

M.A.D. Adventures

(Mainstream's Accreditation Dream)

How we do our work is as important as the work we do

Building on a Solid Foundation

Mainstream is a very special place. We do things our way and we do them well. The 3Rs project is another reminder of that. The 3Rs classes were designed to teach people about their rights. At Mainstream, we talk about rights all the time. Rights are not a new concept here and the successes in the classes show how well we are doing at creating a rights-positive environment. We have definitely laid a solid foundation.

Our success at teaching people about rights is wonderful but how are we doing at recognizing rights restrictions and how well do we support individuals who feel that their rights are being restricted? Let's take a moment to consider what a rights restriction is. A rights restriction can occur when an individual does not have the opportunity to do something he or she desires. It can also happen when an individual is being made to do something that he or she doesn't want to do. Some rights restrictions are less obvious than others. Telling someone that they have to go to bed at a set time is an obvious rights restriction. Moving someone from their wheelchair to the couch can also be a rights restriction if their

wheelchair is not left within reach. This restriction is less obvious but no less important. The challenge is to learn how to recognize restrictions and think of ways to remove or reduce them.

Thinking in terms of rights restrictions can take some getting used to. It involves taking the time to really consider how we support people. Being able to make choices about one's life is a right that everyone should have. Removing a person's right to make their own choices, big or small, is a restriction.

Some rights restrictions are necessary and put in place for the safety of the person involved. An individual who has no knowledge of their community shouldn't take the bus alone even if that is their desire. However we need to recognize that, despite legitimate safety concerns, it is still a rights restriction. The challenge then becomes how can we reduce this restriction and work towards meeting the wishes of the person.

An important component of the 3Rs project is the Rights Facilitation Committee. This committee exists to review rights restrictions that have been identified and propose solutions to reduce or eliminate them. As service providers, we play a pivotal important role in this process.

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Follow Through

It's November! It's hard to believe that we are already 8 months into the accreditation process. It's even harder to believe that this is the 16th edition of M.A.D. Adventures! Time really does fly when we're having fun!

As we move through the domains and the standards, different themes present themselves. Sometimes we are working on changing processes, other times it's policies and still other times, it's our way of thinking. The past few weeks have been about pushing ourselves to think differently, more openly and more creatively.

Concepts like social capital challenged us to think about creative ways to connect people to their communities. Rykert took on this challenge and has added it to their regular staff meeting agenda. They brainstorm about how to meet the goals of the people they support in new ways using less paid supports and increasing the use of community resources. Finding new and creative solutions to meeting the goals of the people we support is challenging yet exciting.

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The A-Team was recently discussing Domain 9: Behaviour Support and follow through became a recurring theme. There were several examples of behaviour plans that have been developed at Mainstream. The plans were well thought out, well written and quite detailed. Where we stumbled was when it came to consistent implementation, documentation and evaluation of the behaviour plan. It is being followed? Consistently? It is working? It is still necessary? Many of these questions could not be answered.

In order to meet all of the standards in Domain 9, we will be working to develop strategies to ensure behaviour plans are followed from implementation to evaluation, staff are properly trained, and appropriate community supports are accessed when

necessary.

Great ideas and well thought out plans are just the first step. We now have to go one step further and make them a reality!

In golf, as in life, it is the follow through that makes the difference.



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We have two important things to accomplish. First of all, we need to respond to all identified rights restrictions. If someone feels that their rights are being restricted, a Rights Restriction Form should be completed and submitted to Margaret. These forms are posted in all Mainstream locations and are available on the server. Margaret will take the form, remove any identifying information and then give them to Kevin. From there, they are submitted to the Rights Facilitation Committee for review. The next edition of M.A.D. Adventures will go into more detail about the Rights Facilitation Committee and its role.

The second thing we need to do is take time to reflect on current practices and identify anything that may be considered a rights restriction. For example, if a contract is in place that removes phone privileges from

someone, that is a rights restriction. If someone has to go somewhere they don't want to go, that is also a rights restriction. Are there new strategies that can be implemented that will reduce or eliminate the restriction? Discuss the issue at your staff meetings, brainstorm alternatives and, if no solutions can be found, a Rights Restriction Form should be completed.

The Rights Facilitation Committee will meet, review the Rights Restriction Form, and propose solutions that we may not have been considered. The Committee is intended as a source of support and we should use them!

We can take pride in having built a solid foundation of rights at Mainstream. The next step is to create an environment that diligently works at identifying and reducing rights restrictions while continuing to ensure the safety of the people we support