



Empowerment through research: how to get a research program you are interested in up and running



**Presented by: Patsie Frawley and the Reinforce
Self Advocacy Group AFDO conference 2009**

**Researchers: Reinforce Self Advocacy group, Paul
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Background



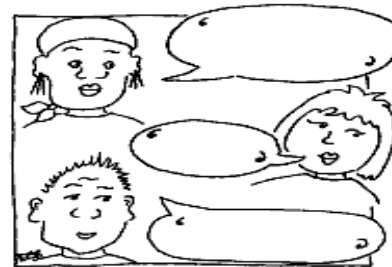
- Reinforce self advocacy group have been involved in self advocacy in Victoria since 1980.
- Our story of self advocacy runs alongside the story of intellectual disability and can tell us about the importance of having a self advocacy movement.
- In late 2007 Reinforce members talked to some researchers they knew about wanting to document the history of their group to find out more about what self advocacy is and has been and how it can continue into the future.
- The researchers agreed to work with the group to do this research and to get funding so the Reinforce members and the University researchers could work together on this project



When you have a research idea you could do what we did.....



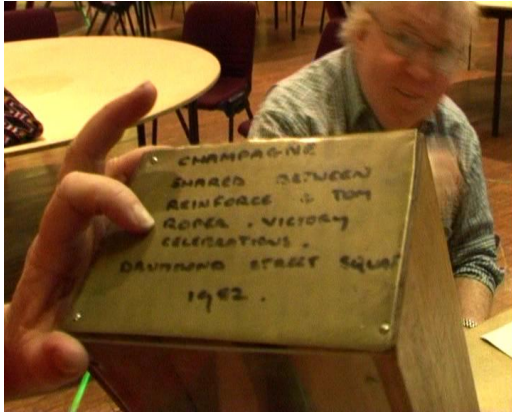
- Talk about it for a long time but not get anywhere with it
- Then talk about it some more but with people who can help you do it
- Keep talking about it at meetings and decide what you want to get out of it



- Make a decision to do it with researchers who can make sure it is done in a way that will get heard



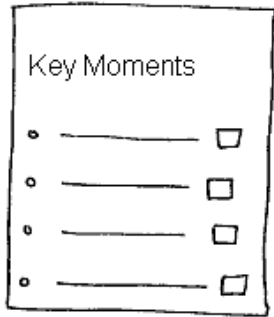
Working out what to do



- Our idea was to do the history of Reinforce
- The researchers' had some other ideas too – like using the history of Reinforce to understand more about self advocacy and inclusion
- We wanted a reunion
- The researchers thought that was a good idea but wanted to use the reunion to find out who needed to be interviewed in the research
- We agreed to get started this way and see what happened
- The reunion was a great success & it helped us work out what else we could do in the research



Working together



- We have been meeting for two years – this is a lot of time for the researchers and Reinforce to put into the project planning
- We needed money to do the research - Chris and Paul wrote the big research application to the Australian Research Council – we did not understand everything in this but we trusted the researchers
- The research plan said we would do the research together and we are



What you do when you are doing research

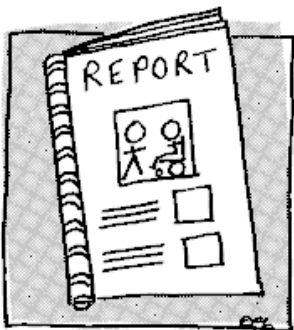
- talking, planning, sharing ideas about what needs and how to do it
- talking to people – we have decided to interview self advocates and people who have supported self advocacy
- Talking to people: what people said in the interviews – this is 'content analysis'.
- Looking at their files – Chris, Paul and Patsie are doing this – to get some ideas from what they have found and we will talk about it



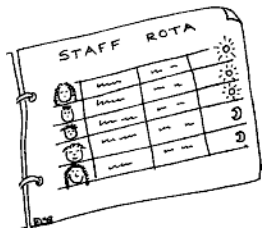
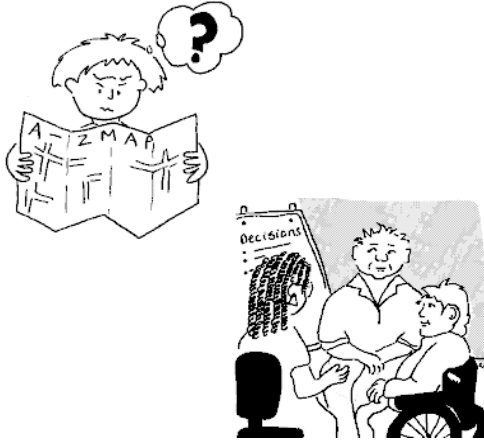
What our research is going to do for us



- Help us learn more about the role Reinforce has had in self advocacy in Australia
- Given us the opportunity to work as researchers on something we wanted to find out more about
- Given us the opportunity to 'become researchers'
- Develop a strong partnership with University researchers
- Write papers and do presentations about what we have found so that lots of other people can learn more about self advocacy



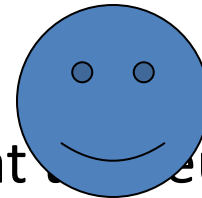
What we have liked and what we have found hard



It has been hard because

- Working out who to interview and how to do everything we want to do
- Keeping everyone up to date with where we are going with the research – over a long time
- Finding regular times to meet and getting commitment from a core group

We have liked



- Seeing people at a reunion
- Working on a project together – researchers and self advocates

Tips for getting involved in research



- Self advocates with research ideas should talk to researchers from Universities who can help put the ideas down, help get research money and work with you to do the research



- Talk about your ideas for research with each other and with researchers



- It is hard work and takes awhile to get there but worth it– just stick with it



- It is good because when you do work as research you get to tell lots of people what you found out and it gets written about so people can learn from it