Start-Up Process

• The Maryland Respite Care Coalition (MRCC) first began in 1997:
  • September 28, 1998: Maryland’s First Annual Respite Awareness Conference was held; Regional workgroups recommend Respite Coalition; DHR, DDA, MHA, Kennedy Krieger Institute, Governor’s Office for Individuals with Disabilities, Prince George’s County Foster Parent Association, Arc of Anne Arundel and Montgomery County Commission on Aging members of Planning Committee; Delegate Marilyn Goldwater attended.
  • Strategic planning to establish the coalition took place between December 1998 and June 1999.
  • October 18, 1999, Maryland’s Second Annual Respite Awareness Conference.
  • December 1999 Delegate Goldwater begins to research Lifespan Respite legislation in other states and commits to sponsoring legislation.
  • January 2000 MRCC Founding Board meets to establish coalition; Delegate Goldwater sponsored House Bill 632, Maryland Family Caregiver Support Act.
  • May 2000 DDA, DHR, DoA, MHA, Governor’s Office for Individuals with Disabilities and the Office for Genetics and Children with Special Health Care Needs meet as a workgroup to support House Bill 632. MRCC provides consultation to Delegate Goldwater.
  • June 2000, MRCC becomes an Incorporated entity in the state of Maryland.
  • The group remained active until 2012, having hosted nine Annual Respite Awareness Day Conferences.
  • In 2017, the group is re-established after a period of five years of limited activity.

Structure

• As of June 2017, the MRCC remains an informal group of respite advocates representing caregivers and human services organizations around the state.
  • In the remainder of 2017 and 2018, the group plans to meet to discuss its structure.
  • The Coalition works closely with the Maryland Department of Human Resources, the lead agency for the state Lifespan Respite grant.

Staff

• MRCC is completely volunteer-based.

Funding

• No formal funding stream for the MRCC.
  • Several human services organizations provide in-kind assistance to the MRCC.

Membership

• Members include caregivers, respite agencies, non-agency providers, human services organizations, representatives from state and local government and university centers, families and concerned citizens.
  • Agencies and individuals donate specific services, funding, or in-kind support and resources to host events.
  • At present, no official policies in place around membership requirements.
Meetings and Communication
• The MRCC meets on a quarterly basis: April, July, October and January.
• Sub-groups of the committee may meet more frequently between quarterly events.
• Regular email communiqués.
• Conference calls.
• Minutes and handouts from meetings are posted on the MRCC’s website.

Major Activities
• In 2017, collaborating with the state Lifespan Respite program administered by Maryland Department of Human Resources.
• Before 2012, the MRCC achieved a number of notable successes:
  • Hosted 14 annual Respite Awareness Day Conferences.
  • Signing of Senate Bill 567 by Governor, establishing the Maryland Family Caregivers Support Coordinating Council to be housed in the Department of Human Resources, the Coalition is the only private non-profit organization to be named in the legislation as a member of the Council.
  • Partnered with the National Family Caregivers Association, Maryland Caregivers Support Coordinating Council, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disability and Aging Services to host a statewide Family Caregivers Town Hall Meeting.
  • Sponsored Legislative Breakfast for Maryland’s General Assembly.

Documents/Resources Available
• Meeting minutes, slide presentations
• Website: www.marylandrespitecoalition.org

State Contact Information
General inquiries about the Maryland Respite Care Coalition, contact:
Christine Schoenberger
443-923-4130
Schoenberger@KennedyKrieger.org
Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities At Kennedy Krieger Institute
To join the Maryland Respite Care Coalition, contact:
Linda Ramsey
410-659-7701
lramsey@marylandfamilynetwork.org
Maryland Family Network
State Lifespan Respite program:
Kathleen Ward
410-767-7422
kathleen.ward@maryland.gov
Department of Human Resources Social Services Administration Office of Adult Services