



FAMILY CONNECTIONS

A Family Newsletter from OASIS
Oklahoma Areawide Services Information System

Volume 26

Summer 2011

OKLAOMA PEOPLE FIRST 9 STEPS TO STARTING YOUR CHAPTER



NEXT ON THE ROAD FAMILY PERSPECTIVE CONFERENCE WILL BE TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2011 IN GUYMON, OK.
For more information contact Sally at 800.426.2747 or email at—
Sally-Selvidge@ouhsc.edu.



Inside this issue:

1. Make sure that everyone understands what People First and self-advocacy are. Talk about why people want to meet as a group. Write it down. This is your mission statement. It is important that the members of the chapter have control right from the beginning, so that the group belongs to the members. Starting a group takes time, so that everyone will understand what is going on and can participate in starting the group.
2. Decide on the responsibilities that each person will have in getting the group going. Things that need to be decided are: finding a place to meet, finding transportation, publicity, the agenda...etc.
3. Find out how other groups work, and learn from them. Then make your own decisions about how your group wants to arrange things.
4. Decide on the rules for how you are going to work together. Things like how you will choose officers, if you will have dues, how you will vote, how you will choose an advisor. Write down what you decide. These are your bylaws.
5. Work on developing team spirit. Work on how you will help people get over their hurt feelings when people have disagreements in the group.
6. Decide on the goals your People First chapter has. Write them down. This is the "goals" section of your strategic plan.
7. Decide on what you will do to reach your goals. Write this down too. It is your list of activities.
8. Develop connections with the local community. Be active and interact with others, both groups and individuals in the community.
9. Every so often, stop, and think over how things are going. Make changes when most of the members agree that something needs to be changed.



**Up Coming and On Going Events and
Family Activities**

Can now be checked out on our new

Website Front Page at:

<http://oasis.ouhsc.edu>

**COMING SOON
A NEW
ONLINE RESOURCE
DIRECTORY
KEEP CHECKING
SHOULD BE UP AND RUNNING
END OF AUGUST.**

12th Anniversary of OLMSTEAD

Where is Lois Now?

On June 22, 1999, the United States Supreme Court ruled in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, that under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the unjustified institutional isolation of people with disabilities was a form of unlawful discrimination. The landmark *Olmstead* case affirmed the rights of Americans with disabilities to live independently in the community of their choice.

Lois Curtis, one of the original plaintiffs of the *Olmstead* case finally began living in the community 11 years after the initial decision. She now sells her artwork and serves as a prime example of how persons can become more productive members of society once they are able to live in community based settings.

Lois' story didn't end after the landmark Supreme Court decision. It launched a new journey. After living in staffed residential homes since her release from the institution, Lois now rents a beautiful home in the Stone Mountain area of Georgia. She has two roommates and in 2010 a non-profit **microboard** was created to help foster Lois' continuing independence. A **microboard** is a group of friends set-up to assist with the services and supports for one individual. In Lois' case her **microboard** was critical to helping her gain access to a Medicaid waiver program for self-directed services.

We all have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Let us move forward striving to make each person's life a vision full of hope for a bright future.

As Margaret Mead once said, "*Never Doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people could change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*"



FAMILY CONNECTIONS



PROJECT SEARCH

By Kim Osmani

Department of Rehabilitation Services



**Exciting things
are happening in
Oklahoma for
Youth with
disabilities....**

Exciting things are happening in Oklahoma for youth with disabilities. For the last three years, through a partnership between the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and the University of Oklahoma (OU) National Center for Disability Education and Training (NCDET), youth with disabilities are participating in a total immersion in the workplace job readiness program, Project SEARCH™. Project SEARCH is a business-led partnership, with support and resources provide by DRS, OU-NCDET, a local school, and a community rehabilitation provider.

Since its inception in 1996 at Cincinnati Children’s Medical Center in Ohio, this collaborative model has proven to be successful in meeting employers’ needs. The program has been replicated in 150 different businesses in 42 states and the United Kingdom. Oklahoma has successfully replicated the program in five locations—Ada (Valley View Regional Hospital), Tulsa (St. John Medical Center), Oklahoma City (Mercy Health Center), Enid (INTEGRIS Bass Baptist Health Center), and Oklahoma City (Chesapeake Energy Corporation).

SEARCH is a nine-month career development program designed to prepare students, ages 18-22, for entry-level employment. Depending upon the structure of the local SEARCH site, high school graduates or high school students who have completed their academic requirements (except Senior English) may apply to participate in the SEARCH program. Each interested student is required to make a formal application and to interview with a selection committee of representative program partners. All program participants must be eligible for services with the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services.

The cornerstone of Project SEARCH™ is total immersion in the workplace which facilitates the teaching and learning process through continuous feedback and application of new skills. Program interns follow the school calendar and participate in three 10 week internship rotations within the host business site. Interns are given support through the on-the-job coaching and work site accommodations. In the classroom, employability skills training is provided by the program instructor with the ultimate goal of independent community employment for each student who completes the Project SEARCH™ program.


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Sally's Blog

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- EXPLORE
 - DISCOVER
 - THINK

My mother-in-law once told me in midst of a family crisis that they might not have had great wealth, but they had their integrity. My integrity has been challenged lately and in a world where people only seem to care about themselves integrity seems to be an action that has lost it's meaning.

Integrity is about principle centered living. It is about doing what is right rather than what is expedient. We have integrity when we are the good person we appear to be. For this reason Socrates (469 ~ 399 BC) taught, "The greatest way to live with honor in this world is to be what we pretend to be."

When we commit to integrity we empower and free ourselves. Unencumbered by the fear of ridicule and rejection by others, we do what we believe is right. The rewards for doing so are many and include a growth in self-confidence and courage. The exhilaration of doing the right thing is like experiencing the joy of reaching the other shore by victoriously swimming against the current. Don't be afraid to be different. How can we be ourselves unless we are unlike others?



**WE'RE ON THE WEB
HTTP://
OASIS.OUHSC.EDU**



To become an OASIS Parent Contact Download the form at: <http://oasis.ouhsc.edu>

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