DART
Travel Ambassador Program

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Background

• Program launch: October 1, 2012
• Purpose: Offer both individuals and groups travel orientation, awareness, and training as it relates to utilizing DARTs fixed route (bus/rail) services.
• Service Area: All 13 DART member cities
• Staff: DART Full Time Employees (4)
• Funding: New Freedom Grant (3 years) and DART operating funds
Pre-Program Launch

• Program goals
• Peer reviews and information gathering
• Funding sources
• Staff training manual
• Easter Seals Project Action – Travel Training
• Evaluate and test staff
Types of Training

• One-on-One Travel Orientation
• Group Travel Orientation
• Lead Travel Orientation
• Group Outreach

*Also offered by Mobility Management Services

• Travel Training
• O & M Specialist
Customer Base

- Conditionally Eligible Paratransit Riders
- Denied Paratransit Applicants
- Health and Human Service Agency consumers
- Older Adults
- Commuters and Students

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Benefits of Fixed Route

• Promotes independence, self-reliance and mobility for persons who may not have previously used public transit.
• Enables persons with disabilities to use the same transit services as their non-disabled peers.
• Supports access to jobs, services, family visits, shopping and entertainment.
Benefits of Fixed Route

• Can result in lower transportation costs to the individual compared with taxis, paratransit fares, or private automobile ownership

• Decreases the need for family and caregivers to provide transportation.
Training Goals & Objectives

1. Accessing DART resources to create trip plans
2. Street crossing skills
3. Recognizing landmarks
4. Locations of bus stops, transit centers and/or light rail stations
5. Recognizing bus numbers/distinguishing correct train
6. Safe boarding/exiting of DART vehicles
7. Stranger awareness and emergency skills
Success Measures

• Paratransit Riders on Fixed Route Bus
• Health and Human Service Agency feedback
• Follow up interviews
• Referrals
• Increase in ridership
How are we doing?

- FY13: Total Trained 22
  - Individuals Trained: 22
  - Groups Trained: 1
  - Group Outreach: 3
  - Lead Training: 1

- FY14: Total Trained 52
  - Individuals Trained: 52
  - Groups Trained: 4
  - Group Outreach: 8
  - Lead Training: 0

- FY15 (Oct - Apr): Total Trained 58
  - Individuals Trained: 58
  - Groups Trained: 12
  - Group Outreach: 49
  - Lead Training: 1

Total Trained: 22
Total Trained: 64
Total Trained: 243
Paratransit – Fixed Route Bus

Trips on Fixed Route

- FY 12: 227
- FY 13: 1083
- FY 14: 2052
- FY 15 (Oct - Apr): 1854
Challenges

• Establish thorough processes and procedures without impeding services
• Not everyone is a fit for this job
• Know your limitations – don’t oversell
• Set clear boundaries and expectations
Travel Ambassador Program

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