

FLEXIBLE SUPPORTS

What are flexible supports
and are you “getting” them?

FLEXIBLE SUPPORTS

- What is your definition/understanding of “flexible supports”?

- What are some examples of flexible/family supports that you are aware of?

FLEXIBLE SUPPORTS

- What is your definition/understanding of “flexible supports”?

SIMPLY PUT

WHATEVER IT TAKES!!!

Flexible supports are - Whatever it takes;
for families to stay together,
and for individuals with disabilities to lead quality lives
in their communities.

FLEXIBLE SUPPORTS

- Garrett's story
- Joy's story
- Examples listed in the Chapter 171 law (may include, but are not limited to:)
 - Coordination and facilitation of support services
 - Counseling and information
 - Facilitation of self-help groups
 - Home adaptations
 - Assistive Technology
 - Financial assistance
 - Respite
 - Adaptive equipment and clothing
 - Recreation and leisure activities
 - Life planning
 - Transportation including vehicle modification
 - Special dietary supplements and medical equipment/maintenance
 - Advocacy training

FLEXIBLE SUPPORTS

- What would flexible supports look like if they were truly flexible and met your individual/family needs?

Think “outside the box”

Do not limit your ideas to the services and supports currently available!

CHAPTER 171 – The Law

- Chapter 171 of the Acts of 2002 – A law providing support to individuals with disabilities and their families

- 7 State agencies named in the law
 - Department of Mental Retardation - DMR
 - Department of Mental Health - DMH
 - Department of Public Health - DPH
 - Mass Commission for the Blind - MCB
 - Mass Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing - MCDHH
 - Mass Rehab Commission - MRC
 - Mass Health

CHAPTER 171 – The Law

- Requirements
 - Substantial Consultation
 - Annual Agency Family/Individual Support Plans (Agency Action Plans)
 - Legislative Review and Monitoring

CHAPTER 171 – The Law

- SUBSTANTIAL CONSULTATION
 - Advisory Boards
 - Surveys
 - Focus Groups
 - Meetings with Individuals and Families

CHAPTER 171 – The Law

- Substantial Consultation
 - What would you consider effective ways for agencies to receive Substantial Consultation?
 - How do you see yourself getting involved in giving Substantial Consultation?

CHAPTER 171 – The Law

- ANNUAL AGENCY INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY SUPPORT PLANS (Agency Action Plans)
(go to www.mfofc.org to see agency action plans)
 - Plans need to be written after substantial consultation has been received
 - Plans have to explain how the department is going to provide flexible supports.
 - “Each department shall seek creative and innovative ways to provide flexible supports...”

CHAPTER 171 – The Plan

- Each plan needs to have goals that address at a minimum the following:
 - Interagency collaboration along with public and private partnerships
 - Create opportunities for individuals and family members to have oversight of, and input into the direction and development of policies and programs by the departments local, regional, and central offices as well as their vendor agencies

Chapter 171 – The Plan

- Specific long and short-term objectives and strategies for implementing accessible and flexible supports as well as a way for individuals and families to monitor progress of previous years plan
- Identify family support resources that will be used to achieve the goals; departments must analyze the current flexibility of funding mechanisms in order to identify and adjust funding to more adequately provide flexible family supports within the agencies mandate

CHAPTER 171 – The Plan

- Enable the full participation of individuals with disabilities or chronic illnesses and their families in community life – respecting all cultures
- Expand the capacity of community services to include persons with disabilities or chronic illnesses by training and educating community service providers
- Empower consumer and ensure their active leadership and advocacy through education, leadership development, and training.

CHAPTER 171 – The Law

■ Legislative Review and Monitoring

- After the substantial consultation is obtained and the plans are written they must be submitted with a collective assessment of the current service delivery systems to the governor, the secretary of health and human services, the joint committee on human services and elderly affairs and the house and senate committees on ways and means.
- Each agency must submit their plans by August 1st of each year.

CHAPTER 171 OF THE ACTS OF 2002

An act providing support to individuals with disabilities and their families.

Anyone receiving support services from any of the 7 named agencies in the law should be aware of Chapter 171 and participate in its implementation on a consistent basis.

Chapter 171 – Next Steps

- Review this years Agency Action Plan
- Contact agency liaison to find out how to participate in substantial consultation
- Follow up & participate in providing substantial consultation
- Continue to review plans annually and comment to agency liaison's
(comments should be about both what is working and what is not working)

Trainings Available

If you would like to know more about Flexible Supports, Chapter 171, Substantial Consultation, and legislative advocacy please contact MFOFC to set up a training.

Mfofc@comcast.net

1-800-406-3632

**Special thanks to MDDC
(Massachusetts Developmental
Disabilities Council) for their
continued support of the
implementation of Chapter 171.**