Greater MetroWest ABLE
2020 Year-End Impact Report
January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

Prepared by Federation Impact Department
Greater MetroWest ABLE
Access Belonging & Life Enrichment for people with disabilities and their families

WHAT ABLE DOES

Creating a Jewish community made whole by the meaningful inclusion of all of its members with disabilities and their families.

Support the development of meaningful participation opportunities in all aspects of Jewish communal life for individuals with disabilities and their families.

Promote the collaboration and coordination of Greater MetroWest partner agencies engaging with individuals with disabilities and their families.

Raise awareness of resources and services for individuals with disabilities and their families.
ABLE had planned to implement an Inclusive Employment Initiative this year, but given the COVID crisis, the initiative has been put on hold. While COVID stalled many programs from happening in-person, community partner agencies were able to find ways to provide services in a virtual manner. ABLE continued to work with community synagogues, educators and agencies to meet the needs of community members, continuing to promote the vision of a fully inclusive Jewish community.

**Mental Health:**

In response to ongoing feedback from clergy, educators and caregivers, ABLE continues to expand its services to provide mental health awareness training for professionals and teens.

- Community professionals have been trained as Youth Mental Health First Aid trainers.
- The Mental Health Resource Guide for the Jewish Community continues to be shared.

**Teen Training:**

- Teens participated in Inclusion advocate training to help promote inclusion of students and campers with disabilities in the Jewish community.
- The Here.Now. GMW program for teens is now in its 2nd year with a full cohort.
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Supporting Synagogues & Convening:

- ABLE assisted synagogues in furthering their inclusion efforts by sharing resources during JDAIM, offering individual consultation on virtual programming and working with synagogues educators.

- ABLE brought together professionals and lay leadership from our partner agencies, monthly, to share best practices and challenges with one another, helping to inform Federation about future planning needs. Prior to COVID-19, professionals and lay leaders convened quarterly.

Beyond Greater MetroWest:

- ABLE served as a model for other Federation communities as they expand their networks to include disability inclusion efforts, consulting with and presenting to other national Federation communities on the work we do locally.

- Manager of Community Inclusion, Rebecca Wanatick, presented workshops for educators at the New CAJE conference over the summer and participates in Jewish Disability Taskforces through JFNA, NJHSA and JFNJ, modeling our Federation program.

Tangible Results

- Various departments at Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest now include inclusive information on their registration materials to better reach and meet the needs of our diverse community and make large community events more inclusive by providing captioning for events and consider inclusive images and language when planning materials.

- Synagogues have shifted their language to be more inclusive and reach out to include individuals with disabilities in their Shabbat and holiday experiences.
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HOW ABLE RESPONDED TO COVID-19

GMW ABLE agencies have shared challenges regarding Division of Developmental Disabilities process and procedures and how to overcome COVID issues, trouble shooting together.

Fed/ABLE helped to coordinate PPE for agencies early in the process.

Rebecca Wanatick stayed connected with families by phone and Zoom throughout the crisis, sharing resources and offering support.

Fed/ABLE met regularly with the ABLE partners, sharing challenges and identifying ways to support the staff and clients.

What ABLE Learned During COVID-19:

Educational programs to families, in a virtual setting, are valuable beyond our COVID-19 crisis.

Teen advocate training will be offered again in person when we are able to extend beyond virtual programming (in-person training better meets the needs of all learners).

The collaboration amongst our ABLE partner agencies is valuable, sharing best practices, resources and working together to bridge identified challenges, better serving the overall community.
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HOW MUCH ABLE DOES

Raise Awareness of Resources and Services:

- 319 Requests for Referrals and Information from ABLE
- 198 Professionals: (clergy, educators, disability specialists) - up from 139 last year.
- 121 Families - up from 111 last year

Attended workshops sponsored by ABLE
7 in-person & 13 virtual workshops

- 496 Individuals

- 25 Programs and Publications
- 2 Conference Presentations (2 virtual)
- 3 Publications (newsletters & articles)
- 20 Community Education Programs

Promote Collaboration of Greater MetroWest ABLE and Partner Agencies

- 40 Programs/Collaborative Programs
- 7 Convening Opportunities for Partner Agencies to Share Challenges, Ideas and Best Practice
- 16 Interactions with Day Schools
- 17 Interactions with Day Schools
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HOW WELL ABLE DOES

Our community members want to be trained.

16 community professionals are now trained as Youth Mental Health First Aid trainers and will train forward in the community.

24 teens (from 3 different synagogues) participated in Inclusion advocate training to help foster inclusion of students and campers with disabilities in the Jewish community.

13 ABLE Awarded* synagogues (1 new this year) and 10 ABLE Awarded partner agencies (2 new this year).

Our community members are advocating to make Greater MetroWest more inclusive.

9 members of our GMW community participated in Jewish Disability Advocacy Day.

23 congregations participated in Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month (JDAIM 2020).

Local educators received Professional Development on the topic of disability inclusion.

159 of local educators from our early childhood, congregations and day schools received Professional Development.

* These synagogues and agencies achieved this recognition, acknowledging their continued commitment and inclusive mindset of providing an environment in which all members of the Jewish community feel like they have a place of belonging – a place in which they can meaningfully contribute and participate.
"ABLE provides collaborations with a variety of agencies serving similar constituents has enabled us to learn new processes, access new opportunities, etc."

- Agency Professional

100% (7/7) of active ABLE partner agencies say that "Greater MetroWest ABLE helped to build their network of professionals working in the field of disability and inclusion."

"ABLE provides collaborations with a variety of agencies serving similar constituents has enabled us to learn new processes, access new opportunities, etc."  
- Agency Professional

86% of active partner agency professionals are more confident and proud of the opportunities provided for individuals with disabilities and their families as a result of the collaborative network of ABLE.

Changing Culture:

Language matters.
6 out of 7 active ABLE partner agencies have inclusive language statements on their website.

Resources are at our fingertips.
As a result of participating in ABLE, our agency professionals are sharing new opportunities with others.
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"ABLE offers a sounding board, sharing of info and best practices and problem solving."

86%
ABLE partner agencies who attribute new client or collaborations as a result of participation

86%
Federation partner agencies list ABLE on their websites

"Since agencies network and understand one another’s services, we are able to find programs that are the best fit for individuals in our community."
"Synagogue outreach conducted by Becca and the ABLE Committee have opened doors to people with special needs that had previously been unavailable. Many more synagogue options are available now for worship and supporting Jewish educational professionals as they welcome children into religious school settings with the training and resources they need to successfully include children with learning differences." - agency professional

"I learned that Rebecca W has many resources to assist synagogues in becoming more inclusive and that other local synagogues are working on the same inclusive goals as my synagogue." - synagogue lay leader

"The event was fantastic. I learned so much. I shared an overview of it at our temple’s Board of Trustees meeting the following night and we already have a plan to implement a few of the ideas - and will form a group to do more." - synagogue lay leader

"ABLE’s consistent presence throughout the community provides a message of inclusion that elicits greater recognition and understanding of inclusion over time. If ABLE weren’t here, the community would not be receiving this consistent message that is so important for change to occur." - committee member

"I can’t thank you enough for all of the help you gave him and us over the years. You really made his experience wonderful and gave us so much peace of mind. Thank you for everything!!" – parent
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HOW MUCH DOES IT COST

$190,500 (for 2020-2021)
- 1 Manager of Community Inclusion
- Program Expenses
- Conference Fees
- Trainer Fees

Largest funding sources

- Private Donors (13.12%)
- Federation Allocation (34.65%)
- JCF Funds (16.54%)
- JCF Grant (12.6%)
- Program Fees (2.62%)
- Carry forward of private donor dollars (20.47%)

LOOKING AHEAD

ABLE Priorities for the 2021 Fiscal Year

★ Raise mental health awareness as it is a key need in our community.

★ Assist in creating employment opportunities for adults with disabilities to assist in creating inclusive employment opportunities.

★ Promote Jewish community inclusion within our synagogues, schools, partner agencies and the Greater MetroWest Community.
WHO ARE THE PLAYERS

Greater MetroWest ABLE Partner Agencies

- Friendship Circle
- JCC of Central NJ
- JCC MetroWest
- JESPY
- Jewish Family Service of Central NJ
- Jewish Family Service MetroWest
- Jewish Service for the Developmentally Disabled (JSDD)
- Jewish Vocational Service
- Round Lake Camp