

**Administration on Development Disabilities  
Technical Assistance Institute – Presentation Summary  
Parental Involvement: Being the Passenger Instead of the Driver  
Thursday, August 10, 2006, 2:15 p.m.**

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**Presenters:** Jayne Chase, Director, Partners In Policymaking and Josie Badger, Member, National Youth Leadership Network, (NYLN)

Everyone should be the driver of their own lives.

**What makes a good parent?**

Supportive

Encouraging

Trusting

Open minded

Keeps their promise

Sassy

Listens

Being there for their children

**How is it different being a parent of a child with a disability?**

No difference.

**How can we work with parents that have to work all day to provide for their families?**

We should move our offices and our operations to places that families frequent.

Sometimes it requires us to work odd hours, such as after 5:00 pm and on the weekends.

We need to provide child-care while parents participate in programs.

We have met in the park to accommodate parents and their families.

We must empathize with others.

There are things we do and wear and say that allow people to want to approach us or not

When parents have a child with a disability, they are immediately thrust into “Service-land”, where we hear a new language and a bunch of acronyms we do not understand.

Our child becomes a label.

What we must do first is develop trust.

Understand that all means all.

Everyone needs to be with others – community.

**Josie Badger -**

Youth should be the driver – Watching your parents drive is how youth learn to drive.

Advocacy is no different. Youth see how their parents assist them, how they deal with others, and from their efforts can learn to be problem solvers for themselves when the time comes.

Your parents show you that you have rights and that you belong. Youth need to attend their IEP meetings, and that can help them learn to take their lives into their own hands. You have to think outside the box to creative problem-solve, and youth can learn self-knowledge by doing this.

Discuss what you need (accommodations) in school with your parents.

Practicing helps to develop advocacy skills and helps youth feel comfortable speaking up. Learning from others can be the best tool in becoming independent. It's important that parents push for youth to do it on their own which can be difficult. We learn from one another. It is important to learn about self, disability (through other disabled peers), needs, and your rights. Attend conferences, take part in disability and peer leadership groups. Knowledge promotes confidence and self-acceptance.

The previously established self-determination will then assist him or her in overcoming obstacles and barriers (tests) that are bound to emerge.

In the driving permit stage – this means having your parents there to assist you, but the youth is responsible for most of the decisions. In the driving permit stage, you have support.

In the driving test stage – youth should continue to do things on their own and parents should take less of a role and allow youth to make mistakes.

With practice and guidance a person can achieve his or her independence. Through their independence, experiences, and personal growth they have many of the building blocks in leadership development. These leadership skills can lead to successful adult lives.

## **RESOURCES**

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**This entire presentation and supplemental handout materials can be found at the following links:**

**Independence is a Highway and I want to Ride it All Day Long power point presentation** - [http://www.ent-s-t.com/ADD\\_0806/08-10-06%20-%20013%20-20Independence%20is%20a%20Highway%20-%20J\\_Badger.pdf](http://www.ent-s-t.com/ADD_0806/08-10-06%20-%20013%20-20Independence%20is%20a%20Highway%20-%20J_Badger.pdf)

**Handout** - [http://www.ent-s-t.com/ADD\\_0806/08-10-06%20-%20012%20-%20%20Parental%20Involve%20-%20J\\_Chase.pdf](http://www.ent-s-t.com/ADD_0806/08-10-06%20-%20012%20-%20%20Parental%20Involve%20-%20J_Chase.pdf)