

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

A Pilot Project for Western MA Family Support Centers supported by Al Condeluci





Name:

Title:

Agency

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Erica Donovan	Berkshire Program Manager	Pathlight
Mary Ann Brennen	Co-coordinator for Widening the Circle	Arc of Massachusetts

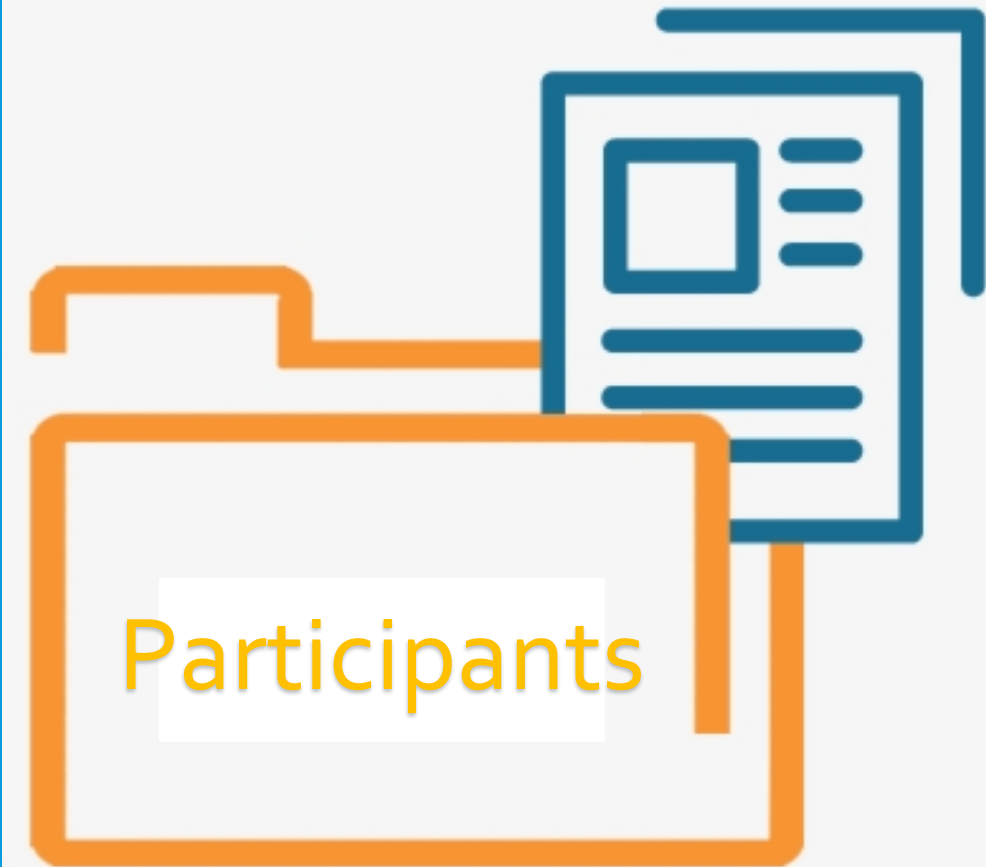
GOALS OF THE PROJECT:



Our goal for this 12 month pilot project, was to increase the capacity and reach of our current community integration projects, and implement new community based programming for the families that we serve. We did this with a focus on community inclusion, and building social capital.

PARTICIPANTS

- We began with an Application process
- Reviewed all the applications and narrowed the selection down to 4 families that recently graduated from the AFC program.
- Ultimately only 2 participants completed the entire Pilot program.



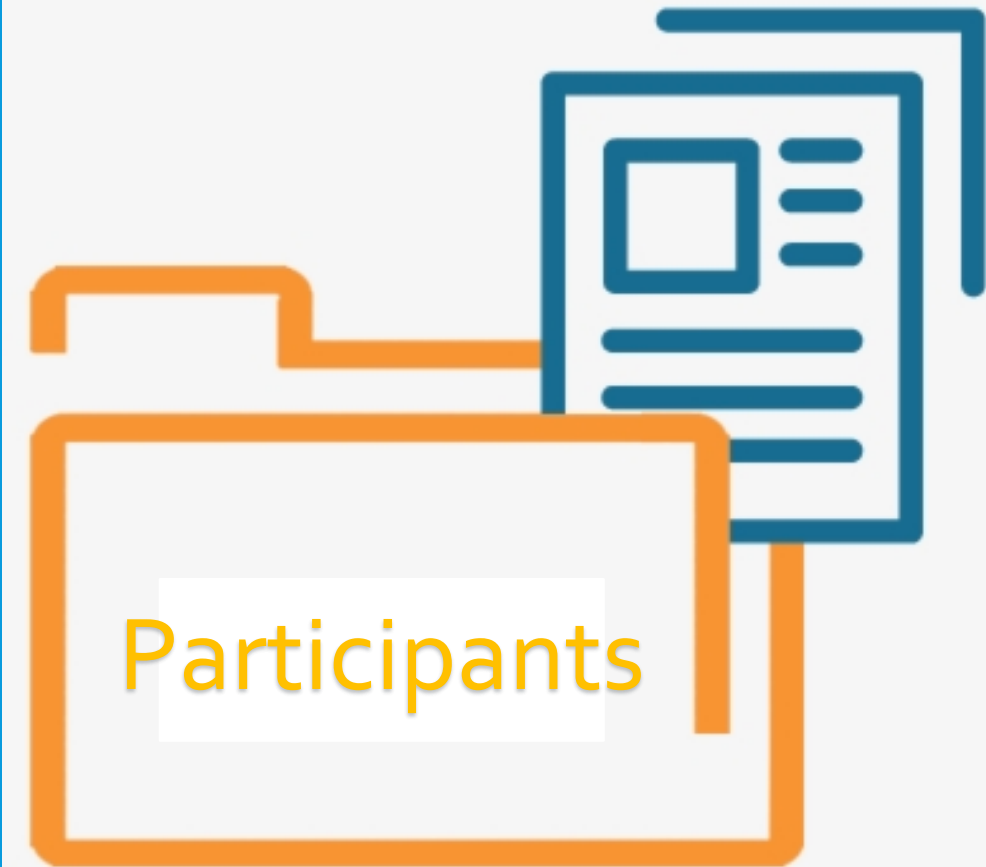
PARTICIPANTS

Participant 1:

(Male, 40) was selected because he was moving out of his family home, and into a community apartment.

Participant 2:

(Male, 23) was moving out of his family home, into a dorm room at a local college.



PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- Hosted an Orientation
- Established goals of the program focusing on person centered thinking.
- Completed surveys at the start and end for tracking
- Made it clear to families this was a short term program that would phase out staff as community connections were made.



Survey Results

When comparing the first feeling connected surveys to the second feeling connected surveys we found that for Participant 1 his first survey indicated that he felt safe, but was isolated and lonely in his family home located in a rural town. The second survey indicated that after he moved to his downtown apartment he felt less lonely and more connected. However, his sense of safety when navigating the city decreased. At one point Participant 1's family offered for him to move back home, and he advocated to stay at his apartment because he felt more connected.



Survey Results

Participant 2 reported in his first survey that although he feels safe and secure at his family home and has some community connections, he indicated that he is looking for more opportunities to meaningfully connect with others in other environments other than his home community. His final survey indicated he felt more connected at his college campus and he was feeling like his social opportunities increased.



Unexpected Victories

- Evening Program
- Integrated Summer Camp
- We now use a community based approach in all the existing work that we do and try to envision how we can use these tools to make better outcomes occur.



Questions?



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Thank you for participating in the Pilot Project Orientation we look forward to seeing you in the Fall!

