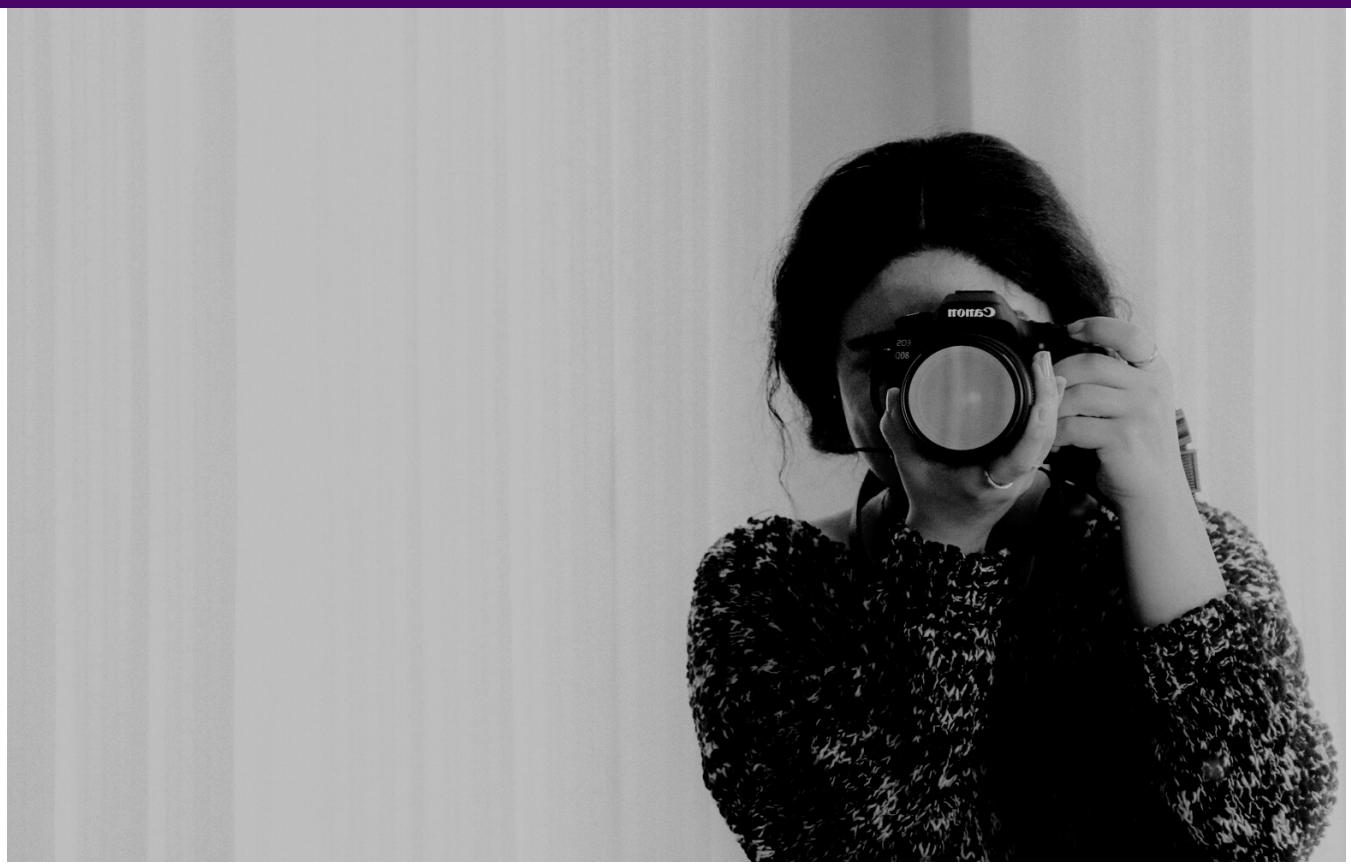
NEW YORK STATE

Council on Developmental Disabilities

CAPTURING & COMMUNICATING IMPACT STORIES



NYS CDD 2023

IMPACT STORIES

IMPACT STORIES ARE ONE OF THE RICHEST AND MOST COLORFUL WAYS TO PROMOTE THE WORK DONE BY THE CDD AND OUR GRANTEES. IT HELPS US COMMUNICATE THE IMPACT PROJECTS HAVE TO THE PUBLIC, STAKEHOLDERS, OUR COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP, AND OTHER FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES. THESE STORIES SHOULD BE SUBMITTED ALONG WITH YOUR QUARTERLY REPORTS.

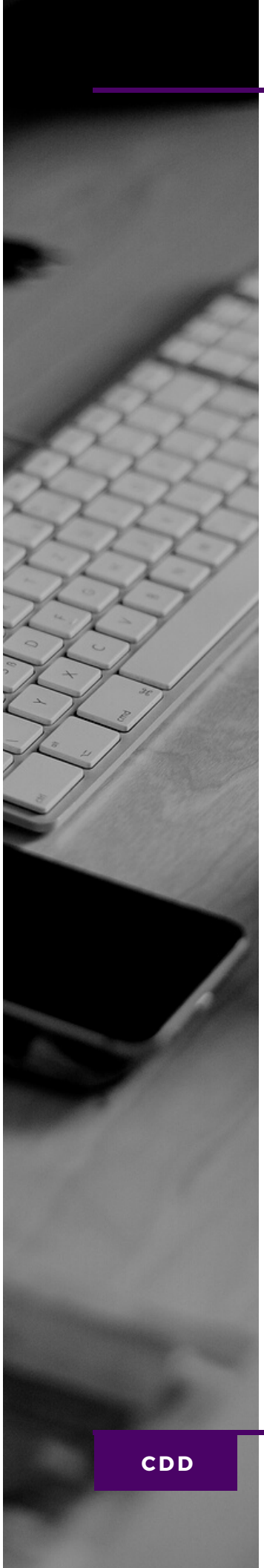
How Do I Write an Impact Story?

STEP 1:

The first step in compiling success stories is to create a system for collecting the information. You may want to identify a staff person to be responsible for collecting, analyzing and writing the stories.

When collecting the information, it is useful to flag potential or developing stories. One way to make this easier is to distribute a satisfaction or follow-up survey from an event, training, or any other opportunity you may be hosting. If a participant identifies having a positive outcome from this opportunity, follow-up with a conversation or interview regarding their experience. For example, if you offer a leadership training for youth with developmental disabilities (DD), and a participant identifies they are now on their student council, be sure to find out more!

TIP: KEEP THE AUDIENCE IN MIND. CDD STAFF REVIEWING YOUR SUBMISSIONS WILL HAVE FAMILIARITY WITH THE INTENT OF THE GRANT, BUT THOSE TO WHOM WE REPORT MAY NOT. THEREFORE, IT MAY BE HELPFUL TO COMMUNICATE HOW AND WHY THE PARTICIPANT'S EXPERIENCE ALIGNS WITH THE INTENDED OUTCOMES OF THE GRANT.



STEP 2:

Once you have identified the stories, you should begin to write the narrative you will submit to us in your next quarterly report. Impact stories can be difficult to write, because you are writing about someone else's experience. As mentioned above, in your follow-up conversation or interview with the participant, you can get more details about the individual's story, and use more of their words to communicate the story. Capturing an exact quote can paint a clearer picture of the specific targeted outcome.

TIP: It may be useful to present a 'before and after' scenario that captures the concrete and identifiable ways that the participant's life has changed as a result of involvement in your grant project.

Collecting and submitting success stories should be a fun part of your grant work and reporting! Identifying these stories are good reminders for you of the impact your project is having on the lives of New Yorkers with DD. Plus, these stories will allow you a creative outlet to communicate project outcomes in a way that will capture the attention of the CDD membership, staff, and our federal partners.

TIP: Remember, monitoring various social media platforms for participant engagement might help you identify individuals whose experiences you will want to showcase. You may also be able to collect success stories from other grant activities like conference presentations, newsletters, and so forth. Thinking outside the box will help identify stories to highlight!

EXAMPLE IMPACT STORIES

Below are two examples from previous CDD grants, to give you a sense of the types of success stories that showcase the positive impacts of your hard work.

1

"This is a story of a 27-year-old, English speaking, Hispanic male. He is diagnosed with moderate intellectual disability and Schizoaffective Disorder as well as severe psoriasis that impacted his ability to enjoy his life. Although there is report of a trauma history, he is a resilient young man, whose character strengths include a very good sense of humor, perseverance and kindness. At referral, he lived with his father, who loves him, but was unable to provide emotional support and was unable to take care of his basic needs. He frequented the hospitals daily where he sought medical and emotional support from the nurses and social workers.

NYSTART coordinators spent a few weeks building rapport and he eventually developed trust that allowed the START team to work with his father, brother and mother. Through systemic consultation with the hospital, his family and residential team it was decided that a residential home was the best placement to ensure the most appropriate treatment and supports in the community.

NYSTART collaborated with Coney Island hospital and once stable he was transferred to the START Resource Center for 21 days. During this Resource Center stay, he developed many new interest and skills, his expressive and receptive communication skills increased, and he thrived medically, emotionally and psychologically. NYSTART clinical team collaborated with his family and community medical providers discussed diagnostic clarification and his medication was reduced. Today, he is thriving in his new residential home and the community and has had no ER visits or hospitalization since April."

2

“An LGBT person with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) began his journey of joining an LGBTQ Advocacy group by travelling 1 ½ hours each way with his support staff to participate in a newly formed LGBTQ advocacy group on Long Island. At the meeting, he enjoyed the support he felt as a gay man with disabilities and the social opportunities which the group provided; for example, he enjoyed being with the group when they went to the diner after the monthly meetings. Before receiving services at a provider agency in Queens, he lived in Willowbrook and was in the closet for many years because he feared the rejection he knew he would experience if he came out as a gay man. He was experiencing the second closet which many of his peers lived, in being gay and disabled. Many LGBTQ people with disabilities come out and go back into the closet many times during their lifetime because of the discrimination and bullying they experience from peers, support staff, family members and their communities at large. After a year of travelling the long distance to attend the LGBTQ support meeting, he advocated with his support staff that he would like to begin a group closer to his home in Queens. His residential manager in collaboration with the Project Coordinator began the first LGBTQ group for people with I/DD in his neighborhood which meets monthly and goes to the diner after the meetings!

He has become an LGBTQ advocate extraordinaire! He has presented at the New York Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation and at PrideAbility workshops in New York City and Queens. Recently he shared his story at the Queens DD Council with his support team and invited the attendees to hear him co-present at the PrideAbility workshop which was held at the Q LGBT Community Center in Long Island City in June. He invited advocates and support staff from both the FREE To BE group he founded in Bayside and YAI’s Advocacy group in New York City to participate in the June workshop. His support staff shared that he has become more verbal in advocating for himself and his LGBTQ peers and that he has developed leadership qualities. His story is a perfect example of person-centered philosophy in action! He is an amazing advocate and leader of the LGBTQ Advocacy Movement in New York State.”

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