

Making Agreements

“Knowledge can be acquired in many ways, but quality of life is earned through relationship. The one thing that has more power than all the short cuts offered by the world is honest, respectful and invested personal relationships” ... Magnus, a homeschooler.

Relationships are at the heart of VISION and clear communication builds good relationships. The role of relationships in a Learner’s educational program is key to the Home and Community Program and the agreements between the Learner and those persons supporting the Learner will create a foundation for the way in which they will work together. Putting agreements in writing is one of the best ways to be sure that you have clear understanding and it is a skill that is useful in many situations in society. These agreements are an important opportunity to use this skill and some are a requirement of the program. Agreements that may be appropriate are a Learner/Parent/Resource Consultant Agreement, an apprenticeship agreement or Learner/Educator agreement, and the VISION Home and Community Program Contract of Agreements.

A complete agreement includes the following elements:

- ✓ Who is making the agreement?
- ✓ What is the purpose of the agreement?
- ✓ The date of the agreement.
- ✓ What is expected of each person?
- ✓ Any time considerations such as how long the agreement is to be in effect, how often meetings will take place, how long they will last, when is the agreement completed, what happens if a meeting is missed or cancelled.
- ✓ What will take place at meetings?
- ✓ If there is money involved, how much and what it is for.
- ✓ How you know the agreement is working.
- ✓ How you know if the agreement is not working and what to do about that.
- ✓ Who to ask for help in case there is a problem.
- ✓ How to end the agreement if problems cannot be resolved.

The agreement between the Resource Consultant and family and Learner requires special attention. This agreement is central to everything in the program, and very little (including enrollment, funding, or accountability) can happen without it.

In forming the agreement consider going over each item in the VISION HCP enrollment contract as well as the RC, parent and Learner role descriptions, and coming to agreement on how each item will be handled.

If RC, parent and/or Learner ever feel that the Learner/Parent/Resource Consultant Agreement has been broken, it should be addressed immediately. Follow *Due Process*. The ideal endpoints are:

- To reach a resolution by consensus that allows all to continue the relationship, or
- To agree by consensus to terminate the relationship. Document this termination in a way that reflects all sides of the story and put it in both the Learner and RC file. At this point, if the Learner and family want to remain in the program, a new relationship with another RC must be formed.