

Active Support teaches direct support professionals how to provide effective support that has been proven to improve participation, choice and quality of life.

WHAT IS THE PROGRAM ABOUT?

People with intellectual disabilities are entitled to lives which are as full as anyone else's. Although everyone of us differs, there are some core things that we all have in common. It is important for most people to:

- ▶ **Be part of a community**
- ▶ **Have good relationships with friends and family**
- ▶ **Have relationships that last**
- ▶ **Have opportunities to develop experience and develop new skills**
- ▶ **Have choice and control over their life**
- ▶ **Be afforded status and respect**
- ▶ **Be treated as an individual**

So important are these core elements of life that they have come to define what we mean by leading a socially valued lifestyle. When a person is not able to do typical activities independently, he or she will need support to do them.

Active Support is designed to make sure that people who need support have the chance to be fully engaged and participating in their lives and receive the right range and level of support to be successful.

CDS AND ACTIVE SUPPORT

The Centre for Disability Studies (CDS) has a long history of delivering Active Support training and research. CDS was the first organisation to bring Active Support training from the UK and deliver the training to community based services in NSW, Australia in 2001. Since 2001, CDS has been involved in Active Support training and large scale roll-outs for government and non-government services in South Australia, Victoria, NSW, Queensland and New Zealand.

Prof. **Vivienne Riches** from CDS led a team of researchers who won the Australasian Society for Intellectual Disability (ASID) 2011 Research Prize for an article regarding the roll-out of Active Support in Queensland titled "Transforming staff practice through active support".

CLASSROOM & INTERACTIVE TRAINING

Active Support is typically taught to Direct Support Professionals through a two day 'Classroom Training' session following by 'one to one', on-site mentoring skills based 'Interactive Training' session for each trainee.

CLASSROOM TRAINING

During this training Activity and Support Plans, Diary's, Future Plans, Opportunity Plans and Support Protocols relevant to the home and its residents will be developed by the staff with reference to existing activities, person-centred plans, and current workings within the household or program.

There is a concentration on the importance of working together as a team, sharing information, regular team meetings, and a person-centred approach.

Direct support professionals are requested to bring along existing individual/ person-centred plans, behaviour support plans and current routines to be workshopped during the classroom training sessions.

In classroom training we aim for an entire group home or day program staff team to attend a two day training session. Having the team together builds team moral and allows for coordination, implementation and planning, although backfill may be required for this staff team.

We also encourage staff in management positions to attend, to demonstrate the commitment from management and understand what it takes to successfully implement Active Support.

INTERACTIVE TRAINING

Interactive training consists of one to two hours 'one to one' on-site mentoring with each direct support professional. Activities are chosen potentially including community activities and activities supporting more than one person at a time.

VARIATIONS

Variations on the scheduling of training may be negotiated if required. However the basic format of time involved is recognised as the best option for comprehensive training in the application of Active Support and up-skilling trainers.

True implementation of Active Support requires more than simply reading an instruction manual. Instead a commitment from management and intensive training is required to achieve the positive results well described in the research literature.

The basic issue is about how support is provided. Staff can do things for residents or staff can do those same activities with residents and support them to participate.

CONTACT INFORMATION

To discuss how Active Support can be best implemented in your organisation please contact CDS:

PERSON CENTRED ACTIVE SUPPORT

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