

Informing Families

Building Trust

A Partnership for Better Communication
on Developmental Disability Issues in Washington State

Focus on the Future: Person Centered Planning

Person-Centered Planning has deep roots in the disability community as part of a large effort to move away from a description of individuals with developmental disabilities as needy, toward a more inclusive visioning and planning that sees the individual as a valued, contributing member of the community.

At its heart, Person-Centered Planning focuses on the individual's strengths, abilities and interests. It can help in a variety of ways, such as:

- ❖ Individual Education Program (IEP) planning and preparation
- ❖ Charting future plans and goals
- ❖ Specific planning (e.g., employment or supported living options)

Person-Centered Planning Q&A

What does Person-Centered Planning look like?

The individual and his/her family invite participants (friends, family, providers—anyone who knows the person well) to a meeting, or series of meetings, led by a facilitator who guides the process. In some cases, the results are illustrated in pictures by a *graphics facilitator*.

What's included in the plan?

The plan can be broad or specific—from long-term planning and major life transitions to education and employment. The process helps to better understand the person's life now (e.g., strengths, interests, talents, abilities, helpful people); where s/he would like to be at some future point; and the activities, people, and supports needed to help reach those goals.

How do I get Person-Centered Planning for my son/daughter?

- ➔ For clients of DDA who receive employment services, the employment provider conducts an informal person-centered planning session during the discovery process. In addition, sometimes a person-centered plan will be conducted through Individualized Technical Assistance (ITA) for individuals who have been in a segregated setting and have not reached their employment goal.
- ➔ School-age children may be able to get person-centered planning through their school district or through private pay (any age). Contact Michele Lehosky at PAVE (Partnerships for Action Voices for Empowerment) to find out what might be available in your area: mlehosky@wapave.org; www.wapave.org.

Additional Resources

Books by John O'Brien and Connie Lyle O'Brien, leaders and innovators in Person-Centered Planning and Community-Building: www.inclusion.com/jobrien.html

Videos by Michael Smull on Person Centered Thinking and Planning: www.learningcommunity.us/podcasts.htm



Our family's Person Centered Planning celebration was a great way to celebrate Ben's 14th Birthday... We had a fun party, told stories, made goals. Everyone had buy-in to his life.

I would recommend everyone look at Person Centered Planning as a way to draw people into your child's life and sign on to help. Such a great underutilized tool.

—Sherri H., Parent

