



2016 AJFCA Kovod Award Submission

Jewish Family & Child Service

Portland, OR

Category: Disabilities Services

Agency Name and Community: Jewish Family & Child Service (Portland, OR)

- Partners for Independence Program

Agency Budget: \$1,632,000

Contact: Marty Michaels, Grants Manager; martymichaels@jfcs-portland.org ; (503) 226-7079, ext. 117

Staff:

- Stacy Buckley, Partners Program Director
- Jackie Swofford, Lead Behavior Consultant
- Kassie Lentz, Skills Trainer
- Nathan Burgess, Skills Trainer
- Janet Menashe, Skills Trainer

Program Summary: Our Partners for Independence program assists adults and youth with developmental and intellectual disabilities who want to live more independently and become more engaged community members. We provide clients with the resources and options they need to make well-informed choices about living, learning, and working.

We meet 1:1 and in small groups in our clients' homes and communities, to assist them as they learn and cultivate daily living skills, such as meal preparation and arranging transportation; form positive

interpersonal relationships and develop social skills; acquire and maintain appropriate benefits and entitlements; cultivate a social network through community involvement; and prepare for and maintain independent living skills, including mobility training, communication with landlords and employers, financial management, health and safety needs, job readiness, and healthy and budget-friendly lifestyle choices.

Our Behavior Consultation services help clients uncover root causes of maladaptive behaviors that are impeding their ability to work toward goals, or that place them in danger of immediate harm. Through careful analysis, our staff creates a client-directed plan that allows the client and their support team to have their needs met through positive behavior modification, as well as by developing skills and habits that can help clients achieve their goals.

Total Program Cost/Funding Sources: \$240,000; expenses are covered mostly by service fees paid through state and federal governments, with the remainder covered by grants and fundraising dollars.

Major Outcomes and Evaluation Methods:

The Partners for Independence program serves clients through contracts with both County and Support Service Brokerage case management programs. We conduct and document evaluations on our staff's supports and clients' progress on a monthly basis in order to track data and improve our quality of service in real-time. Each individual skills trainer reports on the client's status and their support needs each time, and their supervisor approves the reports before forwarding them to the client's referring external case manager.

Following are the major outcomes and evaluation methods we use:

1. Our clients will maintain their current tenancy through development of independent living skills. 96% of our clients who are living outside their family of origin's home have been able to remain in their tenancy of choice.
2. Proven improvement of maladaptive behaviors of more than 35 individuals in the past year, as measured by data tracking, self-reporting by the client, Partners staff observations, and reporting from the client's support team. Approximately 80% of clients served have been successful in reducing their maladaptive behaviors to near-extinction and have been able to progress toward their chosen life goals.
3. Our Skills Trainers will maintain long-term services with our clients, to build a trusted and secure provider relationship and be able to support individuals through the changing goals in their life.

In a field with high provider turnover, our clients will be able to have continuity of services to build on their skills. This is measured by client satisfaction surveys and annual contract renewals as clients choose to remain with Partners for their services.

While maintaining absolute professionalism, to the degree possible (and preferable), we share our clients' experiences. We see and hear their ups and downs, their triumphs and frustrations. Life is often challenging, and our clients reflect that complexity. That said, their treatment plan remains self-directed and the clients always help determine whether a given strategy is feasible, desirable, and effective.

Of our currently active Skills Training clients, 80% have been with Partners for Independence for 2 years or longer, and 52% have been with Partners for Independence 4 years or longer. Our client satisfaction surveys for 2015 show that 92% of responding clients reported their satisfaction with their services as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale.

Ultimately, we seek to determine whether these quality of life measures indicate that the participant has experienced greater independence, reduced supervision, and increased diversity in their living and work environments.

Attachments/Links:

- PDF files of Partners for Independence brochure and Behavior Supports flyer
- Agency video (including Partners program) <http://jfcs-portland.org/about-us/>
- JFCS website, Partners program description

<http://jfcs-portland.org/services/partners-for-independence/>