

Natural Supports for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

In general, natural supports are the relationships that form naturally in everyday life such as relationships with family members, friends, neighbors, as well as coworkers. Natural supports help individuals with developmental disabilities be more fully included in their communities and enhance their quality of life. They help individuals with developmental disabilities gain independence, establish social connections and may reduce the need to rely on paid supports. More and more states are pushing to increase utilization of natural supports by people with developmental disabilities; unfortunately natural supports are not available to every individual with a developmental disability and many families have received no training on developing and using natural supports.

This proposal is to create a Natural Supports Initiative, where a selected contractor will research best practices in developing and using natural supports including identifying and surveying families that have successfully utilized natural supports. The contractor will develop a guide or training curriculum to support families in developing and using natural supports and provide training to a select number of individuals with developmental disabilities and or their families. The contractor will follow the individuals and family members who participated in the training for the remainder of the contract period to determine if their utilization of natural supports increased.

Projected cost: \$15,000 - \$20,000