


Tuesdays: March 2-April 27, 6-7 p.m.



FIRE **FLEXING
INDEPENDENCE
RETAINING
EMPLOYMENT**

Welcome!

**Week 5 – Disability Understanding
and Disclosure**



**Tuesday,
March 30, 2021**



Reminders

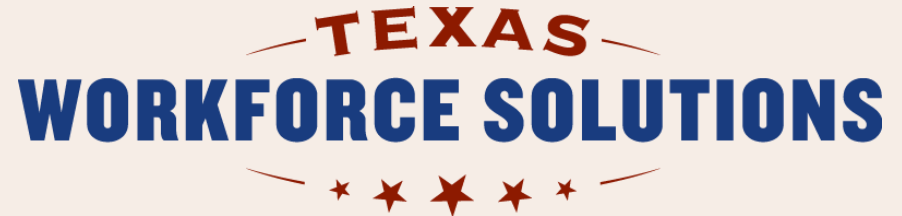
- Mute your microphone unless requested to unmute yourself.
- Turn your camera off until asked to turn it on.
- To ensure confidentiality of all participants, do not share personal information, including address, phone number or other secret information.
- Private chats between participants are not allowed during the training session.



The Intellectual
and Developmental
Disabilities Council
of Tarrant County



Special Thanks!



Tuesday's Caregiver Education ♦ Noon-1 pm

- Apr. 6 – The Roll of Siblings in the Support System for People with IDD
- Apr. 13 – Using Visual Supports

Monthly IDD Council Meeting

First Thursday of Each Month, 8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

- Apr. 1 –Legislative Updates and Progress toward ABA benefits for people 20 and under with Medicaid

Learning When to Share...

The IN's and OUT's of Disclosure & Self-Advocacy

Brandi Levingston, PhD, CRC

FIRE: Flexing Independence, Retaining Employment

Tarrant County

March 2021

What is Disclosure??

- ▶ Disclosure is a very personal decision and takes thought and practice.
- ▶ Disclosure is when an individual reveals, releases or provides personal information about their self for a specific reason.
- ▶ Disclosure should provide information about:
 - ▶ 1) how your disability affects your capacity to learn and perform effectively,
 - ▶ 2) the environment, supports, and services you will need in order to access, participate in, and excel in your job, school studies, and community.

Adapted from:

https://www.heath.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2346/f/downloads/the_411_on_disability_disclosure_for_adults.pdf

Different Types of Disclosure

Social

- ▶ Sharing information about your disability with a friend or peer that you know in order to receive support from them.

Employment

- ▶ Sharing information about your disability with your hiring manager, supervisor or co-worker in order to receive support and accommodations at work.

School

- ▶ Sharing information with your principal, teacher or professor in order to receive support or accommodations at school.

Community

- ▶ Sharing information with a director or employee at a center, or park, or swimming pool, etc. in order to receive support while you are engaged in activities.

But REMEMBER...

You are NOT legally required to disclose your disability on your application, resume' or cover letter, to a school official or to any business. There is no “best” time to disclose...it is an individual decision. The key thing is that YOU control how that information is delivered.

Knowing Your Disability

- ▶ What is the name or the type of disability?
- ▶ Is it hidden or visible to others?
- ▶ Does it cause you difficulty with school, work, or socialization?
- ▶ What are some strengths about your disability?
- ▶ What assistance do you need?

Advantages and Disadvantages of Disclosure



► *Advantages*

- It allows you to receive supports and reasonable accommodations so that you can pursue work, school, or community activities more effectively.
- It provides legal protection against discrimination as specified in the ADA and other related statutes.
- It may reduce stress, since protecting a “secret” can take a lot of energy.
- It improves your self-image through self-advocacy.

► *Disadvantages*

- It may lead to the experience of exclusion.
- It can cause you to become an object of curiosity.
- It may cause others to treat you differently than others.
- It may impact your self-image.
- It might cause you to lose an opportunity or friend.

Advocacy and Disclosure are Partners in Crime

▶ What is Self-Advocacy?

- ▶ Advocating for oneself and speaking out for what one believes in.
- ▶ Knowing your rights and responsibilities under the law!
- ▶ Believing in yourself!

How to Become a Great Self-Advocate

- ▶ Know Yourself!
 - ▶ What are your biggest strengths?
 - ▶ What are your biggest weaknesses?
 - ▶ What does being self-aware mean to you?
- ▶ Be assertive!
 - ▶ (a) stand up for their personal rights;
 - ▶ (b) express their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in a direct, honest, and appropriate way;
 - ▶ (c) show respect for themselves and others; and
 - ▶ (d) leave room for compromise
- ▶ Know Your Rights!

Your Rights and Responsibilities

As a person with a disability, you have disclosure protections as well as significant responsibilities to yourself and to your employers.

▶ *You are entitled to:*

- ▶ Have information about your disability treated confidentially and respectfully;
- ▶ Seek information about hiring practices from any organization;
- ▶ Choose to disclose your disability at any time during the employment process;
- ▶ Receive reasonable accommodations for an interview;

▶ *You have the responsibility to:*

- ▶ Disclose your need for any work-related reasonable accommodations;
- ▶ Bring your skills and merits to the table; and
- ▶ Be truthful, self-determined, and proactive.

Adopted from:
<https://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/ydw.htm>

So How Do I Disclose??

- Disclosure is a very personal decision and takes thought and practice. It also helps to develop a script.
- **YOU** need to determine:
 - **WHY** you think it will be helpful to disclose
 - **WHEN** you want to share the information
 - **HOW** you want to talk about your disability
 - **WHAT** information you want to share
 - **WHO** to share the information with



Your Disclosure Script

- ▶ Sample: *"Currently, I can/have (the skills required) to do (the main duties) of the job, but sometimes (functional limitations) interfere with my ability to (duties you may have trouble performing). It helps if I have (name the specific accommodations you need). I work best when (other accommodations)."*
- ▶ *You could also add the following information:*
 - ▶ *"Sometimes you might see (symptoms or behaviors associated with symptoms). When you see that, you can (name the action steps for the employer). Here is the number of my (employment specialist, doctor, therapist, previous employer, JAN, etc.) for any information that you might need."*



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Thank you for participating!

QUESTIONS?



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Rita Stevenson

Executive Director

The Intellectual and Developmental
Disabilities Council of Tarrant County

Rita@IDDCouncil.org

817.569.4852 call

Natacha Mendenhall

Transition Vocational Rehabilitation
Counselor

Texas Workforce Solutions

Natacha.Mendenhall@twc.state.tx.us

682.347.7445 call/text