

Relationship circle

This identifies who is important in a person's life. It can be used to create actions to increase the number and depth of relationships that the person has; and to inform how to support the person (how can we support the person in their relationships) and be included in the 'perfect week'.

Benefits for the person

- Ensures we know who is important in the person's life, and identifies those we should involve and listen to in planning.
- Identifies who the person celebrates special occasions with e.g. Diwali or Christmas.
- Supports developing relationships further by thinking through what it would take to strengthen/enrich existing ones and develop new ones.
- Shows the balance of family, friends and paid support in the person's life.
- Identifies whose company the person enjoys, which informs 'matching'.
- Important to start people thinking creatively around supporting people to become more connected within communities.

Benefits for employees and the organization

- A way to learn who is important to and for the team or organisation – another approach to stakeholder mapping.
- Helps teams to learn about which relationships to invest in and to plan ways to do this.
- Important in considering who to communicate with outside of the team and share successes and challenges with.

Note With people who don't use words you may want to use photos or graphics of the people in their life. There is the relationship circle and the relationship map. Both achieve the same outcomes but a different graphic is used.

Using it with an individual

- Identify the people the person likes in their life, this may have to be based on our best guesses with those who know the person well.
- With the person (name or photo) placed in the centre, begin to map people out in their relationship circle, with the people who are closest to the person in the closest circle to their name/photograph.
- If people are included who are no longer present in the person's life it may be useful to note how long they have been absent.
- Ask what it would take for the person to have more relationships in their life and action plan for this.
- Explore what support the person wants to keep or enhance the existing relationships in their life. Action plan this or add to one page profile in the 'best support' section.
- Look at any patterns or themes – for example, are there characteristics in common for the people that the person gets along best with? Use this to inform 'matching'.

Using it with a team

- Develop a relationship map with the team to think about the important relationships that they have. For example, people in the individual's circle of support and their families; support workers; local community leaders; professionals/community team; Human Resources team; Assistive Technology representative.
- Think about the relationship that you have with them now, and how you would like the relationship to be in the future.
- Decide what needs to happen to achieve that and set actions, for example, do they need more information from the team? Do they need to feel more valued and appreciated?