



Building Bridges to Create Belonging

Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow.

Don't walk behind me, I may not lead.

Walk beside me, and just be my friend.



“The extent to which disability becomes a handicap,... is a matter over which we, as a community have some control. By providing choices and opportunities for people with disabilities we can all take part in enabling them to play their roles as equal and valued members of society.”

Hon. Kevin Minson
Western Australia
Parliament



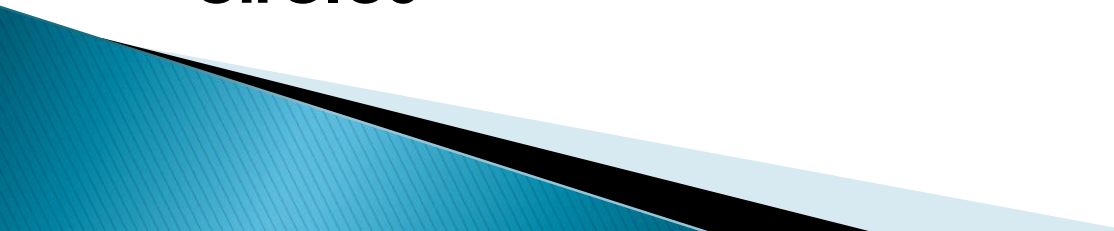
Who?

GOOD LIFE NETWORKS is a family-driven organization dedicated to raising awareness of the valuable contributions of citizens who have developmental disabilities. We also assist the families of children and adults in the Greater Cincinnati area to develop a “social circle” to increase their inclusion and belonging in the larger community.

History of Good Life Networks

- ❑ November 2008-- Al Etmanski, PLAN Institute for Caring Citizenship (www.plan.ca; www.planinstitute.ca) met with families in greater Cincinnati.
- ❑ Al's idea: developing **social circles** or **networks** leading to the “Good Life”. Was there interest in starting a grass-roots group in the Greater Cincinnati area?
- ❑ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfgDvf0LAng>
- ❑ Al inspired us to work together to see where that led, and Good Life Networks was born.

Who?

- ❑ We are not a PLAN-affiliate but use the concept as a template and several of our members have attended the Leadership workshop in Vancouver.
 - ❑ 501 (c) (3) Non-profit
 - ❑ Code of Regulation/By-Laws
 - ❑ PATH planning session
 - ❑ In the process of developing our Training Curriculum and launching our first “social circles”
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Board of Directors

Elizabeth Trenkamp, Chair



Terri Doerr, Vice-Chair

Lana Makin, Treasurer

Jack Pealer- Secretary



Filomena Nelson, member

Shirley LaPiana-Martin, member

Julie Dunford, member

Kim McKinney, member



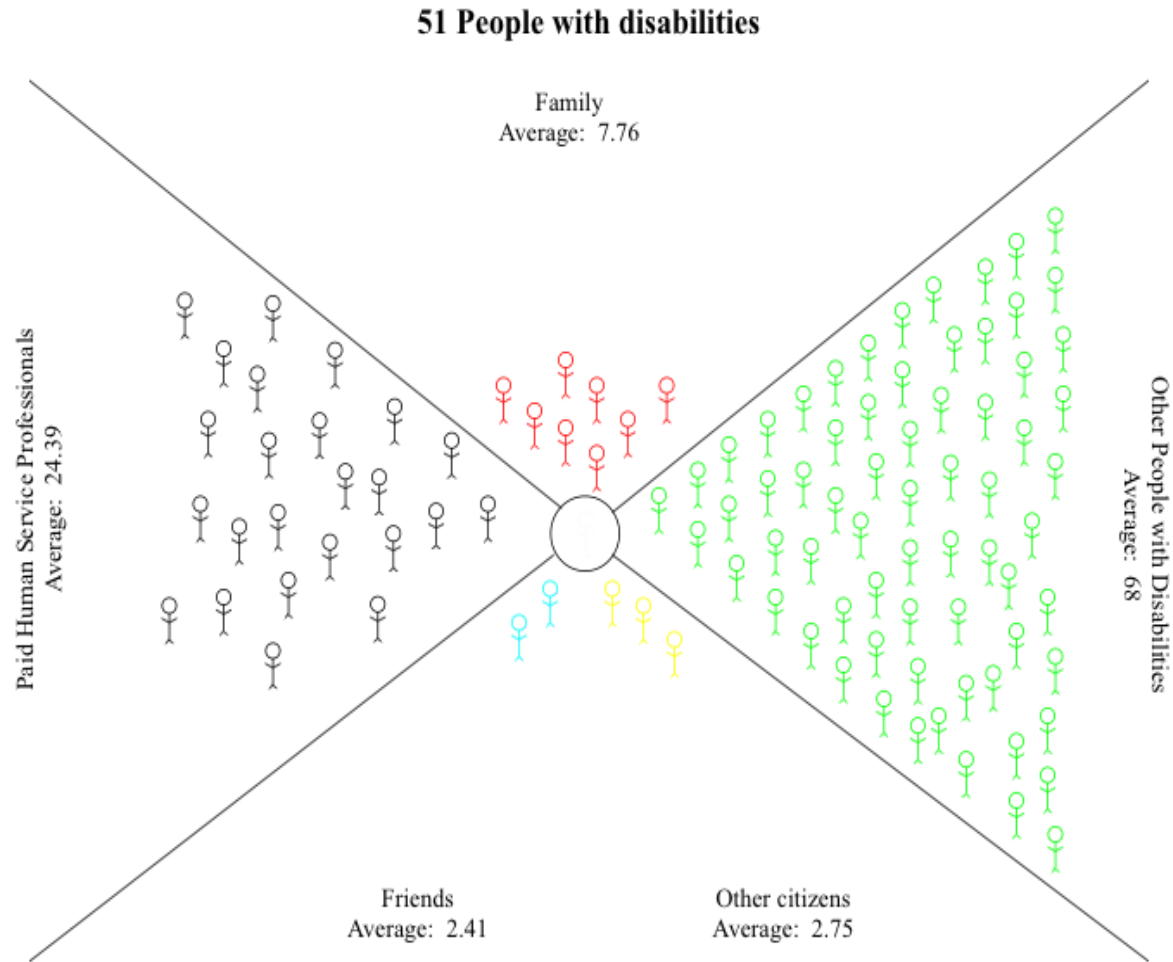
Monthly Board Meetings and Quarterly Gatherings-both are open to all interested

Why?

Experiencing life on the fringes of society (isolation and loneliness) is often a part of the experience of having a developmental disability. Caring relationships are the key to safety, security and a “good life” for all of us.

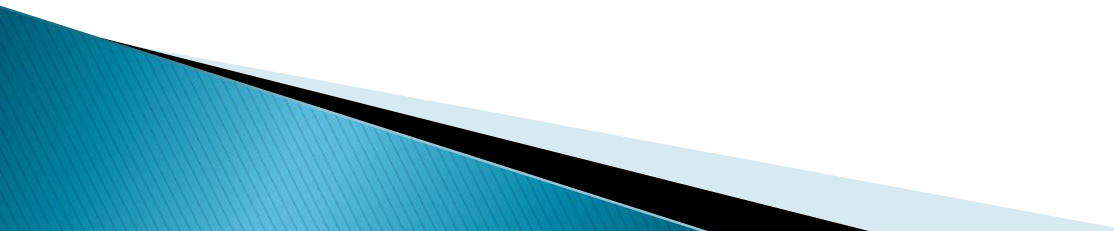


What's Going On in People's Lives? Segregation, isolation and loneliness

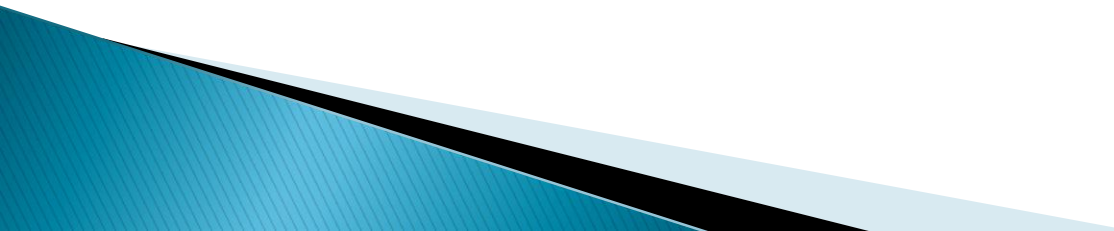


Note: 9 of the 51 people had only paid human services professionals and other people with disabilities in their circles.

Intention Statements

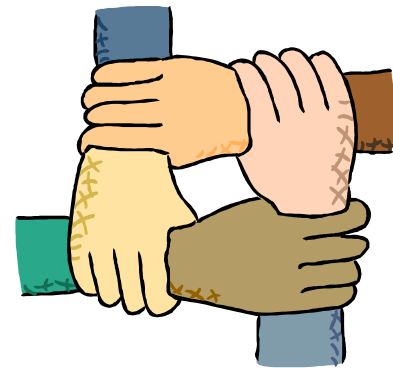
- ❑ Encourage and support people with disabilities to discover and express **their own vision** of what a “Good Life” is.
 - ❑ Respect that each focus person’s vision of a “Good Life” will be unique and ever-evolving.
 - ❑ Provide **training and support** on developing an intentional social circle and assist families in **locating community connectors**.
 - ❑ Recognize the mutual beauty that the relationship of the focus person and the community connectors provides.
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Intention Statements (cont.)

- ❑ Ensure active citizenship through **contribution and participation** in the community.
 - ❑ Increase community awareness of the **talents and contributions** people with disabilities can and do make to society at large.
 - ❑ Explore fundraising opportunities and the possibilities of social enterprise.
 - ❑ Collaborate with other like-minded organizations that share our vision.
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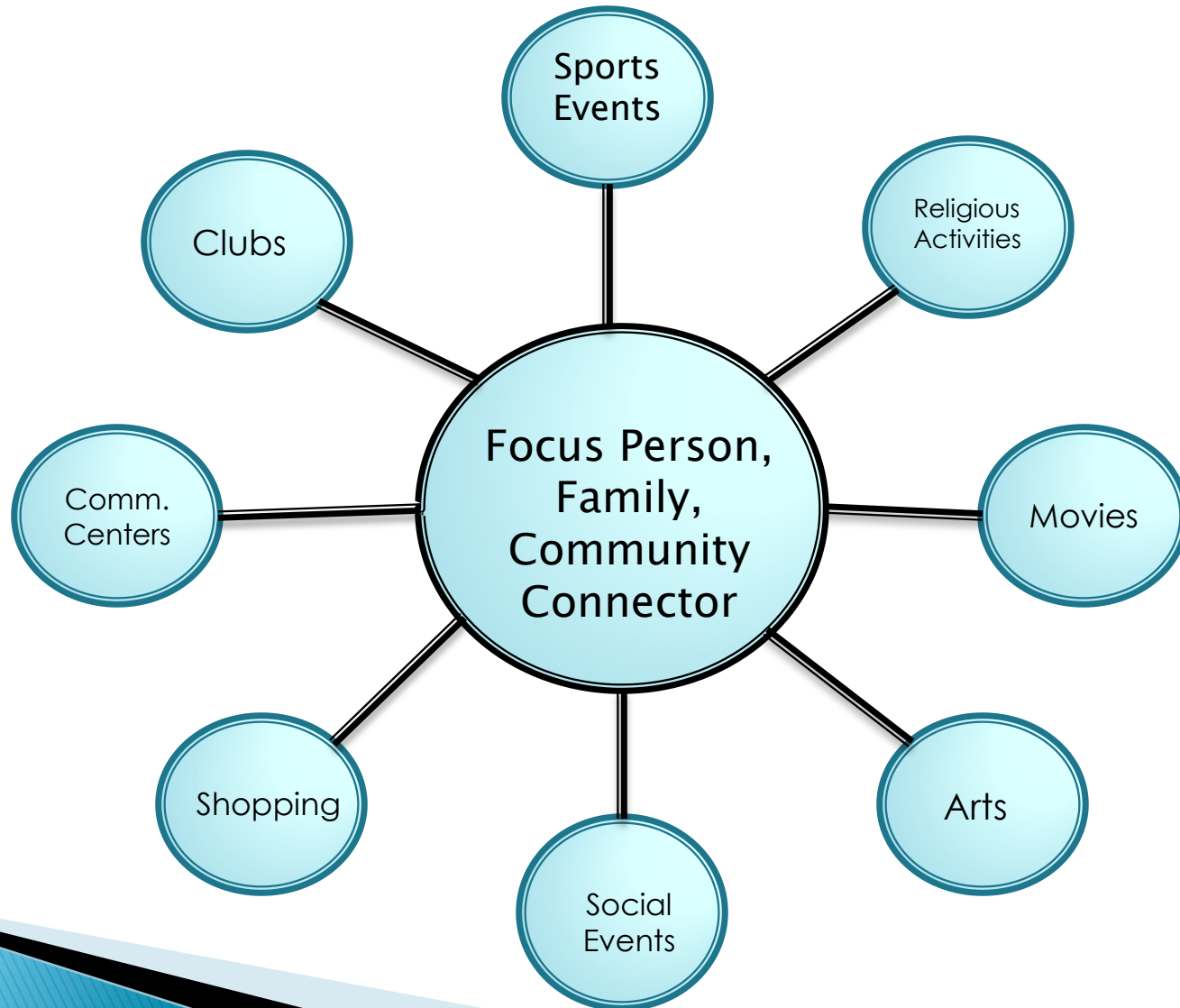


How?



Good Life Networks assists families in finding, training, and supporting a “Community Connector” who knows/learns the gifts and interests of the “focus person” and is well connected within the community. The Community Connector develops and maintains the individual’s “social circle” by inviting others to membership.

Engagement in the Community



Community Connector

- ▶ Ideally someone already connected with the focus person and family
- ▶ Lives geographically close (10 mile radius)
- ▶ Is her/himself well connected in the community
- ▶ Has **high expectations** and truly believes everyone belongs and sees the benefits
- ▶ Attends Connector training seminar given by Good Life Networks
- ▶ **Commits to a minimum of one year** and persists in network development
- ▶ Invests time getting to know the person and their family



Community Connector (cont.)

- ▶ Helps **maintain** active “social circles”
- ▶ Identifies and **invites others into the circle** that would enhance community belonging
- ▶ Sees the focus person’s interests, gifts and personality and has the enthusiasm to inspire others to see it
- ▶ Facilitates in helping the circle members get together and stay connected with each other
- ▶ Encourages circle members to join social activities and events sponsored by GLN



Where?

Come to a Quarterly Gathering or Board Meeting!

Meetings open to all--perfect times to learn and get involved with the group. Meeting locations change, some locations in the past include Scarlet Oaks, Starfire, University of Cincinnati-Blue Ash.

(Board Meetings—second Friday of each month)





Upcoming Social Events



We are committed to keeping the “social” aspect of our organization alive so we host several gatherings.

- ❑ May 10th – Quarterly Meeting 6-8:30 at Starfire**
- ❑ June 24th- Annual Potluck Picnic, 3:00 – 7:00 p.m.,
Keehner Park, West Chester**
- ❑ September 7th – Quarterly Meeting, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.,
Scarlet Oaks, Instructional Resource Center**
- ❑ December 6th- Holiday gathering 6-8:30 at Starfire**

**Mark your
calendars!**