

SUPPORTED LIVING: Opportunities & Choices

Additional information can be found on our
Web site: <http://apd@myflorida.com>

Follow the links to “Supported Living” and
download a copy of the *Guide to Supported
Living in Florida.*



Sandy is 68 years old. He grew up on his family's dairy farm in Pennsylvania. He and his mother moved to St. Petersburg in the 1960's. In 1979, his mother was diagnosed with a terminal illness. Sandy had no other family, so he left the home and a lifetime shared with his mother to live in an Intermediate Care Facility for persons with Developmental Disabilities (ICF/DD). There, he learned to live without her, surrounded by 46 other people.

His guardian approached Sandy about moving into his own home. No one was sure how he would react to the idea of supported living. Once it was described, Sandy's response was: "When do I move...before Christmas?"

A house was found that matched Sandy's vision. He moved in two days prior to his birthday. There, he celebrated 68 years of living and the fact that for the first time, he had a home of his own. Sandy has had countless new experiences as a result of supported living. He sleeps in a double bed, decides what his meals will be and when he will eat them, buys his own groceries, walks nearly one mile daily... and the list goes on. In short, he enjoys the freedom, individuality, and contentment that can be realized through supported living.

WHAT IS SUPPORTED LIVING?

Supported living is an opportunity to choose where, how, and with whom you live. In supported living you receive the supports and services you need to live in your own home, in your own community.

WHERE DO PEOPLE LIVE?

All over the community! People rent, lease or buy houses or apartments that are available through the local housing market and receive the training and assistance they need to maintain their own private homes. Supported living is a residential option that does not include any agency-owned, state-owned, or congregate housing.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Anyone 18 years of age or older who:

- is a consumer of Developmental Services;
- wants to live in his or her own home; and
- needs some supports and services to live there.

WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT CAN BE PROVIDED?

Each supported living arrangement is different, just as each person is different!

Most individuals in supported living receive services from a supported living coach. Coaches assist people in areas where they need some support and help them learn to do new things. This can include finding a house or apartment, setting up a

household, using a bank and managing money, planning and preparing meals, using public transportation, shopping, and many other life skills. Coaches help people find and use the resources of the community and make connections with others who live there. An important part of a coach's job is supporting people to make everyday choices and to be responsible and safe in the community. Supported living coaches also provide emergency assistance as needed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Coaches may work with you for up to 90 days prior to moving into your own home.

Some of the other services that might be provided to someone in supported living through the DS Home and Community Based Waiver include support coordination, in-home supports, homemaker, companion, respite, chore services, adaptive equipment, personal emergency response systems, therapies, community employment services, adult day training, and transportation. Some individuals may receive a financial subsidy to help with basic living expenses. Each support arrangement is different and depends on the individual's needs and desires, as well as available resources.

WHO SHOULD I TALK TO?

Ask your support coordinator (case manager) for more information about supported living and about supported living services in your area. If you need information about becoming a consumer of the Developmental Disabilities Program, get in touch with your local Developmental Disabilities district program office. Ask about the **Supported Living Liaison Network**. This network is comprised of individuals who live in homes of their own and have volunteered to share their experience with you.