



The ABLE Network - Planning and Starting - Part 2

Transcript

Joan Hurst: As Barb was explaining, the key part of this is that it's community-based and the initial supporters of our program were local businesses and educators, but also we had huge support from one of the local faith communities. They helped us to secure a location that is very central in our town: close to transit, close to businesses, and close to the recreation centre. I think that's been the key to our success. We're not on the outskirts of town; we're right in the centre and that's really helped.

So, like Barb was saying, we got charitable status, we got all that business part of it done first, and then we started to go out and locate businesses that would be interested in supporting our young adults. And I'm happy to say that--part of my role at the very beginning was to go out and do that--there was no business that said "No" to us. Everybody we approached was open to it. We made sure that they understood that our participant's involvement in their workplace would have to benefit the participant but it would also have to benefit the business as well. And we've been able to maintain close relationships with all the businesses that we started with--except one which didn't suit, and so we were able to find another work placement. So, you've got to be willing to change and grow.

Now we have eight participants and our hope is to, when we're fully operational, to have 15 individuals with us at the ABLE Network. And we feel that with size of this community right now, that a really good fit, with our location, would be 15.

Both Barb and I have older daughters and part of our idea about being community-based came from our daughters' graduating from high school and going off to universities. We wanted to make sure our other daughters had a similar experience, so they were out there and in the community, so that was key too.

(More information: <http://www.theablenetwork.ca/>)

