

6. Facilitating Friendships

If community inclusion and citizenship are truly our goals, then supporting people to make friends needs to be a priority. Friends are different from volunteers in that friendships generally follow a more natural development and are not conditional (friends do not require practicum hours or evaluations).

Some ways to support the development of friendships are:

- (i) Being out in the community meeting people;
 - (ii) Teaching interpersonal skills;
 - (iii) Identifying people whom the individual you support would like to develop relationships with, sharing this information with the team and coming to a consensus as to how to follow up and facilitate the relationship;
 - (iv) Teaching friends how to communicate with the individual and being open to the opinions of friends about the individual;
 - (v) Being flexible about schedules and meeting times to suit the needs of friends rather than staffing;
 - (vi) Ensuring friends are kept informed of successes, problems, meetings and social events they might like to attend.
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- (a) Every effort by management and staff of Spectrum will be made to support the friends of individuals in our services.
 - (b) Friends will have access to the Society's Policy and Procedures Manual and to in-house training provided by the Society.
 - (c) Friends may receive reimbursement for expenses directly related to their involvement with the individual, with prior approval by the Program Manager.