

Self-Direction

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What is Self-Direction?

- It is NOT a program
- It IS part of a systems change where the individual is at the center of all planning and everyone uses person-centered thinking to support them
- There are currently over 2000 people in NJ who are self-directing their lives!

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Self-Direction is Work!

- Self-direction is something you have to work at, you learn over time
- The first year is usually the hardest
- It allows you to create a life of CHOICE, build upon what works and change what doesn't work
- Falling down is part of life, getting back up is part of living

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You Have The Knowledge

- Recognize that you and your loved one have the knowledge needed to support them, you have been doing it for years
- Self-direction gives you power, choice and control
- You will have to think differently, don't just think "outside the box" think as if there is no box

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Misconceptions

- “Only people who are high functioning can self-direct their supports”
- High/low functioning isn’t part of the language we use in person-centered planning
- People live, machines function
- Anyone can be supported, you need to discover how

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Basic Tenets of Self-Direction From DDD Website

- “Freedom to live the life you choose, where and with whom, with freely chosen assistance as needed”
- What is important to (likes and dislikes) and what is important for (health and safety)
- Balance is key

- “Authority to control a limited amount of public dollars”
- Your budget is provided through one of two waivers
- DDD determines the dollar amount based on the DDRT
- You and your loved one decide how to spend the dollars based on CMS guidelines

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- “Support is planned based on level of need”
- Using person-centered planning tools your support coordinator gathers information and writes your plan
- Direct support staff can be hired from a qualified provider agency or as a self-hire
- Plan is in effect for 12 months from start date

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- “Responsibility to spend public dollars wisely and contribute to one’s community”
- You cannot roll over unspent dollars into the next budget year
- Your support coordinator helps you plan, Easter Seals sends you a monthly report
- NJ is an Employment First state

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- “Confirmation recognizes that people with developmental disabilities must be part of redesigning the human services system”
- This is how change happens!
- Self-advocates and family voices must accept their role and make our voices heard

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Beyond the Basics

- Planning is key and needs to be ongoing
- Relationships will be built outside of the family unit
- Rewards are many
- DREAM BIG!
- Citizens with developmental disabilities are PART of the community, they don't go OUT INTO the community

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- Learn more about person-centered planning
- Visit The Boggs Center website
- Visit DDD's website frequently, changes are occurring and everyone needs to be updated
- If you're loved one is still in school, talk to your Child Study Team about incorporating work opportunities into your student's day

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Questions?