



Creating Community: Building a Meaningful Life

RESOURCES

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Getting ready for Life's Inevita-

Dr. John W. Gibson and Judy
Pigott

[http://
www.personalsafetynets.org/
workbook](http://www.personalsafetynets.org/workbook)

Bridge Ministries- Circle of
Friends

[http://bridgemin.org/
spiritualcare/circle-of-
friends.html](http://bridgemin.org/spiritualcare/circle-of-friends.html)

Lifespan-

<http://www.lifespan-wa.org/>

Metro Accessible Services

[https://metro.kingcounty.gov/
tops/accessible/](https://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/accessible/)

FLASH curriculum

[www.kingcounty.gov/
healthservices/health/
personal.famplan.educators/
Special Education](http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/personal.famplan.educators/Special%20Education)

Things to Think About

People with disabilities want the same things in life as everyone else does: Relationships, meaningful things to do and resources to accomplish them. A job is a key component of a meaningful life. It provides meaningful things to do, relationships with co-workers and the community and resources to explore other interests. But a job often does not fill the entire day. By starting early to build relationships and find things to do, you will have a head start to having a full and meaningful life for your son or daughter.

One of the things that many parents worry about is the safety of their son or daughter in the community. Creating community for your son or daughter is actually protective. The more people who know them, and have a relationship with them, the safer they are because it puts more eyes on them. It is also important for parents to teach their son or daughter how to be safe in the community. Talk to your son or daughter about the different people they will encounter in the community and the kind of relationships you have with them: Their family, their close friends, acquaintances, helpers, authorities and strangers. Talk about how we greet the various people: Do we Hug, kiss, give a wave, a high five, or a handshake? Knowing the difference will help them be safe and navigate various social settings.

Sometimes our sons and daughters have difficulty understanding “who is their friend?” Talk with your son or daughter about what a friend is and how to identify them. Here are some things to help guide the conversation about who their real friends are: Do you know their first and LAST name? Do you know where they LIVE and who they live with? Do you know what they like to do for fun? Do you feel good and happy when you are with them? Do they ask you to do things with you or are you the only one asking? Do they want things from you? Can you share your thoughts with them and they won't tell? Do they like you as much as you like them?

Things To Do

- Find places where your son or daughter can be a “regular” in the community.
- Volunteer as a family.
- Take the bus as a family.
- Explore family recreational opportunities.
- Try new things together.
- Go to local community events.
- Join a service organization
- Make a regular date with friends.
- Explore what is in your community.
- Encourage your child's interests
- Begin to build routine into your child's schedule that can continue as they enter adulthood.

