

Ears to the Ground:



Individuals with disabilities & their families



Top 5 Priorities We Hear

Out of over 19 need areas mentioned, below are the top 5 most consistently heard.

Need	State & Federal Budget Cuts	Staff Development	Family Support	Respite Services	Employment
Data Source Agency Survey Fall 2017	●	●	●		
ABLE Committee December 2017	●	●	●	●	●
ABLE Inquiry Tracking 11/2016-11/2017	●	●	●	●	●
ABLE Community Study Summer 2015	●	●			



Zoom in

Budget Cuts

"Where will the 250 clients go when South Orange has been their home for decades?"
-- Agency Director re: drastic cuts in public funding

1. Medicaid cuts and fee for service transition negatively affects both agency and client financial ability
2. Financial cost to individual support make services inaccessible to many families and organizations

Staff Development

"We want to train our staff...to have a better understanding of how to make their program areas more inclusive."
--Agency Director

1. Adding and training staff touches almost every need affecting individuals with disabilities and the community at large
2. e.g. Trained staff assist in aging in place, supporting employment, and ensuring meaningful inclusion

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Family Support

"My son has Asperger's and ADHD...My main concern is his needs but more so the needs of my other three little ones who are constantly being affected by his needs and behavior." -- GMW Resident

1. 2nd largest category of inquiries ABLE receives (15%)
2. Caregivers and siblings are in need of support & often overlooked by a focus on the individual with the disability

Respite

"Camp Deeny Riback's Camp Friends program made it possible for Sammy to immerse himself in all of the wonderful aspects of a Jewish day camp, while receiving the support and encouragement he needed." -- GMW Resident

1. Largest category of inquiries received by ABLE (32%)
2. Includes respite for children (i.e. summer camps, babysitting) & adults (day habilitation & rec. programs)

Employment

We need "acceptance and understanding why employing individuals with disabilities is a benefit to their agency/company."
-- Agency Professional re: the biggest challenge the agency faces

1. Individuals require job training, transportation to get to jobs, as well as support from families in this pursuit.
2. Education/training for employers to hire and support individuals with disabilities is necessary.

2017–2018 investments

Annual Campaign funds specifically directed at individuals with disabilities and their families

\$44,000	Greater MetroWest ABLE, department of Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ
\$21,600	JESPY House
\$21,600	Jewish Service for the Developmentally Disabled
\$10,000	Friendship Circle MetroWest
\$10,000	JCC of Central NJ, Special Needs Programming
\$3,500	SINAI Special Needs Institute



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Suggestions for Action

- 1. Area of Emphasis: Staff Training**

Dollars supporting additional staff training could meet almost every need expressed by agencies and families. Specifically in residential programs, staff need assistance helping residents age in place. At our schools and synagogues, trained staff can assist in creating more inclusive and supportive environments for their communities.
- 2. Energize advocacy efforts**

Many of the findings in this report result from decisions made at the state and federal political level, including policy regarding housing, transportation, employment, and budgets. "If we had a dedicated staff person whose responsibility was solely focused on legislative lobbying, we'd be able to be better advocates for individuals with disabilities," says Linda Scherzer, CRC Director.
- 3. Get the word out**

Our data suggests the GMW community offers a wealth of resources and support systems for individuals with disabilities and their families. However less than 20% of all respondents expressed confidence in their knowledge of services available in the Jewish community and how to access them (Community Study, 2015). Federation can play a role in helping agencies better market and promote their offerings, as well as connect their communities and collaborate with our Greater MetroWest ABLÉ resources.