



## Natural Support Network Development

Start Date: Mar 1, 2018

### System Gap Addressed

In its state plan, NCCDD sets out the goal that the Council will increase community living for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) by increasing healthy community relationships. To reach this goal, NCCDD has committed its funds to promote systems change innovations that will establish supportive strategies toward expanding non-paid natural supports while identifying and removing barriers that hinder the opportunity for individuals with I/DD to develop natural supports.

- Many individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) face isolation and loneliness.
- The National Core Indicators (NCI) Adult Family Survey, State Outcomes, North Carolina Report for 2015-2016 data found that 29 percent of individuals with I/DD do not have friends other than paid support workers or family.
- To become a contributing member of the community, a person must have friends and acquaintances as well as participate in reciprocal relationships that are not based on the person's disability. This process of relationship building can allow natural supports to form.
- Developing a personal network will reduce the cost burden to agencies that have limited funding because the natural supports will replace certain services that individuals with I/DD may require.

### Initiative Goals and Timeline

- Expand the capacity of individuals with I/DD in North Carolina to develop non-paid relationships in their lives.
- Foster opportunities for natural supports to develop and sustain in the life of a person with I/DD.
- Train at least 25 individuals to become Network Facilitators together with 25 individuals with I/DD who want to develop their natural support networks.

### Description of Activities

- Partner with the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute for capacity building, course development, facilitation, consultation, and ongoing training and support.
- Adapt the PLAN Institute's Personal Support Network Facilitation on-line course to the needs and context of North Carolina's I/DD community.
- Host at least two Community Conversations in 2018 to advertise the availability of this initiative and the opportunity to participate in the curriculum training.
- Develop a specialized Training Guide to be shared across North Carolina that shall explain how natural supports can form and the benefits of creating opportunities for natural supports to develop in the lives of individuals with I/DD.
- Worked with the PLAN Institute to create the on-line training course and customize it for North Carolina.

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### Achievements and Outcomes to Date

- Presented to approximately 90 professionals at the Community Transitions Institute in Cary on May 9, 2018.
- Hosted Community Conversations at Christmount Conference Center in Black Mountain (Asheville area) and the O'Berry Center in Goldsboro in November 2018. A total of 36 individuals participated.
- Worked with Kudzu Brands to develop marketing materials to market this initiative as the "Full Circle Capacity Building Initiative: Working Together to Create a Good Life."
- Created a website for this initiative: [firstwnc.org/fullcircle](http://firstwnc.org/fullcircle)
- Interested individuals can sign up for the more information and updates at [www.firstwnc.org/refer/](http://www.firstwnc.org/refer/) or [www.firstwnc.org/full-circle-sign-up-form/](http://www.firstwnc.org/full-circle-sign-up-form/)
- Created an e-mail list that has more than 100 recipients and created a Facebook page that has more than 150 followers.
- Connected to North Carolina Emergency Management to engage in a conversation about how natural supports can help people with disabilities better prepare for hurricanes and other emergencies.
- Created videos of the Community Conversations as part of a plan to make all materials/tools available digitally for easy access beyond this initiative.
- Opened the on-line training from March 25, 2019 through July 4, 2019. 23 people received training on the principles, values and practices of Personal Support Network Facilitation.
- HORIZONS, a small intermediate care facility, has adopted the curriculum as part of its strategic plan. Six staff members took the training and identified six residents to create a network for.
- Collaborating with NCCDD's Supported Living: Making the Difference initiative through having FIRST's Supported Living team incorporate building networks and mobilizing natural supports in all aspects of their work and support.

### Expected System Change as Result of Initiative

- More individuals with I/DD will have more natural supports as a result of better understanding how natural supports occur and develop in their lives.
- More professionals and family members will better understand how to facilitate natural support network development for individuals with I/DD.