

Sabrina Freewynn, MPH graduated from the Oregon MPH program at Portland State University in March 2006. Since then, she has worked for the Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs as the Project Manager for the Strengthening Oregon Community Services Project. Prior to this position, she worked for the Oregon State Department of Human Services on tobacco prevention.

My longstanding love is for community involvement, and my training, in addition to public health, is in community organizing. In my view, health is something that happens more in the community than in a hospital or clinic.

Zane is the child I'm holding during the interview. At the time he was four months old. He is my second child. My first, Sage, now three and a half, attended grad school with me. Bringing children into the workplace and academic settings is a wonderful way to raise awareness of the needs of both children and parents—and a wonderful way to promote breastfeeding.

My leadership style is very influenced by my father, who worked for the Forest Service in public relations. His view was that public involvement happened one way or the other. It was much better for everyone if the process was good upfront, rather than through a lawsuit if you didn't do it well. I've found that public involvement is really about asking the experts—the people who live in the real world each day—in order to find the wisest answer.

The most important leadership tool? Facilitation! A good facilitator makes things possible and a great one makes things fun. These are skills that everyone should learn and are about so much more than taking good flip chart notes.