



National Participant Network (NPN)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES REGARDING NATURAL SUPPORT

- ◆ The NPN believes that all people, regardless of whether they have disabilities or not, have family, friends and/or community who act as natural support.
- ◆ The NPN believes that a natural support is a non-paid person or community resource which supplies assistance as a result of connection to the individual or general availability to the community at large. A non-paid person may be a family member or others who are in close relationship and are willing to provide service.
- ◆ The NPN believes that a natural support provides occasional physical, emotional and/or logistical assistance to the person regardless of geographic proximity.
- ◆ The NPN believes that natural support, whether for individuals with disabilities or not, is normally intermittent and should not be considered a primary resource to meet people's needs.
- ◆ The NPN believes that activities and assistance provided by a natural support would be at the same frequency and intensity regardless of whether or not that person has a disability.
- ◆ The NPN believes that overreliance on natural support will fundamentally change the nature of the relationship between the individuals involved and shift it out of the realm of natural support. Natural support for individuals with disabilities must be utilized in the same proportion as they are in situations where disability is not a factor.
- ◆ The NPN believes that natural support is not an obligation, but a request or opportunity with free choice involved for all parties.
- ◆ The NPN believes that participants have the right to maintain typical relationships with family and friends, and as part of this we strongly believe that they should not be automatically obligated as an unpaid resource.

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- ◆ The NPN believes that viable long term natural support must not cause lasting negative impact or physical, mental or emotional harm to any of the involved individuals.
- ◆ The NPN believes that safeguards must be put in place to avoid abuse of a natural support.
- ◆ The NPN believes that natural support serves as an enhancement to a person's world, expanding experience or knowledge thus helping the person to grow and learn.
- ◆ The NPN believes that natural supports are those actions that might be found in a traditional relationship, for example a family member cooking a meal for the family on a special occasion.