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PERSON CENTERED PLANNING

A person centered plan can help those involved with the focus person see the total person, recognize his or her desires and interests, and discover completely new ways of thinking about the future of the person."

Beth Mount & Kay Zwernik, 1988

Person Centered Planning is an ongoing problem-solving process used to help people with disabilities plan for their future. In person centered planning, groups of people focus on an individual and that person's vision of what they would like to do in the future. This "person-centered" team meets to identify opportunities for the focus person to develop personal relationships, participate in their community, increase control over their own lives, and develop the skills and abilities needed to achieve these goals. Person Centered Planning depends on the commitment of a team of individuals who care about the focus person. These individuals take action to make sure that the strategies discussed in planning meetings are implemented.

PURPOSE

To look at an individual in a different way.

To assist the focus person in gaining control over their own life.

To increase opportunities for participation in the community.

To recognize individual desires, interests, and dreams.

Through team effort, develop a plan to turn dreams into reality.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN PERSON CENTERED PLANNING?

The focus person and who ever they would like can be involved. It is best when there is a facilitator and a person to record what is being shared. The facilitator should be a person that is neutral and unbiased, leads the group through the process, handles conflict and assures equal opportunity for all to participate. Others that may be included are parents/guardians, other family members, friends, professionals, and anyone else who has a personal interest in the person.

WHERE IS PERSON CENTERED PLANNING DONE?

At focus person's home or somewhere comfortable, informal and hospitable.

WHEN SHOULD PERSON CENTERED PLANNING TAKE PLACE?

At anytime in a person's life. It is best done before transition services are determined. person centered planning can be a very useful tool to develop the transition plan.

TOOLS NEEDED FOR PERSON CENTERED PLANNING

A flip chart or large pieces of paper to record the information shared. Several different colored markers.

THE STEPS OF PERSON CENTERED PLANNING

1. Develop a history or personal life story of the focus person. This is accomplished by everyone sharing past events in the person's life. The focus person's parents and family may share the largest amount of this information. Things such as background, critical events, medical issues, major developments, important relationships, etc., may be shared.
2. Description of the quality of the focus person's life is shared next. This may be accomplished by exploring the following: Community participation, community presence, choices/rights, respect and competence.
3. Personal preferences of the focus person. Things the focus person enjoys doing. Also including the things that are undesirable to the person.

The meeting to develop the personal profile usually occurs several days before the planning meeting so the participants have time to reflect on what is shared. The

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meeting, which takes about two hours, may use graphic symbols in place of words to help stimulate creativity and encourage participation.

THE NEXT STEP...THE PLANNING MEETING

1. Reviewing the personal profile. The group at this point has the opportunity to make additional comments and observations.
2. Review trends in the environment. Identify ongoing events that are likely to affect the focus person's life.
3. Share visions for the future. Through brainstorming participants are challenged to imagine ways to increase opportunities.
4. Identify obstacles and opportunities. Things that make the vision a reality.
5. Identify strategies. Action steps for implementing the visions.
6. Getting started. Identifying action steps that can be completed within a short time.
7. Identify the need for service delivery to be more responsive to individual needs.

FOR A PLAN TO BE SUCCESSFUL IT IS BEST IF:

The people have a clear and shared appreciation of the talents and capacities of the focus person.

People have a common understanding of what the focus person wants.

The group involved agree to meet regularly to review activities.

The group include a strong advocate or family member assuring that the interest of the focus person is being met.

That the group include a person committed to making connection to the local community.

This is the beginning of a process that continues throughout a lifetime. Not a product.

ONLINE RESOURCES

[Person-Centered Planning: A Tool for Transition](#), a February 2004 Parent Brief from PACER and the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET)


[Cornell University's Person Centered Planning Education Site](#)

[Beach Center on Families and Disability articles about Person-Centered Planning](#)

[Indiana's Person Centered Planning Guidelines](#)

Institute for Community Inclusion Research to Practice Brief "[Building Authentic Visions: How to Support the Focus Person in Person Centered Planning](#)"


Institute on Community Inclusion Brief, [More Than Just a Job: Person-Centered Career Planning](#)

[It's My Choice](#)  : A self-guided workbook on person-centered planning by William T. Allen published by the MN Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. Included is a Housing Checklist.

Missouri MPACT: [Transition to Empowered Lifestyles Project Person Centered Planning](#) (on-line PowerPoint presentation)

National Center on Workforce & Disability/Adult: [Starting with Me: A Guide to Person-Centered Planning for Job Seekers](#)

[The Origins of Person-Centered Planning: A Community of](#)

[Practice Perspective](#)  (2000) by Connie Lyle O'Brien and John O'Brien, a 24 page article from the Syracuse University, Center on Human Policy

Person Centered Planning checklists from the [Medicaid Reference Desk](#)

WIN-MILL Michigan's Center of Expertise received support from the Technical Assistance on Transition and the Rehabilitation Act (TATRA) Project to strengthen its expertise and build a resource library on this topic in order to serve as an information and referral resource to parent training projects funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

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PACER is the Minnesota Parent Training and Information Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs

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