

Champions assure progress linked to the *ISP*



IDEA 2: HOW TO WRITE A GOOD DEFINITION OF A MEANINGFUL DAY



IN A NUTSHELL:

A good personal definition of a meaningful day supports a person to flourish in a fulfilling life. It belongs to the person, is unique to the person, supports progress towards his/her vision, expands and grows with the person, is concrete enough to know when it is happening. In addition, with other parts of the ISP as well as spontaneous choices the person makes this definition, is an expression of how each person wants to guide the content of her/his daily experiences and the supports to make those experiences happen.

BRINGING IT TO LIFE: **THOUGHTS AND IDEAS**

Some Questions and Answers about Meaningful Day

What is the official purpose of the meaningful day definition?

- Each ISP must contain a definition of the individual's unique meaningful day so that the team will be able to support the individual in participating in ordinary community activities and functions of his/her choice that the general population desires and chooses.

LIVING IT:

AN EXAMPLE OF A GOOD DEFINITION OF A MEANINGFUL DAY

See *ISP Instructions* that include examples of good personal definitions of a meaningful day on the DDS website at:

<http://www.health.state.nm.us/ddsd/PromisingPractises/documents/ISPInstructions7-5-06version.pdf>

What timeframe does the "day" in meaningful day cover?

- The term "day" does not exclusively denote activities that happen between 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekdays.

What does the definition describe and support?

- Each person's definition of a meaningful day captures what the person desires to do, including community connections.
- The personal definition supports progress toward the vision, but can be broader than the vision and action plan.

What does a good definition include and have as a result?

- A good definition of a Meaningful Day contains concrete descriptors to answer the question: how will you know the person is doing activities related to his/her definition of a Meaningful Day when you see it?
- As a result of the implementation of the person's meaningful day definition at a specific time, the person should come away with more today than (s)he had yesterday and be closer to achieving his/her desired life and outcomes.

Who develops it?

- The person develops the definition, supported by friends, family, close staff members, other IDT members, and the case manager.
- Each member of the IDT takes an active role in supporting the person to develop a definition.

How does everyone prepare to develop a good personal definition of a meaningful day?

- Ask the person what makes him/her feel good in life.
- Think of fun ways that a person can own her/his own definition of a meaningful day. See examples of how to do this (including involving friends, family and staff members who are close to the person) in *TRY IT OUT*.
- Providers offering Adult Habilitation or Community Access services can help the person prepare by supporting him/her to experience increasingly varied and broad community inclusive options so that s(he) can make informed choices.

- In 2007, these providers are supporting each person to develop a draft definition of a meaningful day to bring to the IDT.
- After 2007, these providers and other IDT members will gather information from the individual and others who know the person well prior to the IDT to enrich the definition over time.
- The ISP reflects that input from the person as well as informed choice, regardless of his/her level of care, method of communication, or current services offered.

Where is the definition finalized?

- Each individual's definition of a meaningful day refined, expanded, and finalized at the annual (or special) ISP meeting.

How is the initial definition documented?

- The person may supplement written documentation with a scrapbook of photos or other ways shown in *Selection 7*,

Idea 3: Tracking the progress documentation.

- The case manager records the results of the IDT discussion in the ISP.
- Community Access and Adult Habilitation providers report the date of the ISP that the definition was developed for that individual in the Performance Contract Quarterly Report.
- The reporting is specific to each person's definition (example: Josephina went to the mall – why? What happened there specifically related to her definition?).
- For more information see: *Selection 7, Idea 3: Tracking the progress – documentation*

When will everyone have a meaningful day definition?

- Using the 10/1/06 ISP form, all individuals served by DDS will have a meaningful day definition no later than 9/30/07.

Champions Selection, IDEA 2, PAGE 3

How does the definition relate to Community Inclusion Services?

- The person's definition of a meaningful day should be reflected in the choices and activities (s)he is offered in Community Inclusion Services.
- The individual should have enough information and experience to make an informed choice about what (s)he wants to do on a daily basis to support progress towards his/her outcomes listed in the ISP.

What a *Meaningful Day* Isn't:

- The person's meaningful day definition is not the same definition as the definition every other person in a specific program has.
- The person's meaningful day definition is not just a time filling list of activities or a restatement of what the person is currently doing.
- A definition that lists what the person will not do or does not want to do.

✓ CHECK IT OUT: GOOD RESOURCES

- See *Selection 8: And Yet More...*, Resource 1: *It's Official: The Unabridged 3/1/06 Measurable Definition of a Meaningful Day*
- You can get technical assistance on how to develop a good personal definition of a meaningful day by submitting a Request for Intervention Form to your DDSD Regional Office. See the map of DDSD Regional Office contact information on the DDSD website at: <http://www.health.state.nm.us/preview/ltsd/providerlocationspagedevelopment/providerlocationspg06.htm>
- See *ISP Instructions* that include examples of good personal definitions of a meaningful day on the DDSD website at: <http://www.health.state.nm.us/ddsd/PromisingPractices/documents/ISPInstructions7-5-06version.pdf>

TRY IT OUT: ACTIVITIES, EXERCISES AND COMPELLING QUESTIONS

Think of fun ways that a person can own her/his own definition of a meaningful day, for example:

- Ask the person to choose a team member (s)he trusts.
- Ask the questions that help the person think about what (s) he wants from life (for example: what don't you do now that you used to enjoy?)
- If the person does not use words, use his/her Communication Dictionary and observation to figure out what the person likes (for example: the person laughs when she is bored, and stares intently when she is interested – note what's happening when both occur).
- Ask friends, family and staff members who are close to the person what (s)he is doing when (s)he is happiest.
- Figure out how to build a picture of what the person wants in life (for example: make a collage

out of photos the person selects).

- Decide how both can present this to the team for inclusion in the meaningful day definition (for example: one person points to the photos while the other sings a song that describes it).

Write a meaningful day definition for yourself.

- Review the criteria for a good definition under *BRINGING IT TO LIFE* above to see if your definition meets the mark.
- What did you discover about yourself from writing this?
- How can having this down on paper help you grow in the directions you want?

Work backwards from the bottom line, a great life:

- Identify someone who is flourishing in a fulfilling life enjoying loving relationships, strong connections to the community, rewarding work, a home s(he) is proud of, wellness and lots of opportunities for

- fun doing what s(he) is passionate about.
- Look at that person's definition of a meaningful day (if the person does not have a definition, try drafting one).
 - Does the definition describe this good life?
 - How can the definition expand to support this person to grow even more?
 - What can you learn from how this person achieved this life?

Take a look at current ISPs and ask (*hint: the answers should be "yes"*):

- Is the ISP form implemented by DDS in 10/1/06 used for ISPs developed since that date?
- Is a meaningful day definition in place for each person who has had an ISP since 10/1/06?
- How is the person achieving desired outcomes in a timely way?

Take a closer look at one person's definition and see:

- In what ways is this meaningful day definition unique to this person?
- How does the meaningful day definition support the person's vision?
- Is the meaningful day definition written concretely and specifically enough that results of it can be documented?
- Is the definition of the person's meaningful day changing over time as the person experiences more varied and broader community inclusive options from which to choose?
- How is informed choice being assured, regardless of level of care?