December 2021)



Deepa Srinivasavaradan
CDC’s “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” Ambassador to NJ and State Parent Lead for Early Childhood Initiatives

- 2020 Merle McPherson Award from the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
- Endorsement, NJ Association for Infant Mental Health (NJ-AIMH) (August 2021)



Fulfilling Our Commitment Through Advocacy

SPAN’s national and state policy work is conducted in collaboration with other advocacy organizations who share our commitment to equity and racial and social justice, including the National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE), the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities. Much of our advocacy over the past almost two years has focused on responding to COVID-19 and its often devastating implications for children and families. At both the national and state level, a significant focus of our policy work has involved supporting parents and family organizations to be involved in the advocacy efforts. Major collaborative accomplishments in this time period include:

NATIONAL:

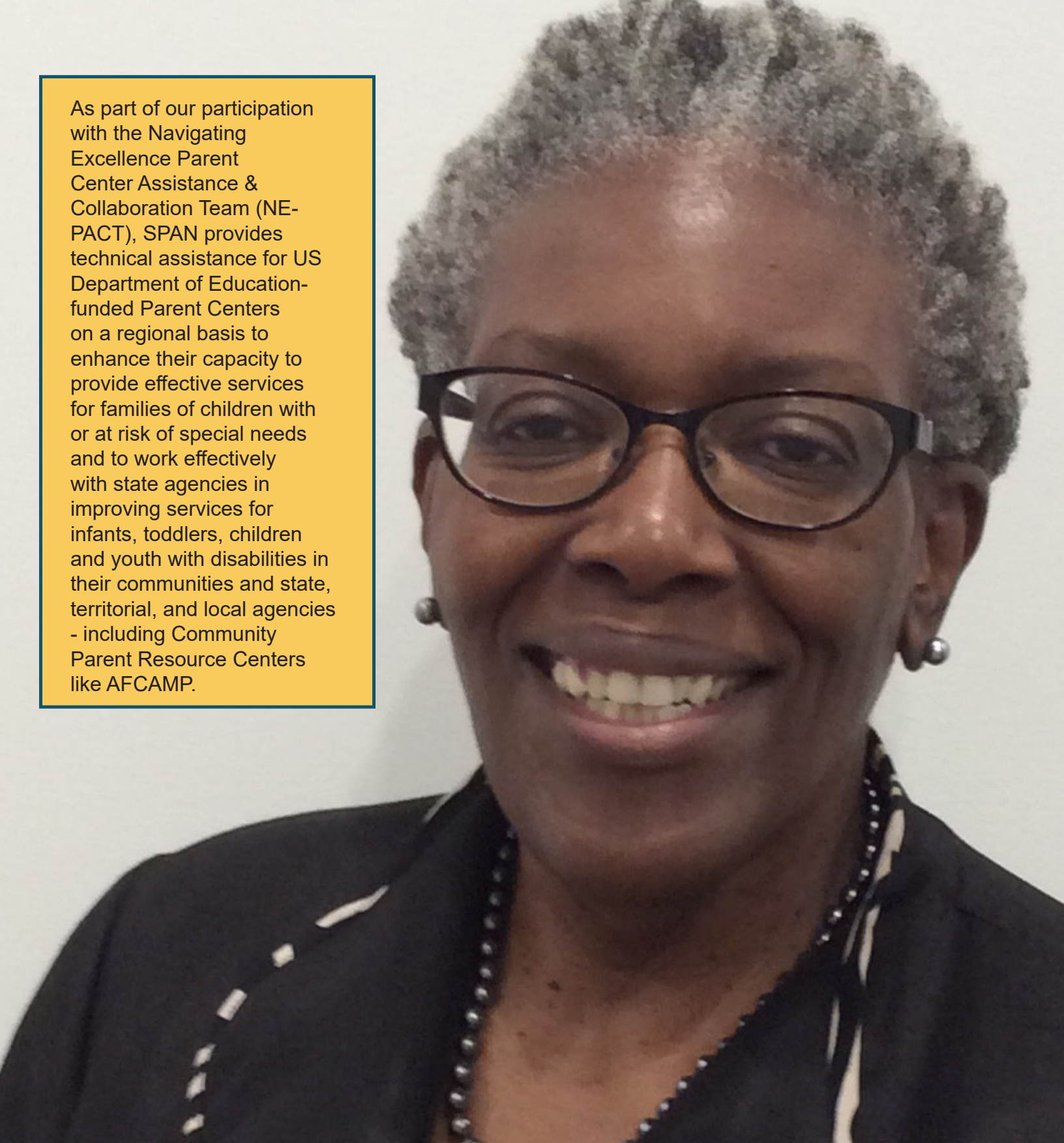
- Strong guidance from the US Department of Education clarifying that during the pandemic children with disabilities are entitled to all the services and protections provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Expanding continuity of Medicaid coverage
- Requiring employers to provide paid sick and family leave to employees impacted by COVID
- Significant increased funding for education, health, early childhood, mental health, and anti-poverty programs including the increased child tax credit, increased food stamps, and increased unemployment amounts and duration
- Approval of telehealth related services during the period of the pandemic
- Expanding and enhancing paid sick and family leave
- Easier enrollment, continued coverage, suspension of premium payments, and approval for family members to provide paid personal care assistance
- Expansion of Medicaid coverage to pregnant women for a full year post-labor
- Guidance requiring hospitals to allow Community Doulas to support pregnant women during labor
- Allowing people with disabilities to have a support person with them in the hospital

STATE:

- Maintaining that having parent advocates support parents at IEP meetings and mediations is not the unauthorized practice of law
- Increasing the age of eligibility for special education services for students turning 21
- Requiring IEP teams to consider the need for compensatory services for students
- Establishment of a NJ Legislative Disability Caucus
- Reversal of the devastating “public charge” rule discriminating against immigrants who access public benefits

Visit our website to learn more about SPAN’s policy work at spanadvocacy.org/policy-and-advocacy.

As part of our participation with the Navigating Excellence Parent Center Assistance & Collaboration Team (NE-PACT), SPAN provides technical assistance for US Department of Education-funded Parent Centers on a regional basis to enhance their capacity to provide effective services for families of children with or at risk of special needs and to work effectively with state agencies in improving services for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities in their communities and state, territorial, and local agencies - including Community Parent Resource Centers like AFCAMP.



“I feel like SPAN has been right by our side every step of the way.”

*Ann R. Smith, JD, MBA, Executive Director
AFCAMP Advocacy for Children*

AFCAMP Advocacy for Children

“I came to African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities, Inc (AFCAMP) early in its infancy by serving on its board of directors. And then in 2012, I stepped into an interim executive director role, and it was anticipated that would last for up to six months while our founding E.D. went on a medical leave. That was March of 2012 and in April, she unexpectedly passed away. I’m still here. AFCAMP Advocacy for Children is a passion.

That’s my starting story and I have felt supported by SPAN from the first day that I walked into that role, and I’ve been supported ever since.

What does that support look like for me? I would say first and foremost, helping us to understand what our responsibilities and expectations are as Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRC), under the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). SPAN takes every step that they can to help us fulfill these. The other thing that I really value from SPAN is that they have helped us to mature as an organization. So, we have been in existence 20 years. And for many of those years, we have been fortunate enough to have successfully competed for parent center awards using what we’ve learned from SPAN.

So, when I think about our organizational life cycle, I feel like SPAN has been right by our side every step of the way. In addition to the kinds of support I’ve already expressed, helping us as an organization to make sure that we’re addressing the multiple issues and aspects of running an organization.

My goal is to be able to adequately support AFCAMP across the different domains of need of our families and to have our organization be sustainable, not only in terms of finances, but also in terms of infrastructure, capacity and vision. SPAN has always helped our parent centers to improve, to bring their organizational functioning to the next level. So, helping us to understand not only the foundational pieces, but then how do you position yourself to grow? I think that’s critical, because the needs of our families have grown and continue to grow.

One other thing that I feel is especially important is that SPAN has done an excellent job creating a sense of camaraderie among all the parent centers in our region, such that if any center feels they need help, they can make a request to all our other parent centers. We’re like one great big family supporting each other! And that is a direct result of the work that SPAN has done to build that kind of relationship.

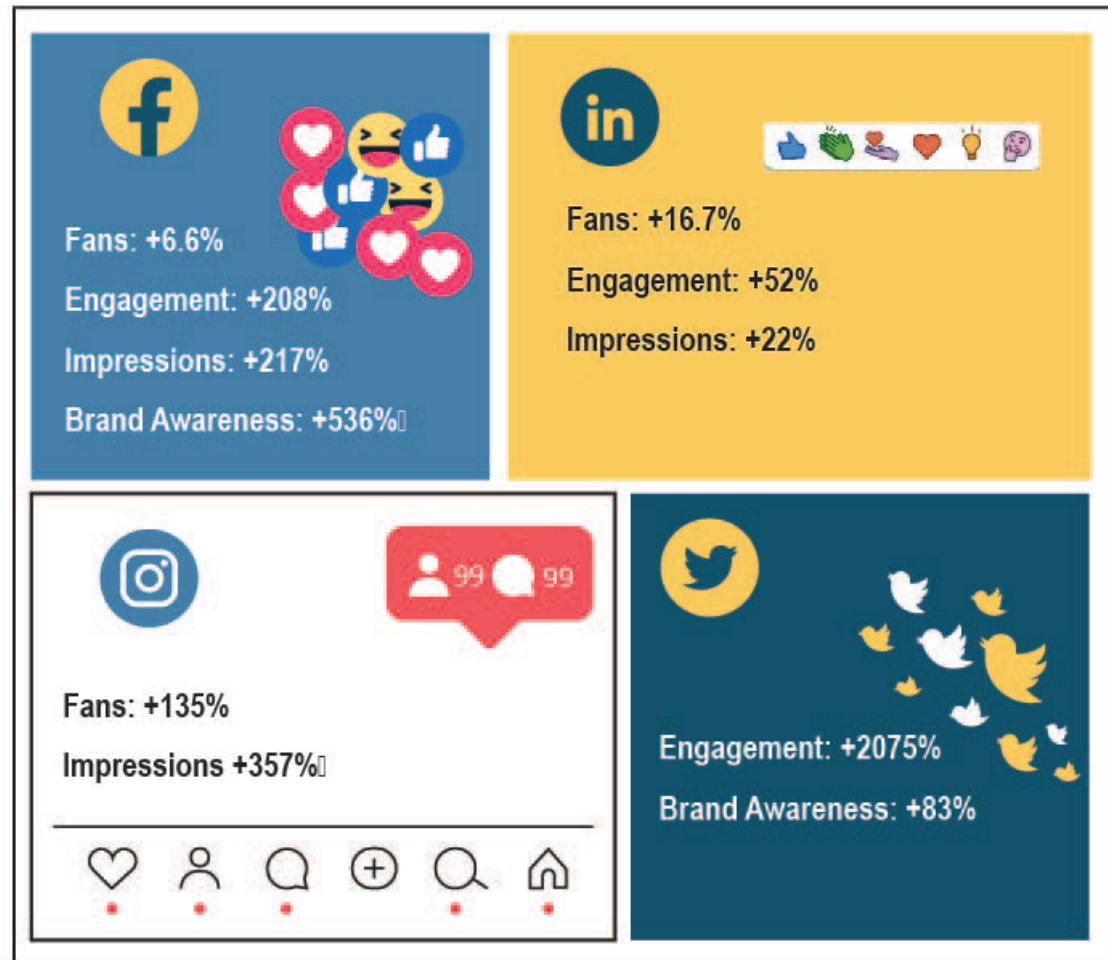
I can’t say enough about the support we have received from SPAN. It has been a tremendous resource to us as an organization, and I am not too proud to say it has been a tremendous resource to me as an executive director, as a leader, and as an individual.”

Expanding Visibility

With the hiring of Strategic Communications Director, Tom Franklin in July of 2020, and Website Content Manager, Melanie McLaurin in January of 2021, SPAN has benefited from the implementation of a new Strategic Communications Plan with a strong Social Media strategy as its keystone. The application of this plan has paid off with expanding visibility, as we have leveraged our social and digital assets at the right time.

Our Digital Footprint

Social Media Performance October 2020 vs October 2021



233K
active monthly users on
parentcenterhub.org

Center for Parent Information & Resources

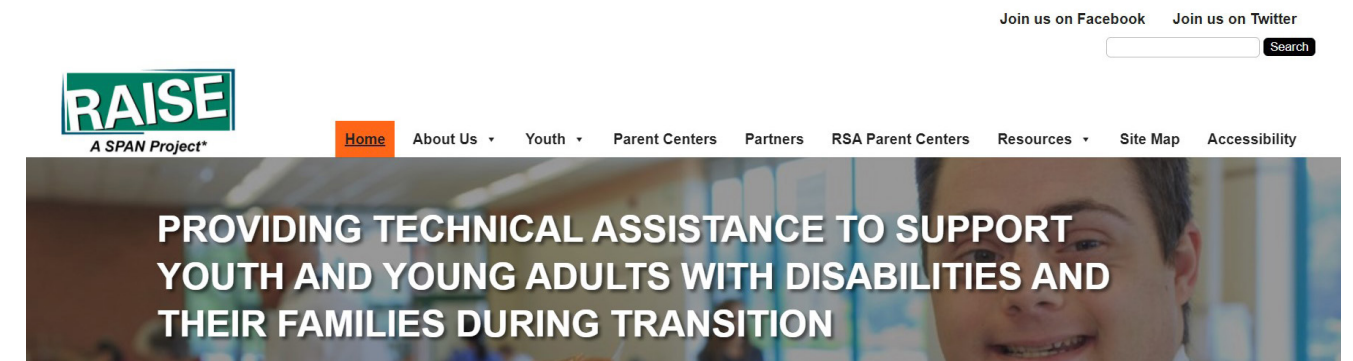
Our parent center hub site is our largest resource website housing thousands of documents, webinars, trainings and more. Our site receives on average, 233,000 website traffic per month.

SPAN Site Traffic

Since the application of our Strategic Communications Plan, our SPANadvocacy.com website traffic is up

↑ 33%

Our Commitment to Accessibility



The Communications team is systematically updating our digital domains and communications to ensure accessibility to the sight impaired. Accessibility is a primary commitment for SPAN and one example is the team's update of the RAISE Center website effective September 2021. RAISECenter.org was designed using the most current accessibility best practices and the American Foundation for the Blind was retained as a consultant on the project. The finished site is not only fully accessible, but fresh, clean, youthful and energetic – perfectly tailored to its Transition audience.

Vermont Family Network

“In the summer of 2020, Vermont Family Network (VFN) was experiencing seismic changes. The Covid state of emergency had moved everyone to remote work, and in the midst of that, after 30 years, our Early Intervention program was being transferred to another contractor, cutting our staff family - and our funding - in half - during a global pandemic! All the while, many of us were trying to care for, educate, and entertain family members - young and old - with significant needs, and with no one at VFN being able to be in the same space at the same time to grieve and support one another. We were reeling, on so many levels.

Change is always difficult, but unexpected, unwanted change - that can be devastating.

We knew we needed to find opportunity in the chaos, and called SPAN. Diana Autin, who knew our organization well, sprang into action. She helped us form a committed

and experienced team of nine Board and staff members. With great care and skill, as well as good humor, Diana worked with us to develop an inclusive process to address the organization’s most pressing concerns and to help us look ahead with creativity and optimism. Via Zoom technical assistance, she guided us to create an immediate 6-month plan, an intermediate plan for 2021, and finally, a plan for 2022-2025.

With SPAN’s support, VFN has been able to mindfully reduce our space needs and expenses, greatly enhance our partnerships, and solidify a plan for sustainable, diversified funding. Headed into 2022, we are making great progress, focused clearly on the goals and objectives we set: Capacity Building, Fostering Change, and Sustainability. Thanks to SPAN, we can say, VFN is “Vermont Strong” and ready to take our statewide family support and advocacy work to the next level!”

SPAN’s participation in NE-PACT allowed us to provide technical assistance to Pam and the Vermont Family Network, but it was more the personal relationship between Pam and SPAN Executive Director, Diana Autin that made real teamwork possible!

“We knew we needed to find opportunity in the chaos, and called SPAN”

*Pam McCarthy, M.Ed., CEO/President
Vermont Family Network*

With Special Thanks to Our Grantors

In 2022, we celebrate a milestone anniversary - 35 years since our founding. Over those years we have grown and expanded our programming and hopefully showcased our ability to deliver on the promises of each and every one of our grant applications.

The dedicated parent leaders at SPAN are so fortunate to enjoy many wonderful relationships with our grantors, in some cases spanning many years. We are tremendously grateful for the trust that has been placed in us over this history. We would therefore like to offer our sincere thanks to all of our grantor partners for this trust and investment in our mission. Without this trust and friendship, we would not be able to make the impact on our communities that we strive to make.

We would like to specifically thank the following agencies, institutions and organizations:

CURRENT FUNDERS

American Academy of Pediatrics – New Jersey Chapter
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
DaSy Early Childhood Data TA Center
Family Voices
Genetic Alliance
Hackensack University Medical Center
National Center on Educational Outcomes
National Federation of Families
Newark Public Schools
New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities
New Jersey Department of Children and Families
New Jersey Department of Education
New Jersey Department of Health
New Jersey Department of Human Services
New Jersey Office for Court Improvement
New Jersey State Bar Foundation
US Department of Education
US Department of Health and Human Services
Maternal & Child Health Bureau
WestEd

PAST FUNDERS

American Academy of Pediatrics – New Jersey Chapter
Advocates for Children of New Jersey
Catalyst Center
Children's Specialized Hospital
Community Catalyst
Disability Rights NJ
Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Healthcare Foundation of NJ
IBM
Jersey City Public Schools
National Center for Children in Poverty

National Center for Cultural Competence
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Center on Deaf-Blindness
New Jersey Education Association
New Jersey Alliance of Family Support Organizations
Nicholson Foundation
NYMAC Regional Genetics Collaborative
Partners for Health Foundation
Perkins School for the Blind
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
Schumann Fund for New Jersey
US Department of Health and Human Services
Administration on Community Living
Veatch Foundation
Wellcare Community Foundation of New Jersey
Youth Services Commission of Mercer County



Help Us Reach More Families Give today.

More than 91% of our program funding comes from grants. However, we need individual and corporate contributions to help us meet the quickly changing educational, mental health and healthcare needs of the most vulnerable families in our communities. And remember, since SPAN is also a trainer of professionals, your gift reverberates and can help families across the country! So, please give today by visiting our website at spanadvocacy.org/donate.

Thank You!



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Our Programs

NATIONAL

Center for Parent Information and Resources
Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice (a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion UMASS)
Early Childhood Data Parent Leadership (a project of the DaSy Center in collaboration with SPAN)
National Center for Learning Disabilities Focus Groups
National Center for Systemic Improvement (a project of WestEd in partnership with AIR, NASDSE, the Meadows Center, & SPAN & other Parent Centers)
National Genetics Education & Family Support Center (a project of the Genetic Alliance in collaboration with SPAN)
National Healthcare Center for Youth with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities (a project of Family Voices in collaboration with SPAN and Got Transition)
National TA Center to Increase the Participation and Improve the Performance of Students with Disabilities in State and Districtwide Assessments (a project of the National Center on Education Outcomes in collaboration with SPAN)
Leadership in Family and Professional Partnerships (a project of Family Voices in collaboration with SPAN)
RAISE Transition Technical Assistance Center

REGIONAL

NE-PACT (Navigating Excellence Parent Center Assistance and Collaboration Team)
Reach-Access-Link (REAL) Transition Partners (in collaboration with Federation for Children with Special Needs, INCLUDEnyc, Parent Network of WNY, & Starbridge)

STATE LOCAL

Act Early COVID Response & Family Resilience
Building Bridges Parent Training & Information Center
Community of Care Consortium
Early Childhood Initiatives
Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Family Mentoring & Engagement

Education and Health Rights of Children and Youth in the Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Systems
Empowering Women in Community Leadership for Healthier Families
Essex Family Council & Grandmothers As Caregivers
Family Mentor Match Program for NJ Leadership
Education in Neurodevelopmental & Related Disabilities (a project of the Boggs Center in collaboration with SPAN)
Family to Family Health Information Center @ Family Voices
Family WRAP (Wisdom, Resources, Advocacy, and Parent to Parent Support)
Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health State Organization
Integrating Care for Kids (a project of Hackensack Meridian Health, NJ American Academy of Pediatrics, NJ Healthcare Quality Institute, Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey, and SPAN)
Medical Home for Children with Autism (a project of Hackensack Meridian Health)
Military Family Support 360
NJ Inclusive Child Care Project
NJ Inclusive Higher Education Collaborative (a project of Georgian Court University, The College of NJ, and Bergen Community College in collaboration with SPAN)
NJ Statewide Parent to Parent
NJ Tiered Systems of Support – Early Reading Initiative
Parents As Champions for Healthy Schools
SCHS COVID-19 Immunization Program: Promoting COVID-19 Immunization
Sister to Sister Community Doulas of Essex County
SEVA Special Education Volunteer Advocates
START Engaging Parents of Students with Disabilities
Technical Assistance and Support to NJCDD to Enhance Diversity, Equity, Cultural Competency and Linguistic Responsiveness
Transition from School to Adult Life
Youth in the Know

For more information on our programs, please visit our website at spanadvocacy.org/programs.

SPAN Employees

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Diana Autin, Executive Director; Co-Director, Family Voices Leadership in Family Professional Partnerships TA Center

Danielle Green, Chief Operations Officer

Carolyn Hayer, Senior Program Director, National/Regional Projects

Peg Kinsell, Director of Public Policy & Military Family Support 360 TA Center; TA Coordinator, Juvenile Justice, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center; Military & Juvenile Justice TA/Coach, Navigating Excellence-Parent Center Assistance & Collaboration Team (NE-PACT)

Jeanne McMahon, Senior Program Director, State/Projects

Roy Maynard, Director of Finance

SUPPORT TEAM

Evann Hardy, Intake Specialist/Receptionist
Ivor Knight, Fiscal Manager
Maria Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant
Joyce Muhammad, Administrative Assistant

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Tom Franklin, Director of Strategic Communications
Melanie McLaurin, Website Content Manager

PROGRAMS/SPECIAL PROJECTS TEAM

Pam Aasen, Director, Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Family Leadership

Lauren Agoratus, State Coordinator, Family Voices NJ, Product Development Coordinator, RAISE

Tanisha Akins, Family Resource Specialist, Empowering Women for Healthier Communities

Myriam Alizo, Assistant Project Director, Center for Parent Information and Resources & RAISE

National Transition TA Center; Family-Centered Services TA/Coach, NE-PACT Regional Parent TA Center

Elina Alston, Community Health Worker, Sister to Sister Community Doula of Essex County

Stephanie Babits, Central Early Childhood Inclusion Coordinator, NJ Inclusive Child Care Project; Parent Group Specialist (Middlesex, Monmouth, & Union Counties), START Engaging Parents of Students with Disabilities (START-EPSD)

Dr. Josie Badger, Director, RAISE National Transition TA Center; National Healthcare Transition Resource Center for Youth with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

Cathy Balto, Family Resource Specialist, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center

Heroína Beras, Family Resource Specialist, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center

Denise Bouyer, Director, NJ Inclusive Child Care Project (NJICCP)

Jeannine Brinkley, Director of Family and Professional Development

Wendy Broadbent, Family Resource Specialist, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center

Alyssa Buchholz, Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Family Leadership

Beth Cosentino, Parent Group Specialist (Essex District), Hunterdon, Mercer, Morris, Somerset & Warren Counties, START/EPSD

Tatsiana DeGrosa, Co Director, Parent Group Specialist (Atlantic County), START/EPSD

Everett Deibler, Youth Coordinator, RAISE National Transition TA Center

Maria Docherty, Director, Individual Assistance,

Employees continued

Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center (PTI), Education and Health Rights of Children in the Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Systems, & Autism Medical Home; Individual Assistance TA/Coach, NE-PACT

Kasey Dudley, Director, Parents As Champions for School Health

Monique DuJue Wilson, Trainer, Education & Health Rights of Children & Youth in the Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Systems; Central Coordinator, Parents As Champions for School Health

Debbie Esposito, Co-Director, START-EPSD; Project Coordinator, NJ Tiered Systems of Support (NJTSS)

Brenda Figueroa, Director, Family to Family Health Information Center/NJ Statewide Parent to Parent; Parent Group Specialist (Hudson & Passaic Counties), START-EPSD

Sakinah Garrett-Cocoran, Family Resource Specialist & Administrative Coordinator, Empowering Women for Healthier Communities

Garima Jain, Family Resource Specialist, Integrating Care for Kids Collaborative

Debra Jennings, Content Specialist, Equity, Anti-Racism, & Family Engagement; National Center for Systemic Improvement

Shirley Johnson, Coordinator, Essex Family WRAP; Northern Coordinator, Family to Family Health Information Center

Chidesha Judd, Community Health Worker/ Doula, Sister to Sister Community Doulas of Essex County, NJ

Tammi Kaminski, Trainer, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center & SEVA (Special Education Volunteer Advocates)

Lisa Küpper, Product Development Lead, Center for Parent Information & Resources

Danica LaFortune, Co-Director, Sister to Sister

Community Doula Pilot (Essex County)

Lanisha Makle-Ridley, Director, NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities Diversity, Equity, Cultural Competence, and Linguistic Responsiveness TA Project

Brittany McLeod, Administrative Assistant, PAC program

Jeannette Mejias, Director, SEVA (Special Education Volunteer Advocates); Family Engagement Specialist, National Genetics Education & Family Support Center; Trainer, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center

Donna Milanowycz, Early Childhood Inclusion Coordinator, NJICCP; Military Family Support Navigator

Dawn Monaco, Director, REAL Transition Partners Regional RSA Parent TA Centers; Collaboration Coordinator, Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice (Supported Decision-Making); TA/Coach, Family-Centered Services & Transition, NE-PACT

Johan Mora-Valverde, Project SupportTechnology, CPIR; Virtual Training Coordinator, RAISE National Transition TA Center; Coordinator, Youth Leadership Council, NE-PACT

Gloria Nieves, NJ Statewide Parent to Parent NE Regional Coordinator (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Passaic, & Union Counties)

Fanny Ochoa, Early Childhood Bilingual TA/Trainer, NJICCP

Keishlen Ortiz, Parent Group Specialist, START-EPSD (Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Monmouth, Ocean, Salem Counties)

Naira Paiva, Family Resource Specialist, Family WRAP (Wisdom, Resources, Advocacy, & Parent to Parent Support)

Patricia Paraskevacos, Family Resource

Specialist, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center

Nicole Pratt, Project Director, Empowering Women in Leadership for Healthier Communities; Senior Trainer, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center; Family Leadership TA/Coach, Leadership in Family Professional Partnerships

Michele Puzio, NJ Statewide Parent to Parent NW (Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, Sussex & Warren Counties)

Edith Ramirez, Family Resource Specialist, Empowering Women for Healthier Communities

Kim Rivers, Family Resource Specialist, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center

Yvonne Robles, Early Childhood Bilingual TA/Trainer, NJICCP

Rachel Ruel, Co-Director, Sister to Sister Community Doula of Essex County

Rachel Shandler, Youth Coordinator, National Healthcare Transition Resource Center for Youth with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

Vanessa Schwippert, Parent Group Specialist, START-EPSD (Bergen, Essex-Chartes, Sussex Counties)

Erin Seigh, Transition Coordinator & Family Resource Specialist, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center

Lola Sims, Family Resource Specialist, Hackensack Autism Medical Home

Deepa Srinivasavaradan, Early Childhood Parent Lead, Early Childhood Screening Initiatives; Learn the Signs. Act Early (LTS.AE) Ambassador; Director, LTS.AE COVID & Resiliency Project, LEND Family

Mentors; Collaboration Coordinator, National Genetics Education & Family Support Center

Joyce Sykes, Administrative Assistant

Tara Syzmanek, Trainer, Building Bridges to Success Parent Training & Information Center & SEVA (Special Education Volunteer Advocates); Family Resource Specialist, Family WRAP (Wisdom, Resources, Advocacy, & Parent to Parent Support)

Henry Tejada, Bilingual Information Specialist, Parent Training and Information Center

Michele Tyler, Co-Director, Region A Parent Technical Assistance Center, NE-PACT

Paulina Vargas, Empowering Women in Leadership for Healthier Families, Family Resource Specialist

Affiliations

NATIONAL:

Alliance to Prevent Restraint, Aversive Interventions and Seclusion (APRAISE) (member)

American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Children with Disabilities Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Workgroup

ARC Collaborative on Eliminating Health Disparities in Lupus (National Advisory Committee)

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (Best Practices Committee, 2018-2021)

Caring for Every Child's Mental Health Campaign (member, Family Council)

Center for Health Care Strategies (Advisory Committee on Medicaid & Family Engagement)

Center for the Study of Social Policy PSP Brain Trust

Division for Early Childhood (member, Family Committee; Recommended Practices aRPy NJ Ambassador)

Exceptional Parent Magazine (member, Editorial Advisory Board)

Family Voices (Affiliate Organization for NJ; member, National Policy Workgroup & Journal Workgroup)

Got Transition (member, National Family Health Care Transition Advisory Group)

Hands & Voices FL3 (member, Advisory Board)

Immumocompromised Collaborative (member)

Learn the Signs. Act Early (NJ Ambassador)

National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (Board of Directors, member)

National Center for Children's Vision & Eye Health (member, National Advisory Council)

National Center for Cultural Competence (member, Leadership Institute Wisdom Council)

National Center for Dignity in Healthcare for People with Disabilities (member, Transplant Subcommittee)

National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, & Community Empowerment (founding member, Board of Directors; Chair, Member Education Committee)

National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (reviewer)

National Family Association for Deafblind (member, Family Advocacy Initiative)

National Federation of Families (State Organization for NJ; member, Board of Directors)

National Genetics Education & Family Support Center (member, Family Advisory Committee)

National Institute for Child Health (member, Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act, Pediatric Priorities Panel)

National Partnership for Women & Families (member)

Paid Leave for All (member)

Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (reviewer)

Parent to Parent USA (Affiliate)

TASH (member, Human Rights Committee)

Urban Institute (member, Community Advisory Board)

REGIONAL:

Center for Education Equity/Region 1 Equity Assistance Center (member, Advisory Board)

Midwest/Great Lakes Equity Assistance Center @ Indiana University (member, Advisory Board)

NYMAC Regional Genetics Collaborative (member, Advisory Committee)

STATE:

American Academy of Pediatrics-NJ Chapter

(member, Council for Children with Disabilities; Early Relationship Health Summit Planning Committee; Immigrant Health Committee; NJ's Kids for Oral Health Initiative Advisory Committee; Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program Interagency Stakeholder Advisory Committee)

Arc of New Jersey (Executive Board, Governmental Affairs Committee)

Ava's Voice (member, Board of Directors)

Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities (member, Consumer Advisory Council; LEND Family Advisory Committee)

Center for Non-Profits (member)

Children's Interagency Coordinating Council (member, Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee)

Colette Lamothe-Galette Community Healthworker Institute (member, Advisory Committee)

Covering Kids and Families Coalition (member)

Directors of Volunteers in Agencies (member)

Disability Rights NJ (member, Board of Directors)

EFMP (Exceptional Family Member Program-Military)

Family Support Center (member, Advisory Council)

Get Fit/Center on Nutrition and Disability (member)

Health Maintenance Organizations (member, Advisory Committees)

Healthy Childcare NJ (member, Advisory Council)

Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (Exceptional Family Military Program Committee (member)

NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice (member)

NJ Anti-Poverty Network (member)

NJ Black Issues Convention (member)

NJ Caregiver Community Action Network (member)

NJ Center for Non-Profits (member)

NJ Citizen Action (member; member, Board of Directors)

NJ Coalition for Diverse & Inclusive Schools (member, Board of Directors)

NJ Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired State Rehabilitation Council (member)

NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities (chair, Children and Families Committee; member, Family Advisory Committee)

NJ Council for Young Children (member; member, Infant & Child Health Committee)

NJ Division for Early Childhood (member, Executive Committee)

NJ Division on Developmental Disabilities (member, Family Advisory Council)

NJ Doula Collaborative (member, Advisory Committee)

NJ Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems/MIEC Home Visiting (member, CQI Stakeholders Group)

NJ ESSA Title I Committee of Practitioners (member)

NJ GAINED (Group for Access & Integration Needs in Emergencies & Disasters) (member)

NJ for Health Care Coalition (member)

NJ Immunization Network (member)

NJ Integrated Care for Kids (member, Partnership Council & Coordinating Committee)

NJ Legislative Disability Caucus (supporting agency)

NJ Map to Inclusive Child Care (member)

NJ Medicaid Advocates (member)

Affiliations continued

- NJ Newborn Screening (member, Advisory Review Committee)
- NJ Part B Special Education Stakeholders (member)
- NJ Part C Early Intervention Stakeholders (member)
- NJ Perinatal Quality Collaborative (member, Community Workgroup)
- NJ Preschool Teaching & Learning Standards Committee (member, Home, School, & Community Partnerships Workgroup)
- NJ Pyramid Model Partnership (member; member, Family Committee)
- NJ Time to Care Coalition (member; member, Paid Leave Outreach Committee)
- NJ Reach Out & Read-Early Relational Health (member, Family Advisory Committee)
- NJ Special Education Advisory Council (member)
- NJ Special Education Funding Coalition (member)
- NJ Special Education Practitioners (member)
- NJ State Rehabilitation Council (member)
- NJ Statewide Network on Cultural Competence (member; Vice-Chair, Leadership Council)
- NJ Task Force on Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Committee (member)
- NJ Universal Nurse Home Visiting Stakeholders Group (member)
- Nurture NJ (member)
- Our Children, Our Schools (member)
- PerformCare (member, Parent Leaders Workgroup)
- Preventive Services Improvement Initiative (Family Representative)
- Pritzker Initiative (member, workgroups)
- SERV (Social/Education/Residential/Vocational) Behavioral Health (member, Family Executive Committee)
- Youth Justice NJ (member)



In the **SPAN** of COVID, we remain **connected, resilient.**

*Expanding access to resources for families, professionals,
and family-led organizations*

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Libby Stone-Sterling
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