

## ISP Fact Sheet: Unpaid Relationship Discussion



### What are unpaid relationships?

**Unpaid relationships** are any personal relationships that the individual has with people who are not paid to provide support for them, such as family members, friends, neighbors, classmates and co-workers. These are people the individual likes to spend time with and who share their interests.

#### Examples of unpaid relationships.

Mary goes to the gym and does a workout class once a week. She has made a friend in the class named Nancy whom she talks to each time.

Brian's aunt comes to visit him several times a month and they go eat lunch together.

Seth has met several people through his favorite online chat group. He connects with them nightly for online gaming.



### Why is it important to discuss unpaid relationships?

- It's very important to know who is in a person's life including paid and unpaid relationships. Each of us has multiple different relationships in our lives. Relationships provide us with physical, emotional, and moral support. Discussing unpaid relationships with someone helps us to understand the balance of paid and unpaid relationships in a person's life. Unpaid relationships offer us the most support and stability in our lives. Paid relationships can and likely will be fleeting whereas unpaid relationships may remain constant throughout our lives.



### How does DBHDS measure discussions of unpaid relationships?

- In the ISP, there is a question "Was there a conversation with the individual/substitute decision-maker about unpaid relationships?" The measure is calculated by dividing the number who mark 'Yes' (numerator) by the total number of individuals' ISPs (denominator). This gives you the result: The percent of individuals that had a discussion about unpaid relationships.
- The goal for this measure is 86%. In SFY24 Q4, the state result was 93.6%. Region 1=94.0%, Region 2=95.1%, Region 3=93.6%, Region 4=97.6%, and Region 5=87.4%.

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### What is the question in the ISP really asking?



- The question asks if the Support Coordinator has **discussed** unpaid relationships with the individual/family. It is not asking if the individual **has** unpaid relationships.
- The response should be 'Yes' if the Support Coordinator has discussed unpaid relationships with the individual, *even if they do not have unpaid relationships*. The response should be 'No' if the SC has not had the discussion.



### Problem: Discussing unpaid relationships is at the end of the ISP. How can I make it less overwhelming?

- Plan ahead! Throughout the year, discuss relationships with the individual. Understand their interests and who they spend time with. By the time you do the annual ISP, you will be more informed to have this discussion.
- Tip: The information can be gathered from different conversations, such as the VIDES, 30-day face to face visit, Onsite Visit Tool, etc. to help be better prepared.
- Consider doing the ISP meeting in two parts. Break it up.



### All discussions are important!

- The questions are in the ISP because the information is important to or for the individual.
- It is helpful to have an expectation that the Support Coordinator will answer 'yes' to having all of the necessary discussions.
- The Support Coordinator Supervisor can expect that all the discussions should happen and seek to understand the barriers in the event that the discussion did not occur.



### Tips for starting and having the discussion.

- Avoid asking "Do you have unpaid relationships?"
- Ask open-ended questions such as "Who do you like to spend time with?"
- Use what you know about the individual's activities and interest to ask probing questions. "I know you like to go to the gym. Who do you hang out with at the gym?"

### Resources

- Plan Facilitation Class: Scheduled upon requested through "The Partnership" with VCU. Contact Barry Seaver (barry.seaver@dbhds.virginia.gov) for more information.
- Person-Centered ISP Guidance: <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewGDoc.cfm?gdid=6379>.