

- “A Promising Practice for Parents with Disabilities”

- Susan Yuan and Bernadette Irwin

- 2019 TASP International Conference

PEER NAVIGATION



Peer Navigation

- Based on the experience of peer counseling in the Independent Living movement:
“Peer counselors are compassionate guides. They apply knowledge, tools, and follow rules to help people get past obstacles and reach their goals. One of the tools counselors use is treating others with deep respect.”

Peer Navigation



Also based on the Parent to Parent and Family to Family movements



“a reliable ally” (*George Singer*)



Available over time



Independent of the service system



Not based on educational qualifications but on life experience with disability and services



As similar as possible to the people being served—**Modeling** (*Bandura*)



Boundaries

- Less strict than for typical social workers
- Depends on comfort level of Peer Navigator in consultation with supervisor
- Important over long-term to establish some limits; communicate clearly about them and give reasons why...



Economical support

- Usually, Peer Navigators are hired by non-profit organizations as contracted, part-time workers at around \$15 an hour, sometimes more.
- Important to set clear expectations about number of hours to work—in both directions. PNs may need to be reined in if they work more hours than they can be paid; they also may be idle until there is a need for their services, so this is not a particularly reliable source of income.

Supervision and Training



VERY IMPORTANT
GIVEN THAT THESE
ARE NOT
TRADITIONALLY
EDUCATED POSITIONS



TRAINING NEEDS TO
BE EXPERIENTIAL,
DRAWING ON THE
COLLECTIVE
EXPERIENCE OF THE
GROUP—LOTS OF
PROBLEM SOLVING
AND CASE STUDIES



IMPORTANT FOR
BUILDING THE TEAM
TO SUPPORT ONE
ANOTHER IN THIS
WORK



EMPHASIS ON
CULTURAL
AWARENESS AND
SENSITIVITY

One framework for Supervision/Support for Peer Navigators (VFF)

What am I most proud of	What am I struggling with
Family Advocacy Updates	System Advocacy Updates
Encouraging Others	Equipping Others

Results of PN in Vermont 360 Project

**Outcome: *Families
have stayed
together, safely,
with needed
supports***

Total families served:
855

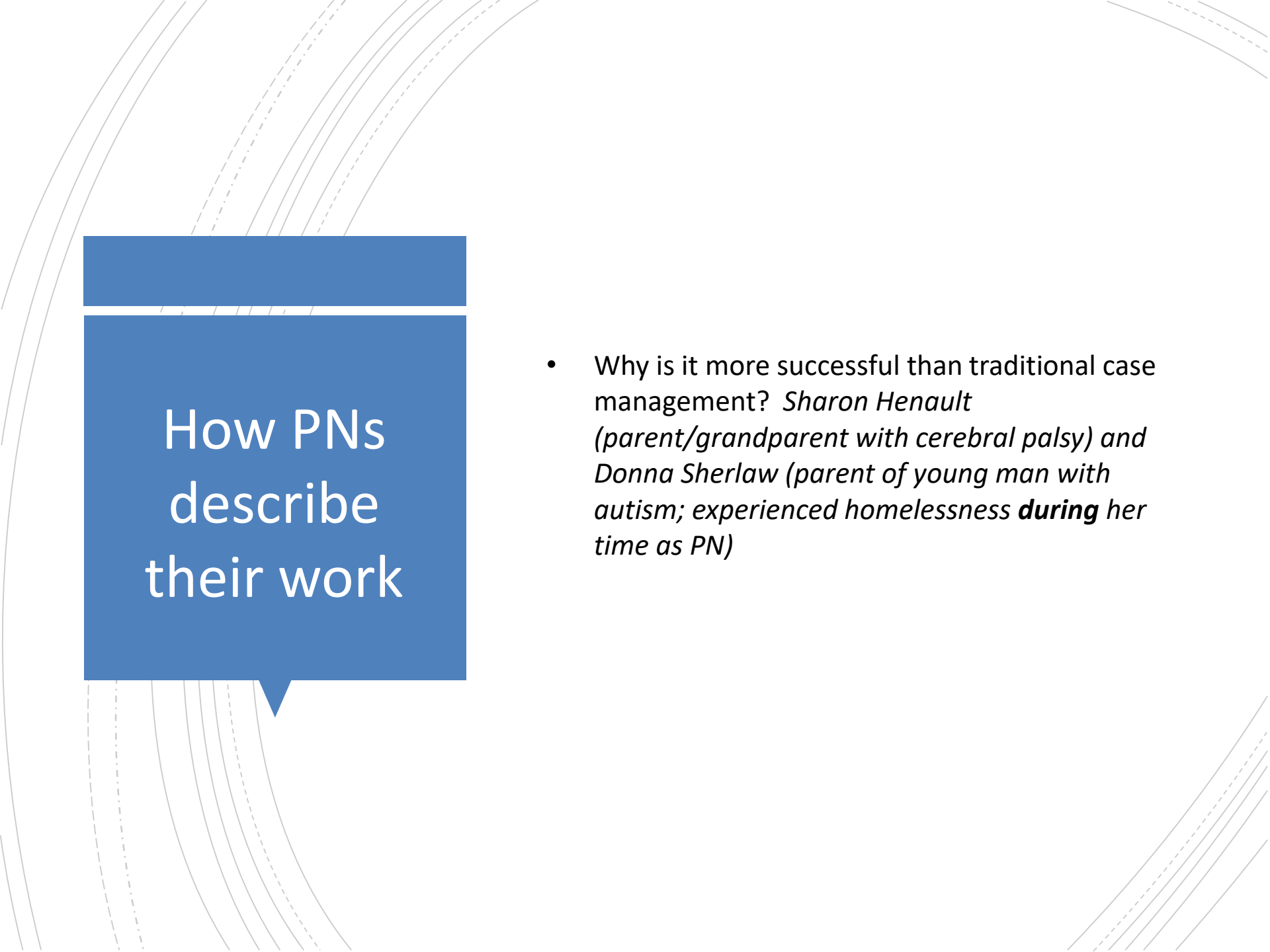
Families with DD
served: 495

Termination of
parental rights: 17

% of TPR of total
served: 1.9%

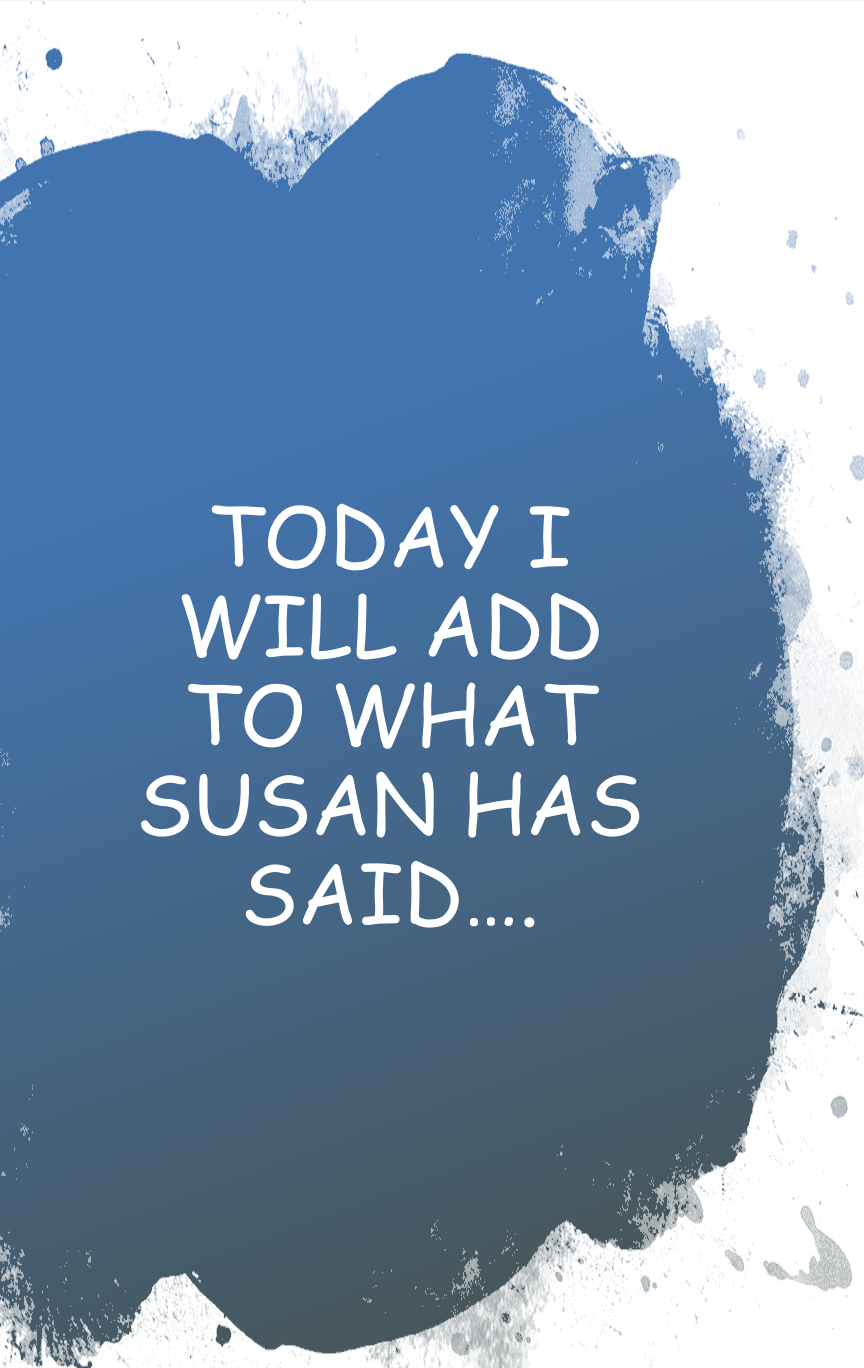
% of TPR for
families with
DD: 3.4%

Expectation of TPR
from research on
parents with DD: 40
to 80% (*Feldman &
Tymchuk, 2002*).

The slide features a decorative background with several curved lines in shades of gray, some solid and some dashed, sweeping across the top and bottom. A prominent blue speech bubble shape is positioned on the left side, containing the main title text in white. The overall design is clean and modern.

How PNs describe their work

- Why is it more successful than traditional case management? *Sharon Henault (parent/grandparent with cerebral palsy) and Donna Sherlaw (parent of young man with autism; experienced homelessness **during** her time as PN)*



TODAY I
WILL ADD
TO WHAT
SUSAN HAS
SAID....

- OVERVIEW OF THE
SUCCESSFUL
PARENTING - DC
MODEL
 - PEER
NAVIGATION
 - PARENT
EDUCATION
- SOME THOUGHTS
FROM DR. FELDMAN
- WHAT DO PEER
NAVIGATORS THINK

HOW MANY



IN DC....

- Parents with ID with children under 18 living with them - 8,500 or 8.9 % of 96,200
- In the US 4.1 million - 6.2% (2012) --
ALL DISABILITIES

*THROUGH THE LOOKING
GLASS.*

THREE DELIVERABLES

#1

- DEVELOP EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL THAT THE PEER NAVIGATORS WILL USE AS THEY WORK WITH DC CFSA/DDA FAMILIES

#2

- PROVIDE EDUCATION AND PEER NAVIGATION TO DC CFSA/DDA FAMILIES

#3

- PROVIDE QUARTERLY TRAINING TO PROFESSIONALS WHO WORK WITH DC CFSA/DDA FAMILIES



3



TRAINING MATERIALS #1

- **DR. MAURICE FELDMAN -
INSTRUCTION IN HOW TO USE
BEHAVIOR SKILLS TRAINING
AS WE TEACH PARENTS
PARENTING OR LIFE SKILLS.**
- **DR. ALEXANDER TYMCHUK -
HEALTH AND WELLNESS
PROGRAM - A PARENTING
CURRICULUM FOR PARENTS AT
RISK**
- **CENTER FOR LEARNING IN
EARLY LITERACY**
- **C.A.R.E. CURRICULUM-
COMMUNICATON, ATTUNMENT,
RESPONSIVENESS AND
EMPATHY**

SERVICE DELIVERY - WHO?




- **PEER NAVIGATORS**
 - INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE LIVED WITH A DISABILITY THEMSELVES OR HAVE BEEN A CARE-GIVER FOR AN INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY
 - EXPERIENCED AT NAVIGATING COMPLEX SYSTEMS OF CARE IN DC



GOAL FOR THE PN TRAINING

- PERSONAL GROWTH - DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW YOU AND YOUR FAMILY VIEW DISABILITY
- BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE FAMILY SUPPORT MODEL THROUGH THE YEARS
- LOOK AT IMPACT OF CULTURE ON SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS
- IMPACT OF CULTURE ON ACCESS TO SERVICES/SUPPORTS
- EXPLORE DYNAMICS OF FAMILY INTERACTION WITH DISABILITY IN THE FAMILY



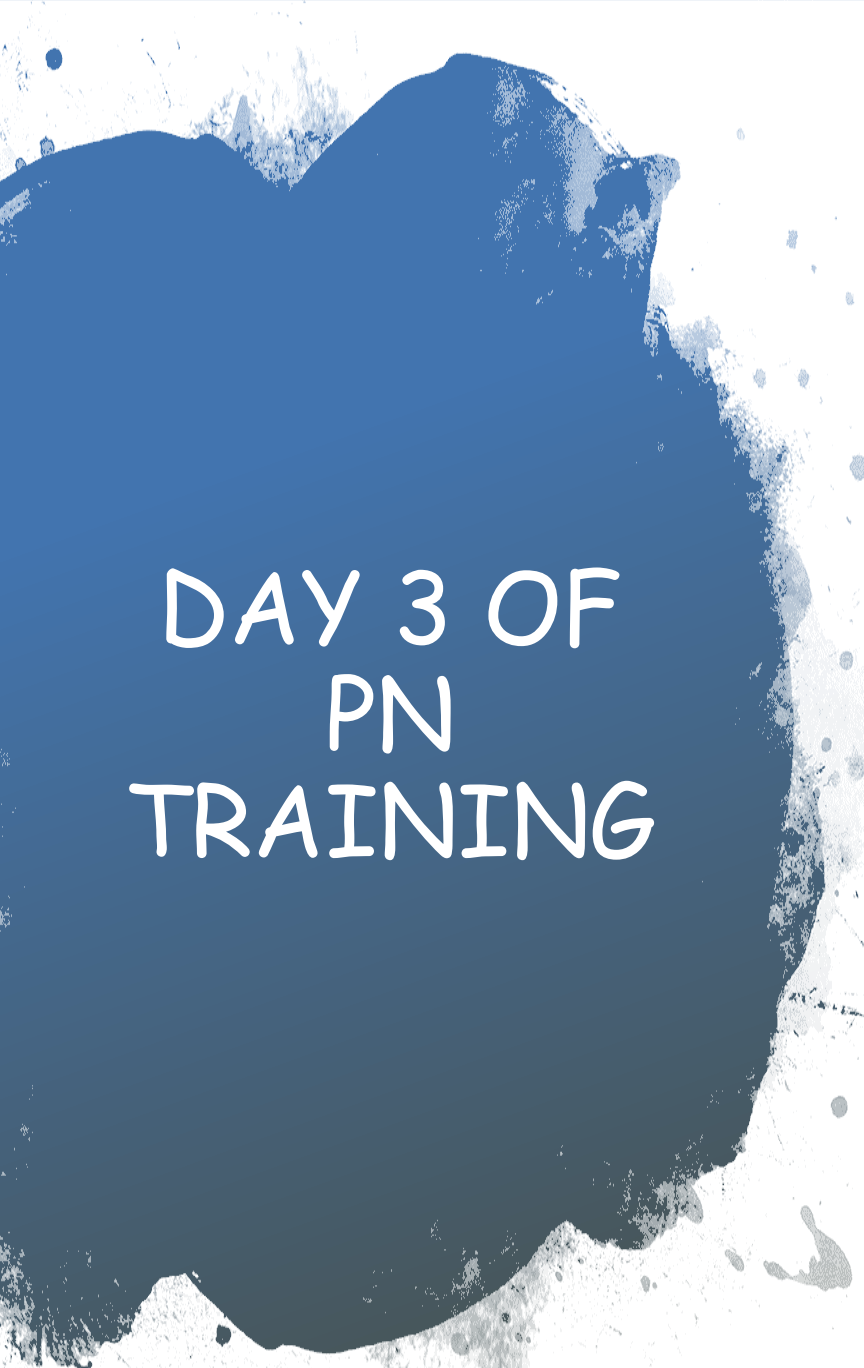
So, what
training
did our PN
Receive?

- 2 days on the PN model
 - Explored Family Support as it relates to **Disabilities**
 - Awareness and sensitivity to differences in families
 - Disability and inclusion in the family
 - Difference between child/person-centered planning and family-centered planning



ALSO,

- EXAMINED CULTURAL MODELS, ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP AROUND SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
 - IDENTIFICATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF YOUR VALUES AND THOSE OF THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU
 - AWARENESS OF HOW YOUR VALUES INFLUENCE YOUR WORK WITH OTHERS



DAY 3 OF PN TRAINING

- STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH PARENT WITH ID
 - IDENTIFICATION
 - ISSUES/ASSUMPTIONS
 - RESEARCH
 - STRATEGIES - VIDEO CLIPS
 - RECENT LEGAL CASES
 - CASE STUDIES - VIDEO CLIPS
 - RESOURCES

Dr. Feldman's
training used lecture,
video clips, group
and individual
exercises

1. Parents with
Learning
Difficulties

2. Case Study

3. Parenting
Interaction
Model

4. Competence-
Based
Assessment

5. Impediment-
Support
Checklist

6. Parenting Skill
Observation
Checklists

7. Family
Support Plans

8. Interventions

(c)2016, M.
Feldman



**Step-by-Step
Parent Education
Program**



- Started in 1980's in Toronto



- Competence-based, rights model



- Based on behavioural and adult learning approaches



- Universal design principles

FROM DR.
FELDMAN'S
TRAINING
REGARDING
PARENTS WITH
ID

- Prevailing attitudes
- Legislation listing parental disability as grounds for child removal.
- Jan. 2015 DHHS & DOJ decision in MA affirmed that federal law entitles parents with intellectual disabilities to ADA special child welfare accommodations under ADA and the Rehabilitation Act (Title II and Section 504).
 - [https://
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- **Justice News**
- Department of Justice
- Office of Public Affairs
- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
- **Monday, August 10, 2015**

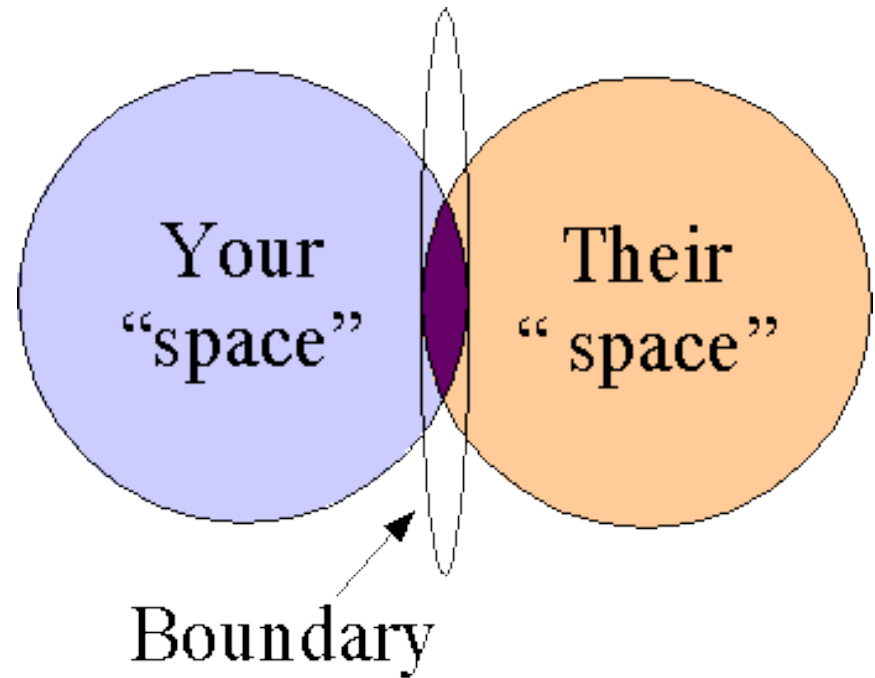
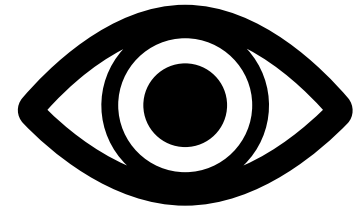
- The Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today issued joint [technical assistance](#) to state and local child welfare agencies and courts on the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The technical assistance released today is part of a new partnership between HHS and the Department of Justice to help child welfare agencies protect the welfare of children and ensure compliance with nondiscrimination laws.
- <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/departments-justice-and-health-and-human-services-issue-technical-assistance-child-welfare>

DC DETAILS

- PEER NAVIGATORS WILL WORK UP TO 6 HOURS PER WEEK WITH THEIR ASSIGNED FAMILIES
- 30 FAMILIES WILL BE SERVED IN THE FIRST YEAR

CHALLENGES OF THE PN MODEL

- FINDING THE RIGHT CANDIDATE
- COMPLICATED LIVES
- BOUNDARIES



THANK YOU!

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