

Integrated Community Project

SHA Membership Meeting

August 4, 2021

Integrated Community Project

Goal:

Increase the capacity of people with disabilities and who face barriers to become fully engaged in their communities



Supportive Housing Association
of New Jersey

Integrated Community Project

This initiative was funded by an Inclusive Healthy Communities Grant from the Division of Disability Services, New Jersey Department of Human Services



ICP Focus Groups

- In June and July 2021, we held six* focus groups with people with lived experience.
 - Lived experience includes physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness, substance abuse, aging, and/or having experienced homelessness
- The focus groups were attended by a total of 44 individuals.
- * In June, we held an additional focus group for family members of people with lived experience that was attended by three individuals.



What have We Heard in the Focus Groups?

“Who you are and what you are is what counts.”

“I would like to participate more - I like to do everything!”

“It does not occur to people that everyone is not like them”

“I heard things in this focus group that I have never heard”

“It is important to remember that not one person is the same.



What have We Heard in the Focus Groups? (cont.)

“There is a philosopher that said, ‘I see you, therefore you are.’ So sometimes when you're not seen, you don't you don't feel like you exist.”

“Communication is being opened and people are able to communicate.”

“Maybe they're going to be able to see it from a different perspective .”

“I mean I even heard things (in this meeting) that I never thought of before, you know like the hedges (blocking sidewalks) and you know you're unable to visually see them.”



What have We Heard in the Focus Groups? (cont.)

“Not one person is the same.”

“We hear a lot of different things. But also, we feel not alone just being together.”

“Making people understand (that) I don't look disabled; I don't normally act disabled. I am like them. Unless my makeup is all messed up, you really can't tell that I am visually impaired. It makes a big difference if someone is traveling in a wheelchair. People can tell a mile away.”

“They're not all inclusive. And that for me, at least in my life has been so frustrating.”

“Having a purpose would feel nice again.”



Themes in the Focus Group Feedback

Individuals facing with a variety of disabilities and barriers*:

- Would like better options and access to transportation to activities in their communities
- Seek improved and accessible communications channels through which they can learn about activities occurring within their communities
- Enjoy activities that typically fall in the category of hobbies
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Themes in the Focus Group Feedback (cont.)

- Participate in services, fellowship and other activities through their houses of worship.
- Both enjoy and desire purpose driven experiences which include social justice activities, advocacy movements, and leadership programs and opportunities
- Want to give back to their community and “pay it forward.”



Themes in the Focus Group Feedback (cont.)

- Seek opportunities to join in physical activities beyond solitary exercising including organizing groups
- Attend a variety of local and county government meetings
- Seek opportunities to both enrich their own lives with music, other entertainment, culture and continuing education opportunities and, also share their own talents with others

* Please note that the common themes below are ranked by the frequency which we heard them mentioned by focus group participants.



Questions for SHA Membership

- Based on your experience, do you hear from people with lived experience similar things to what we heard through the ICP focus groups? If yes, do you have anything to add here?
- Based on your experience, do you hear from people with lived experience different things than what we heard through the focus groups? And if yes, what do you hear that is different?

