

Pathways to Friendship Presentation Descriptions

Our presentations use a variety of mediums, including video, and are co-presented with people with disabilities. We can modify trainings based on interest or age and will present in-person or virtually. Trainings are also available in a **Train-the-Trainer** format for those interested in strengthening their capacity.

General Community:

- **Introduction to Friends:** This presentation is appropriate for any audience just beginning to explore the importance and possibilities of friendships between people with and without disabilities. It is suitable for community trainings, classroom work, webinars, and more. Content includes what we mean by “Friend”, the benefits of such friendships and the challenges to make these relationships happen
- **Building Friendships Between People with and Without Disabilities: A Training for Community Recreation, Cultural and Faith Organizations:** The intended audience for this training is staff from community organizations, including municipal Park & Recreation Programs, libraries, summer camps, YMCA’s, sports groups, museum programs, Faith organizations and many, many more. This presentation explains why friendships are critical for all of us, and provides concrete strategies and techniques for embedding disability inclusion and relationship-building into organizational programming and services
- **The Imperative of Friendship: A Training for Volunteers:** This presentation provides a basic introduction to disability and disability etiquette, but primarily focuses on the need and benefits of friendship for everyone. Participants will come away with concrete tips for forming authentic and meaningful relationships between people with and without disabilities
- **Building Friendships at School:** This training explains the importance of friendship between students with and without disabilities, and introduces strategies that can be used by teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents to promote and support these relationships
- **Creating Circles of Support:** Relationships and social networks are vital in providing advice, support and opportunities in the different realms of our lives. Unfortunately, many people

with disabilities are missing these core relationships or “Circles of Support”. This training, which is based upon Resourcing Inclusive Communities’ *Circles of Support Manual*, introduces the concept of Circles of Support, explains their importance, and provides instruction on how to create an intentional Circle of Support

- **Person-Centered Design: An Invitation into a Process for Planning:** Person-centered planning is a powerful, group planning tool that uses the dreams and desires of persons with disabilities to create a meaningful, vision for their lives. In this training, Jack Yates, who has facilitated hundreds of person-centered design groups over forty years, will be sharing his experience and lessons learned about the planning process and facilitation. Jack will provide the audience with key strategies for asking questions that will guide effective planning sessions

Youth:

- **Appreciating Diversity: Disability:** This presentation helps youth understand disability as part of natural human diversity. The training explains the terms *disability* and *inclusion*, highlights how we are all more alike than we are dissimilar, and emphasizes the benefits that come from friendships with all different types of people
- **Diversity, Disability and Friendship:** This presentation is geared to middle and high school students and goes a step beyond the *Appreciating Diversity: Disability* training. In addition to explaining disability as a natural form of human diversity and the importance of inclusion, this training also covers the benefits of friendships, the detrimental effects of loneliness, and provides concrete tips for forming authentic and meaningful relationships between people with and without disabilities

Families and Disability Service Providers:

- **Supporting Friendship: A Presentation for Families:** Families often struggle with how to help their children with disabilities to form relationships with peers without disabilities. This presentation highlights the importance of friendship for all, and provides concrete suggestions, tools and handouts to help parents/other caregivers connect their children with others in deep and meaningful ways
- **Supporting Friendship: A Training for Disability Support Staff:** This presentation explores the importance and possibilities of friendships between people with and without disabilities, and the valuable role that staff play in developing and supporting these relationships. The training will provide participants with strategies and tools for developing friendship and belonging for those they support, as well as suggestions on overcoming common hurdles to this goal

- **Relationships That Matter: The Role of Friendship in Positive Behavior Support:** This interactive training explores how meaningful relationships and social connection can be used within Positive Behavior Support (PBS) plans for adults with IDD. Through the profiles of four young adults, participants will learn practical strategies to foster friendships, support diverse communication styles, and embed social engagement into daily interactions, promoting dignity, belonging, and positive emotional and behavioral outcomes.

Self-Advocates:

- **Friendship Matters!: Tools and Tips from Self-Advocates on Building and Maintaining Friendships:** This workshop explores the very important topic of friendship. Friendship makes us happier, healthier, and safer, and every single one of us needs and deserves it! Workshop participants will discuss what makes a friend and why friendship is important, and will also learn some methods for making friends, and for overcoming challenges to building friendship
- **Connecting to Your Community:** Self-Advocate and Pathways to Friendship presenter, Jonathan Spiller, teaches about making connections in your community through sharing lessons and techniques from his own experiences