

TIP SHEET



LEAP

Leadership & Empowerment for Abuse Prevention

Partner Guide



VCU

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School of Social Work



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Partnership for People
with Disabilities

Partner Guide: Leadership & Empowerment for Abuse Prevention (LEAP)

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in preventing abuse for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This guide is for family or support providers of a person with a disability who has participated in LEAP training. It is intended to accompany a video which may be found at www.virginiaselfadvocacy.org. It is important that people with IDD learn strategies to prevent abuse because people with IDD are 3 - 5 times more likely to experience abuse than the general population (Smith, N., Harrell, S., & Judy, A. (2017). *How Safe are Americans with Disabilities? The facts about violent crime and their implications* (Publication). New York: The Vera Institute of Justice.)

What is LEAP?

LEAP stands for Leadership for Empowerment and Abuse Prevention and provides training on healthy relationships and information about preventing abuse for adults with IDD. One of the best ways to prevent abuse is the ability to identify unhealthy relationships. LEAP trainers teach participants about:

- what it means to trust someone and who should be trusted;
- healthy, unhealthy, and confusing relationships;
- asking permission before touching;
- different ways to say “no”;
- identifying feelings and physical signs associated with being uncomfortable; and
- how to get help.

What is the purpose of the guide?

We know that adults with IDD learn new information better when they learn concepts over time. As a supporter, you can reinforce these important points so that the people who you support can continue to learn after they participate in LEAP training. This guide explains LEAP and how you can promote practicing the main points taught in the training with the people who you support.

How can I help?

Review the partner guide and videos to learn how you can reinforce the main points from the LEAP training.



Developed by the Partnership for People with Disabilities and the School of Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University, 2019.

For more information, please contact ppdleap@vcu.edu

SESSION 1 TIP SHEET : PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE

About Session 1

In session one, participants think about the people in their lives and how they relate to them. This is to help them figure out who they can trust in their lives. Please watch the LEAP Session 1 video and then review the information below to learn the main points of the training and how you can practice the concepts with the people who you support.

MAIN POINTS 	HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT 
<p>Participants learn a power statement, which reminds them that they are in control of their lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I am strong. My feelings are important. I deserve to feel safe. I deserve respect.</i> 	<p>Remind the people who you support about the power statement and say it with them. Talk about what it means to respect someone and what it means to feel safe.</p>
<p>A relationship is how two people talk and behave when they are around each other.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that they have a relationship with everyone in their life (e.g. family, co-workers, partners, etc.)</p>
<p>Trust is when you know someone cares about you and will try to keep you safe. Trust is built over time.</p>	<p>If the people who you support do not know if they can trust someone, ask them the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you be yourself around this person and say things you might not share with others? Does this person care about you? Would this person hurt you on purpose? Would this person help you if you needed it? Have you known this person for a long time?
<p>All feelings are important and help you figure out how much you can trust the different people in your life.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> whatever they are feeling is okay, even if it is a good or not-so-good feeling; it is okay to feel different than other people around you; and you may not know the words to describe your feelings, and that is okay too.
<p>You tell some things to some people and not to others because you cannot trust everyone with the same information.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> you cannot trust everyone with the same information, and only tell someone you trust personal information.

SESSION 1 TIP SHEET : PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE (CONT'D)

MAIN POINTS 	How You Can Support 
<p>Feelings and how much you trust someone can help you figure out who you touch and who touches you.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that feelings and trust can help figure out who you touch and who touches you. Permission should be given to touch or to be touched.</p>
<p>You are at the center of your own “world of relationships” because you are the most important person in your world.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that <i>they are the most important person in their world</i>. There may be others in their life who they care about very much, but they are the most important person in their world.</p>
<p>The people in your life are in different places in your “world of relationships” depending on how you trust them, feel around them, what you tell them, and how you touch them.</p>	<p>You can give the people who you support examples of people that they know and then ask them: How much do you trust them? How do you feel around them? What kind of information do you tell them?</p>
<p>You can change your mind about who you trust. This can change how close or distant your relationships are with the different people in your life.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that they do not have to trust someone forever. If someone violates their trust or hurts them, they do not have to trust them anymore.</p>
<p>People paid to support you (staff members) may be friendly, but are not necessarily your friends. They do a lot of the same things that friends do, but they are paid for their work. It is possible that a paid staff person could hurt a person on purpose.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that paid staff are not their close friends. Many people trust staff members immediately, so be sure to emphasize that if a new staff started their job today, the person who you support would not know whether the staff should be trusted or not.</p>
<p>You must always ask permission before touching or hugging someone.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support to always ask permission before they touch or hug someone. You should ask permission of the people who you support before you hug or touch them.</p>
<p>Participants identify one person who they can talk to about anything. This person is written on their trust card that they take home.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that they wrote a trusted person’s name on their trust card. If the person has an issue, you might suggest that they look at their trust card and talk to that person. It does not have to be an emergency. Sometimes it just helps to talk things over with someone. It does not have to be an emergency. Sometimes it just helps to talk things over with someone.</p>



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SESSION 2 TIP SHEET : HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

About Session 2

In session two, participants discuss the differences between healthy, unhealthy, and confusing relationships. Please watch the LEAP Session 2 video and then review the information below to learn the main points of the training and how you can practice the concepts with the people who you support.

MAIN POINTS 	HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT 
<p>There are three kinds of relationships: healthy, unhealthy and confusing</p>	<p>Review the three kinds of relationships to make them part of your everyday language. Ask the people who you support about the people in their lives. What kind of relationship do they have? Are they healthy, unhealthy or confusing? If the people who you support have interactions with others that seem helpful, remind them that is what a healthy relationship looks like. If they have a disrespectful interaction, remind them that it is an unhealthy relationship.</p>
<p>Healthy relationships are with people you trust and who want you to be safe.</p>	<p>Give the people who you support examples of healthy relationships, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you should feel very comfortable in a healthy relationship, and • you can say whatever you want to say and not feel worried or embarrassed if you make a mistake.
<p>Confusing relationships are with people who are sometimes respectful and sometimes disrespectful. You might feel uneasy or like you have to watch what you say or do around these people.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that some relationships are confusing and they do not have to trust these people. Sometimes a person seems trustworthy, but sometimes they do not. Confusing relationships are confusing! Sometimes you feel nervous or afraid to say something.</p>
<p>Unhealthy relationships are with people who try to trick you, hurt you, steal from you, or touch you even when you say you do not like it.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that there are unhealthy relationships and give some examples. Talk about how unhealthy relationships may make you feel nervous, scared, or uncomfortable.</p>

SESSION 2 TIP SHEET : HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS (CONT'D)

MAIN POINTS 	HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT 
<p>Men and women have some of the same body parts and some different ones. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • men’s private body parts are penis, testicles, and anus; and • women’s private body parts are breasts, vagina, and anus. 	<p>Remind the people who you support that there are different names for men’s and women’s private parts and they are not bad words. Repeat the names so the people who you support are familiar with using these words. Model saying the words without embarrassment or shyness.</p>
<p>It is important to call your body parts by the right names. That way, if you are hurt or need help, you can explain to someone in words that everyone will understand.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support of the importance of using the correct names for body parts so that they can accurately report to someone if they are touched in a sexual way without their consent, or if they are exposed to others touching themselves in inappropriate ways.</p>
<p>People should ask permission to touch your body. You choose if someone is allowed to touch you.</p>	<p>Remind the people who you support that no one should touch them without their permission. There are many ways to tell someone that they should ask to touch you before doing so. Help the people who you support to figure out the best way to do this. Also, remind them that they should ask permission before they touch someone else. Model this concept by always asking permission before you touch someone, especially if you are helping them with personal tasks, like bathing, getting dressed or using the bathroom.</p>
<p>Giving consent is very important! Everyone has a different way to say “no” or “stop it.” If you are touching someone, and they say “no,” do not touch them. <i>Saying nothing is not giving permission!</i></p>	<p>Give examples of ways to say “no,” such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I don’t feel like it today.” • “I don’t want this right now.” <p>Include examples of using body language, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shaking your head, • putting your hand up, and • turning away. <p>Practice with the people who you support. Reinforce that saying nothing is not giving permission.</p>



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SESSION 3 TIP SHEET : HEALTHY TOUCH

About Session 3

In session three, participants discuss the differences between healthy, unhealthy, and confusing touch. Please watch the LEAP Session 3 video and then review the information below to learn the main points of the training and how you can practice the concepts with the people who you support.

MAIN POINTS 	HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT 
<p>Touch can be healthy, confusing, and unhealthy</p>	<p>Say the three types of touch out loud and use the terms in your everyday language. Ask the people who you support about the people in their lives. How do they touch others? Is it healthy, unhealthy or confusing?</p>
<p>Healthy touch is when two people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trust each other and give each other permission to touch, and • are in a place (public or private) that they both feel comfortable being touched. <p>Romantic touching of private body parts is healthy when two people agree.</p>	<p>As a supporter, you should <i>always</i> ask permission before you touch someone. You can say it out loud, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I’m going to ask permission to touch your face now.” • “I’m going to push your wheelchair to the table. Let me know if you don’t want me to do that.” <p>Remind the people who you support that touch is alright when both people give permission. Explain that romantic touching of private body parts should be done in private when both people give permission. Explain that holding hands or hugging is ok for public places when both people give permission.</p>
<p>Confusing touch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can happen when someone is trying to help you, especially with private things; • is a touch you did not expect; and • is if you cannot decide if a touch is healthy or unhealthy. 	<p>Suggest ways that the people who you support can handle different scenarios, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking to be touched in a different way, • talking to a person they trust, • asking someone to keep an eye out, • asking for the door to be left open so that others can hear them, and • choosing who helps them.



MAIN POINTS



Unhealthy touch includes:

- hurting someone physically or emotionally,
- touching someone without permission,
- touching someone sexually without asking or getting permission,
- someone talking you out of saying no to a touch you do not want,
- someone asking you to touch them when you do not want to, and
- someone asking you to watch them as they touch a private part of their own body.

You can change your mind about who can touch you.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT



Remind the people who you support that they are in charge of their bodies. It is their choice if someone is allowed to touch them. If the people who you support tell you that someone touched them without their permission, explain that *it is not their fault* and that they did not do anything to ask for that.

Remind the people who you support of some things they can say or do if they want someone to stop touching them, such as:

- “Please do not touch my _____.”
- “I do not need you to touch my ___ right now.”
- “I have to leave.”
- Move your body away from them.
- Tell someone that they do not like the way a person is touching them.

Remind the people who you support that they can change their minds about allowing someone to touch them at any time.

SESSION 4



TIP SHEET



HOW AND WHEN TO GET HELP

About Session 4

In session four, participants will discuss how and when to get help if they or someone they know experiences abuse. Please watch the LEAP Session 4 video and then review the information below to learn the main points of the training and how you can practice the concepts with the people who you support.

<h2>MAIN POINTS </h2>	<h2>HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT </h2>
<p>You should get help right away if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your body is hurt,• someone says they will hurt you or someone you care about,• someone talks you into doing something you do not want to do, and• someone takes something that belongs to you without your permission.	<p>Telling someone about an unhealthy touch or relationship may be very traumatic. It may take a long time before someone is ready to say what happened. <i>Do not</i> criticize the people who you support for not coming forward earlier.</p> <p>Remind the people who you support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• that they should get help right away when someone hurts their body or says they are going to hurt them,• to tell if someone talks them into doing something they do not want to do, and• to tell if someone takes their belongings without their permission.
<p>How to get help includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• recognizing that you need help,• choosing who you need to contact, and• asking for advice and help.	<p>Remind the people who you support that if someone hurts their body or their feelings, they can get help. They can look at their trust card to remember someone who they trust. If the person on their trust card is not available, they could ask someone else who they trust, or a police officer, case manager, or other mandated reporter.</p>
<p>People who can help includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the person on your trust card,• case manager/support coordinator,• some paid support staff,• doctors and nurses,• police officers/firefighters, and• lawyers.	<p>With the people who you support, review the list of who can help if someone hurts their body or their feelings. Remind them that some people on the list are mandated reporters and are <i>required</i> to file a report to Adult Protective Services or call the police.</p> <p>Give examples of what the people who you support could tell each person on the list.</p>



MAIN POINTS



HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT



If you are not sure if you should get help, ask yourself the following questions:

- Are you physically hurt?
- Are you in immediate danger?
- Are you being disrespected?

If the answer is yes, you should get help by telling someone when you are ready.

Use these questions to help the people who you support to determine if they need to get help. This can help the people who you support practice making decisions in the future. Remind them that if someone hurts them, or touches them in a way that they don't like, it is not their fault.

If someone asks you for help or if you witness someone else in an unhealthy relationship, you should:

- believe in them and listen,
- remind the person it is not their fault,
- use the power statement, and
- offer to help them get help.

Remind the people who you support of what they can say if somebody asks them for help, such as:

- “I believe you.”
- “It is not your fault.”
- “You are strong. Your feelings are important. You deserve to feel safe. You deserve respect.”
- “I can help you get help if that is what you want to do.”