

Planning for the future is an important task for any adult as they grow older and life changes. But for those who have developmental disabilities, it is even more important.

Without adequate plans in place, adults with disabilities often face disruptive transitions when families can no longer provide care, endure emergency placements in inappropriate settings and suffer through inadequate financial and legal safeguards, all of which place a strain on siblings and other relatives.

**Future Is Now! has one main goal—to help you complete a Letter of Intent.**

In other words, when you are finished with the 2 workshops, you will have a written document which describes your sibling's desired future living arrangement, community role, and lifestyle preferences. You will have a written plan that includes practical directions and information for maintaining continuity in their daily life and needed supports to achieve these outcomes. **Some call this peace of mind.**

## Future Is Now! In 2 Workshop Sessions

Workshop #1— **The Big Step** You'll learn how to get started. How to involve your sibling and other family members. You'll also sense the support and care of other adult siblings sharing similar concerns and joys. A sibling panel and panel of professionals, plus Q & A time and lunch provided. Information presented includes:

- Building Relationships and Skills
- Legal and financial issues
- Housing
- Work, Retirement and Leisure

You'll leave this workshop with the tools to completing a Letter of Intent. Your sibling will leave with a start on a useful scrapbook, "It's All About Me" and eager to come back.

Workshop #2 — Bring your Letter of Intent (need not be completed) and you will have the opportunity to meet with one or more experts to discuss your specific questions to move forward with your future planning.

- Do you have a sibling with special needs who you care about?
- Do you worry about the future for your sibling, yet procrastinate doing anything about it or just not sure where to start?
- Has it been difficult to talk to family members about decisions necessary for the future well being of your sibling, your own family and your parents?
- Would you admit that undergoing a root canal sounds like more fun than making plans for the future?

**THEN DON'T WAIT. THE FUTURE IS NOW! CALL TODAY.**

# Future is Now!

Practical help for brothers and sisters of people with disabilities to stop worrying and start planning.

Future is Now! sessions are designed for adult siblings, but encourages siblings to involve other members of their family, *especially* their sibling with special needs. Adult siblings may invite any family members they choose to attend workshops with them—no extra charge.

## Two-part Workshop

January 28, 2012 8:30 am -12:30 pm

February 25, 2012 8:30 am -12:30 pm

Place: TouchMark 2601 at TouchMark Dr., Appleton  
just off Prospect Ave. near HWY 41

Enrollment fee: \$75 per family

FOR INFORMATION or TO ENROLL contact  
the FVSSN office.

920-968-1742 or [fvssn@fvssn.org](mailto:fvssn@fvssn.org)

This Future Is Now! Series is presented by

Fox Valley Sibling  
Support Network



With financial support from the  
Mielke Family Foundation, Inc



Sisters Joanne and Linda completed the Future is Now! series. Linda says the program has given her peace of mind.

Post-Crescent photo

# Got questions? Here's answers.

## What is a Letter Of Intent?

A Letter of Intent describes a person's hopes and desired future living arrangement, community role, and lifestyle preferences and specifies the available resources and needed supports to achieve these outcomes. Although the Letter on Intent is not a legal document, it provides a road map that families can follow to turn their dreams into reality. It can save time and legal expenses when meeting with an attorney to make legal and financial arrangements.

## What do I need to bring?

Your sibling will be working on a scrapbook called "It's All About Me" and worksheets about their life. Bring photos of people in their lives, things they enjoy doing, possessions that are meaningful, pets, really anything that helps them tell their story to the world. Also bring a 3-ring binder that will suit their tastes and style. If your sibling loves pink, bring a pink binder. We will supply paper, pages, tools and craft supplies.

## What will the sessions be like? Will I have assignments? How much does it cost?

Each workshop will include a variety of activities, including videos, local area experts with information on relevant topics, large and small group discussions. Workshops will be facilitated by FVSSN and Arc Fox Cities staff, along with siblings who have completed the Future is Now! series.

You will receive step-by-step materials that will help you and your family collect information between sessions and move through the planning process more quickly.

Thanks to a grant from the Mielke Family Foundation, participants only pay a one-time donation of \$75/family to enroll in the Future is Now! (regardless of how many attend with you.) You may return to as many Future is Now! sessions offered by FVSSN as you like without charge...ever!

## May I bring other family members to the sessions?

These *Future is Now!* sessions are designed for adult siblings, but encourage siblings to involve other members of their family, especially their sibling with developmental disabilities. Adult siblings may invite any family member to attend sessions with them, including a parent or spouse.

Each workshop will be a combination of group activities for all participants and small group sessions. Sessions for individuals with developmental disabilities use pictures, videos, and role playing to communicate concepts. While sessions are geared towards adults diagnosed with moderate levels of intellectual disability, anyone interested in attending will be included as much as possible.

## What if I can't attend both workshops?

You will want to attend both workshops to get the most of the program. You are always welcome to attend Future is Now! sessions offered by FVSSN in the future if you must miss.



## What if I've never spoken to my sibling with disabilities about their future?

No problem. In fact, you'll probably be in the majority. Most people attending Future is Now! Sessions have not previously had a discussion with their sibling. Future is Now! Sessions will help you determine how you can have discussions with your sibling and other relatives.

## Is this the first time this program has been done?

The Future is Now! Series has been conducted many times for families throughout the United States. The first series offered to Fox Valley adult siblings completed in early 2008 and has been repeated annually. The program is based on the successful outcomes of an innovative training model developed by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Aging with Developmental Disabilities at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The Fox Valley Sibling Support Network (FVSSN) is hosting this program in the Fox Valley area to help adult siblings, their families, and professionals be better equipped for the unique perspectives and concerns of people who have siblings with developmental disabilities.

Here are the results for families after attending other Future Is Now! Sessions:

- Families who attended developed goals for the future.
- 24% developed a special needs trust.
- 64% who had not previously taken action in planning for the future, took action.
- Families who attended the workshops with their relatives with developmental disabilities discussed future plans with relatives to a greater extent.

In addition, compared to groups not attending Future is Now!, families attending reported:

- significantly less feelings of caregiving burden.
- their relatives with developmental disabilities making significantly more choices in their daily lives.
- relief and encouragement from getting to know other siblings experiencing similar joys and concerns