FY 2015 9th Support Project for Persons with Disabilities - Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: January 21, 2016 (Thursday) 13:30-15:30

Venue: Mie Prefecture Comprehensive Welfare Center for the Physically Disabled, Large Training Room

Participants: 14 project members, 2 secretariat staff

1. Matters Discussed Last Time (December)

　・The secretariat staff explained the topics discussed last time.

・Last time, members split into groups and discussed where and with whom they'd like to live, and if they were to live in a group home, how they would like to live there. Many of the opinions shared by members were as below.

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| ●Where and with whom would you like to live?  ・Currently, I live in the community or at home.  ・I would like to continue living in the same place as I am now.  ・Because I live in the countryside, I’d like to live somewhere more convenient.  ・During the day, I want to work with colleagues who are understanding.  ・On days off I want to go out to places like the cinema and other various spots.  ・Transportation in Mie Prefecture is inconvenient, so I wish it would become more accessible. |

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| ●If you were to live in a group home, how would you like to live?  ・It’s good for practice in the future, but I don’t like places with restrictions.  ・As long as it’s somewhere I can spend time freely, that’s fine.  ・After all, I really don’t want to live in a group home. |

2. Today's Topics

① We looked back on what has been discussed in this project so far.

② We shared opinions on how to spread what we have discussed so far to a wider range of people.

(1) Reviewing what has been discussed so far in the project, conversation and meetings up to now

・Based on the list, we looked back on what we discussed from the 1st to the 8th session, and talked and shared together, and reflected on it.

・In the first meeting, it was decided that every time in the project we would have self-introductions, exchange opinions, and get to know each other's feelings and disabilities.

・Since May, members have introduced themselves and exchanged opinions at each session.

・As we listened to each member's self-introduction, we realized that even while each of us faces difficulties, we all have things we look forward to.

・I think this was a great opportunity for us to get to know one another.

・The right column in the list includes things such as "members' proposals to the prefecture and participation in training sessions," listing meetings and training attended by project participants.

(2) Ideas for spreading the project discussions to a wider audience

・Previously, when we asked everyone freely about how to better spread the project’s opinions, the following ideas to get more people involved came up.

・How about reaching out to disability organizations?

・What if we made the themes easier to understand?

・How about going out more into the community and holding meetings by area?

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| ●Taking these suggestions into account, what should we do to let more people know about what we have discussed so far?  ・I think if we spread information about the meetings via SNS (social networking services), a lot more people would learn about it.  ・How about using the website to collect opinions?  ・I’d like to get people with hearing and visual impairments involved too.  (→Providing information support will be necessary.)  ・I want to connect with people who have different kinds of disabilities.  ・I’d like to visit people living in facilities and hear how they feel about living in the community.  ・I want to find ways to gather the voices of those who can’t speak up even if they want to.  ・I want to convey the project discussions to the Prefecture’s Independent Living Support Council.  ⇒I hope they will consider support measures that make independent living easier.  ・I want to share our personal experiences so that young people with disabilities can have more choices for the future and find what they want to do.  ・I want schools and teachers to understand too.  　⇒It’s not good if people around us decide our future for us.  　⇒How about filming the meeting and showing it on video?  ⇒But, convincing parents will probably be difficult.  ・I want to hear voices from various regions.  ・I want government officials to see this project.  ・I want to discuss anxieties about living alone. |

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| ●Other thoughts and impressions  ・When I get through hard times, I hope this project can be a place I can casually come to.  ・I think it’s important to broaden the scope of disabilities included.  ・When I was bullied, I wished people around me would help.  ・I want people to understand disabilities.  ⇒If you can let things go, it’s important to do so and not take it too much to heart.  ・There is stress from dealing with my family. It would be nice if there were a way to let it out.  　⇒I play table tennis. That has become one of my places to belong. |

3. About Future Topics

○Mie Prefecture Independent Living Support Council

Date and Time: February 16, 2016 (Tuesday) from 1:30 pm (planned)

Location: Mie Prefecture Comprehensive Welfare Center for the Physically Disabled, Large Training Room

- Observing is free. If you are interested, please feel free to join.

- This is a forum where welfare service providers and government officials gather to discuss the future direction for Mie Prefecture.

○ 10th Project

- The next (10th) project will be held on Monday, February 22, 2016, starting at 1:30 p.m.