

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human Services, 2013 Oregon Legislative Session.

Attention: Sen. Alan Bates, Co-Chair and Rep. Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair.

February 28 2013

Weisz Family story:

We are the Weisz family. We are the parents of 5 children, in which 4 were siblings with special needs. We have been through a lot as a family. Even prior to the adoption our family began to experience difficult behaviors with our children. The behaviors began to be unmanageable for us to handle. We began the Step Up Program (Children's Intensive Services Program) which uses the wraparound model and principles. This program has been very helpful to our family. It has helped our whole family not just the child in need. Our family has been able to receive help as a whole. We were able to get services that worked for our family. We had monthly meetings where a facilitator brought our team of provider's and natural supports together at one time to discuss the strength's and needs for our family. At the meetings, the team did a great job collaborating and brainstorming different ways to get our needs meet. It was so nice to have all the team players (providers) at the table at one time to discuss all the different needs of each family member. We were given a Family Partner through Oregon Family Support Network. Our Family Partner was helpful because she had her own life experience with raising a child with special need. With her experiences with her own, they made it easy to connect with her. Our Family Partner was able to attend difficult school meetings and help us have our voice heard and valued at the table. Our Family Partner attended our monthly team meetings and this was very helpful to us in order to get answers to questions we had. Our Family Partner also got us connected to other community resources in which we would not have known about, and even now offers different training and support groups for us to attend.

Our family will miss the monthly meetings and facilitation of the Step Up program, our family is much healthier and able to manage behaviors as they arise. Our family has learned new skills to work together as a family. Our children have learned new skills to work better at school and gained opportunities in which they have gained social skills that they did not have prior to the program. We feel that our family is now much more confident and able to ask for and access the help if/when we need it.

We appreciate the opportunities given our family with the great people and the Step Up Program as a whole.

Sincerely,

Dennis and Dawn Weisz
Clackamas County