

## The Arc of Racine County Summary Report

### **Information about the Applicant**

The Arc of Racine County is a local chapter of the Arc of US and the Arc WI. Our Mission is to promote and protect the human rights of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. WE do this by safeguarding their rights, facilitating choice and promoting inclusion in school and community life. As such, the Arc (of Racine County) advocates for many students and adults with ID to ensure safe and fair employment and education opportunities. In addition, the Arc has implemented many peer-based programs to demonstrate social and communication skills, career building, and healthful behaviors. While the Arc of Racine County has seen many successes in its storied history, the Arc has engaged in several successful programs, including the School to Community Transition Program, the Arc 100%ers adult peer mentoring group and the Health Matters program. We have successfully reached at least 100 students per year through the school-to-community transition program that we originally designed and implemented through a three-year grant that was offered to various Arc chapters nationwide through the Arc of the United States from 2009-2012. We continued to carry out this program through 2020 independently. This was a wide-reaching program that had expanded to all the county-wide school districts. Now, this is well-known as our renowned self-advocacy training.

### **Statement of Need**

According to Racine County data from high school special education departments, there are approximately 4500 students in Racine County public schools who are receiving special education services. Estimates from high school and transition teachers for the upcoming school year indicate there will be over 500 students attending who have an intellectual or a developmental disability who are ages 14-21. More than 150 of those students leave the public school system each year between the ages of 18 and 21. By implementing this program prior to age 18, we will have a significant impact on their ability to self-advocate and make healthy choices as an adult. Through this application, the Arc of Racine County is kindly asking Wispact to provide \$10,000.00 to help our organization implement Health Matters and self-advocacy programs with students with developmental disabilities who are between the ages of 14-21 and live within the parameters of Racine County. This includes 150 students across the county in such school districts as Racine Unified, Waterford, Burlington, and Union Grove. As it stands right now, Wispact would be the primary funding source for this project, however we are looking for a matching grant to further aid us in our grand goal. We as an organization have worked closely with the Wispact Foundation for programs past and appreciate the foundation's purpose and mission. We hope to solidify that professional relationship and expand our work with the organization as time goes on.

### **Project Goals and Expected Benefits**

To further explain what exactly we are looking to do with the funding, the purpose of these projects is to engage students with developmental disabilities in conversations surrounding healthful attitudes, while simultaneously teaching them self-advocacy tactics that they can utilize both in school, particularly in IEP meetings, and in life after high school. As it relates to Wispact's priority areas, this program is designed to directly assist students with disabilities in how to advocate for themselves, particularly in school as they move forward in their education. In addition to the project goals and objectives laid out below, we are hopeful that program brings about each student's ability to keep the self-advocacy skills necessary to be active participants in their own IEPs (Individualized Education Program) and post-secondary transition planning as they approach the age that the state of Wisconsin recommends that they begin direct involvement. Lastly, through this program, we aim to promote the fulfillment and edification of students with disabilities with skills that they may carry with them for the rest of their life.

This project has many goals, but to lay out a few:

1. Students will be able to identify healthy eating habits by the end of the program.
2. Students will be able to identify distinct types of physical activity by the end of the program.
3. Students will identify several areas of healthy living in which they have practiced outside of the program in school, at home, at work, etc.
4. Student will learn self-advocacy techniques during the program and be able to practice at least one of those techniques in their everyday lives.

The measurable objectives associated with these goals are:

1. Students will perform various homework assignments for the duration of the program. They will be asked to identify foods that are healthy, as well as foods high in carbs, among other healthy eating habits.
2. Students will identify several types of physical activity via in-class assignments and will then be asked with tracking their physical activity for a week in school and at home.
3. Students will share (if comfortable) with their peers and myself, what they have done throughout the program to engage with the provided content outside of school, whether they report choosing healthier foods for lunch, exercising for an hour more than they had in the past, or engaging in self-advocacy.
4. Students will be able to promote their own self-advocacy while at school or in a meeting, such as IBP.

### **Project Implementation Plan**

This program will be implemented by the author of this application letter, Leah Joslyn.

To complete the goals and objectives laid out above, she plans to conduct the program over eight weeks. Over those eight weeks, students will learn various healthful living habits, including but not limited to, healthy eating habits, proper portion sizing, exercising and what is right for everyone, and the different nutrients that make food healthier than others. In addition, she will be teaching them self-advocacy techniques that they can use in school, especially during IEP meetings, as well as out-of-school once they graduate and/or age out of the public school system. The plan will involve different high-school and transition students across Racine County. As previously said, the course will be given over an 8-week period. Each class session will be about an hour in length and will include an instruction period and a discussion period, as well as giving students time to complete an in-class assignment. There are six sessions to get through, but we decided to implement an 8-week program, to account for any content that we ran out of time to go over, self-advocacy activities, etc. The homework and in-class assignments that students will receive, as well as any discussion will be based solely on the Health Matters curriculum provided to us by Wispact last year when we implemented the program during the 2021-2022 school year. Each class will be around five to ten students in numbers, to best serve the individual needs of each student and encourage discussion with their peers. Throughout the program, we will utilize guests to various sessions in the form of peer mentors with and without disabilities, who are of a similar age to program participants. We hope it will encourage the students to see themselves in employment and higher education opportunities in the future, as well as active participants in their respective communities. At the end of the year, the students will be asked to complete a survey provided to us by the curriculum to gauge their understanding of the content, as well as interaction with the learned concepts both in and out of school. During the implementation of the project, we will encourage teachers to use the program for students to earn credit for Self-advocacy and health and wellness skills, as well as the skills necessary to practice self-awareness, with the hope that in doing so, this incentive will further encourage not only the students, but the school administrators as well to administer this and/or similar programs in the future.

### Evaluation Plan

Throughout the program, Leah, who will be collecting the data, will evaluate student progress in the program in a variety of ways. Students will be asked to engage with the content in a variety of ways, including homework assignments and small discussions about the content on a given day. Through these methods, she will analyze both the students' understanding of the content, as well as gauging their engagement with the content both in and out of school. To measure progress, several methods will be used, including homework assignments, discussions, and classroom activities. At the end of the last session, the students will be asked to complete a brief survey, provided to me in the curriculum, to gauge many aspects of the program, including how much they enjoyed it, how beneficial they thought it was, as well as analyze their understanding of the concepts and their ability to practice those concepts outside of our sessions together. In addition to her observations and the work that students will complete, she will also utilize the teachers' perspectives. In doing so, she will incorporate their observations and evaluation as they know each of their students best and their feedback is highly valued.

### Budget

Expense	Cost
<b>Program Staff</b>	
<b>Training: 8 hours program review (8x\$16/hr)</b>	<b>\$128.00</b>
<b>Session prep 8 hours (8X1hr X \$16/hr)</b>	<b>\$128.00</b>
<b>Pre-meetings with school (20hrs X \$16/hr)</b>	<b>\$320.00</b>
<b>Marketing (20hrs X \$16/hr)</b>	<b>\$320.00</b>
<b>Presentations (20 groups X hrs/ea X 8 sessions X \$16/hr)</b>	<b>\$5,120.00</b>
<b>Final Report (16 hrs X \$16/hr)</b>	<b>\$256.00</b>
<b>Admin Support (10hrs X 12/hr)</b>	<b>\$120.00</b>
<b>Printing program flyer, letter to parents, certificates, class materials</b>	<b>\$120.00</b>
<b>Transportation (.50 X 40miles X 8 sessions X 20 classes)</b>	<b>\$3,200.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>

### Staff Recommendation

The grant application can be recommended for approval but there will need to be some adjustments to the amount. Some of the itemized budget expenses can be covered with a grant but not all. The programming itself for \$5,120.00, the transportation \$3,200.00, and materials \$120.00 can be covered via grant for a total awarded amount of \$8,440.00