

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

COMPETENCIES: COMMUNITY INCLUSION AND NETWORKING; RELATIONSHIPS/SOCIAL SKILLS



INTRODUCTION

The experiences we have within our community are as important as our experiences in the privacy of our homes. Being engaged in the community makes us feel connected and safe. People with Autism gain much from community involvement. They also play an important role in enriching communities by adding to diversity within communities. Consider the strategies below in supporting community involvement and teaching the relationship-building skills necessary to engaging with neighbors, businesses, service providers, faith-based organizations, and outlets for leisure activities. Interview the person you support and map a plan together for community involvement.

BUILD UPON AN INDIVIDUAL'S STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS

- Help the individual identify his or her interests and strengths.
- Seek out opportunities that align with the individual's interests and strengths.

PRACTICE SKILLS NECESSARY TO ENSURE COMMUNITY INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

- Communication (verbal and non-verbal)
- Socialization
- Self-help
- Self-direction
- Tapping the benefits of interdependence

IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

- Teach methods for accessing natural supports.
- Provide access to strategies for sensory regulation.
- Assist the individual in arranging opportunities to engage in the community.

IDENTIFY PREFERRED AVENUES OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Volunteering
- Taking lessons or a class
- Joining a club or support group
- Participating in sports or athletics
- Joining faith-based activities

WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW!

1 Identify one specific social skill you can work on with the individual to promote inclusion within the community. Match this learned skill with a specific activity or event.

2 Identify one specific self-help skill you can work on with the individual to promote community participation. Match this learned skill with a specific activity or event.