

Community mapping

This person-centred thinking tool is a way to map out where the person spends their time (outside of their home). It is a way to think about what it would take to extend the places where the person goes; what is working and not working about where they go; where they can contribute to community life; and what opportunities could be created to connect and develop relationships. This information is important when looking at the person's 'perfect week'.

Benefits for the person

- Clear understanding of where the person goes, when and who with.
- A way to spot opportunities to increase the possibility of relationships and connections, and to develop actions.
- Can link what people appreciate about the person and their gifts and interests to opportunities in the community to use these, and to develop actions.
- This can then be used to think about what is working and not working about the person's community life and to develop actions to change what is not working.
- To create the 'perfect week' and inform support planning.

Benefits for employees and the organisation

- Maps out places that employees and the organisation can make a community contribution in partnership with the people they support.
- Identifies where there may be opportunities to share resources or have mutually beneficial relationships.

Using it with an individual

- Put the person's name or photo in the middle of the map.
- Think together about the different places where the person spends their time.
- Record this (writing, pictures, photos) on the community map under the following sections: Places where I feel good/Places where I am a member/Places where I am a customer.

Next, think together about these questions and add in any missing information:

- Where do you go during the week? At the evenings and at weekends?
- Who do you go with? Alone? With family? With friends?
- Who makes the arrangements for the activity (e.g. who books the bowling alley, looks at bus times etc.)?
- Do you meet and get to know other people at these places?

To move this towards actions look together for patterns or themes and think about:

- Where are the places that the person's connections can be strengthened? What could they now do and who can help?
- Where are there connections that can be made? What could they now do and who can help?
- What is working and not working for the person about where they go at the moment?

- Are there places where they can use their gifts or share their interests? What would it take to make that happen?
- What would need to happen to change what is not working and build on what is working?

Using it with a team

- Map out the community places, people or organisations locally that share the same values and principles (for example social justice and empowerment). Are there organisations that you could work in partnership with to achieve your mission – for example, would connecting with a campaigning organisation for people with learning disabilities offer any benefits to enabling the people you support to be heard on national issues?
- Look at services that could use the same support services of suppliers – are there opportunities to work together to cut costs or get discounts?