On My Own

Transitioning to Independence

Presenters: Andrea L. Manchip, MSW, LMSW
Erin Parcell, MA, LPC
Michelle Sheren, BSW, LBSW

Let’s start with the basics…..

- WHAT DOES INDEPENDENCE MEAN TO EACH OF US?
  - As distinctly different as you and I

- Freedom from outside control or support: the state of being independent: the time when a country or region gains political freedom from outside control (Merriam-Webster)

Progress Toward Independence

- Changing Population Necessitates Changes in Services
- Individuals who have moved from Institutional settings are aging, but still have dreams of independence in their communities.
- The vast majority of individuals now being served at community-based programs have grown up in family settings with siblings and expect to participate in many of the same rites of passage to adulthood that they have seen their siblings experience
Progress Toward Independence

- Greater Awareness of Opportunities for Independence
  - Have been mainstreamed - provided an inclusive education in local schools
  - Younger
  - Raised at home with siblings
  - Strong family advocates have provided a greater awareness of opportunities for independence
  - Aware of supports available to them
  - Tech-savvy and access to technology
  - Want to have sexual relationships
  - Are living longer than ever before - receiving better health care

Progress Toward Independence

- Additional Supports Available
  - Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council
  - RICC - Regional Inclusive Community Coalition
  - CIL - Centers for Independent Living
  - ARC
  - People First
  - Protection & Advocacy
  - Many others

Barriers Encountered

- Community Fears - NIMBY
- Parental Fears & Dignity of Risk
- Geographic Impact - Urban v. Rural Settings
- Concerns of Law Enforcement Agencies
- Impatience - community members, bus dispatchers
Transitions Mission Statement
To encourage and increase choices related to
PRODUCTIVITY, RELATIONSHIPS, HEALTHY LIVING, INDEPENDENCE, CREATIVITY, EDUCATION and ADVOCACY which promote a better life for the people we serve.

Reasons To Develop Something New
- Help Promote Independence
- It’s Our Mission and What We Are Committed To Doing
- Changing Population
  - Tech-Savvy Adults Who Were Educated In An Inclusive Setting
  - Create a Larger Network of Natural Supports
    - The Incoming Participants Are Connected To Their Communities
- Instill Values Of Citizenship
- Overcrowding
  - No Exit Criteria Established

What Do You Need To Know To Be Independent?
- Know how to navigate your community and be knowledgeable about its resources
- Have a natural support system you can depend on
- Be able to utilize problem solving skills to get help in case of an emergency
- Have a knowledge of safety skills to avoid victimization
- Be in control of your own schedule
- Be able to support yourself
It was clear that they didn’t know what they didn’t know.

On My Own
- The search was on for a curriculum that we could use and duplicate at no cost that was accessible
- Created at Transitions
  - Charlotte/Grand Ledge (first) – 14 people
  - St. Johns – 9 people
  - Central – 10 people
  - Mason - 7 people
- Encompasses both rural and urban settings

Safety Zone Cops Talk
A Personal Safety and Police Awareness Curriculum for Adults with Developmental Disabilities
http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/cow/Documents/Publications/SafetyZone.pdf
Portland Police Bureau Planning and Support Division
503-823-0283
The trainings are designed for individuals with adult concerns and experiences.

As adults, participants may live apart from their families, have limited disposable income, and may have intimate and sexual relationships.

As they move independently in public spaces, they encounter the same threats as the general population with less education about how to deal with those threats.

Supplemental activities vary from site to site.

Research:

Taught 122 classes

913 adults with developmental disabilities and 324 of their family members and paid staff during

A six-month training phase of the project from July through December 1998

Culminated in the perspectives of adults with disabilities who attended classes, the community partners who served on the curriculum development committee, and the training officer and co-trainer.

Every discussion item, video, role play and demonstration in this curriculum was either created or tested during classes.

Guidelines For Teaching The Curriculum:

Staff the Program with Committed Trainers

Learn About Students’ Needs and Experiences

Study the Entire Curriculum

Repeat the Theme: Get Away and Get Help

Be Prepared to Address Anger Issues

Sequence the Lessons Logically and Respectfully

Plan Time to Include Informal Conversations with Students

Acquire Needed Equipment and Supplies

Maintain Distinct Roles When Teaching Classes
Guidelines For Teaching The Curriculum:
- Create a Comfortable Physical Environment
- Set the Tone for All to Participate
- Use Discussion as the Primary Teaching Method
- Use Videos to Support and Initiate Discussion
- Use Role Plays to Reinforce Discussion
- Use Demonstrations and Practice to Reinforce Discussion
- Be Prepared to Handle Triggered Memories and Flashbacks
- Be Prepared to Handle Disclosures of Exploitation or Abuse

On My Own Units we’ve added:
- Cell phone do’s and don’ts
- How to schedule county specific public transportation
- ICE contact
- EMERGENCY MEANS LIFE OR DEATH
- Speakers and demonstrations
Identify the needs (WHO, 2009)

- 10%
- Denied the right to establish a relationship and whether to have a family
- Victimized at a rate up to three times higher
- More likely to contract HIV and other STIs
- Often excluded entirely from sex education (Boehning, 2006)

On My Own - Handouts

ALWAYS HAVE AN ICE PERSON IN YOUR PHONE! (In Case of Emergency)
JUST TYPE ICE BEFORE THEIR NAME.

That way Emergency People know who to call if you can’t tell them who to call.

EMERGENCY MEANS LIFE OR DEATH
On My Own - Handouts

How to schedule an Eatran ride:

1. Dial Eatran (list #'s).
2. Push #1 to cancel a ride or push #2 to schedule a ride.
3. Wait PATIENTLY on hold until they answer.
4. Tell them your name.
5. Tell them the date you are scheduling for.
6. Tell them what time to pick you up.
7. Tell them where to pick you up.
8. Tell them where to take you.
9. If you need a return ride, repeat steps 6, 7 and 8.
10. Wait for Eatran to confirm the time and location of your ride(s).
11. THANK Eatran for scheduling your ride.

Struggles We’ve Had

- People don’t know what they don’t know
  - People we serve, parents & staff
- Vacations and missing lessons
- People being able to attend the class when it’s offered
- Pulling people from different communities together
- Rural issues
- Work schedules
- Personalities
- Apprehension regarding graduation
- Transportation

Clubhouse

- A comfortable space that members take ownership of.
- A place to meet with peers and schedule activities.
- A location for ongoing training and classes.
- A place to feel free and independent
People set up their own rides & taking control of their own schedule
- Helping one another to set up rides
- Increased confidence
- Creative problem solving
- Supporting each other
- Improving social reciprocity
- Improved safety skills – awareness of environment
- Developed group norms
- Increased maturity
- Less rigidity – increased risk taking
- Increased Employability
- People being okay with being alone

The Ripple Effect

Then What?
- Follow along for up to 1 year at least monthly for ongoing education and practice
- Assisting Peers
- Mentoring the next class
- Retaking the class or portions if needed
- Closure from Services
- CMH Volunteer
Transitions Exit Criteria

• Possession of at least 6 out of 10 items below:
  • Successful Completion of all "On My Own" subject matter, or exhibits skills thereof. (Taking the Healthy Relationships class is optional.)
  • Volunteerism or Employment in the community established. (Must be ongoing.)
  • Manages personal schedule of activities (Daily routine, on ongoing basis, carries own schedule. Done independently or uses support independently.)
  • Manages own transportation (Independently or uses support independently.)

Graduation Criteria

• Can communicate needs and wants effectively to access community resources (Independently or uses support independently.)
  • Exhibits healthy social boundaries:
    • Respects others personal space (Physical and verbal.)
    • Lawful public displays of affection.
    • Private, consensual intimate behavior.
  • Has developed a network of natural supports.
  • Safely manages own money for daily activities. (Independently or uses supports independently.)

Graduation Criteria

• Manages own health and hygiene, such as medications, psychiatric appointments, doctor appointments, etc. (Independently or uses supports independently.)
  • Displays personal public safety skills. (No illegal activity.)
Questions??

Contact Info

Erin M. Parcell, LPC
Transitions Grand Ledge
401 South Bridge Street
Grand Ledge, MI 48823
517-627-7378

Andrea Manchip, LMSW
Transitions Charlotte
1699 Lansing Rd
Charlotte, MI 48813
517-997-6197

Michelle Sheren, LBSW
Transitions St Johns (rural)
201 West Railroad
St. Johns, MI 48879
989-224-7810

References

References


Resources

- Adolf Ratzka-Independent Living Institute – Sweden, 2005
Resources

- Ohio Association for the Developmentally Disabled - Community Acceptance of Group Homes in Ohio
- The ARC 60 Years of History, www.thearc.org/whoweare