

A Home for Corey



Seminar 5: Lessons Learned Family Panel

May 5, 2018 13:30



Finding a place for a 36-year-old man with Down Syndrome to live

Some Background

- Youngest of five: three sisters and one brother
- Integrated (with supports) through most of his twelve years in school
- Passport funding and job coach from Y's Owl McLure
- No other supports available
- We moved him into an apartment at age 35
 - If we waited on the list:
 - He would still be with us when he was fifty or sixty years old
 - And we would be approaching one hundred years old

Our Hopes for Corey

To live his life as
a happy and
contributing member
of society

Provincial Government Support (1)

What we wanted / needed for Supported Independent Living

- A place to live
- A room-mate or companion
- Supports when needed
- Some security for after we are gone
- Help finding a housing opportunities suitable for Corey (e.g., a website, matching service)

What is available

- A waiting list
- Privacy laws
- Job coach through Y's Owl
- Some life-skills training from Y's Owl
- Some Passport funding
 - (less than \$5,000)

Provincial Government Support (2)

- Designed around medical model
 - But Corey's needs are not primarily medical
 - The supports are not designed to meet social needs
- Assessment
 - We had it done
 - We hoped that would get some SIL supports for him
 - He was on a waiting list (for years)
 - We kept getting older
 - We decided that he should not wait any longer

Taking the Step

- Corey was ready to move out
 - He had spent weekends (and some weeks) at home on his own
 - He just did not know how to make the break
 - He was similar to many other young adults
- He was supported and encouraged
 - By his siblings
 - By his support workers
- An opportunity arose
 - His cousin was looking for a room-mate
 - We decided to take the chance / opportunity



What we did for Corey

- We moved him into an apartment near us
- He shared it with a room-mate
- Since that did not work out, we subsidize his rent
- We are still looking for another room-mate
- Corey is a social person, but
 - Without a room-mate he is less able to express that ability
 - He is not able to organize a social life
 - He waits for others to invite him

Family Support (1)

- Parents
 - Live close to him
 - Financial support
 - Manage his finances
 - Subsidize his rent
 - Social support
 - Help him to plan activities
 - Enrol him in activities
 - Encourage him



Family Support (2)

- Sisters
 - Two live in Ottawa, one in Vancouver
 - Social support
 - Encourage him to participate
 - Encouraged him when he moved to apartment
 - Education
 - Cooking
 - Social Activities
 - Travel
 - People to visit
 - Nieces and nephews

Other Supports

- Federal Government:
 - Disability tax deductions
 - Help us to support him
 - Registered Disability Savings Plan
 - Started with funds from his grandmother
 - Funding will not be available to him until he is sixty
 - By then, he may have a reasonably comfortable retirement (financially)

Work Life

- Paid job
 - Two mornings a week at a pet store
 - Supported by Y's Owl McLure
 - Nothing else available
- Volunteer work
 - One morning a week at Good Companions of Ottawa
 - (Seniors' Centre)
 - Two weeks each year at Bluesfest
 - Green Team: cleaning up the grounds
 - He loves music and he loves to dance
 - Ottawa Food Bank
 - Once or twice a month

Social Life

- Very sociable, but needs support to develop and organize his social life
- Loves to travel
- Sports (Special Olympics and Regular Sports)
- Spectator Sports (He is a huge sports fan)
- Enjoys board games and video games
- Goes to the mall and talks with people





The Actual Results of Moving Out

- Growth
- Confidence
 - Noted by his curling coaches
- Independence
- Reliability in Routine Activities
- Learning to recognize needs

Lessons Learned

- People learn by experience
 - Failure is a definite learning experience
 - Allowing the occasional failure is not a bad thing – and can be very good
 - Try to keep it to small failures
- He can grow up
 - But only if he is given the chance
- Not all of his problems were solved
 - He still does not plan well
 - He still needs help making his major meals
- We need help to find a room-mate for Corey
 - with networking or facilitation