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**MINNESOTA PARTNERS IN POLICYMAKING®  
LONGITUDINAL STUDY**

**YEARS XXI THROUGH XXIV  
(CLASSES 25 – 28)**

**PREPARED BY**

**NANCY MILLER  
METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
MAY 5, 2013**

**Minnesota Partners in Policymaking®**  
**Final Report: Long-Term Follow-Up Survey**  
**Class 25 – May 5, 2013**  
**Submitted by Nancy Miller, MS, LPC, HS-BCP**  
**Associate Professor, Metropolitan State University**

**Class 25**

Total class: 30

Total surveys emailed: 27

Total surveys completed from emails: 9

Dates emailed: April 10, April 17 & April 24, 2013

Total surveys US postal mail: 3

Dates mailed by US Post: April 17 & April 24

Total received from two mailings: 1

**Total return rate: 10 (33%)**

**All surveys, including those received by postal mail, were entered on SurveyMonkey.**

**1. Did the skills you learned during the Partners program continue to be helpful in securing appropriate services today for you or a family member?**

Yes, most of the time	7	70%
Yes, some of the time	3	30%
Seldom	0	0%
No, not at all	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2. Overall, how would you rate your current advocacy skills?**

Excellent	6	60%
Good	4	40%
Fair	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

**3. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) have become more independent\* at work, home or school.**

Yes	9	90%
No	1	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Independence* means the extent to which individuals exert control and choice over their own lives.

**4. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) am (is) more productive.\***

Yes	8	80%
No	2	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Productivity* means starting employment or a positive change in one's employment situation (better wages, hours, benefits, improved status, or job advancement).

**5. Since graduating from the Partners program, my self-determination (or the self-determination of a family member with a disability) has increased.**

	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>
Yes		
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Self-determination* means the freedom to choose where and with whom to live or taking personal responsibility for personal decisions about needed supports and services.

**6. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with disability) have experienced more community integration and inclusion.\***

Yes	10	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Integration and inclusion* means using the same community resources that are available to other citizens or fully participating in community activities.

**7. Since graduation, have you increased or decreased your use of government funded services?**

Increased	3	30%
Decreased	3	30%
About the same	4	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

**8. My (or my family's) quality of life is better because of my participation in the Partners program.**

Strongly Agree	8	80%
Agree	2	20%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

**9. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am/is more knowledgeable about my rights.**

Yes	10	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

**10. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am more aware of safety issues and can better protect myself (or a family member).**

Yes	10	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

**11. What significant changes have occurred in your life (e.g., housing, education, employment, family support, case management, technology, health care, friendships, etc.) or the life of a family member with a disability which you attribute to your Partners program experience?**

1. Entrance into better programs and services.
2. Case management, self-confidence, greater knowledge base, network of friends.
3. I'm a confident advocate. I have been able to work better with my daughter's school since Partners and think it has greatly improved her standard of life.
4. Better advocacy for my daughter.
5. Security.
6. Education, medical care.
7. It has helped my son get the services he needs in school.
8. Another partner told me about a school for kids with autism that was going to open. It just happened to be in OUR district! That was the turning point for our son - going to Lionsgate Academy. Our son graduated from MN Online high school (on time). We never thought that would happen. Our son was also arrested (unjustly) and I was able to contact the county district attorney and advocate for him to be released. What I learned at Partners helped me be confident and know where to go for help.
9. My own challenge is coming for finding employment but that is just part of trying to get into the job market.

(1 skipped question)

**12. What skills did you learn in the program that you still use today?**

1. How to better advocate for my child and how to get better services.
  2. Advocacy, lobbying, research, listening, understanding perspectives.
  3. Advocacy: I understand how things work, and if I don't... I know who to ask!
  4. Advocacy.
  5. Advocacy.
  6. Advocacy.
  7. I have a M.A. in family therapy, and I use my advocacy skills with my clients every day.
  8. I still keep in contact with almost all the people from Partners. I work with at risk kids and I use what I learned and the resources I have to help kids and their families. Just the general knowledge that I received - learning about how the process works - politically.
  9. Advocating for myself.
- (1 skipped question)

**13. Looking back at your experience with the Partners program, what recommendations would you make to improve the program?**

1. I can't think of anything now. The program was great.
  2. Would love to be able to learn more, take more classes from your organization. Specific interests include: starting a not for profit, public speaking, advocating on a larger scale.
  3. More per deim.
  4. Keep the program going. It is a fabulous training opp for families and individuals.
  5. When my son turned 18 - I was lost. He wanted to go to college but we didn't know of any resources to help him. MN Online High School gave us the number of a vocational rehab person, but he doesn't return my son's phone calls so he stopped trying. Also, I wondered if my son would be exempt from signing up for Selective Service because of his disabilities. Last, there are tons of services out there but we have been turned away by many of them because our income is too high. Is there any help for middle class families? We haven't had any support services for our son for about 8 years.
  6. None at this point.
- (4 skipped question)

**Minnesota Partners in Policymaking®**  
**Final Report: Long-Term Follow-Up Survey**  
**Class 26 – May 5, 2013**  
**Submitted by Nancy Miller, MS, LPC, HS-BCP**  
**Associate Professor, Metropolitan State University**

**Class 26**

Total class: 29

Total surveys emailed: 28

Total surveys completed from emails: 14

Dates emailed: April 10, April 17 & April 24, 2013

Total surveys US postal mail: 1

Dates mailed by US Post: April 17 & April 24

Total received from two mailings: 1

**Total return rate: 15 (52%)**

**All surveys, including those received by postal mail, were entered on SurveyMonkey.**

**1. Did the skills you learned during the Partners program continue to be helpful in securing appropriate services today for you or a family member?**

Yes, most of the time	7	47%
Yes, some of the time	6	40%
Seldom	2	13%
No, not at all	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2. Overall, how would you rate your current advocacy skills?**

Excellent	8	53%
Good	6	40%
Fair	1	7%
Poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

**3. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) have become more independent\* at work, home or school.**

Yes	12	80%
No	3	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Independence* means the extent to which individuals exert control and choice over their own lives.

**4. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) am (is) more productive.\***

Yes	9	60%
No	6	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Productivity* means starting employment or a positive change in one's employment situation (better wages, hours, benefits, improved status, or job advancement).

**5. Since graduating from the Partners program, my self-determination (or the self-determination of a family member with a disability) has increased.**

Yes	14	93%
No	1	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Self-determination* means the freedom to choose where and with whom to live or taking personal responsibility for personal decisions about needed supports and services.

**6. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with disability) have experienced more community integration and inclusion.\***

Yes	11	73%
No	4	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Integration and inclusion* means using the same community resources that are available to other citizens or fully participating in community activities.

**7. Since graduation, have you increased or decreased your use of government funded services?**

Increased	3	21%
Decreased	1	7%
About the same	10	72%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>

Skipped question: 1

**8. My (or my family's) quality of life is better because of my participation in the Partners program.**

Strongly Agree	6	40%
Agree	9	60%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

**9. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am/is more knowledgeable about my rights.**

Yes	14	93%
No	1	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

**10. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am more aware of safety issues and can better protect myself (or a family member).**

Yes	13	87%
No	2	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

**11. What significant changes have occurred in your life (e.g., housing, education, employment, family support, case management, technology, health care, friendships, etc.) or the life of a family member with a disability which you attribute to your Partners program experience?**

1. I will be moving into my own apartment with staffing.
2. Became one of the two Self-Advocate Mentors for Merrick, Inc.
3. Life of a family member has greatly improved. Completed Community Health Worker Program. Now employed in Health care as a Community Health Worker staff.
4. Becoming a member of The Arc Greater Twin Cities Board of Directors and serving on their Self-Advocacy Advisory Committee, plus becoming one of the two Self-Advocate Mentors at Merrick, Inc.
5. Inclusion vs. mainstreaming in school.
6. Increase and stabilization in services.
7. We have put much more thought into what our daughter may do when she becomes an adult. We have secured an additional waiver program for her, because we learned of additional diagnosis (deafblind).

(8 skipped question)

**12. What skills did you learn in the program that you still use today?**

1. People listen to what I say.
2. Political action skills.
3. Have a great job.
4. Telling my story to legislators testifying for/against issues.
5. Advocacy.
6. Advocacy, focus on a specific career area based on ability, interest, desire and preferences. With personal support and support of family members all came together for me.
7. Talking about my rights sharing my story with legislators (both over at the capitol and for site visits at Merrick, Inc.) Testifying in support or in opposition to certain issues.
8. Advocacy, Now I am teaching my son, who is too young to attend PIPM, how to advocate for himself. It is very exciting, as he recently had his first letter to the editor published!
9. Negotiating, deescalating, compromising, thinking outside the box.
10. How to contact legislators. How to make sure that all individuals are included. How to support every individual to participate in as many self determination/choice activities as they can.

(5 skipped question)

**13. Looking back at your experience with the Partners program, what recommendations would you make to improve the program?**

1. More follow-up.
2. Not every participant of Partners in Policymaking was a parent raising a child with a disability. Provide information that will help the young adults in the group to be more independent.
3. Nothing
4. Nothing at all.
5. Use more local experts.
6. The program has high quality content areas, sequences information to personal life. Participants need to create a path way to success with this program. It's great and offers a lot to those served.
7. N/A.
8. Making certain that speakers are not too over the top or discussing personal issues such as religion or politics in an offensive way.
9. Discussion of post secondary education supports.

(6 skipped question)

**Minnesota Partners in Policymaking®**  
**Final Report: Long-Term Follow-Up Survey**  
**Class 27 – May 5, 2013**  
**Submitted by Nancy Miller, MS, LPC, HS-BCP**  
**Associate Professor, Metropolitan State University**

**Class 27**

Total class: 25

Total surveys emailed: 22

Total surveys completed from emails:

Dates emailed: April 10, April 17 & April 24, 2013

Total surveys US postal mail: 3

Dates mailed by US Post: April 17 & April 24

Total received from two mailings: 0

**Total return rate: 8 (32%)**

**All surveys, including those received by postal mail, were entered on SurveyMonkey.**

**1. Did the skills you learned during the Partners program continue to be helpful in securing appropriate services today for you or a family member?**

Yes, most of the time	7	87%
Yes, some of the time	1	13%
Seldom	0	0%
No, not at all	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2. Overall, how would you rate your current advocacy skills?**

Excellent	3	37%
Good	5	63%
Fair	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

**3. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) have become more independent\* at work, home or school.**

Yes	7	87%
No	1	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Independence* means the extent to which individuals exert control and choice over their own lives.

**4. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) am (is) more productive.\***

Yes	7	87%
No	1	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Productivity* means starting employment or a positive change in one's employment situation (better wages, hours, benefits, improved status, or job advancement).

**5. Since graduating from the Partners program, my self-determination (or the self-determination of a family member with a disability) has increased.**

Yes	8	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Self-determination* means the freedom to choose where and with whom to live or taking personal responsibility for personal decisions about needed supports and services.

**6. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with disability) have experienced more community integration and inclusion.\***

Yes	7	87%
No	1	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Integration and inclusion* means using the same community resources that are available to other citizens or fully participating in community activities.

**7. Since graduation, have you increased or decreased your use of government funded services?**

Increased	1	13%
Decreased	3	37%
About the same	4	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

**8. My (or my family's) quality of life is better because of my participation in the Partners program.**

Strongly Agree	5	63%
Agree	3	37%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

**9. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am/is more knowledgeable about my rights.**

Yes	8	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

**10. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am more aware of safety issues and can better protect myself (or a family member).**

Yes	6	75%
No	2	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

**11. What significant changes have occurred in your life (e.g., housing, education, employment, family support, case management, technology, health care, friendships, etc.) or the life of a family member with a disability which you attribute to your Partners program experience?**

1. Housing services available for my teen daughter, also services regarding employment.
2. I have been much more successful at advocating for my kids at school through the IEP process.
3. Spread my advocacy and volunteer skills beyond the disabilities in my household to help others.
4. We have had significant school transitions for our son. Partners gave me the knowledge and skills to be able to advocate for the best possible situations for him. I have been a strong resource to other families who need assistance when navigating the system.
5. Case management, housing, technology.
6. Continued employment, but with lesser pay, longer commute, and health/dental insurance very, very high. Have advocated for HF Bill 772 and SF Bill 644 and am honored to be a part of getting the bill passed into law.
7. The county decided to end our case worker services.

(1 skipped question)

**12. What skills did you learn in the program that you still use today?**

1. Increased confidence when speaking to politicians, contacting politicians more often.
2. Many of the principles regarding laws and rights have become a basis for my advocating.
3. Advocacy during IEP meetings.
4. The ability to be a strong advocate for all people with disabilities. The confidence to be a strong advocate and the knowledge to do it well.
5. Advocacy.
6. How to contact legislatures. Get around the Capitol with ease. Advocate on behalf of those who cannot. Set clear and concise boundaries with client I work with that have a disability does not constitute incompetency or irresponsibility in their behavior. Having a disability is not an entitlement to not take and take and not give back to others.
7. Advocating.

(1 skipped question)

**13. Looking back at your experience with the Partners program, what recommendations would you make to improve the program?**

1. Somehow add more days! There is so much information jam packed into the weekend it is very overwhelming. Otherwise it is run perfectly with awesome staff and presenters/speakers.
2. Perhaps teach a segment on the rights of vulnerable adults and guardianship.
3. I would love to have more opportunities to continue the program. I would love to see past participants invited to continuing programming. After Partners I have at times felt I was left on my own. It would be great to have a way to reconnect with the program through annual seminars, gatherings, etc.
4. To participate in the program.
5. Our system has many flaws. It is frustrating as a case manager to try and give incentives to people who are on public/government funding to work and stayed gainfully employment. There are a lot of entitlements and there are many people who desperately need services and cannot due to the amount of abuse in the system.
6. More time learning about talking with representative or more time learning about writing to them.

(2 skipped question)

**Minnesota Partners in Policymaking®**  
**Final Report: Long-Term Follow-Up Survey**  
**Class 28 – May 5, 2013**  
**Submitted by Nancy Miller, MS, LPC, HS-BCP**  
**Associate Professor, Metropolitan State University**

**Class 28**

Total class members: 30

Total surveys emailed: 29

Total surveys completed from emails: 7

Dates emailed: April 10, April 17 & April 24, 2013

Total surveys US postal mail: 1

Dates mailed by US Post: April 17 & April 24

Total received from two mailings: 0

**Total return rate: 7 (23%)**

**All surveys, including those received by postal mail, were entered on SurveyMonkey.**

**1. Did the skills you learned during the Partners program continue to be helpful in securing appropriate services today for you or a family member?**

Yes, most of the time	7	100%
Yes, some of the time	0	0%
Seldom	0	0%
No, not at all	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2. Overall, how would you rate your current advocacy skills?**

Excellent	4	57%
Good	3	43%
Fair	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

**3. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) have become more independent\* at work, home or school.**

Yes	7	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Independence* means the extent to which individuals exert control and choice over their own lives.

**4. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) am (is) more productive.\***

Yes	6	86%
No	1	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Productivity* means starting employment or a positive change in one's employment situation (better wages, hours, benefits, improved status, or job advancement).

**5. Since graduating from the Partners program, my self-determination (or the self-determination of a family member with a disability) has increased.**

Yes	7	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Self-determination* means the freedom to choose where and with whom to live or taking personal responsibility for personal decisions about needed supports and services.

**6. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with disability) have experienced more community integration and inclusion.\***

Yes	7	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Integration and inclusion* means using the same community resources that are available to other citizens or fully participating in community activities.

**7. Since graduation, have you increased or decreased your use of government funded services?**

Increased	3	43%
Decreased	1	14%
About the same	3	43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

**8. My (or my family's) quality of life is better because of my participation in the Partners program.**

Strongly Agree	5	71%
Agree	2	29%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

**9. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am/is more knowledgeable about my rights.**

Yes	7	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

**10. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am more aware of safety issues and can better protect myself (or a family member).**

Yes	6	86%
No	1	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>

**11. What significant changes have occurred in your life (e.g., housing, education, employment, family support, case management, technology, health care, friendships, etc.) or the life of a family member with a disability which you attribute to your Partners program experience?**

1. Our daughter has become a natural part of her school community, making friends, being invited to birthday parties, being expected to participate and make progress in school (rather than being babysat in school), etc. all because we know how to advocate for her effectively and work with the school positively.
  2. Our daughter has become more included in her general education classes at school.
  3. I've set goals for my daughter who has a disability but now I feel like I have better tools to empower her to succeed at meeting AND SURPASSING those goals.
  4. I advocated hard for my children to get county waivers. I finally got them last year. They will help us relocate to a house which is more accessible.
  5. Moved my advocacy efforts to policy makers.
  6. I am a strong advocate and created my own job as a Peer Mentor helping others.
- (1 skipped question)

**12. What skills did you learn in the program that you still use today?**

1. Standing up for myself and making new connections.
2. Civil discourse and the art of constructive discussion.
3. Confidence in knowing what my son is entitled to and knowledge that I can ask for what he needs to succeed.
4. Tell my story, know my voice counts, confidence to speak up.
5. Not take NO for an answer right away and then walk away discouraged. I will ask again, become more knowledgeable as to what we can expect for my daughter and look for a middle ground if it comes to that.
6. How to access and contact people and how to be heard in a respectful manner.
7. I learned to not be afraid to advocate at any level of government or private agencies to influence policy.

**13. Looking back at your experience with the Partners program, what recommendations would you make to improve the program?**

1. Having more self-advocates.
2. It was a fabulous program.
3. It seemed so rushed to get in all the information...and hard as was it was to fit it into my schedule I would love to really delve into more of each topic....so much to learn.

4. There needs to be more in person ways to connect after graduation. There needs to be better ways to connect with other graduates.
5. I can't think of any - it was a WONDERFUL experience!
6. I would love a tune up program for graduates, at certain yrs, 2 years, 5 years, 10 years, etc. so much changes with technology it would be helpful to find out what is working now, vs. when you graduated, etc.
7. More information on accessing services and supports in outstate MN. The metro area has many more options for people with disabilities. Isolation is a problem for outstate individuals and families with a disability.

**Minnesota Partners in Policymaking®**  
**Final Report: Long-Term Follow-Up Survey**  
**Combined Classes 25-28 – May 5, 2013**  
**Submitted by Nancy Miller, MS, LPC, HS-BCP**  
**Associate Professor, Metropolitan State University**

Class 25: 30; 10 respondents  
Class 26: 29; 15 respondents  
Class 27: 25; 8 respondents  
Class 28: 30; 7 respondents

Total class participants: 114  
Total respondents: 40  
**Response rate: 35%**

Survey links emailed: April 10, April 17 & April 24, 2013\*  
Surveys mailed by US Post: April 17 & April 24, 2013

\*See additional details on result numbers in reports for each class.  
All surveys, including those received by postal mail, were entered on SurveyMonkey.

- The return rate for the 2012 Long-Term Survey for all classes combined was 39%
- The return rate for the 2011 Long-Term Survey for all classes combined was 47%
- The return rate for the 2010 Long-Term Survey for all classes combined was 43%
- The return rate for the 2009 Long-Term Survey for all classes combined was 45%.

**1. Did the skills you learned during the Partners program continue to be helpful in securing appropriate services today for you or a family member?**

Yes, most of the time	28	70%
Yes, some of the time	10	25%
Seldom	2	5%
No, not at all	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2. Overall, how would you rate your current advocacy skills?**

Excellent	21	53%
Good	18	44%
Fair	1	3%

Poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

**3. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) have become more independent\* at work, home or school.**

Yes	35	88%
No	5	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Independence* means the extent to which individuals exert control and choice over their own lives.

**4. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) am (is) more productive.\***

Yes	30	75%
No	10	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Productivity* means starting employment or a positive change in one's employment situation (better wages, hours, benefits, improved status, or job advancement).

**5. Since graduating from the Partners program, my self-determination (or the self-determination of a family member with a disability) has increased.**

Yes	39	98%
No	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Self-determination* means the freedom to choose where and with whom to live or taking personal responsibility for personal decisions about needed supports and services.

**6. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with disability) have experienced more community integration and inclusion.\***

Yes	35	88%
No	5	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Integration and inclusion* means using the same community resources that are available to other citizens or fully participating in community activities.

**7. Since graduation, have you increased or decreased your use of government funded services?**

Increased	10	26%
Decreased	8	20%
About the same	21	54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

**No response = 1**

**8. My (or my family's) quality of life is better because of my participation in the Partners program.**

Strongly Agree	24	60%
Agree	16	40%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

**9. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am/is more knowledgeable about my rights.**

Yes	39	98%
No	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

**10. As a result of the Partners program, I (or a member of my family with a disability) am more aware of safety issues and can better protect myself (or a family member).**

Yes	35	88%
No	5	12%
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**11. What significant changes have occurred in your life (e.g., housing, education, employment, family support, case management, technology, health care, friendships, etc.) or the life of a family member with a disability which you attribute to your Partners program experience?**

1. Entrance into better programs and services.
2. Case management, self-confidence, greater knowledge base, network of friends.
3. I'm a confident advocate. I have been able to work better with my daughter's school since Partners and think it has greatly improved her standard of life.
4. Better advocacy for my daughter.
5. Security.
6. Education, medical care.
7. It has helped my son get the services he needs in school.
8. Another partner told me about a school for kids with autism that was going to open. It just happened to be in OUR district! That was the turning point for our son - going to Lionsgate Academy. Our son graduated from MN Online high school (on time). We never thought that would happen. Our son was also arrested (unjustly) and I was able to contact the county district attorney and advocate for him to be released. What I learned at Partners helped me be confident and know where to go for help.
9. My own challenge is coming is funding employment but that is just part of trying to get into the job market.
10. I am a strong self-advocate created my own Job as peer Mentor helping others.
11. I will be moving into my own apartment with staffing.

12. Became one of the two Self-Advocate Mentors for Merrick, Inc.
13. Life of a family member has greatly improved. Completed Community Health Worker Program. Now employed in Health care as a Community Health Worker staff.
14. Becoming a member of The Arc Greater Twin Cities Board of Directors and serving on their Self-Advocacy Advisory Committee, plus becoming one of the two Self-Advocate Mentors at Merrick, Inc.
15. Inclusion vs. mainstreaming in school.
16. Increase and stabilization in services.
17. We have put much more thought into what our daughter may do when she becomes an adult. We have secured an additional waiver program for her, because we learned of additional diagnosis (deafblind).
18. Housing services available for my teen daughter, also services regarding employment.
19. I have been much more successful at advocating for my kids at school through the IEP process.
20. Spread my advocacy and volunteer skills beyond the disabilities in my household to help others.
21. We have had significant school transitions for our son. Partners gave me the knowledge and skills to be able to advocate for the best possible situations for him. I have been a strong resource to other families who need assistance when navigating the system.
22. Case management, housing, technology.
23. Continued employment, but with lesser pay, longer commute, and health/dental insurance very, very high. Have advocated for HF Bill 772 and SF Bill 644 and am honored to be a part of getting the bill passed into law.
24. The county decided to end our case worker services.
25. Our daughter has become a natural part of her school community, making friends, being invited to birthday parties, being expected to participate and make progress in school (rather than being babysat in school), etc. all because we know how to advocate for her effectively and work with the school positively.
26. Our daughter has become more included in her general education classes at school.
27. I've set goals for my daughter who has a disability but now I feel like I have better tools to empower her to succeed at meeting AND SURPASSING those goals.
28. I advocated hard for my children to get county waivers. I finally got them last year. They will help us relocate to a house which is more accessible.
29. Moved my advocacy efforts to policy makers.

**12. What skills did you learn in the program that you still use today?**

1. How to better advocate for my child and how to get better services.
2. Advocacy, lobbying, research, listening, understanding perspectives.
3. Advocacy: I understand how things work, and if I don't... I know who to ask!
4. Advocacy.
5. Advocacy.
6. Advocacy.
7. I have a M.A. in family therapy, and I use my advocacy skills with my clients every day.
8. I still keep in contact with almost all the people from Partners. I work with at risk kids and I use what I learned and the resources I have to help kids and their families. Just the general knowledge that I received - learning about how the process works - politically.
9. Advocating for myself.
10. People listen to what I say.
11. Political action skills.
12. Have a great job.
13. Telling my story to legislators Testifying for/against issues.
14. Advocacy.
15. Advocacy, focus on a specific career area based on ability, interest, desire and preferences. With personal support and support of family members all came together for me.
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17. Advocacy, Now I am teaching my son, who is too young to attend PIPM, how to advocate for himself. It is very exciting, as he recently had his first letter to the editor published!
18. Negotiating, deescalating, compromising, thinking outside the box.
19. How to contact legislators. How to make sure that all individuals are included. How to support every individual to participate in as many self determination/choice activities as they can.
20. Increased confidence when speaking to politicians, contacting politicians more often.
21. Many of the principles regarding laws and rights have become a basis for my advocating.
22. Advocacy during IEP meetings.
23. The ability to be a strong advocate for all people with disabilities. The confidence to be a strong advocate and the knowledge to do it well.
24. Advocacy.

25. How to contact legislatures. Get around the Capitol with ease. Advocate on behalf of those who cannot. Set clear and concise boundaries with client I work with that have a disability does not constitute incompetency or irresponsibility in their behavior. Having a disability is not an entitlement to not take and take and not give back to others.
26. Advocating.
27. Standing up for myself and making new connections.
28. Civil discourse and the art of constructive discussion.
29. Confidence in knowing what my son is entitled to and knowledge that I can ask for what he needs to succeed.
30. Tell my story; know my voice counts, confidence to speak up.
31. Not take NO for an answer right away and then walk away discouraged. I will ask again, become more knowledgeable as to what we can expect for my daughter and look for a middle ground if it comes to that.
32. How to access and contact people and how to be heard in a respectful manner.
33. I learned to not be afraid to advocate at any level of government or private agencies to influence policy.

**13. Looking back at your experience with the Partners program, what recommendations would you make to improve the program?**

1. I can't think of anything now. The program was great.
2. Would love to be able to learn more, take more classes from your organization. Specific interests include: starting a not for profit, public speaking, advocating on a larger scale.
3. More per deim.
4. Keep the program going. It is a fabulous training opp for families and individuals.
5. When my son turned 18 - I was lost. He wanted to go to college but we didn't know of any resources to help him. MN Online High School gave us the number of a vocational rehab person, but he doesn't return my son's phone calls so he stopped trying. Also, I wondered if my son would be exempt from signing up for Selective Service because of his disabilities. Last, there are tons of services out there but we have been turned away by many of them because our income is too high. Is there any help for middle class families? We haven't had any support services for our son for about 8 years.
6. None at this point.
7. More follow-up
8. Not every participant of Partners in Policymaking was a parent raising a child with a disability. Provide information that will help the young adults in the group to be more independent.
9. Nothing

10. Nothing at all.
11. Use more local experts.
12. The program has high quality content areas, sequences information to personal life. Participants need to create a path way to success with this program. It's great and offers a lot to those saved.
13. N/A.
14. Making certain that speakers are not too over the top or discussing personal issues such as religion or politics in an offensive way.
15. Discussion of post secondary education supports.
16. Somehow add more days! There is so much information jam packed into the weekend it is very overwhelming. Otherwise it is run perfectly with awesome staff and presenters/speakers.
17. Perhaps teach a segment on the rights of vulnerable adults and guardianship.
18. I would love to have more opportunities to continue the program. I would love to see past participants invited to continuing programming. After Partners I have at times felt I was left on my own. It would be great to have a way to reconnect with the program through annual seminars, gatherings, etc.
19. To participate in the program.
20. Our system has many flaws. It is frustrating as a case manager to try and give incentives to people who are on public/government funding to work and stayed gainfully employment. There are a lot of entitlements and there are many people who desperately need services and cannot due to the amount of abuse in the system.
21. More time learning about talking with representative or more time learning about writing to them.
22. Having more self-advocates.
23. It was a fabulous program.
24. It seemed so rushed to get in all the information...and hard as was it was to fit it into my schedule I would love to really delve into more of each topic....so much to learn.
25. There needs to be more in person ways to connect after graduation. There needs to be better ways to connect with other graduates.
26. I can't think of any - it was a WONDERFUL experience!
27. I would love a tune up program for graduates, at certain yrs, 2 years, 5 years, 10 years, etc. so much changes with technology it would be helpful to find out what is working now, vs. when you graduated, etc.
28. More information on accessing services and supports in outstate MN. The metro area has many more options for people with disabilities. Isolation is a problem for outstate individuals and families with a disability.

**Minnesota Partners in Policymaking®**  
**Final Report: Long-Term Follow-Up Survey**  
**Combined Classes 25-28 – May 5, 2013**  
**Submitted by Nancy Miller, MS, LPC, HS-BCP**  
**Associate Professor, Metropolitan State University**

Class 25: 30; 10 respondents  
 Class 26: 29; 15 respondents  
 Class 27: 25; 8 respondents  
 Class 28: 30; 7 respondents

Total class participants: 114  
 Total respondents: 40  
**Response rate: 35%**

Survey links emailed: April 10, April 17 & April 24, 2013\*  
 Surveys mailed by US Post: April 17 & April 24, 2013

\*See additional details on result numbers in reports for each class.  
 All surveys, including those received by postal mail, were entered on SurveyMonkey.

- The return rate for the 2012 Long-Term Survey for all classes combined was 39%
- The return rate for the 2011 Long-Term Survey for all classes combined was 47%
- The return rate for the 2010 Long-Term Survey for all classes combined was 43%
- The return rate for the 2009 Long-Term Survey for all classes combined was 45%.

**1. Did the skills you learned during the Partners program continue to be helpful in securing appropriate services today for you or a family member?**

Yes, most of the time	28	70%
Yes, some of the time	10	25%
Seldom	2	5%
No, not at all	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2. Overall, how would you rate your current advocacy skills?**

Excellent	21	53%
Good	18	44%
Fair	1	3%

Poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

**3. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) have become more independent\* at work, home or school.**

Yes	35	88%
No	5	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

\**Independence* means the extent to which individuals exert control and choice over their own lives.

**4. Since graduating from the Partners in Policymaking program, I (or a family member with a disability) am (is) more productive.\***

Yes	30	75%
No	10	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

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