

Embracing Change...Maintaining Hope



Being the Parent Advocate at the Mental Health Association the past thirty years, I have seen changes on many fronts. Changes in office location, coworkers, and directors are only a few. Names of families I work with change all the time as well as agency or school staff that I encounter. Committees I have been a part of have come and gone in different directions.

Ways of addressing issues with families has also changed. Communication has gone from mostly phone calls and in person contact to emails by the hundreds and countless virtual encounters.

Perhaps the changes that have has the most impact are personal ones seen by children and their families as they deal with issues faced. It is rewarding to see how they have changed their way of thinking and have been willing to work with others towards more positive outcomes. I have seen outlooks change with child-serving agencies as well as all realize the benefit of working together.

While some changes are easier to deal with than others, I see them as helping us to grow “older and wiser” in dealing with issues on a daily basis.

Learning from and experiencing these changes—whether they were positive or negative, maintain hope that we can adapt to whatever happens in the future.

Mary Ann Zeitler, Parent Advocate