



A HOME OF ONE'S OWN

**Meeting the Challenges of Independent Living
With Supports**

Anita Abraham-Inz

July 2014



WHAT IS THE POINT?

POINT (Pursuing Our INdependence Together):
a program that assists individuals with developmental disabilities to live independently with supports



AND THE POINT IS ...

- Currently, a community of 40 young adults living among “typical” neighbors
- Apartment-living in several buildings in the city of White Plains, NY, a suburb of New York City
- A collaboration among 2 private agencies and participants’ families
- Staff consisting of administrative, clinical and government resources experts



THE STARTING POINT

- Who: a small group of parents of individuals graduating in 2008 from a postsecondary residential program
- What: discuss life after school
- When: spring 2007
- Why: to create a community for young people capable of living independently with supports



VIDEO ON POINT
[HTTP://VIMEO.COM/60612352](http://vimeo.com/60612352)



HOW DID WE REACH THIS POINT?

- Opened in August 2008
- Started with 15 participants
- 1 part-time staff member
- Extensive involvement of families
 - Hands-on work with participants
 - Committees with agency staff



STRUCTURE

○ Families

- Cover housing either privately or with government funding (New York State and Medicaid)
- Arrange for medical services
- Pay annual program fee (currently fee is private-pay only but the goal is to have the fee payable by Medicaid)
- Participate in committees

○ Agencies

- Hire and oversee staff
- Identify and support vocational opportunities
- Direct and manage the program



OT-RECOMMENDED FUN: PLAYING WII



STAFFING

- Full-time program director
- Program specialists (master's level)
 - 2 full-time; 1 part-time
- 4 part-time staff for activities
- Life skills trainers (funded by government or by families)
- Medicaid service coordinator, who advocates for government benefits (funded by government or optionally by family)



VOCATIONAL SUPPORTS

- Internship development
- On-site job coaching
- Transportation assistance
- Support group meetings to discuss work-related issues
- Assistance with accessing government-funded supported employment



INTERNSHIP AWARD



POINT-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

- Planned by participants and staff monthly
- Hands-on, with focus on fun
- Activities with a POINT
 - Independent living skills—e.g., meal planning, cooking, using public transportation
 - Healthy living—e.g., discussion group on personal hygiene, yoga class, seasonal sports
 - Community-building—e.g., male-only and female-only “bonding” activities
- Recreation—e.g., movies, bowling, weekend trips to cities and to activity centers like YMCA camps





Weekend trip to Philadelphia



POINT April 2014



AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

Last year, more than 70,000 people pledged to **Light It Up Blue** to shine a light on Autism for World Autism Awareness Day, Wednesday, April 2nd. **Light It Up Blue**, in its 7th year, is a unique global initiative to help raise awareness about autism. Iconic landmarks around the world will **Light It Up Blue** to show their support.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Erik 914-419-4636 Alison 914-610-8385 Natalie 914-500-9833 Barbara 761-0600 X175</p> <p>Rohan 914-409-7040 Skyler 914- 760 0882 Valerie 914-646-3385 Abby 914 475 4980</p>	<p>Save the date for the Theater for Action dinner and show on Wednesday, May 21 at 6:30. POINT Participants are free. Tickets for all others \$10</p>	<p>1 10 -12 pm Sarah Neuman Home 3:30 pm Yoga RSVP POINT 4:15 – 5:00 pm Vocational Support 5:00 – 6:00 SMAC POINT! RSVP point@wjcs.com 6:00 Mocktails & Mixers Rsvp point 6:45 pm Pickup Special Olympics APRIL FOOLS DAY!</p>	<p>2 World Autism Day 12-3 pm Food Bank 6 pm Theatre for Action</p>	<p>3 11 - 1 pm Community Give-Back RSVP POINT 3 -4:30 pm Taft Center Drop in 4:30 – 6:00 Personal Best</p>	<p>4 9 am - 12 pm Greenburg Nature Center RSVP Sklyer 2 – 5 pm Taft Center Drop In 5 -6:00 pm Book Club RSVP POINT</p>	<p>5 Maplebrook Basketball Game Pick up at 9:30 10-2 Taft Drop In Ceramics with Natalie</p>
<p>6 9 – 11:30 am Project HOPE Passover Package Delivery – volunteer to deliver food packages to home-bound seniors. Rsvp vrosen@jccany.org 11:30 Movin & Groovin' Pick up at Lake & Canfield 1:15 Basketball Pick up at Lake & Canfield</p>	<p>7 1 – 4 pm Taft Center Drop in 5 - 6:15 pm Relationship Group RSVP POINT</p>	<p>8 10 -12 pm Sarah Neuman Home 3:30 pm Yoga RSVP POINT 4:15 – 5:00 pm Vocational Support 5:00 – 6:00 SMAC POINT! RSVP point@wjcs.com 6:45 pm Pickup Special Olympics Lake and Canfield Happy Birthday Trevor!</p>	<p>9 12-3 pm Food Bank 6 pm Theatre for Action</p>	<p>10 11 - 1 pm Community Give-Back RSVP POINT 3 -4:30 pm Taft Center Drop in 4:30 – 6:00 Personal Best 6:00 All Participant Meeting and Going Away Party for Trevor</p>	<p>11 9 am - 12 pm Greenburg Nature Center RSVP Sklyer 2 – 5 pm Taft Center Drop In 3-4 pm Yu Gi Oh Tournament with snacks 4:30 pm Foodies</p>	<p>12</p>



Learning how to make a quick, healthy dinner: beef, pasta and vegetables!

MEMORIAL DAY BARBECUE



FAMILY-DRIVEN AND FAMILY-FUNDED ACTIVITIES

- Special Olympics—several local teams to join
- Special Hockey
- Personal training session
- Private occupational therapy
- Psychological counseling
- Wellness training



SPECIAL HOCKEY



POINTED SUCCESSES

Agency secured a grant that provides a space for community meetings, yoga, practicing food preparation, drop-in hours, celebrations

Government Funding

- ❖ Many families have started receiving government funding for housing costs, life skills trainers and other services. This is a result of extensive advocacy by the agencies and parents.
- ❖ POINT fits well with self-directed funding which is being encouraged by New York State.





Halloween party at the community space for POINT participants and staff

MORE POINTED SUCCESSES

- Strong program director provides excellent leadership and administrative services
- Jobs
 - ❖ Agency provides a Staff member for vocational assessment and job development
 - ❖ Agency is a provider of government-funded vocational supports
- Agency secured a grant that funds activities related to healthy living



FAMILIES GETTING TO THE POINT



POINTING TO THE FUTURE (CONTINUING CHALLENGES)

- Growth: 60 participants by 2016
 - ❖ Aggressive recruiting schedule
 - ❖ More effective follow-through on recruitment
- Ameliorating high costs
 - ❖ Fundraise through grants
 - ❖ Work to increase government funding
 - ❖ Work to have annual POINT fee payable by Medicaid



THANKS FOR GETTING THE POINT

- Independent living with supports
- Community of peers within a large community of typical people
- Natural supports in addition to the paid staff
- POINT Families and Friends (PFF) very strong advocacy group with many committees
- Collaboration among two agencies and PFF



WEEKEND TRIP TO FROST VALLEY YMCA CAMP



PREPPING FOR AN ART PROJECT



SCALING NEW HEIGHTS



CONTACT INFORMATION

- anita.inz@gmail.com

- POINT@wjcs.com

- Westchester Jewish Community Services

[http://www.wjcs.com/index.php?](http://www.wjcs.com/index.php?src=gendocs&ref=POINTProgram&category=Special%20Needs)

[src=gendocs&ref=POINTProgram&category=Special%20Needs](http://www.wjcs.com/index.php?src=gendocs&ref=POINTProgram&category=Special%20Needs)

- Jewish Childcare Association of New York

[http://www.jccany.org/site/PageServer?](http://www.jccany.org/site/PageServer?pagename=programs_compass_point)

[pagename=programs_compass_point](http://www.jccany.org/site/PageServer?pagename=programs_compass_point)



THE END

Thank you
for your kind
attention

