

ASK

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A Year in Review:

As I think about the year we just completed, words like **foundation, leverage and celebration** come to mind. 2017 marked the 30th year of continuous operation of About Special Kids (ASK), an organization founded by parents of children with special needs and professionals in the field of special needs.

We believe that parents know best how to raise their child and, when given the appropriate resources, can navigate the many services and systems necessary to ensure successful outcomes for their children with special needs. The foundation of who and what ASK is begins with parents helping parents.

We meet families where they are in their journey of raising their child. We provide peer support, care coordination, education and information all specially tailored to each family. There's no one size fits all here, well except for parents helping parents. We are a small not for profit; strong because, we are parents and family members of children with special needs who are educated, experienced, skilled and trained to meet the complex needs of each family.

During the year we reached more than 1,900 families and professionals with our services of peer support, care coordination, education and information. Much of our success can be attributed to leveraging resources and relationships. Let me explain:

During the year, we continued a long-standing partnership with the Indiana State Department of Health by being one of five organizations to receive a competitive two-year Title V grant. Our program, **ASK Indiana Medical Home Project**, deepens relationships with two First Step Clusters and three Eskenazi Health Centers. Working with our collaborators, ASK staff participate in weekly medical case conferences, receive referrals from our partners, and provide in-depth support services to the clients/patients.

Also, during 2017 we negotiated a contract with the newest Indiana Managed Care Entity (MCE), CareSource. We have contracts with each MCE in the state: Anthem, MDwise, Managed Health Services (MHS) and CareSource. ASK provides client services around the care coordination model to referred members who are children with special needs, working hand-in-hand with case managers for successful health and social outcomes. Through sponsorships, each of these organizations also support ASK services beyond the contracted referrals.

Another shining example of leveraging resources is our continued work with what was originally known as the Annie E. Dyson Community Pediatrics Training Initiative. Initially begun in 2001 the project is led by

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the Indiana University School of Medicine. ASK is one of three collaborating community organizations. This program was an early example of training doctors in Indiana on the concept of Medical Home. Each year approximately 50 first and second year pediatric and family medicine residents come to ASK to gain an understanding of the concept of the parent-to-parent model of services we provide, and how we can partner with them in their practices for successful health and social outcomes of their patients.

The foundation of who we are may be parents helping parents, but the success of who we are is leveraging resources and relationships. I've listed three examples, but there are many more.

Finally, we ended our year in celebration of 30 years with our first annual Founders' Breakfast, the Kitchen Table Beginnings Breakfast, at which we honored our four founders: Donna Gore Olsen, Linda Hankins, Dr. Lann Thompson and Dr. Gary Collings. Our founders provided the vision of parents helping parents, and created an organization that has served more than 50,000 families with a mission of **helping children with special needs live better lives by educating, empowering and connecting their families.**



Kitchen Table Beginnings Breakfast Emcee, Patty Spittler with Board President, Josh Pascoe



ASK Founders: Dr. Gary Collings, Donna Gore Olsen, Linda Hankins and Dr. Lann Thompson receiving the first annual Founders' Award.



Providing history about ASK at the November 2, 2017 Founders' Breakfast, Executive Director, Joe Brubaker

I would like to thank our board, staff, volunteers, partners, collaborators, sponsors, funders and founders for continuing the walk that we walk together toward ensuring positive health and social outcomes for Indiana families of children with special needs. We would not continue to have relevance without the families we serve. Finally, I would like to thank our clients, who every day allow us to walk alongside them.

Sincerely,

Joe Brubaker
Executive Director

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