

REAL LIFE AFTER SCHOOL



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PLANNING FOR REAL LIFE AFTER SCHOOL

WAYS FOR FAMILIES AND TEACHERS TO PLAN FOR
STUDENTS EXPERIENCING SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE

GARY BUNCH, KEVIN FINNEGAN & JACK PEARPOINT



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*Ways for Families and Teachers
to Plan for Students
Experiencing Significant Challenge*

*Gary Bunch, Kevin Finnegan
and Jack Pearpoint*

INCLUSION PRESS

A Note On Authorship

This book is the result of extensive collaborations. Gary Bunch and Kevin Finnegan were the primary researchers. However, dozens and dozens of people from a wide array of perspectives have contributed the content which has been organized into a coherent report on transition with what we hope are helpful thoughts on next steps we could all participate in so 'each belongs' is a fact and not just a hope.

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- Our friends and colleagues working in schools. There are islands of excellence out there where vision guides education. Many of these colleagues are from Canada and the United States. Others may be found in nations as diverse as England, Malta, India, Scotland, Russia, Spain, Germany, and the Netherlands. Their visionary leadership continues to inspire.
- Our friends and colleagues who are parents of families deeply involved in the daily and life-long relationships and challenges posed by society to their family members who are experiencing disabilities. Without their vision and their efforts to bring visions to reality, very little progress toward connecting Disability Education & Social Justice would be made.
- Our supporters, both those who contribute their personal efforts and ideals and those who support us with funds. One can be of little value without the other. Together we are better.
- Lastly, to the students who travel the challenging path through the education system. You are our first inspiration.

– Gary Bunch, Kevin Finnegan
& Jack Pearpoint

Foreword

This book began as a 'report' on a research project looking at various perspectives (students, families, teachers) on the issue of "transition" from high school for students experiencing disabilities.

The research findings have hopeful threads, but reaffirm a devastating pattern of systemic misunderstanding for 'transition planning' and 'meaningful life choices' for these students. This is not 'news' to families and committed teachers who are only too aware that 'support systems' for their children 'virtually evaporate' when students turn 21. These interviews reaffirmed those facts - documenting disappointing results. Too often, students with disabilities do not find work following secondary school.

This is not new, however now it is documented. That's why this report changed. We wanted to do more than deliver more bad news. Both families and good educators want all students to have good lives. But they are often overwhelmed, consumed by bureaucratic busy tasks, and genuinely stumped about what to do.

We decided to use this report to remind, refresh and/or introduce some ideas that we know can make a difference. They are proven. They work. They are 'out of the box' approaches. But since the 'box' is systemically failing many students experiencing disability, that is a reason to try some new options.

Thus, this report proposes using 'Person-Centered Planning' approaches to assist individuals and schools to implement viable 'Transition Plans' that begin to create new and viable futures for students and families. There are two very important caveats. The authors have focused on Circles, MAPS, PATH and PlayFair Teams. They are 'introduced'. However, before they can be used, facilitators will have to do more in depth research and training. In the process, they will discover that there is a whole family of Person-Centered approaches. We focused on the ones we have been involved in developing, but there are many excellent approaches. Our point was to introduce the 'approach' as a way to move forward in a difficult situation that needs a new breathe of life.

Many students experiencing disability are presently short changed. We need to do what it takes to give them the opportunity to be full citizens.

–Jack Pearpoint

Inclusion Press & the Marsha Forest Centre, Toronto

When people discover what they have, they find power.

When people join together in new connections and relationships they build power.

When people become more productive together, they exercise their power to address problems and realize dreams.

Quoted from: When People Care Enough to Act: Inclusion Press with permission.



I

INTRODUCTION

Transition from *secondary school to post-secondary education or to work is an important event in the life of every student. For students experiencing disabilities impacting their academic achievement, moving beyond secondary school is perhaps the most important event in their lives. Preparation for this event, planning for transition while in school, must be considered extensively and intensively during the secondary years. Many believe that, for some learners, planning needs to begin even before secondary school. Teachers, parents, and students must collaborate in developing a sound and personalized transition plan and ensure that it is delivered in well-laid-out steps. This is true, in particular, for those students who will be challenged in finding work. It is for this group of learners that this resource manual is designed.*

For youth with disabilities entry into the labour force is known to be fraught with challenges. As has been well-documented by federal studies, youth experiencing disabilities are significantly under-represented in the workforce. Within this group of youth, those with postsecondary education are more fortunate in finding employment than are those whose education ends at secondary level. The 2004 gap between numbers leaving secondary school and seeking work and those finding work varies from 44 to 72 % across the nation. This transition planning resource focuses on this group.

The information presented in this resource is based on what teachers, parents, and students told us about planning for life

after secondary school. We interviewed individuals in all groups and asked them to relate their experiences and views. As we listened, we began to realize that all groups understood the value of solid transition planning. They understood how they could contribute to planning. We began to realize, too, that, while some teachers and parents worked together, there is much room for improvement. There were fundamental differences between the views of teachers and parents and little opportunity to work these out in the interests of the students involved.

One point did emerge as we analyzed what people said to us, it became clearer and clearer that there is need to focus on who the student at the centre of planning is, what abilities that person possesses, what personal challenges are involved, and what the person looks forward to following school leaving. There was a sense, articulated by a goodly number of parents and by some teachers, that a vision for the student was a major missing element in transition planning. This vision is best developed when parents, teachers, and students collaborate and contribute to transition planning.

I like to be seen for myself, not by my label.

People First Ontario

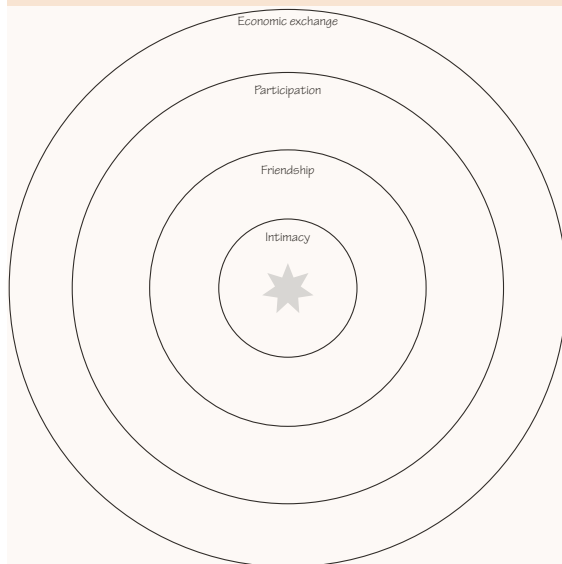
*We may have all come on different ships,
but we are in the same boat now.
—Dr. Martin Luther King*

Research indicates that the present approach to education for learners experiencing disabilities does not provide enough teachers and parents with understanding of the life situation of these learners. These students tend to experience higher levels of challenge, both on the academic side and on the social side. The academic challenge is clear to all. This becomes the focus of teacher attention and that of many parents. However, few have insight into the

social challenge. While some students with high degrees of challenge will be successful in finding work after school, many others will not be as fortunate. For these students the relationships they have with others, their ability to mix well, and the degree to which they are understood and accepted are central to life after school. These qualities impact the chance of finding work. Just as the school supports academic growth in students, so should it support social growth. The two qualities, knowledge and social awareness, are the two halves that largely determine success in finding and keeping work.

One way to strengthen transition planning for all, but particularly for this group of youth, is to develop a person-centered approach to all aspects of life from early in the school experience. This means that schools need to be proactive and hold high expectations in both the academic and the social areas of life. Both teachers and parents are familiar with the level of academic success. Academic achievement will impact on finding work. There is far less familiarity with the level of social success. This will impact on finding work just

Circle of Friends

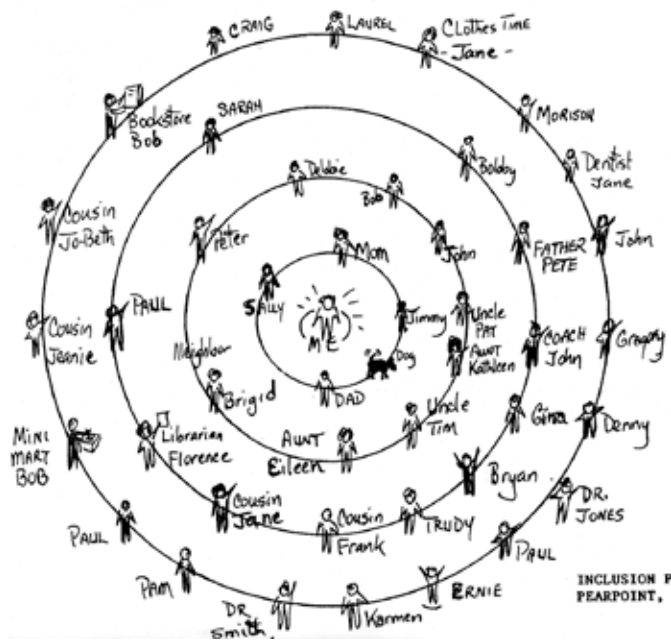


The format for recording a Circle of Friends

as much as does the academic level achieved. The following diagrams illustrate the social actuality for many students experiencing disabilities. They provide a picture of the common social differences between typical students and those experiencing disabilities.

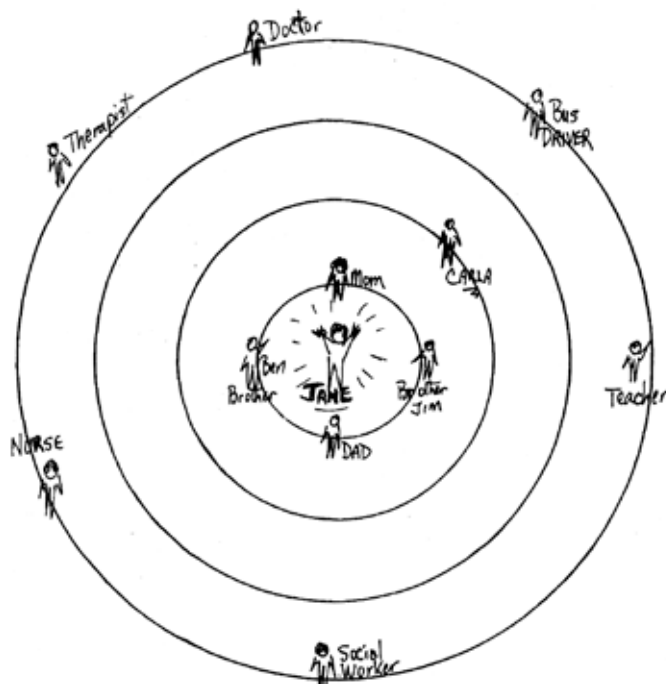
The unfortunate reality is that in too many instances

High School Student's Circle of Friends



The Circle of Friends format filled out by a typical student - with wide ranging connections. It is rich in numbers and variety.

Full circles indicate capacity to deal with life and are a powerful measure of health in our society. There are people there to call for a party, for coffee, or when you need to talk to a friend.



(more on these Circles later)

Jane's Circle of Friends - a student living in 'isolation' (perhaps at home or in a segregated supported living facility). At the heart, it is warm and loving. Beyond that, it is almost non-existent. This pattern of relationships and disconnection is tragically 'the norm' for most people experiencing disability. It is a formula for loneliness and crisis. There are no people to 'ask' for a hand. There are no people to just go to a movie, have a coffee or ...

Quoted from: All My Life's a Cricle: Inclusion Press with permission.

transition plans for this group of learners are not all they could be. Those we interviewed suggested in one way or another that attention should be paid to a number of factors influencing transition planning. Among these are:

- Need for a more person-centered planning process.
- Continued improvement in collaboration among students, parents, and teachers.
- Greater involvement of those engaged in Co-Operative Education programs for typical students, and more by Guidance staff.
- Need for teachers to guard against low expectations for certain students.
- Creativity in conceptualizing and implementing workplace experiences.
- Strengthening job coaching support during workplace experiences.

The quality of what is achieved is uneven across the education system. Some are doing an excellent job in well-designed programs. Many are still working to put the elements of transition planning in place. A commonly missing element is one of the most important, the social experiences of youth with disabilities throughout their school experience. It is the person that an employer hires. This is of great importance when the academic side is of modest strength.

I want the same opportunities as my brother has.

People First Ontario

This resource is based on the belief that all students have a right to a well-thought-out transition plan, a plan designed to reflect the individual's academic and social abilities. Within this, high goals must be set for the individual, acknowledging there is more to success in the workplace than simple academic achievement scores. The aim is for significant individual social progress and connections as well. Such a plan best involves the parents, teachers, and students working as a collaborative team. There should be work experience opportunities based on the student's abilities and interests. The definition of "work" must be flexible and based on a creative approach to planning work.

Collaboration, careful planning, flexibility, and creativity all are components that need to go into transition planning for all students. For this group of students, they are essential.

This resource takes the approach that the main players in transition planning, the teachers, the students, and the parents, possess the needed knowledge and skills to plan for transition. What is needed is a vision of the student as a person so that all aspects of the plan relate to a guiding concept. Our emphasis is on suggesting that all players work toward the positive, that transition plans be based on person centered planning strategies known to work, and that transition planning be initiated at the time of the student's arrival at secondary school, if not earlier.

Jobs are important to all of us. It is the fortune of most of us that we find work. The group of students for whom this resource has been developed is not as fortunate. One way of increasing the

possibility of finding work is to work on developing the whole person. The crafting of educational programs and plans, which consider the entire person, will increase the possibility of finding and keeping work.

Throughout this resource we have inserted the voices of people experiencing disabilities and their thoughts about work. We also have inserted examples of creativity and flexibility in finding work.

JOBS are Important

- *You make money.*
- *Doing a good job.*
- *Doing for other people.*
- *Self-respect, self-image, feeling good about yourself.*
- *Be more involved in community.*
- *Makes you happy.*
- *Learning more skills on the job.*
- *Meet new people and make new friends.*
- *Build more for the future.*
- *Building a better reference for jobs.*

People First Ontario

Whose Ideas are in This Manual?

This resource manual is designed to support students, teachers, and parents in working collaboratively to develop strong transition planning from secondary school for learners impacted by disability. Our focus is that group of students whose disabilities impact on academic and social achievement, and, thus, on full life following school.

This resource manual is based on information provided by teachers, parents, and students. Some 42 lengthy individual interviews were conducted. Teachers were from different school systems to ensure that our information was based on various approaches to transition planning. All teachers interviewed were knowledgeable regarding transition planning. Parents were from various communities; some large and some small, some urban and some rural. Parents had direct experience with transition planning in different school systems. Students were from different schools in different communities.

Those being interviewed were asked to comment on various aspects of the secondary school transition planning process as they had experienced it. From their comments, we extracted central ideas and issues. We also searched for comments on collaboration among the three groups and for clues to strategies which would support a strengthened approach to transition planning.

All comments, conclusions, and suggestions are

drawn from the information supplied by the parents, students, and teachers interviewed. The authors of the manual did not insert their own thoughts. Their job was to work with the information obtained from the three interview groups, present it as clearly as possible, and to end by suggesting transition planning ideas and strategies implied by comments of the parents, students, and teachers.

Design of this Resource

The design of this resource was determined by what students, teachers, and parents told us. We used a series of guide questions for interviews. The questions probed for information on how groups saw their roles in transition planning, and how they saw the roles of others. We asked what was positive about their experiences with transition planning and what could be improved.

One thing quickly became apparent. Teachers and families approach transition planning from differing viewpoints. Their roles and relationships relative to students are of different natures. Therefore, as you will see, we set about trying to describe the school context and the family context. In doing this we are attempting to lay a base for informed collaboration. If people understand each other better, there is more possibility of developing a collaborative relationship.

A second interesting and valuable piece of information was that families and teachers seem to view “work” differently. Teachers tied “work” to employment. Families also tied work to employment. But they also tied it to life in the community in general, and to personal relationships and leisure activities. Both teachers and parents understood that for some students, work might not be fulltime. Many more parents than teachers interpreted this to suggest that schools should consider this reality in transition planning. Planning must see life after school as more than work. It must envision what will engage students during

the times they will not be at work. Thus, in this resource we talk a little about developing a flexible definition of “work” in transition planning. We speak also of the need for creativity in envisioning work and how it might be accessed.

Both teachers and families recognized the value of working with families to prepare them for life beyond the school years. Teachers saw their role primarily as arranging to have information on community agencies working with people experiencing disabilities made available to families. Parents saw this as important as well. However, some parents also saw value in informing families on how transition planning might work, on the need to develop a vision for the student, and on community resources through a workshop format. We give an example of one parent group that has developed such a workshop for parents and students.

**Jim, a Powell River contractor
was approached by friends
to hire Andrew.**

He did.

I was approached back in the spring of 1999. When we first met Andrew, we didn't know what to expect. We became comfortable very quickly. The other workers learned to relax around working with him. He very quickly became one of the guys. The business has grown and he has grown with it. Now when a new employee comes on, he adapts quickly.

Jim stresses that the relationship with Andrew and other people with disabilities needs to continue outside of work. Andrew is invited to all of the crew's Birthday and Christmas parties. And Jim knows Andrew's parents and family as well.

Building the Road as You Walk It: Guiding Principles, Not Recipes

*How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice, practice, practice.
—Old saying among musicians*

Quoted from: When People Care Enough to Act: Inclusion Press with permission.

Lastly, we took the issues of developing a vision for the student, being concerned about the social side of life, and the value of a positive school culture seriously. It was largely, but not entirely, parents who connected these issues to planning for life beyond school. Our decision was that we would not try to teach parents or teachers possible steps in transition planning. Teachers are familiar already with their school's approach and parents learn about transition planning, one way or another, as time passes.

We want to have real work with real pay.

We want to work. We want to contribute.

We want to be included as workers.

We want to get paid

like other people get paid.

We don't want just "dead end" jobs.

We want to learn how to do jobs

that we can like.

People First Ontario

We decided to focus on understanding and supporting the student and developing a positive school culture. We would talk about getting to know the person and fitting planning around individual skills, needs, and hopes. The final sections of this resource talk about person-centered planning strategies and the need for all engaged in transition planning to work together. We talk about how to create a supportive background for transition planning. These are the large issues we learned from those with whom we talked. In various ways, they all focused their comments on the individual.

Two Paths -- Two Solutions



Quoted from: *When People Care Enough to Act*: Inclusion Press with permission.

II

The School Context and the Family Context

*Every citizen has gifts. A strong community knows
it needs everyone to give their gifts*
-John McKnight

Though a collaborative relationship is fundamental to development of an individual transition plan for learners whose disability impacts on academic achievement, it must be realized that schools and families look at the transition process from different viewpoints. It is worthwhile to consider these viewpoints, as they must be blended when undertaking transition planning so that the differing views can be complementary. Collaboration in planning the future of any student is important. In the area of education and disability, collaboration is crucial.

The School Context: How Schools Work

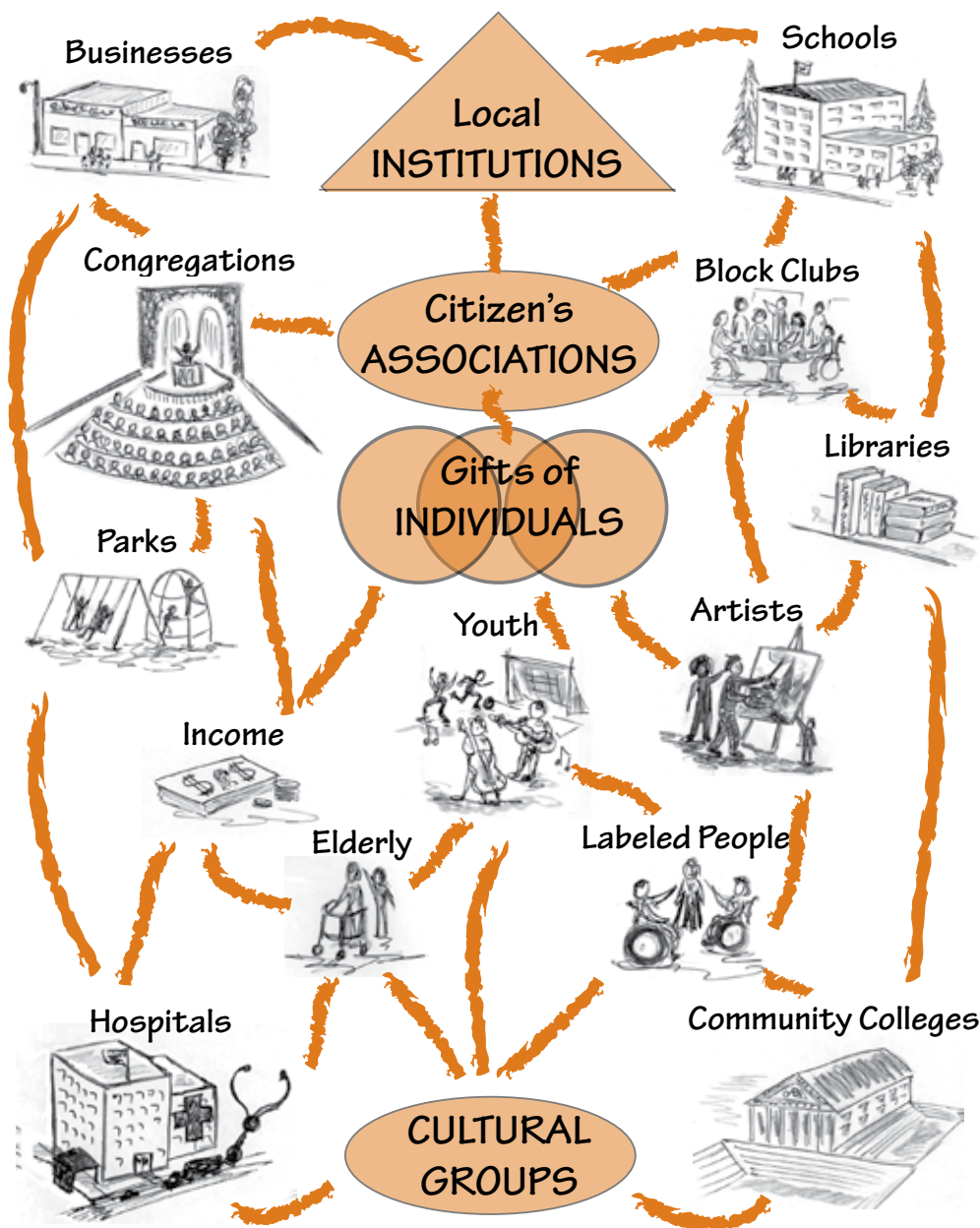
Secondary teachers work within a large institutional system. There is a hierarchy involving system level administrators, individual school administrators, department heads, subject teachers, special education teachers, educational assistants, and support staff. The system is founded on policies and processes laid down by the Ministry of Education and school system administrators to manage large numbers of students with varying needs and abilities, to meet academic goals, to work with prescribed curricula, and to ensure a safe and secure learning environment. There are a number of fundamental working conditions and expectations.

- *Teachers want to do the best for their students.*
- *Teachers reasonably regard themselves as the experts in education.*
- *Secondary teachers are subject specialists. Most have little or no professional preparation in working with students with special needs. Subject specialists, by and large, do not regard students experiencing disabilities as the focus of their work. Their focus is teaching their subject well to an entire and diverse class of students.*
- *Teachers whose expertise is in Special Education will lead transition planning with support from other school staff. Special education teachers see students experiencing disabilities as their first priority. They also see need to follow the policies and procedures laid down by their school system and their individual schools.*
- *Teachers work within scheduled daytime hours for a set number of days and months each year. Planning is done within these boundaries.*

Within this general picture each secondary school has a number of teachers who specialize in working with students with special needs and other teachers who specialize in Guidance. It is these two groups, primarily the first, who, under the direction of school administrators, develop and implement a school's transition planning process.

Secondary schools traditionally are geared toward graduation of students who will go on to post-secondary education or directly to work. More recently, they have become responsible for a number of

Community Assets Map



Students 'graduate' to lives in communities. Communities are places of tremendous capacity and connection - if we look and have people to help us make those connections. (illustrations from *When People Care Enough to Act*: Inclusion Press)

students for whom these outcomes are less likely, students described as having special needs. Teaching both groups of students in the same school building has posed a challenge to administrators and students. Exactly how best to go about meeting this challenge has resulted in differing models of education for learners with significant challenge to their academic and vocational progress. This blending of students with differing abilities and needs is handled in most secondary schools by creating a “school” within a school.

The intent of the first school, the one for the majority of students, is academic and/or vocational education directed to secondary school graduation. That is, the majority of typical students are taught by teachers who specialize in certain academic subjects. These students, generally, will obtain a secondary graduation certificate and go on to post-secondary education or to employment. This is the school attended by the majority of students.

The second “school” has a limited number of students. These students are considered to have special needs, which require accommodations, adaptations, and/or modifications to their school programs. These students take as many “regular” courses as pos-



Gifts of the head – knowledge, information

Gifts of the hand – practical skills

**Gifts of the heart – for example, passion,
listening**

EVERY Person has “Gifts”: of the head, hand and heart. Transition planners and friends see, honour and nurture the gifts in every person. Thus we discover the capacities that can be developed in workplaces and the community.

sible. For some of these students with special needs, these needs often are interpreted as meaning that they may not take any regular courses, and that they need to be in a special class segregated from their typical peers. Some may have little or no instructional interaction with specialist academic subject teachers. They will be taught by special education teachers. They will earn few, if any, academic credits under the present design of secondary education. Programs designed for these students are directed toward gaining a certificate of attendance, rather than toward a secondary school graduation diploma.

Within this “school” within a school, special education teachers supported, at times, by guidance teachers and educational assistants run a program governed by a second set of policies and processes laid down by the Ministry of Education and the school system. These apply only to students identified as having special needs. They involve adjusting educational programs to enable students experiencing disabilities to master as much of the regular curriculum as possible, and/or to master alternate curricula such as life skills, learning strategies, and employability skills.

For specific reasons, such as developing individual education plans (IEPs), transition planning, and solving problems, these teachers are expected to interact with parents and students, as well as with supportive community agencies. As teachers work daytime schedules, meetings with parents are scheduled during the school day, other than for special evening events such as Curriculum Nights. Though teacher-parent collaboration is an aspect of the teacher’s work and has value, teachers see it as a tool to advance learning as defined by teachers, to occur during the school day, and to ensure that certain programs and set policies and processes are carried out.

Real Education

We want to go to the same schools and classes as everyone else.

We want to learn with our peers and neighbours.

People First Ontario

Overall then, secondary teachers work within an institutional environment, and are governed by hierarchically set policies, programs, and routines. The teachers hold the role of expert and are responsible to the system for the design, implementation, and evaluation of student programs. Special education teachers, and to some degree Guidance teachers, have responsibility for working with learners experiencing disabilities. In carrying out these responsibilities, teachers work to certain schedules and are guided by set policies aimed at achieving academic and/or vocational objectives. The teachers we know do the best they can to support all their students.

Introduction of students experiencing significant levels of disability into secondary schools, and into regular classroom settings, is a relatively recent educational dynamic. An important part of the work of some teachers, mostly those prepared in the area of special education, is development of programs and objectives for students identified as having special needs. This often calls for policies and processes differing from those set for typical students. In many ways students identified as experiencing special needs are treated differently than are typical students. Just how to program best for all students and make all a true part of the school community is a continual challenge. Person-centered planning is one way for schools to move in this direction.

The Family Context: How Families Work

The context of the family is the home and the local community. Families relate to the school system in order to obtain the strongest possible educational outcomes for their daughters or sons. Schools and the way they operate are unfamiliar ground for most parents. They need support and time to understand how they and teachers can work together to achieve desired outcomes for students.

The strength of the parents' understanding of their child is how he/she interacts with the family and others at home and in community settings. They see how their child undertakes the tasks of daily life. They see how their child responds to people and events in the community. While raising their child, the parents are, in fact, teaching her/him how to act and respond in social and work settings. They have a depth of understanding in such areas for their child that is greater than that of teachers, who are focused on school matters. The parent view is of their child as a person rather than as a student. The parents are experts in how their child deals with everyday life, and of how that compares to the experience of other children not experiencing disability. From the early years the parents begin to think of the time when their child will enter school, what will happen there, and what their child will do on leaving school.

It is this context of their child as a person that informs the parents' interaction with the school system. Parents know in a very personal way how the disability their child is experiencing impacts on his or her life. They can judge the impact on how their child develops from birth, through the early years, through the first experiences with school, and then through the academic and social

progress of their child during the elementary years. They know in a very real fashion the reactions of their child to school and the reactions of the school to their child. Their view, based as it is on their child's total life experiences, is different than, and far wider, than that of the child's teachers. It is a view of their child as a person within a family and a community, as a person experiencing disability, and as a person who goes to school.

Parents look to school and teachers as a primary support in realizing to the greatest degree their child's potential for formal learning. They look to the school for support in the academic area and the social area. Parents know if their child's friendship circle is rich or circumscribed. They look to school to model acceptance and interaction so that typical peers will accept and interact with their child.

As the school years go by, parents depend on the school for guidance into the future. They are intensely interested in working with the school to achieve as much as possible by the end of school, and to prepare their child for life after school.



My daughter Annie is a person with a wonderful sense of humor, infectious enthusiasm, good heart, kindness, and a beautiful smile. She is also a person with an intellectual disability who has been labeled "mentally retarded". Often people see her only as disabled rather than seeing the many other gifts Annie offers. My dream has always been that Annie will get the chance to live a life where she is needed for her gifts. It is true that we all have the great need to be needed.

I once asked my friend John McKnight, "What will allow Annie to have a safe and secure future?" John said the problem is that people in everyday life don't know that they need Annie. They don't realize that without Annie present and contributing, none of us can have a whole community. If Annie has no meaningful place, then none of us has a place we can count on.

Quote from When People Care Enough to Act: Inclusion Press with permission

A Word About the Student

The student fills two roles. He is both a member of the family and a member of the school community. While it is the school and the parents who tend to be most involved in planning the educational program for a student experiencing disabilities, particularly in the earlier years, it must be remembered that the school experience is most important to the student. It is the student who has the most at stake.

I like being able to express my own views.

People First Ontario

Both school and family should work with the student to involve her/him in decision-making. In the long term, it is the student who must begin to direct her/his life to the highest possible degree. Both teachers and parents with whom we spoke realized this fact. Each indicated that the other had an important role to play in preparing the student for independent functioning. It would seem logical, then, that school and parents must focus on helping the student to acquire skills needed to direct one's own life. This may be a challenging task for school and family, but it is a vital element of any transition planning program. It also is a central element of person-centered planning.



Greg Kazmierski had to go the court to win the right to attend regular high school in Ottawa. He won. He graduated. His circle is so extensive, that one of his most recent accomplishments is to be appointed Honorary Mayor of Blackburn Hamlet (near Ottawa). He is such a powerful connector in the community, that it is only logical. Everybody knows Greg, and Greg knows everybody. It's a better life for everyone. Greg was fully 'included' so is a contributing citizen, a taxpayer and a great friend. In an institution, he would have withered at great cost. Including Greg from the beginning made all the difference.

Meet Blackburn Hamlet's honorary mayor



Ottawa Mayor Larry O'Brien (right) named Greg Kazmierski (left) the honorary mayor of Blackburn Hamlet early last week.

BY NICK BERGAMINI
Staff Writer - The New EMC

There's a new mayor in town.

Greg Kazmierski, a well known community figure was named "Honorary Mayor of Blackburn Hamlet" by Ottawa Mayor Larry O'Brien.

With his friends and family looking on, Kazmierski, who has Down's syndrome, received the honour at a May 27th ceremony also attended by Ottawa Police Chief Vern White and Innes councillor Rainer Bloss.

The title of "Blackburn Hamlet Mayor" is well suited to the Loeb service clerk, given the many political skills he has.

Kazmierski can often be seen around the community, shaking hands and chatting with residents. Not only is he well known, but he also has a gift for name recognition that would make any politician jealous.

In 1992 he received a Commemorative Medal for the 125th Anniversary of Canada, an award given to distinguished citizens.

"There's no way around it. But as soon as we have the [population density] to support it, we can bring light-rail further east," said O'Brien. "It's a matter of incremental change."

Bloss used the tour with Chief White and the mayor to raise the issue of crime in the east-end.

"There's a lot of the focus on the core because that's where crime tends to be more visible and of a more serious nature," said Bloss. "But we have problems here and we want to distinguish them."

Local resident inspiration to all

BY NICK BERGAMINI
Staff Writer - The New EMC

Greg Kazmierski is a regular guy. He's worked at a grocery store for 19 years. He's a top player in a weekly dart league and is a big Senators fan. But what makes him extraordinary is that he has led this very ordinary life despite having Down's Syndrome.

Greg, 35, is an inspiration to his parents, Carl and Mary-Anne, whom he lives with in Blackburn Hamlet.

He was the first student with special needs in Ontario to win by appeal the right to study in a regular classroom. "We really had to fight for two years to get him in," said his mother.

"We needed to use specialists and lawyers to convince the courts."

She said that the case set an important precedent for students like Greg. "Now there are so many of them who have followed in Greg's footsteps. There are a lot of people profiting from the inclusion."

His father stressed the importance of special-needs students learning in a regular classroom. "The social

moves my beer around and tells me it's April fools, even when it's October."

"Being active in the community is a central part of Greg's life. He volunteers in the annual Blackburn Fun Fair and plays in a charity basketball game with high-powered Toronto lawyers.

His greatest passion is likely the Ottawa Senators. Greg is so loyal to the team it borders on stubbornness. He doesn't mind gloating after a win over Toronto either, recalls his father.

"We have quite a bit of family in Toronto so there is a big rivalry there. Gregory always calls them up when Ottawa wins. But when they lost to Toronto on the 22nd, he was getting lots of calls from them. But he refused to answer a single one," he said, laughing.

Greg has also had several encounters with fame. He met and later exchanged letters with Nancy Reagan, wife of former US President Ronald Reagan. He had a backstage tour with Grammy-winning singer Peabo Bryson during a Chicago concert.

He also developed a close friendship with Olympic

Greg began a co-op placement at the Loeb Blackburn Market while still in high school and was hired soon after. Nearly two decades later, he is still there.

"He's a very loyal and dedicated employee," said Store Director Steve Watson. "It wouldn't be the same place without him."

The job has been a perfect fit for Greg, said his mother. "The most beautiful thing is that he has never once left this house for work and not been in a happy mood. That's quite an accomplishment for having been there nearly 20 years."

Watching Greg work, it is obvious that the position is perfect for his outgoing personality. While he packs grocery bags, he chats with customers and, if the Senators are playing, reminds them to watch the game.

According to Wayne Carle, his friend and dart league teammate, Greg has a gift for name recognition that would make any politician jealous. Conversely, everyone seems to know him.

"Everybody knows Greg. It's like he's the mayor of



Blackburn Hamlet resident Greg Kazmierski is a top player in a weekly dart league he competes in.

the 125th Anniversary of Greg is an integral part of community has treated him and feels that the Re-

Types of Voluntary Community Associations

Artistic Organizations: Rock bands, dance groups, theater groups

Business Organizations: Chamber of Commerce, neighborhood business associations

Charitable Groups and Drives: Red Cross, AIDS Task Force, Cancer Society, Salvation Army, Literacy Groups

Church/Faith Groups: Altar Society, Bible study groups, synagogues, Mosques, choirs

Community Support Groups: Friends of the Library, Historic Preservation Society

Seniors Groups: Grey Panthers, Associations of Retired Persons

Interest Groups: Car and motorcycle clubs, recycling groups, writer's groups and book clubs

Informal Support Networks: Kinship networks, informal groups of neighbors, relatives and friends

Mutual Support: Adoptive and foster parent groups, AA, La Leche, Habitat for Humanity

Neighborhood Groups: Block watch, neighborhood associations

Outdoor Groups: Garden clubs, Audubon Groups, Nature Conservancy

Political Organizations: Your choice

Professional Organizations: Unions, Bar Association, Medical Society

School Groups: PTA, adopt a school groups, volunteer tutors

Service Clubs: Veterans Groups, Lions, Rotary, etc

Social Cause Groups: Unions, housing and hunger task forces, MAD, ARC.

Sports/Health Clubs: Sports leagues, runner's clubs

Youth Organizations: Scouts, 4-H, computer clubs

This beginning list simply hints at the enormous array of underutilized capacities in EVERY community. There are lonely people, people with time, and people who would love to be connected. These are ALL opportunities waiting for 'membership' and engagement. This is a 'treasure chest' of connections for transition planners.

Quoted from *When People Care Enough to Act*: Inclusion Press with permission

Community: A Place Filled With Care

- *Care remains invisible without intentional conversations about what people care about.*
- *People may not care about what those with a particular agenda want them to care about.*
- *Care must be discovered through relationships that are built on purpose.*
- *Learning conversations are the way to make care visible.*

Learning Conversations

Care = Motivation to Act: “What I will go out the door and do something about”

- Concerns – What I don’t want to happen
- Dreams –What I want to create
- Gifts – What I want the opportunity to give

Distinguish Motivation to Act (“I will ...”) from Opinion (“Somebody ought to...”)

Quoted from: *When People Care Enough to Act*: Inclusion Press with permission.

III

How Teachers and Families Approach Transition Planning

There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.

-Margaret Wheatley

People in every community care about something

Families and teachers approach the transition from secondary school planning process from differing viewpoints. To put it simply, the teachers are professionals working to develop efficient and productive programs for their students with special needs. They plan across large groups of students, guided by set policies and processes. Families are those with whom the learner experiencing disability grows up. They know the individual as a family member, a person with needs and abilities, and a person needing support in various ways. Their aim is to support their family member experiencing disability to participate in society to the greatest extent possible. Families have a variety of supporters helping them to achieve this goal. Among these are professional supporters who will work to motivate the highest level of student achievement. Important among these supporters are those who teach their family member in school. These two viewpoints, teacher and parent, come together in the school system in a relationship often strong and positive, but, at times, one in which tension can occur.

We believe that one way to strengthen the transition planning process is to clarify the viewpoints, roles and contributions of teachers and families. Knowing the context of each other might

also reduce possibilities for tension, which tend to arise when groups with differing viewpoints work toward the same objectives, in different ways.

We want to have real work with real pay.

We want to work.

*We want to learn how to do
jobs we will like.*

We want to get paid.

People First Ontario

Following are discussions of how teachers and then parents described and explained their contributions to support of students experiencing significant challenge through the secondary years. We emphasize that the teachers we interviewed worked for a number of different school systems. There was considerable variability in the transition planning programs discussed here. Variability existed also in the views of the roles of parents and students, expectations of parents and students, involvement of community organizations in delivery of transition programs, and the school's role in providing for work experiences.

In the following two sections we set out the views and experiences of teachers and of parents as they encountered transition planning. Each general point noted was made by a significant number of participants. The points made are supported by quotations from interviews.

Views & Experiences Expressed by Teachers

- *Students experiencing disabilities fall into two groups for teachers, those whose abilities permit them to gain secondary school course credits and those whose abilities and needs are viewed as impeding the gaining of course credits.*

Some students in Grade 12 might not be credit-earning students, students that are with us in the Community Living Program.

With some of the DD students, obviously with the K courses, they are not credit bearing.

- *Teachers professionally prepared in special education are responsible for the transition planning process, though in a modest number of instances direct support is received from Guidance Departments, subject teachers, and administrators.*

Head of Special Education would be really the key player.

The Special Education teacher who has that student on their caseload takes the lead hand in coordinating everything.

- *Teachers regard their role as one of ensuring that individual education plans are developed and implemented from the beginning of the student's secondary school experience. At some point the IEP and transition planning interact and become one.*

On the student's IEP, there needs to be a transition plan and the age is 14 and that is normally Grade 9.

Transition planning is an ongoing process we are supposed to be doing anyway in the IEP planning.

- School staff view these program planning activities primarily as the responsibility of the special education teacher.

The SERT (Special Education Resource Teacher) would dictate. That person initially takes the responsibility.

- Teachers understand that students and parents should play a role in IEP development and in the transition planning. The appropriate degree of student and parent involvement seen by different teachers in different school systems and different schools varies widely.

It would have to be a collaborative thing with the SERT and student and sometimes the parent to plan the next steps after high school.

- Some teachers put forth considerable effort to engage students in understanding their programs and what the objectives are. Where possible, parents are invited to participate in teacher-student meetings.

There are meetings throughout the year where we meet again with parents and students and we discuss how things are going.

- Teachers try to be reasonable in setting meeting times for parents, but the majority see meetings as being held during the school day, a time most parents are not readily available. The number of

teacher-parent meetings, their timing, and their purposes vary widely from teacher to teacher and school to school.

We try to give the parents warning so that if they are working they can come in within a lunch hour, let's do that, or come in at 7:30 a.m.

- Teachers work to develop special courses of instruction that impact on their academic progress for students experiencing disabilities. Among these courses there is a focus on learning strategies, life skills, employability skills, and job search skills. Teachers are aware that not all parents agree that such non-credit courses should form the basis of the school program for their children.

There is a special course called GLE40. It is basically a learning strategy course. They work on job research skills, employability skills, resume writing, cover letters, and prospects in a number of things.

- Teachers view the transition planning process as one that occupies up to 7 years. It begins with the student's arrival at secondary school (even during elementary school according to some interviewees), and continues in some schools for some students to age 21.

We have a seven year goal: For our Grade 8 students, it is a way to share with them, as well as talk about the seven year plan that we and the parents need to work on for the child.

- At times, the idea of developing a vision for the student's future was raised by teachers.

I think, too, that part with the parents is that we need

to get them involved earlier. They need a vision. That vision might take 20 years to complete or seven years.)

- Most, but not all, schools develop work experience programming for students experiencing disabilities. Those schools that do not create work experience programs for all students reinforce the “school within a school” possibility.

The school I am at now has a Co-operative Education Program, but it is a university/college level. So I feel that leaves out a whole segment of our student population who would really benefit from Co-operative Education.)

- Some schools develop job simulation programs in their schools. The activities undertaken in such programs vary in degree of resemblance to actual work situations. For example, some teachers arrange for students to deliver mail around schools or working in cafeterias. Others set up simulated stores in classrooms to provide students with skills in shelf-stacking and money management.

One of our best places to work is the cafeteria. We cover the cafeteria every period of the day. In the morning, they (the students) would be stocking shelves. They would put pop in the cooler. The second group would start to get the lunches prepared.

We would have to make our classroom what they were doing. For example, we would have shelves here and we have some cereal boxes. And we would throw all these things in a bin and the kids would pick the cereal and stock the shelves like they would do in a grocery store.

On Real Jobs

*We meet people and make friends.
Become more independent.
Earn equal pay.*

People First Ontario

- Some schools seem to do a solid job of seeking job placements in the community, for some students. At times, parents are invited to participate in locating placements.

Some of the parents do help because we always say that if you have a contact, then I will follow-up for sure because that helps us get in the door.

- Job-coaching is an element of the Cooperative Education programs of some schools, though it is not common. Some employers prefer that an adult not be in the workplace working with a student or students.

We really approach anybody and we ask if they can place a student with the assistance of a job coach in their business.

- A number of teachers mentioned the need to teach leisure skills in preparation for life beyond secondary school. This indicates a flexibility of thought that extends to understanding that some students may go on to a life in the community, which may or may not include work.

Some need quite different skills. It would be like reading a magazine for 20 minutes and then maybe colouring for 20 minutes, so it is building up leisure skills.

Her strength is to walk while pushing something. Now she pushes a cart from the Mall food court and has her own business delivering coffee to people working alone in stores who can't get away for coffee. Another strength is picking things up. She needs help to hold them, so the coffee shop staff hand the coffees directly to her and automatically accommodate her disability by double-cupping.

- Some schools find they do not have the staffing necessary to provide support to students in the workplace.

The problem is that you could do a lot more if you had more man-power.

- Some schools rely on community agencies, such as Community Living, to share responsibility for activities related to preparation for employment. The school takes a monitoring role.

A Community Living student who was going straight to a work job, that would mostly be Special Education, like, coordinating with ARC on Main Street, that would be the EAs and SERTs that would do that.

Here it would be Halton Support Services and whoever supports that student. Sometimes it is STRIDE for mental health. Other times it could be like a college or university or Community Living)

- Teachers are concerned that some parents do not focus on developing independence in their children. This is a particular concern as the end of secondary school approaches and employment becomes more and more of an issue.

The mother said, "When she leaves in seven years, my husband and I are going to take care of her".

I say, “No mam, let’s try for her to be able to take care of herself, let’s try for her to be able to dress herself, let’s try for her to be able to feed herself.

This, and a number of other teacher comments, touched on the issue of parent vision.

- A number of teachers mentioned the need to wean parents off reliance on school supports. Again, this becomes more of an issue as school leaving approaches. A frequent strategy was for schools to try to inform parents of community organizations active in the area of disability.

If they are doing an out-of-school work placement, we want the parents to get them there, not Board provided transportation. Because, come July 1st, there is no Board transportation.

People Getting Jobs

What we need to get jobs:

- *Independent, feel good, self-esteem.*
- *More effort. Try your best.*
- *Pride.*
- *More control.*
- *More guts.*
- *Understanding your rights.*
- *Stand up for your rights.*
- *Speaking up for your rights.*

People First Ontario

Teachers with whom we spoke described a variety of transition planning approaches for learners experiencing disabilities. No teacher indicated that her/his school did not have such a program, though it appears that great variety exists among programs. Many saw a role for parents in transition planning, but in a subsidiary position with teachers as primarily responsible for initiating and guiding transition planning. That was their responsibility as assigned by their school system and they had to meet that responsibility in accord with school system policies and procedures. Teachers also described a variety of special courses developed to support the learning of their students and to complement the transition planning program. A number spoke of the effort they put into working with parents and students to understand the transition programs and their objectives.

Though almost all schools had Co-operative Education (Co-Op) programs for provision of work experience, few teachers mentioned a workplace job coach strategy. A common tactic seemed to be to rely on community organizations and/or parents to locate work experience placements. The community organizations might take responsibility for finding and monitoring the work experience part of the transition program.

Becky works as a volunteer tutor at a local school in the primary grades. The students practice their reading by reading to her. She responds by listening carefully and giving them amazing smiles. Students with reading difficulties constantly reaffirm that she is a wonderful listener - and they feel no judgement - only support. It is a win-win creation.

*I always think of the goals
of People First of Ontario:*

- 1. Real homes.*
- 2. Real education.*
- 3. Real jobs.*

**Richard Ruston
Former President
People First Ontario**

A few teachers spoke of the value of developing a vision for a student's life after school, a point brought up by many parents. Teachers saw need to develop independence in their students, and need to transfer responsibility for decision-making to the student and family as graduation approached. Some suggested that parents occasionally relied too much on the school and that parents needed to pay more attention to developing independence in themselves and particularly in their children.

Views & Experiences Expressed by Parents

Parent views of the transition planning processes they and their children experienced were of two distinct types. The greater was articulated by parents who had severe criticism for their schools. Those who praised their schools' efforts formed a considerably smaller group. At times, different parents, whose children attended schools in the same school system, offered contrasting views. There was a strong suggestion that transition processes depended heavily on the attitude and value system of administrators of individual schools, and of the teaching staff assigned to work with learners experiencing significant disability. There was unevenness in the quality and flexibility of response to transition planning from school to school and from school system to school system.

Criticism of parents may be connected to lack of substantial involvement in the planning process. Many indicated that they were unaware of, or not part of planning. As will be seen in some following quotes, parents who were involved were less critical. Whatever the source of criticism by parents, it is important to recognize that many parents appear dissatisfied. They wish to work with the schools, but they believe schools wish to hold them at a distance.

- Many parents stated they were unaware of any transition planning process at their child's school.

What is the transition planning process?

I have never heard of it.

- Other parents were closely involved in a transition planning process at their child's school.

We have been doing transition planning for high school since my son was in Grade 10. He is 18 now.

- A number of parents were aware of the IEP process at their school. Some had attended IEP meetings, though with varied experiences.

I participated in IEP meetings.

My son was invited to them as well.

I attend the IEP meetings, but I don't say much because they are talking about things I don't understand.

- Though the majority of parents said that schools did not value their input, other parents found that their participation was valued.

I have had no contact at the school. There is no parent role.

Teachers seem to appreciate a parent who is interested.

My son is at a school that encourages me to give my ideas.

• Parents in general were concerned that schools had low expectations for students.

The teachers have low expectations for my son being independent: Expectations for life after school were minimal:

Some teachers pre-judge students and then do not challenge them: My impression of the school was that they have little faith in him.

• On the other hand, a number of parents gave positive comments regarding some of the special support programs offered by schools.

*The course on employability was good:
Teachers at my son's school recognized that he has skills that can be used in the newspaper club at school.
They encouraged him to join that club.*

Our school connected us to Community Living to make links before graduation.

• Parents recognized the value of Co-Operative Education (Co-Op). Views of school support in finding Co-Op placements, however, varied.

*I had to arrange for work placements: I was disappointed by Co-Op. They provided inappropriate placements.
They were thinking in the box.*

My school provided placement support by an Educational Assistant: The Co Op placements were of value.

- Parents wanted schools to develop a vision for their children. This was, perhaps, the most consistent statement made by parents. There were times when schools worked with parents to develop a vision.

There are opportunities at school meetings to discuss a vision for my son's future.

Most parents, however, felt that schools were not vision-oriented.

There was no vision for life after school.

There was no school vision.

Schools need a vision-for them and for parents.

Setting a vision does not happen.

They just deal with day-by-day issues.

***I don't want to sit around.
I want to pay my way.***

People First Ontario

In general, parents were less positive regarding transition planning programs than were schools. Some stated they were unaware of any transition planning programs. This is an interesting finding as teachers consistently described their programs as serving a wide range of students. It is possible that the term IEP was being used by schools and the more formal term, transition, was not used as frequently. It also is possible that communication between school and home was less than that desired.

When it came to work experience programs, parents had differing experiences. In general, there seemed to be a sense that such experiences were of considerable value. Many parents took active part in this area, some noting that they had to step in when their schools did not take action to find placements. It also was interesting that some schools called on community organizations to become active in delivering work experience programs. Some schools, on the other hand, seemed very active in finding placements and monitoring the process closely.

Lastly, parents felt transition planning needed to begin early. Parents and schools needed to work together to develop a vision for life after school. Vision was a significant concern for parents. Many felt it was a priority.

People First - Power with not Power Over



Searching for the
Right Relationship
Between People and
Programs



Quoted from: When People Care Enough to Act: Inclusion Press with permission.

IV

What Does All This Suggest?

Collaboration as the Base of Person-Centered Planning

*If the only tool you have is a hammer,
then the whole world looks like a nail.*

–Mark Twain

It is obvious from reading the above that the two groups most central to the transition planning process, parents and teachers, hold different views and have differing experiences with regard to the transition planning process. They approach the process in quite different ways.

Teachers are experts in education. They know and understand the importance of strong transition planning, particularly when it comes to learners experiencing greater degrees of challenge. They know the steps in planning an educational approach leading to achievement of stated objectives. They know the guiding policies. They believe they are qualified and mandated to take the lead in transition planning. Not all welcome the opportunity for working in collaboration with parents and students in planning student programs.

Kathryn worked in the library of St. Robert's High School beginning in Grade 9.

Most teachers are professionals who do the very best job they can with the available resources. We are not speaking here of those very few teachers who may not put all they have into their work. Serious professionals work on behalf of all students assigned to them and they take their responsibilities seriously. They strive to work out a program, which can meet different abilities, needs, and possible futures. Theirs is a wide-ranging responsibility, which encompasses many students on an ever-changing rota.

Parents are experts about the lives and challenges of their children. They see their child as a person and as a member of their family before they think of her or him as students. Their responsibility is from birth to adulthood. They are not sophisticated in educational policies and practices, though they work diligently to understand them when they impact on their children. Theirs is a more personal view than that of teachers. Their involvement with the person around whom school planning revolves, comes from personal commitment to the person from birth, throughout the school years, and into adulthood. Their concern is a long-term one focused on their immediate family member.

It is in the area of planning the strongest possible education for a learner with distinctly individual abilities and needs that teachers and families come into close contact. Both groups care. Both groups do their best.

However, they do come from different perspectives. For the joint planning process to work well, the two groups must understand each other and their respective viewpoints. When there is insufficient mutual appreciation, there is potential for tension between

school and home. The close collaboration needed between teachers and parents may be undermined.

The base of all descriptions, statements, and suggestions in this resource is the need for and value of family and teacher collaboration. Both groups have vested interest in the student's success, whatever the definition of that success. It cannot be said too often that the person with the greatest stake in success of the process is the student. Establishing early open communication, developing a habit of sharing views and concerns, and demonstrating respect and appreciation for each other will result in smoother progress through the secondary years and into life after school, than will keeping each other at arms length. But all must remember that collaboration must be nurtured. It rarely springs into existence without appreciation that all are going in the same direction, even if traveling on slightly different paths.

Two significant and inter-connected cardinal points emerge from the conversations we had with students, parents, and teachers. Almost everything said relates to two central issues.



Real Jobs for Real People. Neil has been a stalwart employee at Flatbread Pizza for over 15 years. Real job. Real Pay. Real Life..

- Teachers, and families view transition planning differently. Too often this leads to only modest collaboration at the best. Difficulty in collaboration in a planning process that, given its importance to all three parties, must be collaborative to function well, bodes ill for all parties.
- A plan is a vision of what should happen to achieve a desired result. As the group of students for whom this resource was developed is known to encounter challenge in successful transition from school to work in the community, it would seem best if all involved put their efforts into a shared plan, a shared vision of what is desired and possible. Too often it appeared that teachers, students, and parents did not share a vision for successful transition of learners experiencing disabilities to life beyond school.

To us, it seems logical that effort needs to be put into collaboration in development of a shared plan/vision. It also is apparent to us that parents and teachers possess the desire and skills to do the best for the student, the person for whom all planning is being done. We know from our experience with many teachers, parents, and students that well-intentioned, skilled people, collaboratively can develop strong plans around the abilities and challenges of an individual. The process is referred to as Person-Centered Planning. It is a process developed to strengthen planning in challenging personal situations. It is a process that stimulates parents and teachers to mutually support a person to take direction of her/his own life to the greatest extent possible.

***Learn what other people do so you can do it too.
Learn the right people to talk to who will listen.***

People First Ontario

Person-Centered Planning is not new to education. This approach to planning is employed in educational jurisdictions ranging from nations, to provinces and states, to individual school systems, and to individual schools. The strategy is also used by many organizations beyond the school system. Person-Centered Planning is known to work.

Earlier descriptions of the teacher view and the family view suggest where mutual understanding may not be strongest. Awareness of these areas is part of the solution. Deciding to do something to work toward mutual progress is the second part of avoiding the pitfalls all too often experienced by some. We see four basic steps as the foundation of Person-Centered Planning in the school environment.

1. That parents, students, and teachers look to person-centered strategies, such as those outlined later, in developing a shared vision for the student's progress during secondary school and beyond. A shared vision in which all know their contributions and the value of them will lead to less tension and greater progress.
2. That teachers, parents, and students come to agreement on what their individual roles will be in collaborative Person-Centered Planning.
3. That all involved in transition planning hold high expectations for the progress and involvement of the individual student.
4. That a central element of transition planning is progressively moving responsibility for continuing both planning and support for life in the community to the family and to the student. School involvement will end with the student's final day at school and all must be prepared for this event.

These four initial suggestions are designed to set the stage for collaborative planning of a vision for the student. A school need not wait for transition from school to life in the community to initiate Person-Centered Planning. It can begin as early as desired in a school career. It can be centered around any particularly challenging issue. It can be used on various occasions during a school career to extend and reinforce earlier planning. One of the challenges where its value has been proven is planning for transition from secondary school to life beyond school.

Matthew was fired as a volunteer at an employment centre. He yelled at someone who interrupted a mass photocopying job he was doing. Later he was hired at the same centre and accommodations were made to match his abilities and needs.

The following suggestions may be seen as forming pieces contributing to the larger concept of a Person-Centered Planning activity. In this case, they all apply to planning for transition from secondary school. Again, all of these suggestions are drawn from our conversations with people directly engaged in transition planning. The pieces may be thought of as the separate pieces that form a kaleidoscope. Separately, they may not have great meaning. Put together within a Person-Centered Planning approach, they can result in a beautiful picture.



This is a Circle of Friends all dressed for a Graduation Celebration. Everybody wins. And it was a great Party.

Suggestions:

- *Students participate in all discussion of programs or problems with schoolwork. They are at the centre of whatever is happening.*
- *Teachers advise parents and students of all IEP and, eventually, transition planning meetings, and invite their participation in person, or if necessary by telephone or email contacts.*
- *Parents make every effort to attend program planning meetings, or that they have input into planning by telephone or email contacts.*
- *Teachers ensure that parents are aware of school system guides to IEP and transition planning, as appropriate, for the student's entire secondary school career. It would be a good idea if parents had a copy of any guide being used.*
- *Both parents and teachers communicate to each other any questions, suggestions, or instances when they are uncertain of what is going on with regard to the student's program.*
- *Families and teachers collaborate in finding work experience programs best suited to an individual student's abilities and needs.*

*We want to work.
We want to contribute to our communities.
We want to earn real pay for real work.*

People First Ontario

Suggestions Continued:

- Schools take responsibility for informing parents of community organizations and resources in the area of disability in effective ways.
- Parents make efforts to discover what community resources, such as parent workshops, supportive organizations, work opportunities, and leisure opportunities, exist in their local communities.
- Parents and teachers plan into the transition process, when appropriate, experience with a range of leisure activities.
- Parents and teachers emphasize development of independence of the student as a priority for both.
- Teachers and parents keep each other advised of their expectations for students and work together in their achievement.
- Teachers do their utmost to locate and acquire resources appropriate to support of transition planning programs.

At times, teachers and parents must engage in intense discussion as they work toward solutions of problems. This is a routine characteristic of being engaged in finding ways to keep moving forward when solutions are not obvious. Vigorous discussion is a part of Person-Centered Planning. It is part of sharing ideas and coming to mutual agreement. Little good results from entrenched positions when the future of a learner experiencing disabilities is at stake. Pulling together results in greater progress than does pulling in opposite directions, or than not pulling at all.



A good lookin guy with friends - it's a better way to be. We don't need any 'forms' to evaluate the power of this circle of friends. Look at their faces!

An ABCD Community Partnership

Owned and controlled by local people

Desired outcome: local people act as productive citizens vs local people receive services

A community organization that engages the wider community as an engine for ABCD.

Seeks resources both inside and outside the community

Both cooperative and challenging; building connections among people and groups and at times challenging institutions for social change.

Broad participation—every member of the community has gifts to offer, not just designated leaders

Inclusive—there is no one whose gifts are not needed.

ABCD - Asset Based Community Development

(a way to look at people and communities by focusing on their assets and capacities - their gifts, rather than their deficits and deficiencies.)

Quoted from: When People Care Enough to Act: Inclusion Press with permission.

V

WORK, FLEXIBILITY, and CREATIVITY

For the young people considered in this resource, finding work is often a challenge. Federal statistics indicate that a great many young people experiencing disabilities do not find work after secondary school. This is an unacceptable result of education for any student. Unfortunately, our governmental systems do not appear willing to make this tragic situation a priority and to commit the resources necessary for marked change. Fortunately, some teachers and parents are setting examples of how work may be found through the exercise of flexibility and creativity. Throughout this resource you will find quotes from people experiencing disabilities expressing their desire for work and their willingness to work. You also will find a number of examples of productive work resulting from flexibility and creativity when work was not seen as possible.

Jobs are hard to get. And then when you get a job, sometimes people aren't nice to you.

It is this flexibility and creativity that some teachers, some parents, and some young people have exhibited that suggests that new ways of thinking about work are needed. Working with learners experiencing disabilities in regular school settings is a recent responsibility for schools. The schools have found that traditional programming around work results in only some learners experiencing disabilities actually finding work. It is obvious that new approaches are needed if more of these young people are to join the workforce.

Schools have tried a number of strategies to strengthen their work-related programs. One, which we question, is the practice of expecting community organizations to locate workplaces in which students could gain job experiences, and to monitor student progress. It seems to us that this is a responsibility of the schools. Collaboration with community organizations can be positive. Some have excellent experience and needed knowledge. Working together can be productive in preparing students for work and finding work experience sites. On the other hand, we wonder about working with community organizations whose idea of appropriate work experience is a sheltered workshop. Our project partners in People First Ontario were strong in their criticism of their experience in sheltered workshop settings. Such workshops certainly are not an example of flexibility and creativity. Schools need to step up and take responsibility for all of their students, disabled or not. Fortunately, most school systems seem to be trying to do a solid job in the area of work.

Job Coaching: Some school systems have turned to the strategy of job coaching. Job coaching is a way to support a learner experiencing disabilities as he or she gains work experience in a real workplace. The idea of job coaching is that a school staff member or other capable person accompanies the students in the workplace. As the student works the job coach explains the job, offers suggestions on how the job should be done, and assists when new learning is needed. This model gives the student the time and support needed to gradually learn various jobs, develop positive work habits, and learn the culture of the workplace. It also provides evidence for potential employers that the individual concerned, with a little time and support, can become a productive employee. The key to good job coaching is to be the 'coach' and not to do the job. Job coaching is a creative solution to a challenging issue.

Team Exploration: Another excellent idea is for the student,

teachers, and parents to work together in defining what the student brings to the workplace and what kind of work interests the student. With this type of background information and knowledge of what skills and personal qualities various jobs require, there is a greater chance of matching students with work.

Gary works for a highly regimented Junior A hockey team where he assists the coaches and the trainer with a variety of duties.

“On game days he gets ice for the players. The towels are folded for each player. He ensures that in the dressing room, the sweaters are out and he makes sure that they are in the right places for the players. He comes out during practices and helps the trainer. Gary also went away with the team to Vancouver. It is really good for our players and helps people who are just big fans. With the new trainer this year, who is very regimented, he really enjoys having Gary around to help with these specific tasks. Gary loves to be there also, because he loves hockey. He brings other people that we never really meet, into the arena. He has gotten to know every coach and is an important part of the team’s family.

As can be seen in the examples given throughout this resource, everyone wants work. Work gives purpose to life. It helps create a positive self-image. It may be that new ways of thinking will be required to develop a strong work experience program. It may be that, for some students, new methods of support are needed. It may be that collaboration with community organizations can be productive. If, at the end of secondary school more youth with disabilities are gainfully employed, the effort will be more than rewarded.



It takes a team with diversity and commitment (like the one below) to create the possibility for this aspiring young videographer to have a chance.

The Job Coach seems to be enjoying it too. It's worth it for all of us.





The move is from
services to clients
to
supports for citizens.

Quoted from: *When People Care Enough to Act*: Inclusion Press with permission.

VI

A Parent Transition Workshop Initiative

An example of what parents can do to support transition planning and the school comes from the **Hamilton Family Network (HFN)** of Hamilton, Ontario. HFN is one of a number of Family Network associations working in various ways to support families with a member experiencing disability.

Have you ever seen mail being delivered in a rural area? The post office worker drives a car the wrong way on the road so that the mail boxes are within reach. That is a somewhat dangerous thing to do. Would it be possible to have a second person in the car? The driver could then drive on the correct side of the road. This second person could put the mail in the mailboxes. This would be much safer and be a good job.

Working closely with a local school system, HFN has developed a workshop for parents on transition from secondary school. The intent of the four evening workshop is to work with families to develop a vision of life after school for the family member experiencing disability. Led by two mothers, whose own families have been through planning for life after school, the workshop guides parents and their children in developing a vision based on realistic understanding of the abilities and needs of the individual.

The HFN workshop:

- Considers issues of employability
- Works from a flexible definition of “work” which includes the idea of paid work, further study, leisure activities, volunteering, and establishing a friendship circle.
- Obtains information on government support programs through invited speakers.
- Arranges speakers who give information on community support organizations and their services.
- Offers guidance and feedback on developing visions for the future.

On the last evening of the workshop, the families and the students involved gather. The students, with support from their parents, describe the vision for life after school they and their families have developed.

Additional resources that may be helpful for those exploring this type of approach include:

* **The Big Plan: A good life after school**

S. Coulson & H. Simmons, Inclusion Press

A book on ‘group’ transition planning.

• **Implementing Person-Centered Planning: Voices of Experience**

O’Brien & O’Brien, Inclusion Press

•• Pathfinders: It’s Never too Late p 255 +

•• Large Group Process for Person-Centered Planning

The HFN workshop has a number of values:

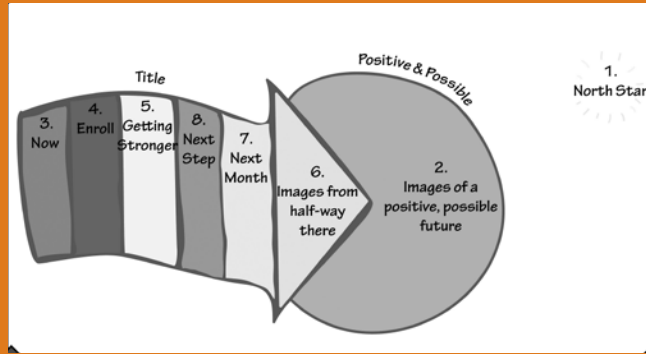
- It provides needed support for families in planning for life following school.
- It is connected to the local school system. Teachers present information at the workshop or, occasionally, drop by to see what is happening.
- It involves the young people concerned in the planning.
- It connects families to government, municipal, and community support systems.
- It describes the transition program of the local school system.
- It creates a vision for life after school, which families can share and discuss with their schools.
- It develops a support network of other families who are facing the same challenges.
- It connects parents with a larger network of local families who have gone through the same challenges.
- It is a particularly strong tool for planning for a young person who may be challenged in finding employment, but who still has the right to lead an active life in the community.
- It provides an example of what might be done by parents for other families

HFN advocates for parents to be informed about school transition planning for their children, and for parents to be part of the transition planning team. The fundamental beliefs of HFN are:

- That empowered parents have the capacity to create solutions and opportunities for their family members experiencing disabilities.
- That parents are an essential source of expertise with respect to their sons and daughters.
- And that involved and confident families are the most effective agents for social change.

The HFN family workshop is an example of creativity. The HFN does not expect or wait for schools to take the lead. They saw a need and decided to address it. As a result, their parents are informed and active. There is a strong partnership with the local school system.

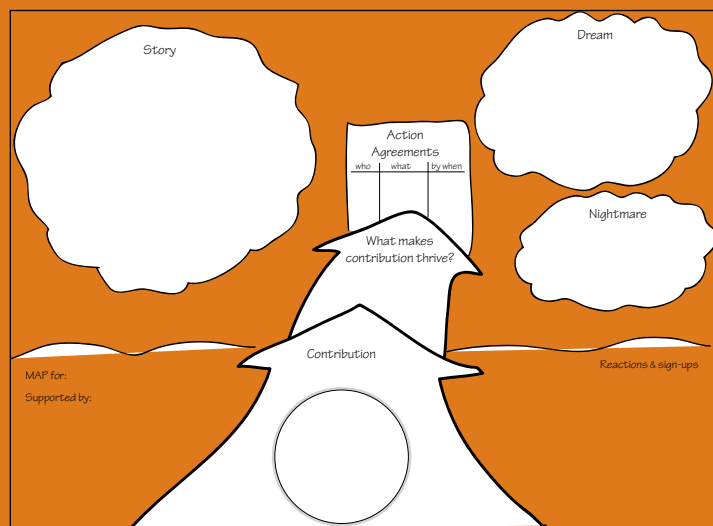
We recommend that other families come together and address local needs. It does little good to criticize what schools are doing if parents do not become involved.



Think About...

There are many *Person Centered Planning* tools. We recommend you learn about them in depth. There are additional books, videos (DVDs) and workshops from many sources.

This handbook is an 'introduction' - a *teaser* - not a comprehensive workbook on *Person-Centred Planning*. Before you use these tools (or similar approaches developed by others), please review additional resources, and if possible take a course.



VII

Person-Centered Planning

Person-Centered Planning focuses on how a group is able to support a group member with abilities and challenges. The idea is to consider the person first in any instance where support is needed. Traditional approaches put the cart before the horse. They determine what supports are available first, and then fit the person into those 'boxes'. Person-centered planning puts the person first, creates an action plan (often referred to as a vision for the future), and then determine how to assemble needed resources.

Andrea loves cooking. She has begun her own business. She makes cookies and cakes and delivers them for parties. She has a list of regular clients.

In the case of transition planning, the group member to be supported is a student with disabilities who would benefit from support in moving from school to life and work in the community. Other group members include parents, teachers, peers, and others who can contribute.

The purpose of Person-Centered Planning is people working together to:

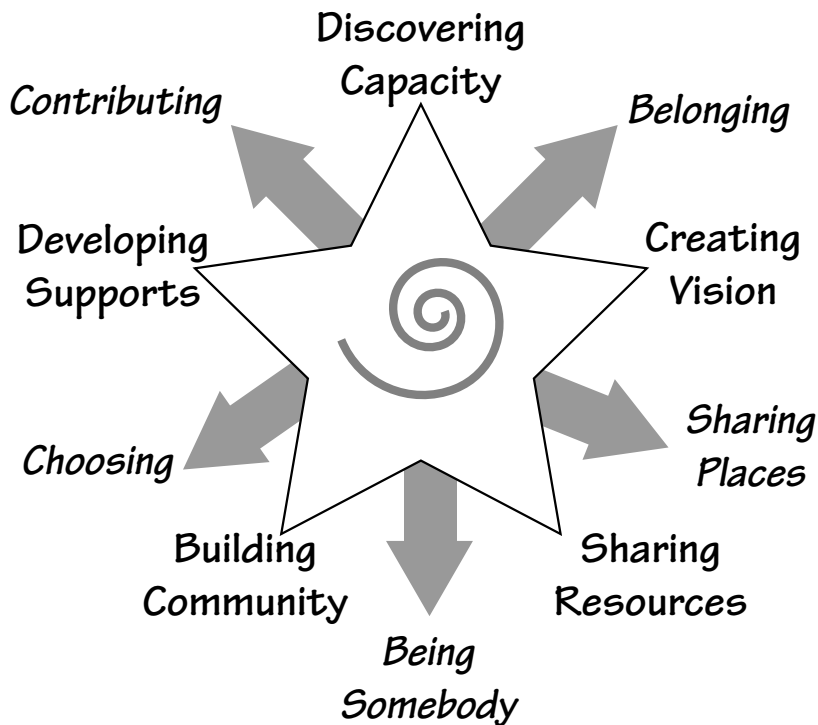
- Create a vision for the future
- Share resources in reaching for that vision
- Develop supports to move toward that vision
- Build community connections focused on the person at the centre of the support group.
- Discover capacity within the group to build the capacity of the individual to be a full and contributing citizen in the community.

Requirements for Person-Centered Planning include:

- **Integrity** – treating people with respect, listening to them, and doing what is agreed needs doing,
- **Purpose** – Using proven tools that build inclusion in community,
- **Discipline** – Improving mastery of these tools through practice and reflection, dealing positively with negative thoughts and interactions, and always seeking opportunities for new learning, and
- **Creativity** – Engaging all in creatively imagining a future that works for everyone and discovering new ways to move toward inclusion of all.

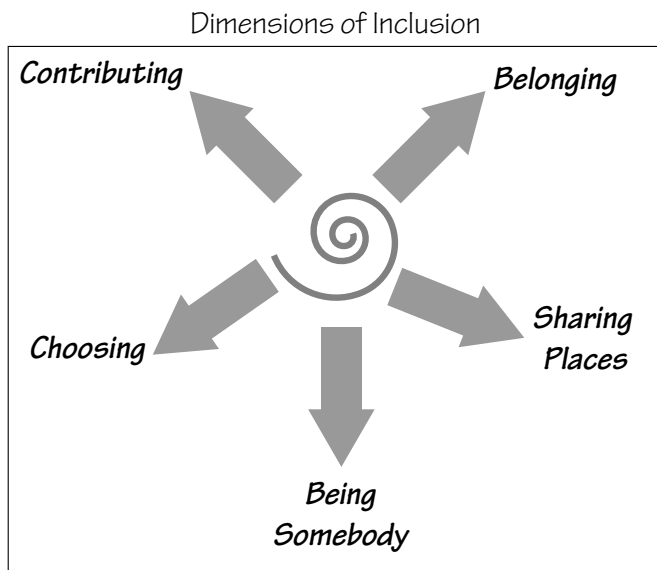
Rebecca has a variety of challenges. If you observe carefully and creatively, she also has many skills. She loves to look upwards. She now works in a museum in an area where the exhibits are on the ceiling. People coming in who do not know this, see Rebecca looking up. They look up to see why and discover beautiful exhibits.

What Purpose Does Person-Centered Planning Serve?



Quoted from: *Person-Centered Planning with MAPS and PATH*: Inclusion Press permission.

Person-Centered Planning is a natural and productive way for students, families, and schools to approach planning for the momentous move from school to life and work in the community. In transition planning, a person-centered approach is particularly valuable when the student experiences significant needs. It calls

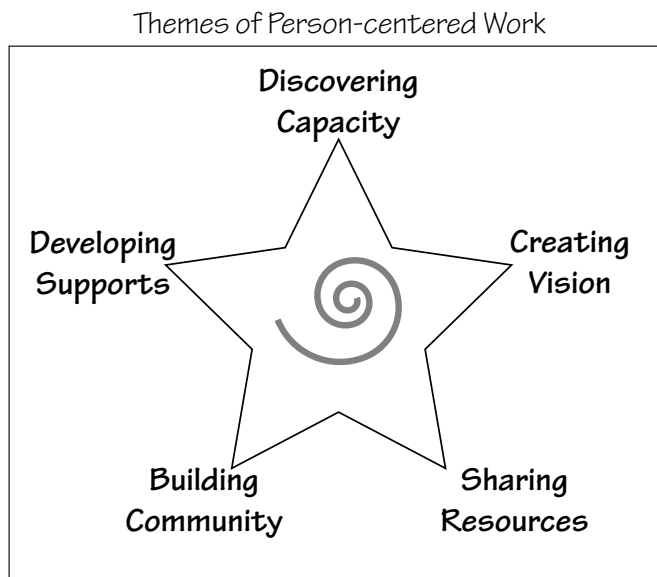


for people closest to the educational life of a student to work together. It may mean thinking new thoughts and doing planning in new ways. It definitely means that students, families, and teachers strive together for the best that can be done. It means that all find personal satisfaction

in reaching as high as they can, and finding that they can reach higher than they thought.

Person-Centered Planning also has the value that it is designed to avoid the pitfall of prejudging the capability of a student and

failing to challenge the student to achieve her or his very best. Meeting high personal standards is one of the prime objectives of Person-Centered Planning.



Quoted from: *Person-Centered Planning with MAPS and PATH*: Inclusion Press permission.

What Person-Centered Planners Do

- Build a capacity view & a rich vision for a community future
- Challenge deficiency thinking
- Get involved with community people, places, & associations
- Raise expectations
- Join others to create opportunities, develop resources & arrange assistance that supports vision

How They Do It

- Gather the people who care & can act
- Listen respectfully to understand the whole person
- Search for possibilities by describing history & current realities, & by seeking ideas & leads from others
- Create & share vivid & powerful images of desirable futures as a platform for asking for what is desirable
- Go through many cycles of learning by acting, inviting others into the action, & reflecting

We KNOW that there is a set of person-centered and other related strategies that support teachers and families in planning for life after school graduation for even the most challenged of learners. We know this because we work with them. We know this because we develop them. We know this because we have seen them work. We know this because people from around the world come to our workshops or ask us to go to them to present workshops.

Some can be put in place early in school life with positive effect on the culture of the school. Others, at later stages, can strategically increase focus on transition from school to life and work in the community. All have been proven in use in school systems in Canada and elsewhere.

A selection of strategies are:

- **Circle of Friends**

Circle of Friends ensures that from the earliest point a learner with significant needs becomes a true, interactive member of the classroom. This strategy changes the culture of classrooms and schools.

- **MAPS (formerly Making Action Plans)**

MAPS is a way to support and refine the educational program planning of a student from early school years. MAPS impacts the culture of classrooms and schools, and leads to a strong, customized educational plan.

- **PlayFair Teams**

PlayFair Teams is a school-wide strategy aimed at developing understanding throughout a school with regard to Disability, Education, and Social Justice. PlayFair Teams impacts the culture of a school and has potential to change the culture of other schools and of their surrounding communities.

- **PATH (formerly Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope)**

PATH is an incisive, holistic way to collaborate in planning for transition from school to the community for students with significant needs.

These strategies all are Canadian in origin. They were developed by advocates and educators at the Marsha Forest Centre in Toronto and are used internationally. **PATH** has particular strength in planning for transition while the others prepare a supportive and secure school environment throughout the school years. Together they enable schools, parents, and students to work together in developing an understanding, accepting, and supportive school culture for students with disabilities.

The four strategies are outlined briefly here. Excellent print and visual resources exist for each. All resources are economically available. There are many people across North America and beyond who have experience in implementing the strategies. Training is available for those who would like to give extra strength to their existing school strategies for diversity. Contact the Marsha Forest Centre website, www.MarshaForest.com, for information.

We recommend that those who wish to use Person-Centered Planning prepare themselves by attending a workshop. It is possible to get an idea of the process from print and visual resources, but personal interaction at a training session is much more effective. As noted, training is readily available. An economical way for a school or school system to prepare itself for Person-Centered Planning is to have two or more staff members attend a workshop and then hold workshops for others when they return home.

Additional resources that may be helpful for those exploring these approaches:

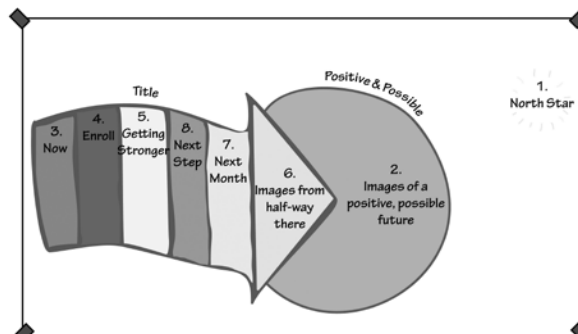
- **Person-Centered Planning with MAPS & PATH: A workbook for facilitators**
J. O'Brien & J. Pearpoint, Inclusion Press
- **The Big Plan: A good life after school**
S. Coulson & H. Simmons, Inclusion Press - 'group' transition planning.
- **Implementing Person-Centered Planning: Voices of Experience**
O'Brien & O'Brien, Inclusion Press
 - Pathfinders: It's Never too Late p 255 +
 - Large Group Process for Person-Centered Planning

www.inclusion.com

Introduction to PATH and the PATH PROCESS

Introduction

Some students approach the end of their school years without a clear vision of their future. Their families do not have a clear vision. Their teachers do not have a clear vision. While the majority of students see their path generally as one leading to work or post-secondary education, others, many of whom experience disability, see uncertainty. All involved in the education of these students wish only

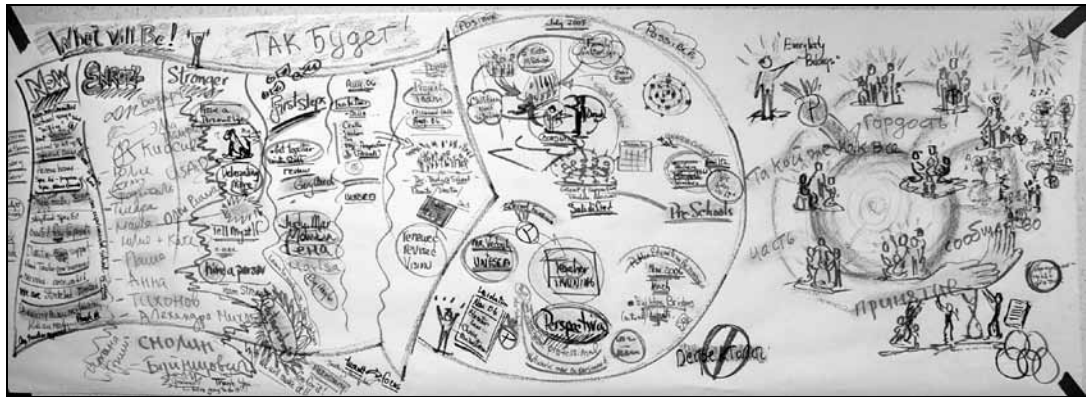


for the very best for their future. However, finding a way to move forward with students experiencing significant disability is challenging. **PATH** is one way of moving toward realization of an individual's 'higher purpose' in a very strong and positive way. We introduce **PATH** (formerly Planning for Alternative Futures with Hope) first in recognition of its proven power in transition planning.

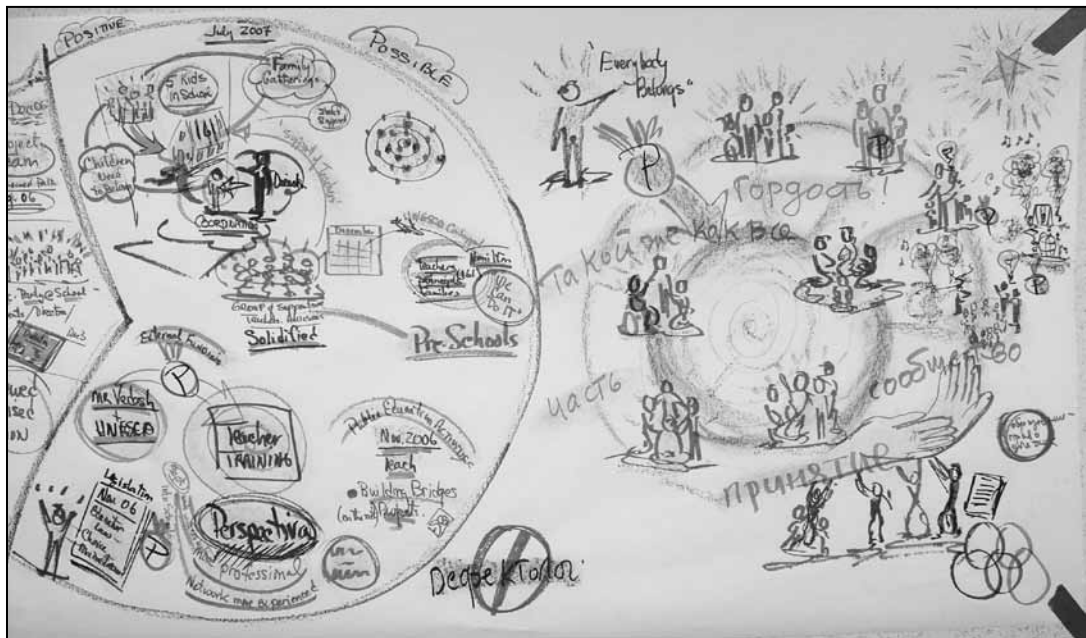
Secondary schools have teachers whose responsibility it is to work with students and their families in planning transition from school. However, most schools' transition plans are designed to function across a broad band of abilities. They consist of a series of logical steps, which work for most students. Various strategies to prepare for transition are put in place. They work sufficiently to satisfy students, parents, and teachers. This is a good example of how teachers create supports that meet the abilities and challenges of their students.



● Georgia's PATH to Everyday People ●
 This is a PATH for a team in Georgia



This is a PATH for a team in Russia - some of it in Russian



For a small set of students, particularly those referred to as special education students, the routine transition planning process does not work as well. For these students, schools need to engage in a long-range planning process that begins in elementary school and grows more and more focused near the end of secondary school. The process must involve the entire school in creating a culture of acceptance, respect, and support for all learners. It must bring student, family, and teachers together in a strong, focused, collaborative process which develops a creative vision for life after school, a vision that makes the student a contributing, active contributing participant in community life in every sense.

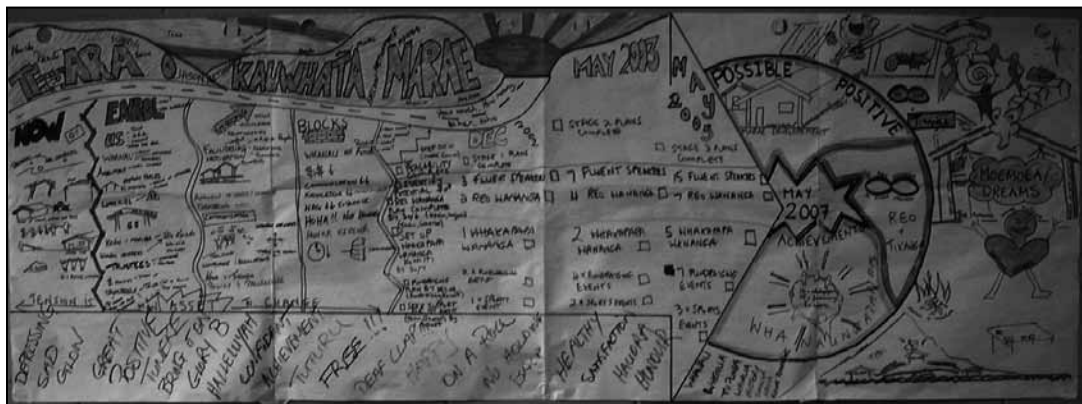
This is a challenging task for all involved. Some school systems manage it well. They begin the planning process at an early stage. They work with student and family throughout. They know transition from school to community will be challenging. Some schools prepare to meet the challenge from an early stage. They work hand-in-hand with the family and the student. They keep a constant eye on the future. Some even work with community organizations to offer parents and students training in planning for transition. Other school systems are not as active. They do not build an infrastructure of understanding and support from the early school years. They leave planning for later. Some rely on out-of-school organizations to support transition planning. They reduce their role in the transition process. It is for students in these latter systems that transition planning is most problematic.

**It is better to light one candle
than to curse the darkness.**

Motto of the Christopher Society

This resource manual is designed to help students, families,

and teachers strengthen the transition planning process in their schools. It is only recently that transition planning for learners experiencing disabilities has become a feature in most secondary schools. Until approximately 1990 when the winds of change began to impact how regular schools relate to students experiencing disabilities, little attention was paid to planning transition from school to community. As we all know, it takes time for families and teachers to learn to work together. It takes time for schools to establish a positive culture of understanding and support. Those partnering in development of this manual understand this. Two are experienced teachers and school administrators. Two are leaders of a self-advocacy organization of people experiencing disabilities. Two are from organizations of parents and are familiar with the



This is a PATH for a Mauri community in New Zealand

abilities of the students concerned, and with the barriers they continue to encounter. Their intent is that the manual will support schools and families in developing the most positive school culture possible.

To assist us in developing this manual, we have turned to **two primary sources for information** on how to smooth and strengthen the process:

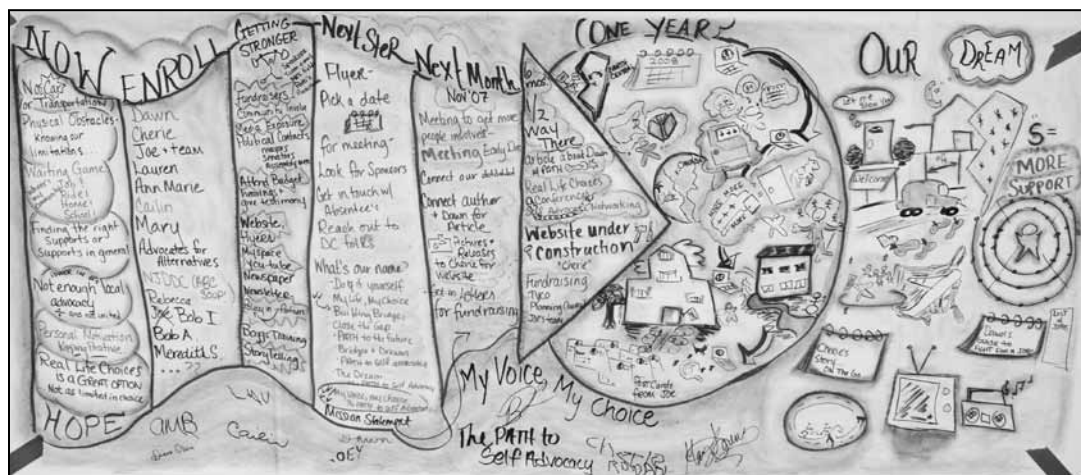
- 1) **The people concerned.** We interviewed teachers, parents, and

students. Our questions focused on what was working in the transition process and what was causing problems.

2) **The literature on transition planning for learners with disabilities.** We consulted transition plans of various school systems and ministries of education, articles on transition planning, and resources to support planning.

We found that many of the latter advocated a person-centered planning approach. We also found that many of the former were unfamiliar with this powerful way of planning for learners experiencing disabilities. We decided to direct our efforts toward informing teachers and parents about the contexts of each other. We decided not to attempt to set out suggested steps for some particular model of planning. Instead, we decided to emphasize Person-Centered Planning as a background context for planning using whatever planning steps were chosen by those doing the actual planning. We decided to emphasize the human element.

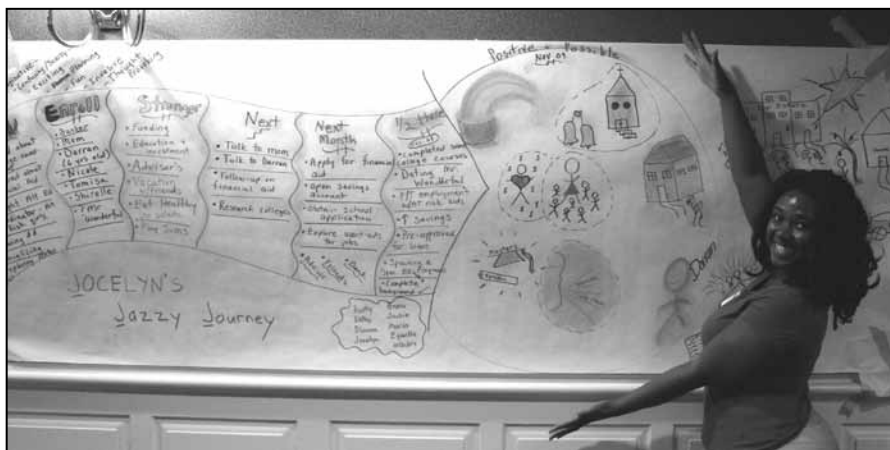
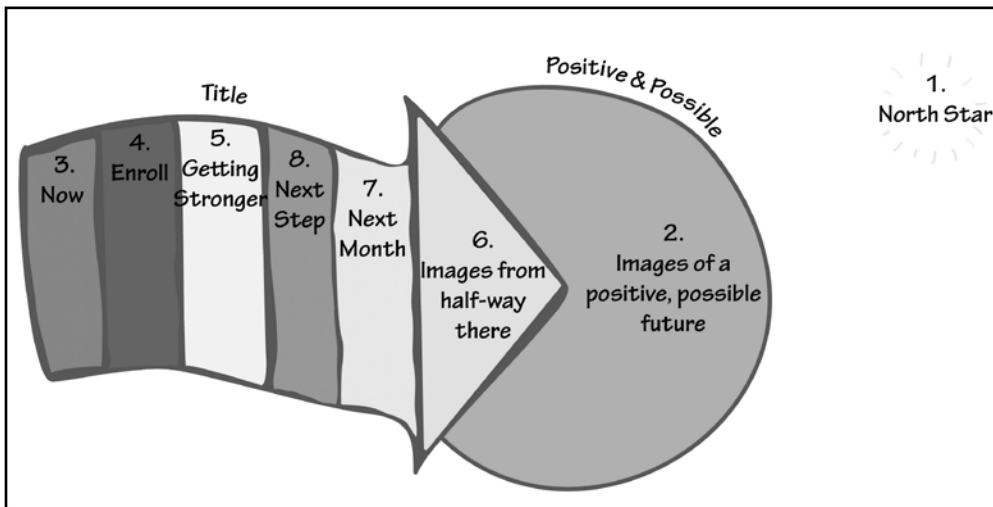
The process has a carefully designed ordering to the eight steps. It is counter-intuitive. It begins with Step 1, looking ahead to a personal North Star, the student and family's dream for the future. The dream is unrestricted. It is a dream. Having a dream



This is a PATH for Self Advocates Group In New Jersey

does not mean you will 'get it' - but it does give 'direction' to a person's life. Discussion begins with the future and works back to the present. The process concludes with action steps for the immediate future, but it is a planned process to get there.

As the facilitator leads the group through **PATH's** 8 steps, the recorder works with a large-scale outline model of the full process mounted on a large wall or other surface. The outline model (template) is prepared in advance. It will be filled in with colourful images, shapes, and key words & actions created by those present and contributing to the process.



This is Jocelyn's PATH - we think she liked it!

PATH Process

PATH is a long-range group planning process designed to develop a vision for the future (in this instance) for a person experiencing disability and whose future appears problematic. It involves teachers, family, peers and friends, with the student at the center of the process. The objective of **PATH** as a school-based planning process is enabling teachers and participants to identify a student's strengths, and to nurture those strengths as catalysts to reach a vision for the future. It is an action-oriented strategy with input and commitment by all group members. Teachers are not left alone to figure everything out. They are supported by others who know the student, the student's capacities, and the student's needs, and who care for the student.

PATH is an excellent and proven vision planning approach for people experiencing disabilities as they transition from school. **PATH** is used by governments and school systems across Canada and the United States, in the United Kingdom, and in other nations. Though we use **PATH** in an education context, it is used by other types of organizations as well. The approach has wide applicability for planning for the future.

PATH is led by two facilitators; one works with the group through progressive planning steps; a second person maintains a graphic record of the discussion and decisions reached. In keeping with the importance of the process for the future of a student, discussion is intense. Planning a vision for the future is not a five-minute chat. It requires the time needed to do a thorough job.

Step 1: The North Star – Locate the North Star - the Dream

- *The first two steps are conducted ‘in the future’ - creating the ‘futures’ we want. The North Star dream focuses on the hope the student has for her or his future. The step goes to the future and creates an unrestricted “dream” future situation wanted by the student. This dream gives Direction to the PATH.*

Step 2: Generate Images of a Positive Possible Future

- *This step works in the future as well - but a ‘closer future’ - say one year from now. Using the technique of ‘remembering backwards’ from one year from now, the student creates images of what is Positive and Possible within the year. By remembering as if they have already happened, the events come to life. All parts of the future goal are checked for being positive and possible.*

Step 3: Describe the Now

- *This step comes back to the present to ground the PATH. What is it like now? How would you describe where you are now? The differences between “now” and the future goal are brought out. The tension between where a person is today - and their goals and dreams becomes evident.*

Step 4: Invite People to Enroll

- *This step explores ‘who’ will be needed to move in the direction of the Dream. The PATH journey cannot be accomplished alone. Who will be needed for support? Who will be on the team? Group members are asked to consider whether they will support the student and how. Other needed people are identified.*
-

Step 5: Decide to Get Stronger

• In order to move forward, people need to ‘do things’, learn things, take care of themselves, reach out to others, do what it takes to strengthen themselves for this journey towards their dream. A commitment list often includes things like improvements in diet, regular exercise, reconnecting to a spiritual journey, etc.

Step 6: Identify Bold Steps

• This step looks backwards from the future and ‘remembers’ the progress ‘already made’ half way on the journey (say six months from now). Begin by revisiting the Dream, and the Goals for a year from now. The group remembers (positively) what has changed.
What milestones have been achieved?

Step 7: Organize for the Next Month

• This step ‘remembers’ the immediate future (say one month from now) and recalls what has been done. Remember in detail. Who did it? When? Where? How? People feel the movement switching from the dreaming process to reality and implementation. People begin committing to supporting actions and changes.

Step 8: Agree to First/Next Step(s)

• The group has outlined who will be involved. Actions to be taken have been clarified. The group returns to the present. What is our first step NOW - immediately? (ideally within 24 hours). This step(s) is identified. Who will do what and when (precisely). A coach is selected from the group to support the student by checking on progress, and helping them keep their commitment to implement the first step(s). The student’s path begins.

MAPS & THE MAPS PROCESS

Since 1989 **MAPS** has been making people's lives better, richer, and stronger. It is related to **PATH**, though it was first created for planning the educational programs of learners experiencing disabilities who were at risk. **MAPS**, as with **PATH**, works with a creative facilitator, and a graphic facilitator. The creative facilitator is a person who can listen, focus, and believe in the deep capacity of all human beings. He or she believes that it matters not if you have a disability. You still have deep capacity. It matters not if your challenge is more significant than the challenges of others. You still have deep capacity. **MAPS** operates on the belief that the glass is half full, rather than half empty. A positive view in planning is the keynote.



As with **PATH**, which grew from **MAPS**, this is a group-oriented strategy. It focuses on the challenges facing a student who most likely would be segregated under the special education approach taken in many schools. It works for both those who are included in regular classrooms and those who are placed in special settings.

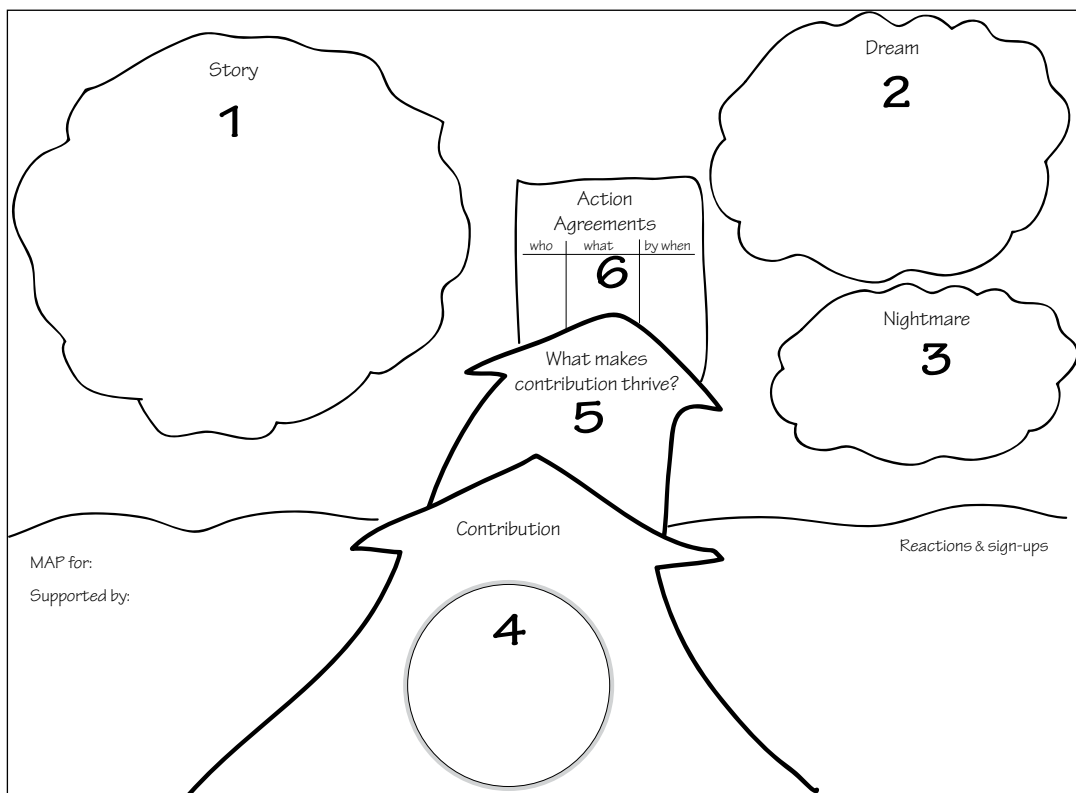
MAPS also is an excellent and proven strategy, which can be used at all levels of school. **MAPS** is used by provinces and territories in Canada, American states, and across entire nations. For instance, in Malta all students experiencing disabilities go through the **MAPS** process.

MAPS uses the power of a Dream, as does **PATH**. However, there is more immediacy in an educational MAP. An educational program must be planned beginning right away. **MAPS** also has eight steps, but the initial focus is on the story/history. Where has the person

come from? Steps that follow will help to clarify where we want to go, and what we need to get there. **MAPS** is an excellent tool to support planning and will provide an excellent foundation for an Individual Education Plan (IEP). If initiated early, **MAPS** blends into **PATH**, which works as a follow-up strategy as adulthood and transition from school approach.



An educational MAP begins by bringing together the people who are central to planning a student's educational program. Commonly, these are the student at the centre of the process, the family, the teachers, the peers, and any central others. Again, a large sheet of mounted paper, a 'process facilitator', and a 'graphic facilitator' are necessary.



Getting Started: What is the purpose of this MAP?

- The process facilitator welcomes the group. The purpose of the MAP is reviewed. The *MAPS* process is begun by asking.
-

Step 1: Tell the Story

- The student's history/story is presented to the group - ideally led by the student - with support if necessary. The process facilitator is the guide to discussion. The graphic facilitator records the emerging story. Milestones of the student's story/situation are described (as chosen by the student).
-

Step 2: Honour the Dream

- The Dream is the heart and soul of the *MAPS* process. The student articulates her/his Dream. The Dream is not questioned. Further discussion refines and clarifies the Dream. The task of the *MAPS* process is to begin planning how to move in the direction of the Dream in a concrete way, but the Dream is 'an unrestricted dream'.
-

Step 3: Recognize the Nightmare

- Students experiencing disabilities can face a dark future unless positive change is planned. Nightmares vary. Some are clear, others harder to articulate. This discussion clarifies the nightmare as a stark contrast to the direction of the future. It also makes clear that the intent is to move toward the dream, and not the nightmare. The nightmare might not appear to be an educational concern. However, the direction education takes can lead to a nightmare or to realization of a dream.

Step 4: Name and Claim the Gifts.

- *Who is the person? What can their CONTRIBUTION be? What are the person's strengths, gifts, and talents? This is a brainstorming step. Everyone in the group responds spontaneously with words and images describing the person. A portrait of the person, as a full, gifted person is drawn. The student concerned then describes herself/himself by choosing a few key words from those suggested by the group. This helps clarify the student's self image and vision. Create a 'central image' (a logo - a symbol) that represents this person's gifts when they are at their best.*
-

Step 5: Say what it takes for Gifts to Flourish

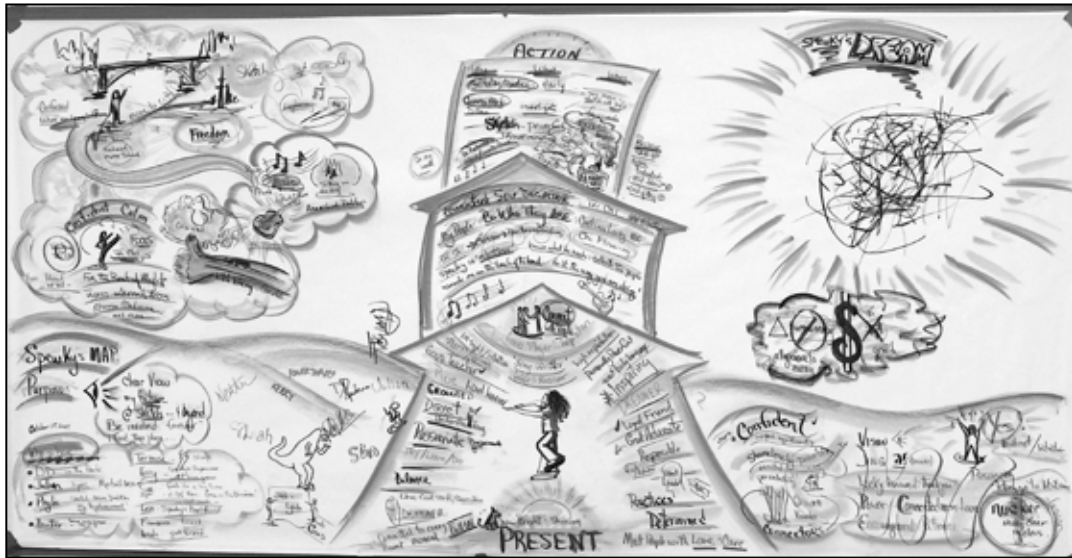
- *The dream and the nightmare anchor the discussion. The task is to decide how to move towards the dream and away from the nightmare through a strong, positive educational program. What people, resources, and actions will lead to the dream? This dialogue explores mutual responsibility from the focus person and participants - and this cannot be achieved alone.*
-

Step 6: Commit to action

- *Group members are asked to state what is needed to realize the dream. What actions are necessary? What are the beginning actions? Who will do what? When will they do it? Clear action commitments are made. A Coach is selected to check that the action steps are progressing as planned.*

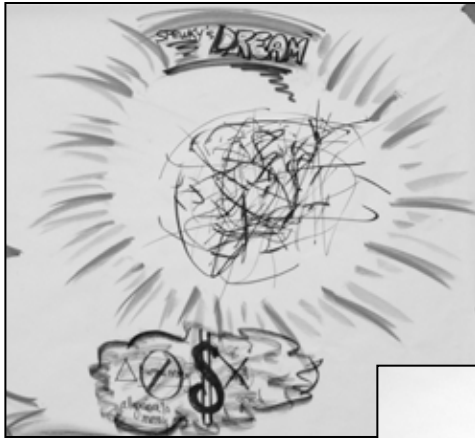
The MAP is now in action.

The process facilitator leads the ‘conversations/questions’ while the graphic facilitator records the MAPS discussion on a large, mounted sheet of paper using the MAPS format. The format suggests the form the discussion might take. Note that there is a space to record names of those supporting the process and the names of those willing to participate in moving from discussion to action.



Images of Spewky's MAP - Spewky, some of his team - and blowups of some of the images - the dream and “gifts and Capacities to Contribute”





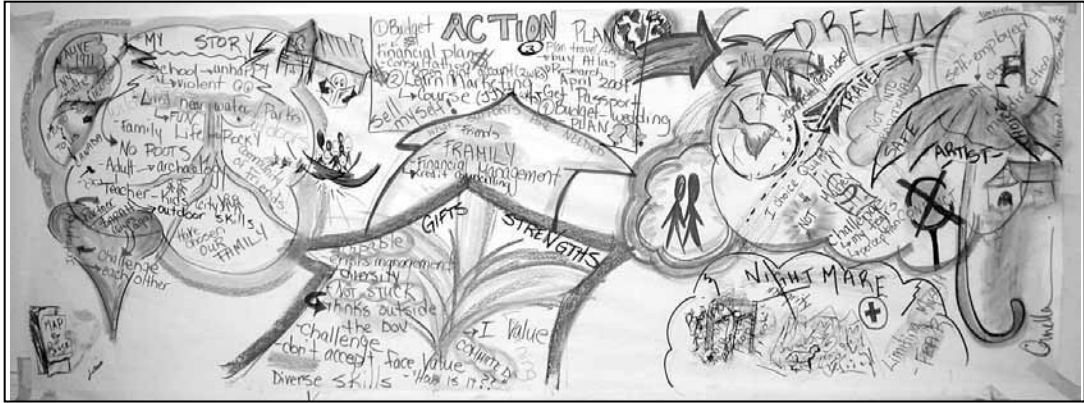
There are many resources to support your further learning about MAPS and PATH. see

www.inclusion.com

- Person-Centered Planning with MAPS & PATH: A Workbook for Facilitators
- All My Life's a Circle and more....

Spewky instructs Tai Chi - and at the end demonstrated some of his favorite positions.





A different MAP; a graphic faciilitator at work, and a final shot of Spewky showing how he feels at the end of the process.



CIRCLE of FRIENDS & The CIRCLE of FRIENDS PROCESS

We all need friends. We can scarcely envision life without loved ones and good friends about us. It is an unfortunate reality that some young people experiencing disabilities do not have a rich circle of friends, or even of acquaintances. Their situation, the impact of their challenges, their frequent placement in segregated educational settings, and low expectations for progress lead many students to being lonely even among hordes of people.

Teachers, parents, and typical peers can change this situation for those without a naturally formed circle of friends. It is simple to do so. Circle of Friends does not help only one person. It helps those who join the Circle. It helps the adults involved in making a Circle happen. The Circle of Friends strategy contributes from the first years of school to the end of school and beyond through creation of a culture of acceptance, respect and positive action in an entire school.

Circle of Friends is a proven support strategy used internationally by schools and community organizations. Many Canadian and United States schools use the Circle of Friends strategy, as do many schools in other nations.

Circle of Friends begins with a review of the social life of an individual. This social scan takes shape as 4 concentric circles in which names are recorded and social closeness indicated. These are:

Circle of Friends

- **Innermost (First) Circle – Circle of Intimacy**

The names recorded here are those closest to the person at the centre of the circle. Those with intimate interaction. These are the people one cannot think of life without.

- **Second Circle – Circle of Friendship**

These are the person's best friends. They would almost make it into the Circle of Intimacy.

- **Third Circle – Circle of Participation**

These are persons associated through participation in community organizations. They can be schoolmates, teachers, people from church, temple, or synagogue, from a club, a dance group, a team, or any 'association' where one joins and meets people.

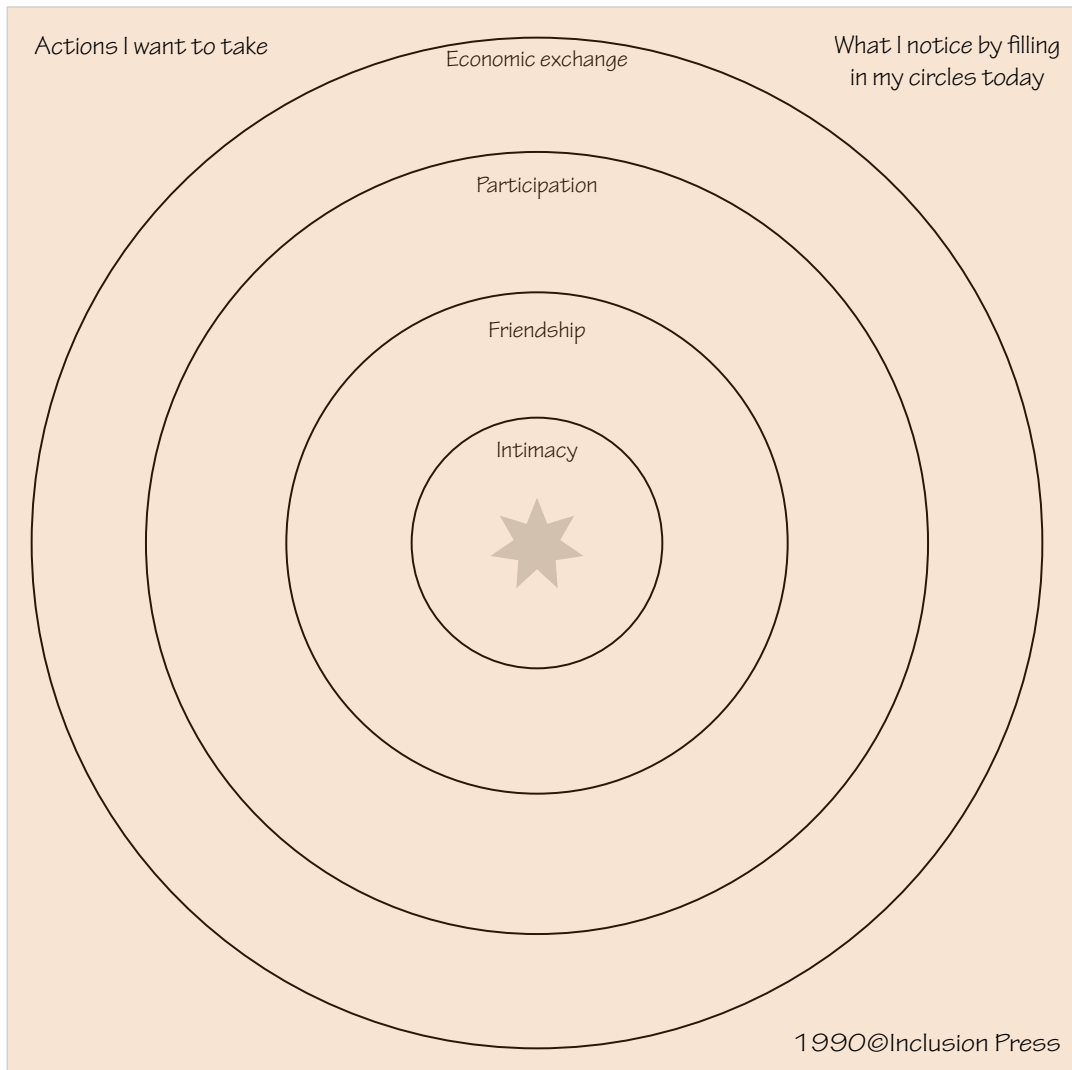
- **Outermost (Fourth) Circle – Circle of Exchange**

These are people paid to be in the individual's life. Medical professionals, teachers, caregivers, and so on.

Notes:

- Some people may be in more than one circle. For example, a teacher is paid to be in a student's life, but also may become a friend.

- To be in a circle, one does not even need be human, as with a favoured pet; or alive, as with a favourite relative who has passed.



The Process

The process is simple, but can become quite emotional. A facilitator draws the four circles on a large surface. A group of supporters form a participating audience. These may include any appropriate group – beginning with peers, and then teachers, educational assistants, school administrators, parents, other family and friends. The name of the person at the centre of the process goes into the middle of the Circle of Intimacy.

The setting should be ‘hospitable’ and welcoming. The Facilitator

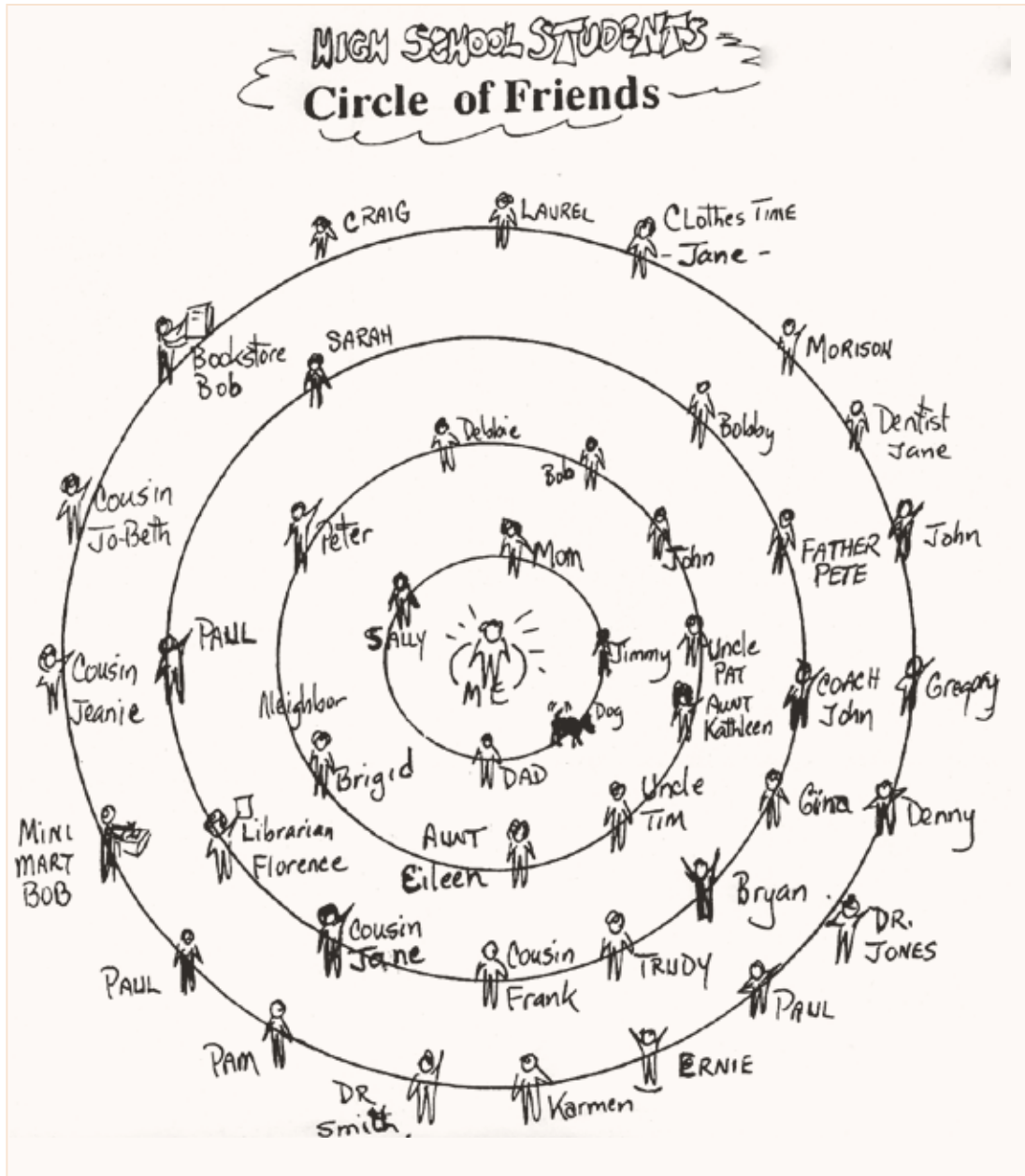
begins by explaining that this process is voluntary and creates a 'picture' of the people in a person's life. The purpose of the process is to notice potential for strengthening relationships and friendships.

The first step is to create a Circle of Friends diagram for a volunteer 'typical' student. This demonstrates the process, and typically reveals the kind of friendship circle that one might expect around most people. It also gives everyone involved a rehearsal for participating in the Circle of Friends process for the person experiencing disability.

The facilitator, pointing to the Circle of Intimacy, says, "Only the people most important in your life go here. Who fits in here? Who is very, very close to you? Who do you want in your life forever?" The person at the centre of the process decides whose names go into the Circle of Intimacy. If the person has some type of communication challenge, another person may assist, but every effort is made to have the centre individual make the decisions in her or his own way. The names of the people chosen are written into the circle.

The facilitator then goes through the same process for each circle, always explaining the purpose of the circle and always recording names. Once the Circle for the typical student is completed, discussion is held on how each of the circles includes a variety of names. Attention is drawn to what people are present in each circle. The people are in different circles because they have different relationships with the person at the centre.

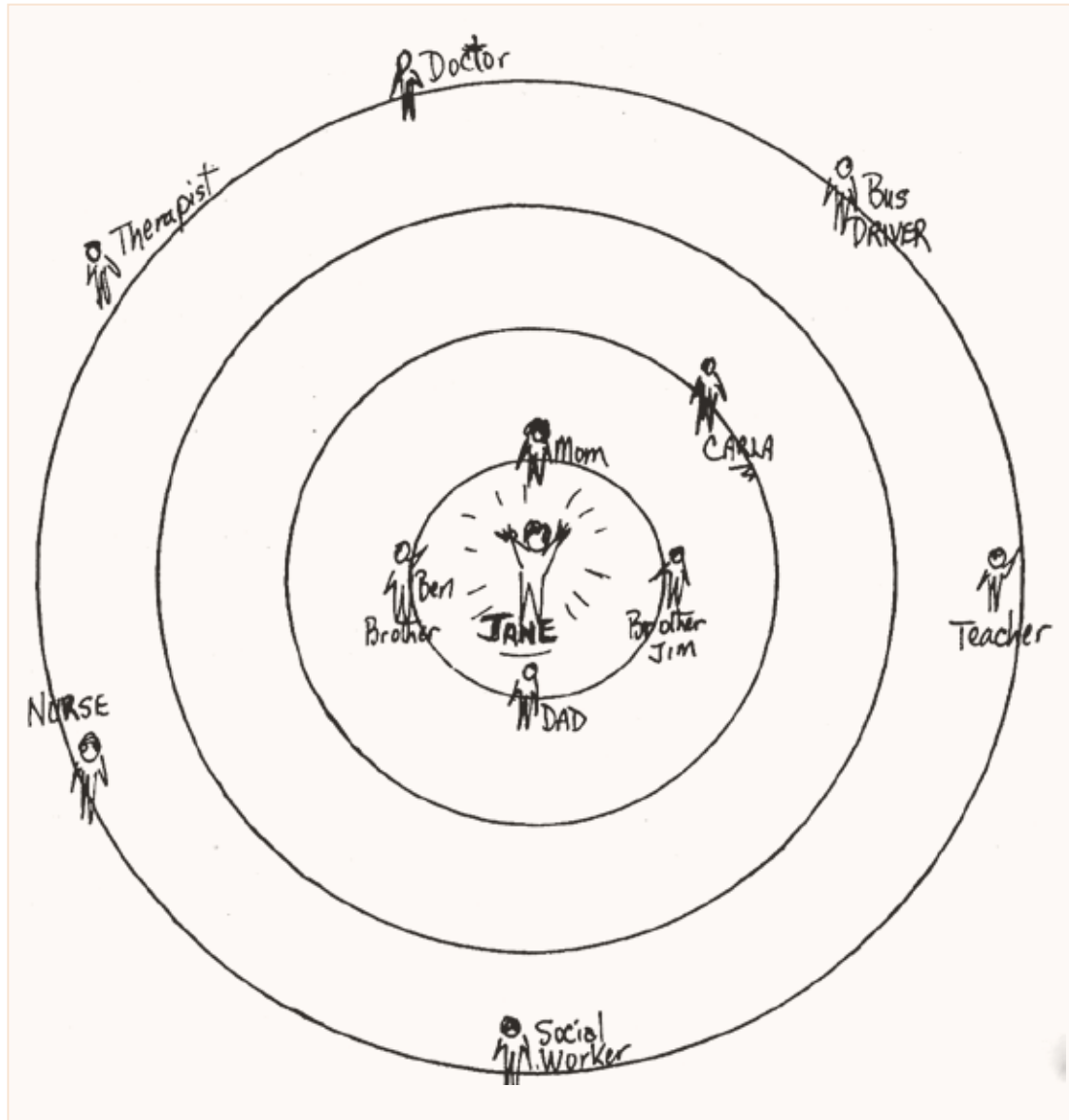
Even students with strong Circles of Friendship often feel elated as they actually see the enormous array of people in their lives.



Above is a 'typical' complete sample circle of friends diagram.

Now, go through the same process for the person experiencing disability.

Quoted from: All My Life's a Circle: Inclusion Press with permission.



The most common result is that there is immediate and often dramatic awareness of differences between the two circles. Discussion makes the differences more apparent. One has many more names than the other. Frequently, the names of people normally listed on the Circle of Exchange (paid to be in your life) appear on the internal circles of the person with challenges. This could be because some are actual friends. It could also be because there are so few people named in the three inner circles.



The circle diagrams above make it clear that the content is much more important than the 'art'. Sticky notes provide a way for more people to be involved in 'posting' suggestions to the network. Being interactive is good.

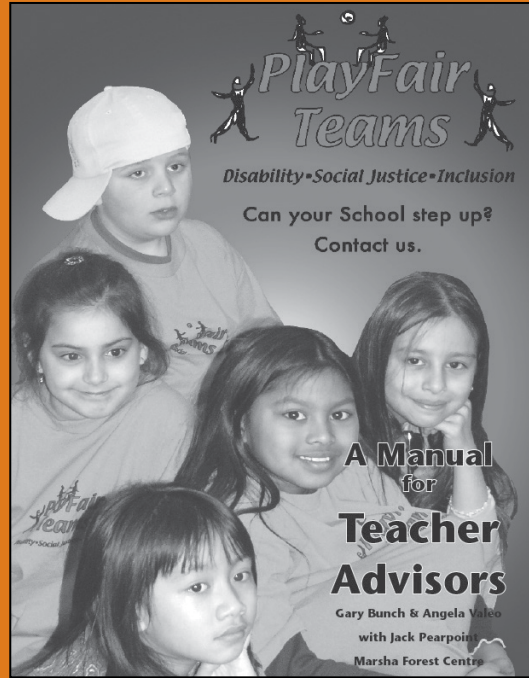
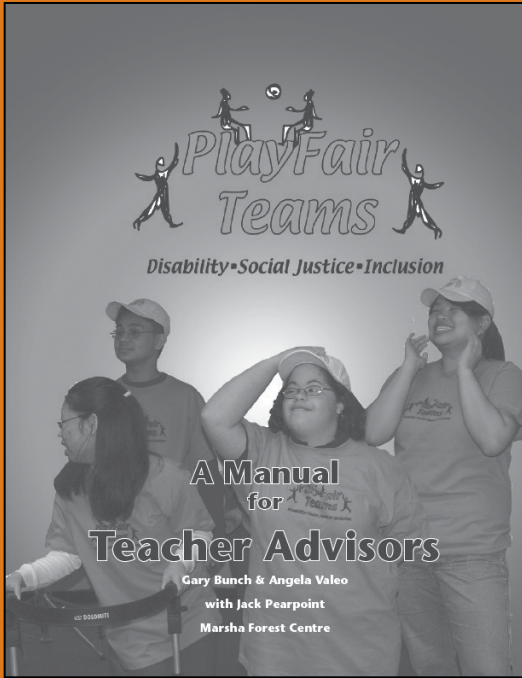
The final step is discussion with the group of what the differences suggest, and what might be done to strengthen the friendship circle around the person at the centre of the process. In schools, the group includes classmates as well as some family members and school staff. Very often, and particularly in earlier grades, the students immediately volunteer to support their peer experiencing disability. Sometimes the group, especially when older, needs to be led toward suggesting how to strengthen the circle so that volunteers come forward.

It is critical to facilitate this commitment to action so that people are clear about what they are proposing and agreeing to, and that they can, and as much as possible will, 'deliver'. For example, 'loneliness' is typically revealed in many circles. Appropriate actions could be to play together at recess, agree to have lunch on Thursdays, call and see if they could go for 'coffee' or a movie together. The facilitator needs to be sure that 'follow through' is possible. Can people contact each other? by phone? Are appropriate transportation options available? etc.

Another response that is both powerful and common is to form a 'Circle of Friends'. Those who choose simply agree to meet (say weekly or on request) to help each other and enjoy each other's company. Initially, the focus tends to be on the person with challenges, but typically, in a short time, the circle is responding to the wants, challenges and needs that face each of us. It becomes a mutual circle of support with everyone contributing.

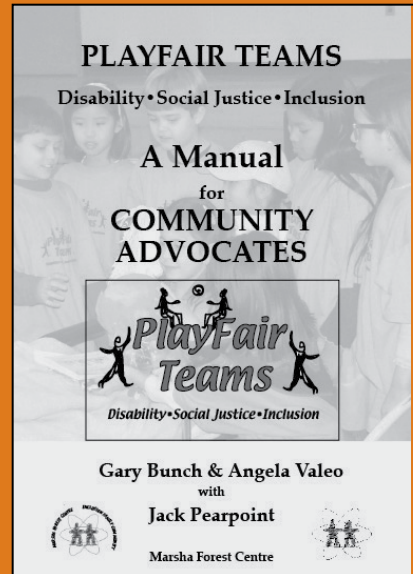


Circles of Friends have fun together, plan together, and are powerful together as they face the future.



PlayFair Team Resources

www.inclusion.com



VIII

PlayFair Teams A School Culture Strategy

PlayFair Teams is a leadership opportunity for schools and students. It is an opportunity for students, both typical and with challenges, to contribute to the development of a culture of acceptance, respect, and positive action in terms of diversity. PlayFair Teams is a background extra-curricular activity for schools. It is a strategy aimed at creating a culture of understanding and acceptance. The objective is to acculturate the entire school to the fact that students experiencing disabilities are simply other students who should be accepted as full members of the school community. It is a strategy aimed at moving students experiencing disabilities from the margins of the school to the status of just being other students. The focus is Disability-Social Justice-Inclusion.



The Eight Steps of Setting Up a PlayFair Team

1. Consider the fairness of the situation of people marginalized in society. Use the students in your school experiencing disability as an example. Are all groups of students being treated with equity? If not, consider the responsibility of schools in doing something positive and leading students to be involved.
2. Have a look at the PlayFair Teams resource materials as a way to introduce the concept of: Disability – Social Justice – Inclusion to students in your school.
3. Select staff members to become advisors to your PlayFair Team.
4. Bring on board a community person with disability as your Community Mentor for Disability. (If your PlayFair Team is a blend of students with and without disability, it is a good idea to extend that model to the adults involved.)
5. Make the PlayFair Team opportunity known to all students, with and without disabilities, and call for volunteer Team members.
6. Work with the ideas of Team members to develop a presentation based on Disability – Social Justice – Inclusion. (The presentation can take any form the students think will get the ideas across to others.)
7. Make presentations to others in your school, other schools, and the community around your school. (It is good to sensitize as many as possible to the issues involved.)
8. Support the PlayFair Team as you would any other extra-curricular activity. (If another group of students obtains support from your school, this new group should as well.) This step ensures that your PlayFair Team is seen as something the school intends to continue. Just as a sports team, or other extra-curricular activity, becomes part of the fabric of your school, so should your PlayFair Team.



PlayFair Teams



What Do High School Students Say About PlayFair Teams?

PlayFair has been an experience like no other. It was definitely nothing like I had expected. When I was first told about PlayFair, my initial thought was that as Grade 12s, we would be leading the Special Ed students in developing a presentation. As soon I learned, the true experience was for me. I've discovered the joy of meeting new people. Despite physical and mental disabilities, the Special Ed students are like any other teenager. During this experience, we talked, played, laughed, and cried.

Michelle, Grade 12

PlayFair gave me the opportunity to meet and get to know 12 different, amazing people, all of who taught me something. The things I've learned about the process of a presentation and about myself are lessons that'll stay with me for life.

Florence, Grade 11

All my life I was judged, put down and left out of things just because I am physically disabled, but, for once, I'm not. I guess it's true. People really have no clue how powerful they are.

Megan, Grade 11

The day was perfect and it took me to another world. It reminded me of all the problems I had in my life. If I can help other kids like me, what a difference we could make in this world.

Jennifer, Grade 12

I personally feel that my group did an extraordinary job displaying how important acceptance is to everyone and how everybody, no matter what age and ability level, just wants to be accepted.

I think by the end everybody realized how much impact it could have on someone by simply accepting him or her.

Crystal, Grade 10

The PlayFair Team Teacher Advisor Manual and the supporting DVD will give you a lot more information and many ideas.

PlayFair Teams Have a Role in Bullying Prevention

Though PlayFair Teams have the overall objective in realizing social justice for learners experiencing disabilities, some schools have noted that it impacts on bullying in schools. Research and experience indicate that students with disabilities are the most bullied group in schools. A PlayFair Team brings together typical students and students experiencing disabilities in a setting where equity of status and contribution exists. Often this is the first time typical students have associated with peers experiencing disabilities in a setting that is not based on some version of the charity model. The impact on both groups of students is obvious in the student comments above. The impact is not only on the students involved in the PlayFair Team. Other students in the school are less liable to engage in inappropriate behaviour directed toward those with disability. In fact, the typical students on the PlayFair Team begin to note and react to inappropriate behaviour. Their sensitivity has been increased, and that begins an effect, which spreads throughout the entire school.

Here is a review of PlayFair Teams published by the Ontario, Canada Ministry of Education. Ontario is where PlayFair Teams originated. PlayFair Teams was selected as a bullying prevention program by the Ministry and all schools were made aware of its potential.



Ontario Ministry of Education Review of PlayFair Teams for Anti-Bullying



Registry of Bullying Prevention Programs - Classification Checklist

Playfair Teams - Disability, Social Justice, Inclusion

KEY ELEMENTS OF A SCHOOL BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM	Present in Submitted Program	Absent in Submitted Program	Comments
The program defines bullying.	X		Clearly defined
The program identifies different forms of bullying.	X		
The program addresses specific issues identified in schools.	X		The program focuses on social justice for people with disabilities, younger or older
The program focuses on healthy relationships, and explains the bullying dynamic.	X		The bullying dynamic is explained and strategies on overcoming bullying and the disabled are included
The program includes training materials and guides for educators, students, parents, and school staff on the issue of bullying and on bullying prevention strategies.	X		There is a handout booklet and a CD ROM for both PC and MAC that includes black line masters and interactive resource kit for students to complete and problem solve
The program takes a multi-faceted approach: <i>school-wide education</i> (targets the whole school community and is embedded in the curriculum); <i>routine interventions</i> (specifies strategies for students involved in bullying and victims of bullying); and <i>intensive interventions</i> (identifies supports for students involved in repeated bullying and victimization, with possible recourse to community/social service resources).	X		The program is multifaceted. The program positions volunteer students, working collaboratively, as leaders in creating positive conceptual and behavioural social change in understanding and respecting groups that are a focus of bullying
The intervention strategies address peer processes that can promote prevention and stop bullying.	X		The main focus of the program is that students can help create positive change in their schools and communities
The program is <i>systemic</i> (it involves parents, peers, classes, staff, and the wider community), and is ongoing (it is integrated into daily classroom activities in reading, art, and other curriculum elements).	X		The program is systemic. Students give a voice to their experiences by dramatizing forms of bullying, singing of new possibilities, creating murals of diversity, growing peace gardens, and acting as conflict negotiators
The program includes interventions and support for students who are bullied and those who bully.	X		Interventions are included for all students that are a part of the bullying dynamic
The program helps to develop protocols for safe reporting of bullying incidents.	X		
The program has an evaluation component.	X		An evaluation form is completed by the students with different forms for the varying ages of the students
The program has safe intervention programs for bystanders.	X		
The program promotes a healthy social school environment.	X		A positive healthy social environment is promoted
The program promotes development and/or improvement of students' social behaviour.	X		The program promotes awareness of issues that relate to disabilities

Quotes from Teacher and Parents Evaluation of Transition Resource Manual

As a teacher, the description of our approach was handled well. And what I liked was the challenge to review more deliberately the perspectives of the other team members

Secondary School Teacher

The value of collaboration is introduced early in the report and developed with respect and encouragement for all involved.

Secondary School Teacher

Excellent; particularly with regard to no prejudging and encouraging challenges for all participants.

Parent

I really appreciated the discussion on the context of teachers. This is a unique discussion in my experience.

Parent

There is no doubt at all that collaboration is a key to everything that happens in planning the transition program. The value is stated clearly and repeatedly. The problem is that it happens so rarely.

Parent

This resource will assist parents and teachers in coming together in the best interest of the student.

Educator

Clearly shows the benefits, and need for, all involved (teachers, families, school systems) to work together and keep discussions related to the transition process open and ongoing.

Educator

What makes this resource unique is its candid approach to the “three perspectives” – school/parent/child. It acknowledges that each group may come to the table with a different perspective, but that the combined effort of the various groups produces the best outcome.

Secondary School Teacher

Good read overall. I can see many areas that I would like to bring to my educational group and to the families with whom we work.

Secondary School Transition Program Coordinator

Overall, a strong addition to the literature on transition and disability. Thank you. I have learned from this resource.

Secondary School Teacher

This was a refreshing read. You laid out the main issues clearly. It was pleasant to see someone taking a wider view of what schools and families need to think about.

Parent

SUPPORTIVE RESOURCES

RESOURCES for Inclusion

Inclusion Press at www.Inclusion.com has many excellent resources to support teachers, families and individuals as they work to build full and successful lives. There are also resources to build community support as a person joins community membership in a person centered way. Many videos, books, and other resources are available.

BOOKS

PATH: Planning Possible Positive Futures by Jack Pearpoint, John O'Brien, Marsha Forest

PATH is a creative planning tool that starts in the future and works backwards to an outcome of first (beginning) steps that are possible and positive. It is excellent for team building. It has been used to mediate conflicts. PATH is not for the faint of heart. It is very results oriented. It is unique in its focus on the pathfinder's dream and vision of the future and the focus on enrolling community allies needed to move towards that future.

Person-Centered Planning with MAPS & PATH: A workbook for facilitators (4th printing)(2007) John O'Brien & Jack Pearpoint

This workbook was developed to accompany a three day training workshop for MAPS and PATH. Articles have been added. Toronto: Inclusion Press

PlayFair Teams: Disability-Social Justice-Inclusion: A manual for teacher advisors. G. Bunch, A. Valeo and J Pearpoint (2 books and a CD-ROM in a kit)

PlayFair Teams are a tool for schools to implement inclusion building on the capacities of all students. There are two manuals: one for teachers and a second for community mentors. There is also a CD with video clips and other resources to assist people to create and sustain a PlayFair Team.

All My Life's a Circle: Using the tools: Circles, MAPS & PATH. Falvey, M.A., Forest, M., Pearpoint, J, & Rosenberg, R.L. (1993) Toronto: Inclusion Press

This popular book captures the essence and spirit of three creative and exciting tools used by many schools and organizations who want to build innovative and quality education or human service systems that truly meet the needs of the people being served. The book gives a glimpse of the 3 tools: Circles, Maps and PATH, and outlines the key points for each. Stories and graphics illustrate the text and add depth to the tools described. It has been used by school systems around the world.

Members of Each Other: Building Community in Company with People with Developmental Disabilities by John O'Brien and Connie Lyle O'Brien Toronto: Inclusion Press

This book exposes the dangers of power, of isolation, of helplessness. It also challenges and gives hope for communities to commit to care for each other.

Future Directions: An interaction workshop series. Hamilton Family Network (2008)
Families helping families to plan transition from school to community.

From Behind the Piano: The Building of Judith Snow's Unique Circle of Friends by Jack Pearpoint and *What's Really Worth Doing And How to Do It: A Book for People Who Love Someone Labeled Disabled* by Judith Snow (Two books in one)

This "Two in One" book is the story of Judith Snow's life and circle of support. It is also Judith's wisdom from a lifetime of receiving help and support about what is worth doing. A little book with as much good thinking about the art of living as any book that I know.

A Little Book On Person Centered Planning edited by John O'Brien and Connie Lyle O'Brien

Ways to think about person-centered planning, its limitations, the conditions for its success. A series of essays offering critical thinking about the practical issues of making person centered plans.

Make A Difference: A Guidebook for Person-Centered Direct Support by John O'Brien and Beth Mount with contributions from Peter Leidy and Bruce Blaney

This very practical book supports action learning about relationship building, planning with people in a person-centered way, supporting choice, and building community inclusion. (Learning Journey workbooks go with the book.)

Action for Inclusion: How to Improve Schools by Welcoming Children with Special Needs into Regular Classrooms: John O'Brien & Marsha Forest with J. Pearpoint, J. Snow & D. Hasbury. Toronto, Inclusion Press (1991)

This 55 page book is the all time best seller of Inclusion Press. Now in its 4th printing, it is as fresh and relevant as the day it was written. A classic: short and jargon free. It describes the Circle of Friends exercise, and the MAPS process in detail. We strongly recommend it as a companion to the videos: With A Little Help From My Friends and the New MAPS Training Video. This book is being used by school systems around the globe.

Each Belongs: The Remarkable Story of the First School System to Move to Inclusion: Jim Hansen with G. Leyden, G. Bunch & J. Pearpoint (2006). Includes a DVD
The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board been fully Inclusive for All since 1969. Their mission statement: "EACH BELONGS". This remarkable book by Jim Hansen collects the history - including an extensive collection of documents and letters from teachers and families - that tell the stories of the struggles from the inside over 30 years.

Implementing Person-Centered Planning: Voices of Experience John O'Brien & Connie Lyle O'Brien (2004)

A collection of remarkable learnings by 28 leaders in the field as they reflect on their experiences. The second in the series. .

A Little Book On Person Centered Planning edited by John O'Brien and Connie Lyle O'Brien

Ways to think about person-centered planning, its limitations, the conditions for its success. A series of essays offering critical thinking about the practical issues of making person centered plans.

The Big Plan: A Good Life After School, S. Coulson & H. Simmons: Toronto, Inclusion Press, (2006)

The Big Plan: A Good Life After School describes the vibrant experience in Scotland and England, of an approach that engages young people and their families in large groups to plan full lives. It is inspired by and modeled on the work of Connie Lyle O'Brien & Beth Mount with the PathFinders Project in New York City. Students and their families and supporters come together over a series of weeks and engage in person centered planning with their circles of support, through a series of guided conversations and reflections.

Connie described the PathFinders experience as a process of "self - efficacy" whereby students and families recognized and respected each other's strengths and gifts, growing in confidence and self-esteem as a result.

The Basics: Supporting Learners with Intellectual Challenges in Regular Classrooms: A Resource for Teachers, G. Bunch: Toronto, Inclusion Press, (2006)

A teacher's resource book on dealing with intellectual challenges in a regular classroom. This book is a resource for teachers who have the opportunity and the responsibility to work with students who have been labeled with intellectual challenges. The fundamental premise is that good teaching is good teaching - for all students. Secondly, this book believes that teachers are good professionals and have both the skills and the spirit to welcome and teach all learners. However, because of lags in teacher training and support, many teachers may fear the challenge of welcoming students who at first glance appear to require special training they have not had.

Inclusive Education: To Do or Not To Do: Gary Bunch & Angela Valeo (2009) Toronto, Inclusion Press

Snapshots of inclusive education in & Nations: Canada, Croatia, England, Germany, India, Malta, Spain. As with all change, Inclusive Education is not welcomed by everyone. Some governments, educational administrators, teachers, and parents prefer the Special Education approach, which regards some learners experiencing disability as so different that they cannot learn in the company of their typical peers. Under this view, they must be separated for their own good. However, increasing numbers of people in every nation see and argue for the social justice of bringing all learners together in school. They understand that difference is a reason to be included. This book presents snapshots of the struggle of educational change as seven nations respond to this new human rights understanding of how education and disability should intersect.

Inclusion: How To: Essential Classroom Strategies: G. Bunch: Toronto, Inclusion Press, (2005) (just published in Russian)

A book for all classroom teachers. This readable, jargon free book tells you all you will need to know to include any child - if you want to.

Inclusion: How To is a handbook for every school teacher. In straight forward language, Dr. Bunch (York University) outlines proven strategies that work in real classrooms. Without pretension, the book constantly references known research that gives authority to these strategies.

The Inclusion Papers: Strategies to Make Inclusion Happen. J. Pearpoint, M. Forest & J. Snow: Toronto, Inclusion Press, (1995)

Practical, down to earth and sensible. A classic that is well worn from use in many schools. Perfect for conferences, courses and workshops. Circles of Friends, MAPS, articles about drop-outs, kids at risk, Medical School courses and more. Favorite and now classic articles include Two Roads: Inclusion or Exclusion; The Butwhatabout Kids; MAPS: Action Planning; Dynamics of Support Circles; Common Sense Tools: MAPS and CIRCLES; and Giftedness.

DVDs

My Life, My Choice: Personal Stories, struggles & successes with Person Directed Living (82 min): (2007). DVD Toronto, Inclusion Press

My Life, My Choice profiles seven adults with disabilities living Person Directed lives in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. Rather than relying on a limited number of programs and services to direct their lives, their futures are in their own hands. With flexible funding and with the support of independent planning, they are free to follow their hearts and live their lives as they choose. Their inspirational stories are a powerful testament to what is possible when given a chance to dream.

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) resources

When People Care Enough to Act: Asset Based Community Development: Mike Green & Henry Moore with John O'Brien. Toronto, Inclusion Press Book & DVD (2007)
Developed in response to the question "I love ABCD (Asset Based Community Development); what do I do Monday Morning?", these materials support a practical approach to creating community collaborations that work. Enriching each other, the book and the DVD provide clear exposition of ABCD organizing principles and best practices, examples of ABCD organizing in action, learning exercises, worksheets, and reflections from experienced practitioners of ABCD organizing.

ABCD Institute www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html offers a complete listing with access information of the many ABCD Institute publications at www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd/abcdpubs.html including workbooks, articles for download, and a list of articles by John McKnight.

Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets, John. Kretzmann & John McKnight. Chicago, ACTA Publications. (1993).

The original book of ABCD which first described the ABCD perspective; filled with many stories and examples.

Careless Society: Community and Its Counterfeits, by John McKnight New York: Basic Books (1995)

If *Building Communities From the Inside Out* points towards 'what to do', then *Careless Society* points towards 'what not to do', an analysis of the many ways community is undermined.

PLANNING MEETING NOTES

#	Date	Agenda	Place	Time



MEETING NOTES – MEETING #

DATE:

PARTICIPANTS:

DISCUSSION NOTES:

DECISIONS:

CONTINUING ISSUES:

MEETING NOTES – MEETING #

DATE:

PARTICIPANTS:

DISCUSSION NOTES:

DECISIONS:

CONTINUING ISSUES:

MEETING NOTES – MEETING #

DATE:

PARTICIPANTS:

DISCUSSION NOTES:

DECISIONS:

CONTINUING ISSUES:

MEETING NOTES – MEETING #

DATE:

PARTICIPANTS:

DISCUSSION NOTES:

DECISIONS:

CONTINUING ISSUES:

What Teachers and Parents say about this Manual

Excellent; particularly with regard to no prejudging and encouraging challenges for all participants.

Parent

What makes this resource unique is its candid approach to the "three perspectives" – school/parent/child. It acknowledges that each group comes to the table with a different perspective, but that the combined effort of the various groups produces the best outcome.

Secondary School Teacher

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Parent

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Educator

A strong addition to the literature on transition and disability.

Secondary School Teacher

You laid out the main issues clearly.... taking a wider view of what schools and families need to think about.

Parent

Clearly shows the benefits, and need for all involved (teachers, families, school systems) to work together and keep discussions related to the transition process open and ongoing.

Educator



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