

Become a PEAK Parent Center Personal Network Facilitator!

PEAK's Personal Network Facilitators support the critical social and personal development needed to help build resilience, self-determination, and well-being of young adults with disabilities. Now more than ever, PEAK Parent Center is stepping up to find innovative ways to support young adults with disabilities in their journey toward adulthood and life long meaningful relationships.

What is a Personal Network Facilitator?

Regular people, just like you. You don't need any special degrees or job skills. You just have to want to positively impact the life of a young person with a disability and believe that positive relationships are essential for all people to have a good life.

Facilitators are:

- Steeped in the values of self-determination, community, and capacity building
- Deeply committed to creating opportunities for relationships instead of therapy and programs
- Individual and community oriented, not expert oriented
- Not in the business of fixing, but rather focus on walking with people in their journey
- Reflective and notice what is happening around them
- Not interested in being seen as a hero

Facilitators are comfortable with:

- Establishing a safe environment that motivates participation
- Guiding conversations because they understand that no one person has the answer
- Holding space for the unknown and can wait in ambiguity
- Creating time for process of discovery - there is not one "right" answer
- Structuring sessions while at the same time giving room for exploration
- Stimulating interaction while remaining neutral

Facilitators have:

- Faith in people and their ability to find their own answers
- Strong communication skills
- The ability see the gifts of others
- Good listening habits. ...
- constructing meaningful conversations
- building and holding good processes
- moving to action
- documenting both process and outcomes
- Assists others to discover new possibilities
- Confidence to challenge "outside-the-box" thinking
- A proactive approach
- Flexibility

What kind of support can I expect from PEAK Parent Center & what kind of time commitment should I be prepared to make?

This experience consists of...

- Four, two-hour virtual trainings that will take place over two weeks, times and dates TBD.
- Monthly Wednesday night gatherings with all project participants who are walking through this process (No meetings in June and July)
- Monthly Facilitator training calls at noon on Thursdays and one-on-one coaching calls when you are available
- Regular monthly meetings with your assigned young adult AND their family to apply what you are learning
- Typically facilitators are engaged with our project for 7-10 hours a month

There is the satisfaction of being dedicated to a single person and how they want their life to unfold. And there is the beauty of building a relationship with someone while having few predetermined assumptions about possibilities.

Here is what facilitators shared with us about their experience from last year:

- *"He's helped me more than I've helped him."*
- *"I will take this experience with me forever and apply with everyone I work with. I learned to ask "wait a minute" questions" (to help people to be curious and explore new possibilities.)"*
- *"An awesome experience - it opened my eyes and my career path."*
- *"It was invaluable - shifted my viewpoint from systems-based to a relationship approach, thinking outside the box, and changing expectations."*
- *"I learned to plant seeds in small opportunities."*
- *"The young adults who are struggling and their families need this kind of inspiration for the future."*
- *"It has affirmed why I'm doing what I do now. I have loved getting to know people and to learn where their hearts are."*
- *"I liked seeing things happen slowly but naturally."*

A Personal Network is a powerful force for creating a safe and secure future for people who have a disability and it can be the difference between a person living on the edge of community and being actively included and contributing to their community in meaningful ways. We focus on helping others to develop a range of relationships leading to varied personal networks based on courage, vision, passion, and principles in order to carry out this work. As you can see we do all this for the sheer joy of connecting people with each other.

For more information about Personal Networks and the role of PEAK Network Facilitators, email Sami Peterson at speterson@peakparent.org

I am not interested in picking up crumbs of compassion thrown from the table of someone who considers himself my master. I want the full menu of rights.

~ Archbishop Desmond Tutu