

Personal Networks: Enriching Life in the Present and Providing for the Future



TEXAS NETWORK CONNECTIONS
Creating Community for People with Disabilities

How are we, as parents, going to make sure that our child with a disability has a good life, both now and after we die? Who will make sure that the plans we have arranged and the services we have secured are implemented and functioning well after we are gone? How do we make sure our child is not lonely, isolated or neglected? How do we give caring friends and family an opportunity to have a fulfilling relationship with our child? How am I, a person with a disability, going to achieve these goals for myself?

Not Alone!



MavMen (created March 2010)



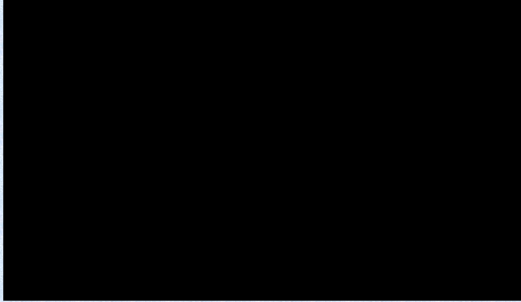
What we'll cover today

- What is a personal network?
- History of networks
- **Texas Network Connections (TxNC)**
- Key components of networks
- Networks in action!
- Starting a network
- Phases of network development

What is a Personal Network?



The Personal Network



History of Personal Networks



TEXAS NETWORK CONNECTIONS Personal Networks Come to Texas!



Networks in Action!



Five Key Components of Networks

- #1 Relationships are the key to a good life and the foundation of networks
- #2 No disability precludes relationship
- #3 Successful networks are directed by individuals and/or families
- #4 Networks focus on contribution
- #5 Everyone benefits -- community

Starting a Network



**The Three Phases of Network
Development:
Invitation, Development & Maintenance**



#1 Invitation



Invitation: Who do I Invite?

- Identify people in your life:
- Immediate and extended family
- Neighbors, family friends, church members
- People who have worked with the focus person (school, attendants, therapists, etc)
- People who have offered to support a person or family but have never known how to
- People who share common interests with person at center

Host an Invitation Meeting

- Snacks and socializing
- Welcomes and Introductions. How do you know the person at the center and his/her family?
- What is a personal network?
- Why are we starting a personal network?
- What are the commitments of network members?
- The Ask: To join or not join the network?

Invitation: is it easy?



Invitation: or hard?

Asking is the #1 challenge to starting networks!

ASKING...

What comes up?

Words?

Feelings?

Stories?

Concepts?

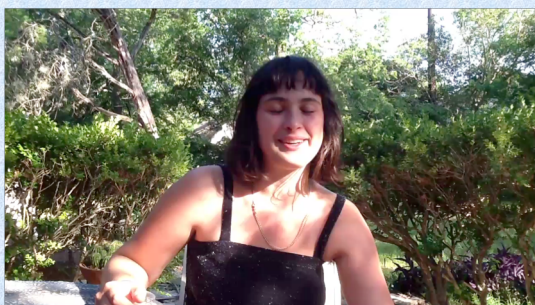
Who are network members? Joni and Danny



Siblings Love Networks!



Lucy Rose



#2 Development: Network Meetings



Network Meetings: The Journey Begins!



NETWORK MEETINGS: TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

AGENDA

Introductions. What's new with members?

Getting started: Develop the Network

- Think about a name
- List and assign roles
- Communication tool: Website? Facebook?
- Decide when to meet, how often, where, etc...

Getting to know Maverick and his supports, part 1:

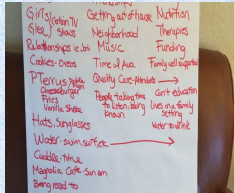
Activity Calendar:

- Deadlines
- Appointments
- celebrations

Next Meeting

Adjourn

Network Meetings: Format & Goals



What Do Networks Do?

- Meeting regularly
- Provide social opportunities
- Get to know each other
- Plan for the future
- Monitor services
- Learn about disability issues
- Supported Decision Making
- Eat good food and drink
- Have fun!

Network Meetings: Just do it!



#3 Maintenance and Sustainability



Developing a healthy, sustainable network takes years

And...that's okay.

Networks are a work in progress!





Over time, as networks mature, relationships deepen and members become more invested in each other's lives

SNAPshots Celebrates Another Year!



The Wacos Take a Charge in 2018!



Start Young! GiGi and JoJo



The Cavern Club Keeps on Rockin!



Next Steps



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Get Connected with Texas Network Connections!

Visit the Texas Parent to Parent website at:

<https://www.txp2p.org/services/texas-network-connections>

- Learn more about networks and TxNC
- Watch the Personal Networks video
- DIY (Do it yourself) manual on personal networks
- Join the TxNC listserv at <https://www.txp2p.org/services/talk-to-another-parent/parent-listserv>

For more information about Texas Network Connections, fees and services, contact cynnda.green@txp2p.org