

Core Values about People with Disabilities

A quality Partners in Policymaking program is built on critical values relating to the inherent worth of people with disabilities. These values must be the underlying thread woven throughout every aspect of the training program. Partners is all about how to achieve a vision which respects these values.

Value #1: People with disabilities are **people first**. They are not “the handicapped” or “the disabled.” Using People First Language is a must – no labels!

Value #2: People with disabilities need **real friendships**, not just relationships with paid staff.

Value #3: People with disabilities are entitled to the full meaning of the right to free speech. The ability to **communicate**, in whatever form, must be available to every person with a disability.

Value #4: People with disabilities must be able to enjoy full **mobility and accessibility** that allows active participation in community life.

Value #5: People with disabilities must be assured **continuity** in their lives through families and neighborhood connections.

Value #6: People with disabilities must be treated with **respect and dignity**.

Value #7: People with disabilities must have the **freedom to choose** how they want to live their lives and receive the support they need.

Value #8: People with disabilities must be able to **exercise choice and control** in all areas of their lives.

Value #9: People with disabilities must be able to live in **homes** of their choice and choose the supports they need.

Value #10: People with disabilities must be able to enjoy the benefits of true **productivity** through employment and/or **contributions** as members of their communities.

These values were conceived in 1987, and continue to reflect best practices.