18 Slides
Slide 1
Summary National SSP Survey on Curriculum & Training
Presentation at National Convention of the National Federation of the Blind's DeafBlind
Division Business Meeting
July 12, 2017
Katherine Gabry
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Slide 2
National SSP Survey on Curriculum & Training
- Support Service Provider - SSP
- Survey developed by the National SSP Development Alliance (formerly known as the National SSP Task Force)
- Survey circulated February – April 2017
  - Determine standards for SSP services
  - Better define
    - Role of the SSP
    - Training necessary to be a qualified SSP

Slide 3
National SSP Task Force
Started Fall 2015 by Ryan Bondroff (Seattle)
Goals
1. Develop a national curriculum and certification process for SSPs
2. Develop a term to replace "Support Service Provider"
   - More empowering term
   - Stronger awareness to agencies & legislatures

The National SSP Task Force officially folded in 2016, but a small group of the original members continued the work of the original Task Force with a new name: the National SSP Development Alliance.

Slide 4
Helen Keller National Center
Biannual Survey of SSP Programs
- Most recent 2016
- 29 states and District of Columbia offer a total of 38 SSP programs
- Most programs are regional
- Approximately 1,200 people served by these 38 SSP programs
- HKNC estimates that approximately 2.5 million people live with combined loss of hearing and sight
- Only about 1 in 2,000 DeafBlind people have SSP services

Slide 5
What did we decide to do?

Survey experienced SSPs!
We defined "experienced SSP" as one who has:
1. Worked at least 15 volunteer and/or paid assignments
2. Worked with at least 5 different people
3. Used a variety of language, mobility and communication skills

Slide 6
Development of the Survey
- 9 month process
- Established a team of 13 Peer Reviewers
  1. DeafBlind individuals
  2. SSPs
  3. Interpreters
  4. Family members
- Team provided review, creative problem solving, writing, critique, kudos, testing … not once, not twice, but three times!
- Distribution
  1. DeafBlind people, camps, organizations, SSP programs
  2. Family, friends
  3. Email, social media

Slide 7
Survey Content
- Demographics
- The work of SSPs
- How SSPs are trained
- Core Concepts SSPs believe are necessary
- Challenges on the job
274 SSPs took the survey.

Slide 8
Demographics of SSPs Who Took Survey
Women = 73%
Men = 26%
Older than 30 = 87%
Younger than 30 = 12%
Older than 45 = 60%
Hearing and sighted = 55%
Deaf or Hard of Hearing = 43%
DeafBlind = 2%
Blind = 0%

Slide 9
Longevity of Experience
indicates a longtime commitment to the community
43% more than 10 years

20% more than 5 years
83% report a personal relationship/friendship with someone who is DeafBlind

Slide 10
Languages Used
American Sign Language = 94%
Tactile American Sign Language = 85%
Spoken English = 63%
Touch communication systems = 56%

Slide 11
States with the Highest SSP Survey Response
Washington State = 20%
New Jersey = 12%
New York, Maryland, Ohio = 10% each
Pockets of SSP Services
Seattle
New York – New Jersey metropolitan area
Washington, DC metropolitan area
Ohio
Smaller pockets in Florida, California, Minnesota

Slide 12
Typical SSP Activities
Shopping
Errands
Travel
Workshops/trainings
Conferences
Medical appointments
Social activities
Clubs/organizations

Slide 13
SSP Training
More than 70% of the SSPs said they learned their skills in a variety of ways: from DeafBlind people, from multiple SSP training workshops and programs, and on their own.
All of them – *every one* – felt that DeafBlind people should be involved in the training.
The average ranking the SSPs gave their formal training program was 8 out of 10.

Slide 14
Core Concepts Surveyed
Introduction to DeafBlind
Role of the SSP
Providing Visual & Environmental Information
Communication

Practicing Skills
Mobility & Safe Travel
DeafBlind Culture
SSP Environments
The Professional SSP

Slide 15
Where SSPs Wanted More Training
All forms of communication & communication styles, including specifically touch
communications (ProTactile, Haptics)
Real-life practice
O&M
Dealing with challenging situations
Spending more time with DB mentors
Setting boundaries
Taking care of themselves

Slide 16
SSP Comments on Their Work
- Making a positive difference
- Providing access that leads to inclusion in the greater community
- Exposure to a rich culture
- Making great lifelong friends
- Knowing that because they offered their time, another person can exercise their rights as
  an independent, self-empowered individual

Slide 17
Are SSPs interested in a national certification?
90% said
YES

Slide 18
Next Steps
Finish compiling the survey data
Crosstrain interpreters and interveners as SSPs
Survey DeafBlind people
1. Role of the SSP
2. Expectations of SSP services
3. Training SSPs
Build the National SSP Database
To use the database, email: NSSPCert@gmail.com