

Submitter: Julissa Mendez  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services  
Measure: SB1016

within the last year of working for Families Connected and Familias en Conexión at The Arc Lane County, we have seen so much growth in our families. With Familias en Conexión, our parents struggle with language barriers and would often isolate themselves from the community. Recently, we have seen our families include themselves in the community and community conversations. A few months back, we partnered with Willamalane Park and Recreation to do a conversation where parents with children with disabilities have the opportunity to speak on what these parks need to become more accessible for their child. We had a great turn out and it was very empowering to see our parents strongly advocate for their children.

Being a Family Network, especially one that works for the Latinx community, we have been able to be the bridge for parents and agencies/organizations. With hosting our monthly parents meetings and trainings, our parents have gained a lot of skills when it comes to communicating and advocating for their child. We have parents who are no longer afraid to voice their concerns, despite language barriers. Parents who will continue to educate themselves so they are walking into IEP meetings with full confidence in what that is and what their child needs. The Family Networks has and continues to support, empower and advocate for parents with a child that experiences I/DD and their child.