

Families, Youth and Professionals to Benefit from New SPAN Funding Awards

Newark, Oct 23, 2020 ([IssueWire.com](http://www.IssueWire.com)) - SPAN Parent Advisory Network of Newark, NJ is pleased to announce that it has received new or renewal funding from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services and the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration to provide information, training, and support to families, infants, toddlers, children, youth, and young adults with disabilities; as well as support to professional partners providing early intervention, special education, and transition to adult life services to these groups. This funding is associated with the following four programs:

SPAN's *Parent Training and Information Center*, which "builds bridges to success" for children and youth with disabilities and their families. The resources, coaching and training opportunities offered by this center help families and youth develop the confidence they need to navigate early childhood, school, and adult systems. Professional partners also benefit from support allowing them to work more positively with families and youth. SPAN will also continue to bring the voices of families and youth to decision-making tables, especially those with challenging outcomes, that can improve the policies and practices impacting their lives.

REAL Transition Partners will help 26 Parent Centers in 11 states, DC, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. This center will give youth and young adults with disabilities, their families, and professionals high quality, up-to-date, and easy to use information, training, and resources so that they can develop effective transition plans leading to post-high school education, employment, community living, civic participation, and fulfilling, productive lives. Our Partners include the Federation for Children with Special Needs, INCLUDEnyc, Starbridge, and Parent Network of Western New York.

SPAN's *National Transition Technical Assistance Center (RAISE)* has been renewed for five more years. This Center supports eight regional Parent Information and Training Centers funded by the US Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) that will be a source for resources and training for youth and young adults with disabilities as they transition through high school to postsecondary education, competitive employment, and independent living. For transition resources and more information about SPAN's National RAISE Center, go to: www.raisecenter.org To find the center serving your state, go to: www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Community Living, *The Center on Youth Voice, Youth Choice* will provide youth/young adults with disabilities and their families information on alternatives to guardianship, including supported decision-making. Guardianship can unnecessarily strip youth/young adults with disabilities of their civil and human rights. Families are often pressured by school staff and other professionals to take guardianship over their young adult instead of considering the many alternatives that can protect the health and safety of their adult child

while still supporting his/her/their capacity and dignity.

If you have any questions about this release or would like more information about SPAN and its many family-supportive programs, please contact Tom Franklin, Strategic Communications Director at tfranklin@spanadvocacy.org or visit www.spanadvocacy.org.

Media Contact

SPAN Parent Advocacy Network

tfranklin@spanadvocacy.org

9736428100

35 Halsey Street, 4th Floor

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