

A Guide To Supported Living In Florida



Sponsored by United States Department of Health and Human Services,
Administration on Developmental Disabilities and the
Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc.

PRODUCED FOR THE



BY PROGRAM DESIGN, INC.

January 2005

A Guide to Supported Living in Florida

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without the contribution of persons using supported living services in Florida, the information found in this *'Guide'* would not have meaning. Their experiences and opportunities have inspired content and kept us focused on what really matters.

The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to the Supported Living Advisory Committee. Committee members traveled hundreds of miles for meetings and donated their time and their extraordinary efforts, skills and talents to making this project a success.

Each member brought their unique style and expertise to the group, resulting in true consensus regarding the scope, style, and format of materials to be used. Not only did they contribute forms and share stories regarding people they know, they also shared their agencies' work. The effort was extraordinary and it was our pleasure to work with such committed and caring professionals.

Although meetings were lengthy, the group's tireless effort and passion for the field of supported living inspired the group's synergy. We owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to the following members:

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Everyday People Do Extraordinary Things When They Put Their Heads Together!

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A special thanks to Sandi Smith, FDDC Contract Manager, and Ed Rousseau, Developmental Disabilities Program, Supported Living Coordinator, who provided continuous feedback, support and direction. Sandi's attention to detail, patience, and sense of humor have been invaluable. Ed's focus on a quality product and vigilance in making the most current information available were essential to meeting established timeframes.

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PREFACE

It wasn't that long ago when the road to services for individuals with developmental disabilities in Florida led to a 500 bed facility in Gainesville known as the Farm Colony for the Feeble Minded and Epileptic. This facility, later known as Sunland Center at Gainesville, was the first of five such institutions to be developed between 1950 and 1968 to offer services to persons with a wide range of disabilities. By 1970 the number of persons with developmental disabilities being served in these facilities reached a peak of 6,107.

During the early days, Florida's service system for persons with developmental disabilities was based on an institutional model. The choice offered to families was "stay at home or go to an institution." In the early 1970's winds of change blew through our nation. They did not bypass the state of Florida. The winds whispered news of less restrictive environments, integration not segregation, personal values, independence and community-based services. The Florida Legislature directed the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services to undertake a massive reorganization of its service priorities and make community based supports the number one priority. The history of the Developmental Disabilities program is filled with shifting priorities and a renaissance of new thinking focusing on self-determination and personal choice.

Supported living is an example of a new way of doing business in supporting individuals with developmental disabilities. Supported living is an opportunity for adults with developmental disabilities to choose where, how and with whom they live. Persons in supported living receive personalized supports necessary to maintain their own private home. It is from our homes we greet the world, go to work, to shop and interact with others. It is in our home we show hospitality to our family, friends and neighbors.

In 1988 the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council provided a grant to initiate a supported living project designed to inform and assist individuals to achieve and maintain a home of their own in the community. Florida's supported living initiative started with approximately 200 participants. Today, over 2,700 persons participate in supported living. In Florida, and across the country, supported living is the fastest growing option for residential supports outside the family home.

The 2003 version of *A Guide to Supported Living in Florida* is the second revision to the first guidebook on supported living in Florida. It has been crafted to offer all individuals, family members, stakeholders, and professionals alike, the opportunity to understand and grasp the philosophical concepts, program requirements and values associated with supported living. Persons receiving services and their families will find relevant information to assist in the decision making process to determine whether or not to choose supported living. Professionals will find information about minimum requirements, philosophical and ideological concepts and best practices for success.

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It goes without saying that persons with developmental disabilities have been patient in waiting for services that support opportunities to live everyday lives. Time itself ranks as public enemy #1. Consider the twenty years it took to build our institutional programs, and the twenty years it has taken to reverse the trend. A span of 40 years has elapsed. It is our job as consumers, families, advocates and professionals to be assertive in promoting positive values and quality of life for all persons with developmental disabilities. When time is lost, it cannot be found again. Making sure our tomorrows are not filled with empty yesterdays is a challenge for which we must all take responsibility.

One day, perhaps in the not too distant future it will be written:

“In Florida, not that long ago, the road to services for individuals with developmental disabilities led to a very familiar place....home.”

Ed Rousseau,
Developmental Disabilities Program
Supported Living Coordinator

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Produced for the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council
By Program Design, Inc. 01/05

INTRODUCTION



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INTRODUCTION

In an effort to promote and support the success of persons who use or are planning to use supported living services, this '*Guide*' is offered as a practical reference tool. Although it is anticipated this '*Guide*' will contain useful information for anyone interested in supported living, it is designed for use by:

- individuals receiving services;
- family members;
- guardians and advocates;
- supported living professionals;
- service providers;
- support coordinators; and
- Developmental Disabilities Program staff.

A Guide to Supported Living in Florida is one of three companion products developed by Program Design, Inc., under contract to the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. These materials include:

- *A Guide to Supported Living in Florida* an update to previous versions developed in 1995 and 1997. It is intended for use as a reference tool during and after pre-service training. Pre-service training is a requirement for supported living coaching certification and this training is a major component of those requirements. The '*Guide*' is organized according to the sequence of events which guide supported living service acquisition. It provides specific information regarding roles, responsibilities and values. Sample forms, formats, and suggestions for service provisions are also included.
- *A Guide to Supported Living in Florida: Trainer's Guide* is utilized by trainers to direct the flow of supported living training. This document provides useful information for trainers including a narrative script, handouts, activities and experiences to reinforce learning. The '*Trainer's Guide*' is accompanied by a Power Point™ presentation and copies of overheads. The materials follow the sequence of information found in *A Guide to Supported Living in Florida*.
- *The Supported Living Liaison Network* provides a resource listing, by District/Region, of participants who are willing to share their supported living experiences with those who are considering supported living as an option. This listing will link current supported living participants and service providers with individuals who want to explore supported living services and supports.

The development of these materials was directed by the Supported Living Advisory Committee comprised of individuals who receive supported living services, supported living professionals, supported living providers, support coordinators, guardians, advocates and family members, and representatives from the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council and the Department of

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Children and Families, Developmental Disabilities Program. This group took a proactive approach to the development of materials and provided direction to every aspect of the process.

In addition to the advisory committee's direction, the development of materials was driven by a nationwide 'best practices' survey, whereby supported living practices from around the nation served as examples of what should (and should not) be included.

The primary authority reference for the content found in this '*Guide*' is the Developmental Services Waiver Services Medicaid Coverage and Limitation handbook. It will be important for the reader to maintain the most current version of the handbook which at the time of publication can be found at www.fdhc.state.fl.us/Medicaid/dev_serv/.

Using the Guide

As mentioned, the **layout** follows the natural progression of the supported living process as can be seen in the graphic representation on page xiii. Each component represents the eight chapters found in this '*Guide*'.

1. Defining Supported Living
2. Exploring Supported Living
3. Understanding Coaching Services and Requirements
4. Getting Started
5. Planning Supports
6. Documenting Progress
7. Supporting Success
8. Enhancing Quality

Each chapter begins with a "***What You Will Find***" divider listing the specific topics found in each chapter. Stories, experiences and sample formats are used throughout to illustrate content. All forms are made available courtesy of providers and family members throughout the state and can be copied and used as desired. It is important to note that the forms are offered as examples and are not endorsed by the Developmental Disabilities Program.

Text found in **framed boxes** throughout the document connote to items of importance. These boxes also represent slides or overheads that may be used during training. The information found below each box provides discussion related to its content. Each page is formatted with additional white space for jotting notes beside the text.

In order to maintain **gender neutrality, individuals and providers are referenced by random gender throughout this guide**. All persons having **legal guardians or guardian advocates**, must be involved in decision-making, as specified in the Court Order. Therefore, **references to the individual's decision-making are presumptive of appropriate legal representation, and the use of "individual or guardian" has been limited**.

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A **Website Links** reference can be found, beginning on page W-1.

A **Glossary** of important terms can be found, beginning on page G-1.

The **Bibliography** begins on page B-1, and includes references and resources utilized in the compilation of these materials.

NOTE: At the time this '*Guide*' is published in May 2003, Developmental Services Medicaid Waiver Services are being reviewed by stakeholders participating in a redesign effort undertaken by the Agency for Health Care Administration and the Department of Children and Families. Whenever there are significant changes to the service information in this '*Guide*', updates will be available on the websites of the Department of Children and Families, Developmental Disabilities Program (www.apd.myflorida.com) and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. (www.fddc.org). At all times, current service guidelines will be found in the Developmental Waiver Services Florida Medicaid Coverage and Limitations handbook.

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The Supported Living Process:

