

Deputy Secretary of ODP Kevin Friel

Listening Tour

Friday, January 20, 2012

Good Morning,

My name is Eugene Young; I am a retired police officer and a Board member of the Police & Fire Association for Handicapped Children (PPFAHC). We work to assist families and their loved ones with disabilities. Our membership of Policemen, Firemen (active & retired) is concerned and (to be frank) frightened.

We are fathers, mothers and relatives of children and adults with disabilities. My son Joshua is a great young man, who is 18, he happens to have ID/Autism. My fear as his father is that all the work, love, blood, and tears his mother, me and the countless other people who supported Joshua will disappear.

The support/services Josh receives has made all the difference in his life so far. He is able to explore his neighborhood, city and community. He is member of the JR. ROTC at his school. His art work has been shown in 2 shows. He is learning to be more independent and use his voice.

Josh, his mother and I have dared to dream of a future. We dared to plan a life; we dared to believe that we have a system that supports our hopes and dreams.

Deputy Secretary, I was shot in the line of duty and had to retire from the Philadelphia Police Department. I had many fears in my recovery. None of those fears are as great as the one I have for my son Joshua if we turn the clock back and support institutions and not giving people real lives in their communities where they belong.