A Collaborative Approach for Improved Outcomes

Being Active and Productive in the Community
Trainer’s Manual

Developed by Regional Centers for Workforce Transformation
**Introduction**

The purpose of this video is to help DSPs identify areas of interest, possible places of employment, and socialization opportunities in the community. The challenge for DSPs is twofold. First, they are often met with the challenge of identifying a variety of places in the community or optimizing familiar places for use by the people they support. The second challenge may be that the person they support doesn't know what options are available or they may struggle with expressing their interests or getting their interests understood by the staff. Teaching DSPs to look at familiar places with fresh eyes will open up a world of opportunities. This video will help DSPs to support a person’s ability to participate in the community in a manner aligned with their choices. It is the DSPs’ responsibility to help develop a person-centered plan. To do so, a DSP must learn to listen intently to the person, find ways to discover what they are communicating, and truly understand what the person wants using a variety of techniques. Using these techniques will help the person you are supporting to make informed decisions.

This manual is designed to be used with the video for Goal #7 of the NYS DSP Core Competencies. The manual will guide you on how to teach the class. It includes when to pause the video, *what questions or statements* (*italicized in the manual*) to make and also what exercises to utilize. Trainees should be encouraged to take note of new ideas and concepts for potential use with the people they support.

**Intended Audience:** All staff whose job responsibilities include supporting people with ID/DD to be active and productive in the community.

**Time Frame:** Approximately 2 hours but size of group or amount of discussion can alter the time required to complete the class.

**Handout:** DSP Core Competency Goal #7

**Start Video:** play until pause button appears on screen.

**Introduction:** “The goal of this video is to train staff on how to see the community through a fresh pair of eyes so that the people they support will have enhanced experiences and express informed choices.”

**Challenges:**

- Finding a lack of variety of places to go
- Figuring out where the person you support really wants to go
- Determining if the person you support
  1. Wants to go to the same place over and over
  2. Refuses to go to unfamiliar places
  3. Avoids going to the community altogether
Determining if the person has limited experience in the community

What other challenges might you have?

Pause and Discuss: The trainer should encourage and facilitate a discussion of other challenges brought forth by the trainees.

Start video: play until pause button appears on screen.

Use pictures to learn the interests of the people you support

- A picture tells a thousand words.
- Pictures grab attention, explain difficult concepts and inspire.
- Pictures help us communicate more easily.
- Pictures cross all language barriers.
- Pictures can be used to show more than one interest at a location.

Pause and Discuss: The trainer should say: “Everyone uses pictures in their everyday life, whether to order from a fast food menu or to assemble a piece of furniture.” Ask trainees to identify ways pictures help them in their daily life.

The trainer should then ask trainees: “Have you ever used pictures to teach, and if so, please share how.”

Say: “It’s important to remember pictures can be used with people at all levels of cognitive functioning.”

Start Video: play until pause button appears on screen.

Key Techniques

Technique 1: How to Use Questions

- Know the abilities of the people you support.
- Questions you use proceed from open-ended to a more specific
- For example:
  - Open-ended question – “What do you see that you like?”
  - Pointing – “Can you point to something you like?”
  - Multiple Choice – “Which do you like better, this or that?
  - Yes/No – “Would you like to do this?”

Pause and Discuss: Remember our goal here is to help the person you are supporting chose anything of interest in the photograph. Be careful not to lead the person in the choice, but be open to exploring any item identified by the person.
**Practice Activity 1**

In groups of 2, take turns practicing using questions to explore interests using a picture. One staff chooses and describes a person they support, and the second one practices questions for discovery of interests.

**Group Share:** After all groups have had a chance to practice, share and discuss what the experience was like and how it could work with the people they support.

**[Trainer’s Tip]**: During this training the trainees can use their phones or tablet to select a picture to explore.

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**Technique 2: Discovering Interests by Using Pictures**

- Think outside the box – expect that there is more to any picture than is seen at first glance.
- Check for your understanding.
- Make a note of similarities and recurring preferences.

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**Pause and Discuss:** Check for your understanding… make sure what you think the person chose is really what they chose. For example, if they point to the bowling ball, ask “I see that you chose the bowling ball, does that mean you like bowling?” It could mean that the person just likes balls. This can be confirmed after the person looks at other pictures that include activities that use balls.

Also remember what you are trying to discover, is it a job? Recreation activity? Volunteer activity? For example, the person you are supporting may choose a table with people sitting around it. You may ask, “I see that you chose the table in the restaurant; do you like eating in a restaurant or working in a restaurant?” Remember to ask follow up questions and continue to check for your understanding. Again, be careful not to lead the person deliberately or in-deliberately.

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**Practice Activity 2**

In groups of 2, take turns role-playing the person supported and the staff practicing the discovery of interests by using pictures and connecting similarities.

- Have one staff look at the pictures on the screen (or in the handout).

- Using techniques 1 & 2, write down everything that interests the other staff from each picture. Focus on one picture at a time.

- Then look for similarities and identify specific interests and then locations that these interests may be realized.

**Group Share:** After all groups have had a chance to practice, share and discuss what interests were discovered, what the experience was like and how they could use it with the people they support.
Technique 3: Discovering Interests When Pictures Are Not an Effective Method

In some instances, pictures will not be an effective tool to discover interests because:

- A person may be visually impaired.
- A person may not understand that a picture represents an object or activity.

Pause and Discuss: Ask attendees: “Have you worked with anyone who fits into either of these 2 groups, or are any other reasons that a person might not respond to pictures.” Share experiences.

Practice Activity 3

In groups of 2, take turns role-playing the person supported and the staff practicing the discovery process; how would you offer a tangible experience to someone if pictures aren’t effective?”

For example, looking at a picture of a dog may not be an effective method for knowing if a person likes interacting with dogs.

Bring a dog into the person’s home or program, or visit an animal shelter to determine if they have that interest.

(NOTE: If a person has an allergy to animals it doesn’t necessarily mean that they can’t be around or involved with animals. Explore other options such as being on a mailing list for the ASPCA or adopting a wildlife animal where you could receive regular updates. A person who is visually impaired may not see the animal but could make dog biscuits and donate them to a local shelter.)

Group Share: After all groups have had a chance to discuss, share what other experiences could be used with the people they support who do not benefit from using pictures.

Trainers Tips: Sometimes it is more effective if the person whom you are supporting is included in the picture. In this case, take a picture of the person doing the task or being in the location. This may help someone with memory loss or help the person you support to connect more readily with the picture. You can also record the sounds of places or identify significant smells (with the person whom you are supporting), thereby connecting the place with the process of making a choice.

Start Video: play until pause button appears on screen.

Transitioning from Pictures to the Community for more Discovery

What are some things that Franny discovered in the Pizza Shop?

What possible employment opportunities were available in the Pizza Shop?
Core Competencies

**Pause and Discuss:** Trainer should request the trainees: “write down what Franny discovered in the pizza shop.”

Ask the following questions and discuss responses: “Were there other things that you noticed that Connie did not point out?” “Did you see any employment opportunities?” Discuss responses.

**Start Video:** play until pause button appears on screen.

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2nd Scene – Jared at the Library

We are now going to watch Jared being supported at the Library.

**Pause and Discuss:** Connie and Jared explored many things in the library. Did you notice how Connie looked at the library, a familiar location, through fresh eyes?

**Activity** – There were more than 10 different possible interests that were explored. How many can you remember?

Ask the trainees: “Please write down as many as you remember.” Share and discuss.

Ask trainees: “Did you observe any additional possible interests? Share and discuss.”

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From Exploration and Discovery to a Person Centered Plan – What is the next step?

**Start Video:** play until pause button appears on screen.

**Pause and Discuss:** Trainer will discuss the following questions with the group

What is the purpose of the debriefing?

What did you learn from watching this process?

**Start Video:** play until pause button appears on screen.

**Activity**

In small groups, write down a number of locations in your community that could be better explored. Select one of those locations and “explore with fresh eyes.” Record what you “see.”

**Group Share:** After all groups have had a chance to practice, share and discuss new possibilities discovered.

**Final Activity:**

Think of a specific person you are now supporting and write down ideas on how you will help that person to better use the community employing the following techniques:
Core Competencies

- Use pictures to find interests
- Explore specific locations based on information gained from the pictures
- Explore familiar locations to discover other opportunities
- Share the information to create a person centered plan

**Group Share:** After all groups have had a chance to discuss, share some examples with the class.

**Closing statement:**

Thank you for your professionalism and embracing the Core Competencies and Code of Ethics.

Every day you make a difference in the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities.