



Family Leadership Series

UFC offers a Family Leadership Series that consists of four two-day workshop sessions for a group of approximately twenty-five parents and family members. Areas of focus include: 1) affirming the value of families and their power to create change; 2) helping families develop a positive vision for their family member; 3) strengthening communication, negotiation and advocacy skills; and 4) enlightening families about the policy-making & legislative process in Massachusetts. There is no charge to attend the Family Leadership Series - lodging and meals are provided, and respite/child care costs and travel costs can be reimbursed.



Grants

UFC offers training grant for agencies that support individuals with disabilities and their families. These grants are intended to provide workshops and trainings for family members who wish to strengthen their skills to become more active leaders, but are unable to attend our more intensive Family Leadership Series. Family support agencies, individuals/family members or family groups within an agency are welcome to apply for grant money. Any training (not including educational advocacy^{***}) that will further a family's capacity to effectively obtain quality services in the community for their family member will be considered.

^{***}Since the Federation for Children with Special Needs provides training in educational advocacy, we would not want to duplicate their efforts.



Networking

Knowing other families who are in similar situations is often the most helpful experience for families who have a member with a disability. Families are given many opportunities for networking during the Family Leadership Series. After the Family Leadership Series, every “graduate” becomes a member of UFC and MFOFC and our area coordinators will support UFC member to connect with other members who share their concerns and interests. These connections will support the leadership and advocacy efforts UFC members chose to pursue.



UFC

Established in 1991, Uniting Families for Change (UFC) is a grassroots, multicultural coalition of families in Western Massachusetts who have come together to bring about change for individuals with disabilities and their families. UFC believes that an investment in helping families become better informed and more effective in their advocacy is critical for implementing reforms needed to ensure more promising and valued futures for their family members who have disabilities.

UFC is the western Massachusetts chapter of Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change (MFOFC), a statewide network of families dedicated to securing more responsive, more comprehensive and more flexible family supports.