



My Life,

My Rights,

My Way!

A Human Rights Training for Self-Advocates

What Are We Talking About Today?



- Dignity
 - Self-determination
 - Our human rights
 - Exercising our human rights
 - Limits placed on our rights
 - Who can help me to learn more about my rights?
-

My Services



The services I receive should promote human dignity and self-determination.

My Services Should:

- Meet my needs
 - Help me to develop skills
 - Help me to increase my independence
 - Support me to make independent choices
-

What is Dignity?

- When I respect myself
- When I have confidence in myself
- When I am proud of what I can do
- When other people admire me and treat me with respect



I Know I am Respected When:

- People treat me like I am important
- People pay attention to me
- People listen to me and look me in the eye
- People don't interrupt me when I am talking
- People don't try to finish my sentences
- People care about what I think



Let's Say This Together...

I am a person

I have confidence in myself and in my abilities

People should have confidence in me

I respect myself

People should treat me with respect

What is Self-Determination?



Freedom to do things and make decisions about my life

Freedom to live as I choose

Let's Say This Together...

It's my life

I know what I want

I make my own decisions

Ask me

Listen to me

I choose

These Are My Rights:

- I get the services and support that I need
 - Where I live is my home
 - I am a part of my community
 - I choose activities that I like
 - I wear the clothing that I want
 - I keep my own stuff
 - I eat healthy food that I like
 - I talk to the people I want to
 - I get privacy
 - People can visit me
-

- I should help decide which services and supports are part of my plan
- My services and supports should be explained to me so that I understand what's going on
- People should be respectful when communicating with me
- I should be treated like the adult that I am



Services and Supports

What Can I Do?



- Read the plans people write about me or have someone read it with me
 - Ask questions
 - Ask people to explain what I don't understand
 - Ask for changes if I don't agree
-

Home

- My home should be located in a safe neighborhood
- My home should be comfortable and nicely decorated
- My bedroom should be decorated the way that I want





Source: Flickr

Do I Like This Bedroom?

Do I Like This Bedroom?



Source: Flickr



Do I Like This
Bedroom?

What Can I Do?

- Think about what I want my room to look like
- Look through magazines
- Go online to download pictures
- Take pictures of the displays at stores like Ikea and Jordan's Furniture
- Buy the things I need
- Decorate my room the way I want
- Ask for help if I need it





Community

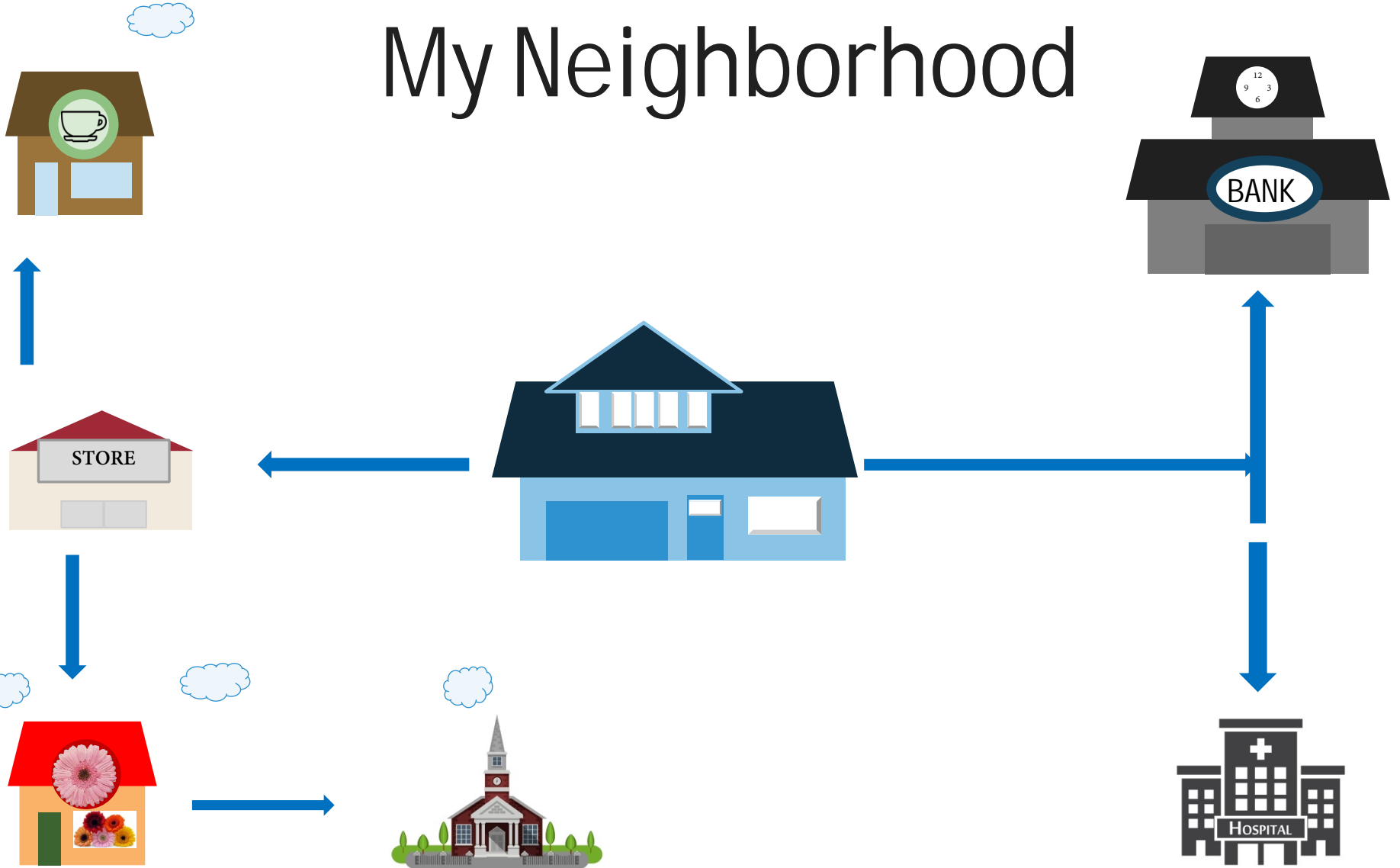
- I should be familiar with the community I live in
 - I should be a part of my community
 - I should have opportunities to meet other people living in my community
-

What Can I Do?

- Take a ride around the neighborhood
 - Write down the names of places I would like to visit, or ask for help from friend or family member whom I trust
 - Make a map of the neighborhood
 - Be friendly and say “hello” to neighbors
 - Search online or in the newspaper for events happening near me
 - Ask for help finding events and opportunities to meet people
-



My Neighborhood



Activities

- I can explore new activities to see what I like and don't like
- I should be able to participate in activities I like
- I should have opportunities for exercise and fun each day





Sometimes, people choose to participate in risky activities like skydiving and jet skiing. I should be able to participate in these types of activities, too, as long as I am safe.

What Can I Do?

- Create a list of activities I would like to participate in
- Go online and search for “fun things to do in _____”.
- Ask for ideas
- Come up with a schedule and plan for participating in these activities
- Discuss my schedule and plan with my caregivers, family, friends and my ISP team
- If you need help with anything, ask for help!



Clothing

- What I wear is my choice
- I can shop for my own clothes and pick out what I think looks good
- My caregivers should support me to make sure my clothing is always neat and clean
- I should have clothes for every season



What Can I Do?

- Look online and in magazines for fashion ideas
- Window shop
- Try on different things
- If I see someone wearing something I like, it's okay to compliment them and ask where I can find the same thing
- Ask for opinions (if I want them)





What is My Most Prized
Possession?



Possessions – My Things

- If I buy something, then it's mine
 - I can use my possessions whenever I want to
 - I should have a place to store my possessions
 - I should be able to get my things when I want
-

- My kitchen cabinets and refrigerator should be full of foods that are good for me
- I should help with the grocery shopping so that I can buy the foods and drinks I like
- Sometimes, I want to eat cookies and ice cream and that's okay



Nutrition

What if My Doctor Puts Me on a Diet?



- A doctor usually makes a recommendation that will help me to be healthy
 - I can choose whether to follow his or her advice
 - If my doctor makes a recommendation I don't agree with, I should discuss it with him or her (and with my team) and try to come up with something I can follow
-

Communication



- I should always be able to contact the people I want to talk to
- I should have privacy whenever I'm using the phone, texting, sending email, using social media or any other form of communication



- No one should post my picture online or in any place outside of my own home without my consent
- No one should give my address to anyone without my consent



Privacy

Privacy

- I should have privacy when I sleep
- I should also have privacy when I am taking care of my hygiene, getting dressed, and using the bathroom



- If I need help with hygiene, getting dressed or using the bathroom, I should feel comfortable with the staff person who is helping me
- If I am uncomfortable with a particular staff helping me, then someone else should step in to help

Privacy





Visits

- I should be able to have visitors in my home
 - If a visitor comes to see me, then staff should find me to ask if I want that person to come in
 - I should have privacy when visitors come to see me
 - I should also be able to have visitors in my bedroom
-

What are Restrictions?



- Restrictions are limitations or controls placed on someone or something
- Sometimes, our rights may be limited to keep us safe
- Those who support me should make sure that the LEAST restrictive options are used first





Restriction Examples

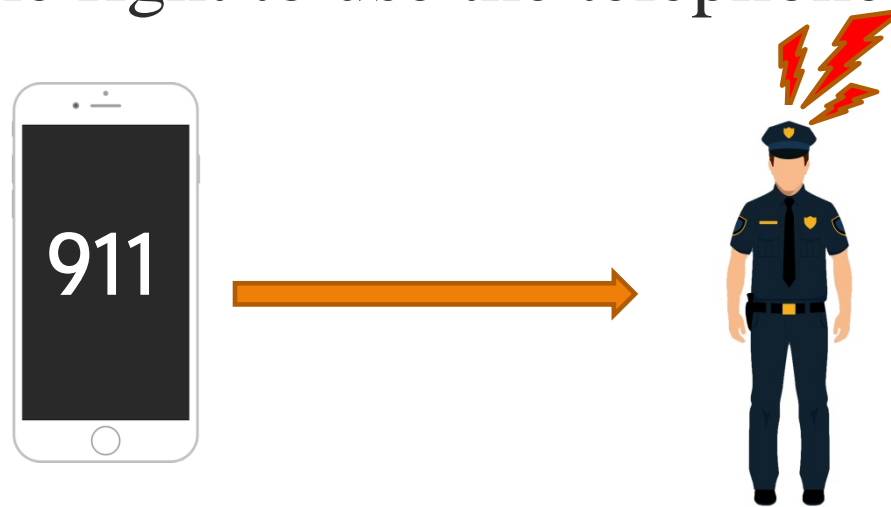
Example

I have the right to have visitors.



...but what if my friend shows up at the house and is drunk and threatening to hurt me?

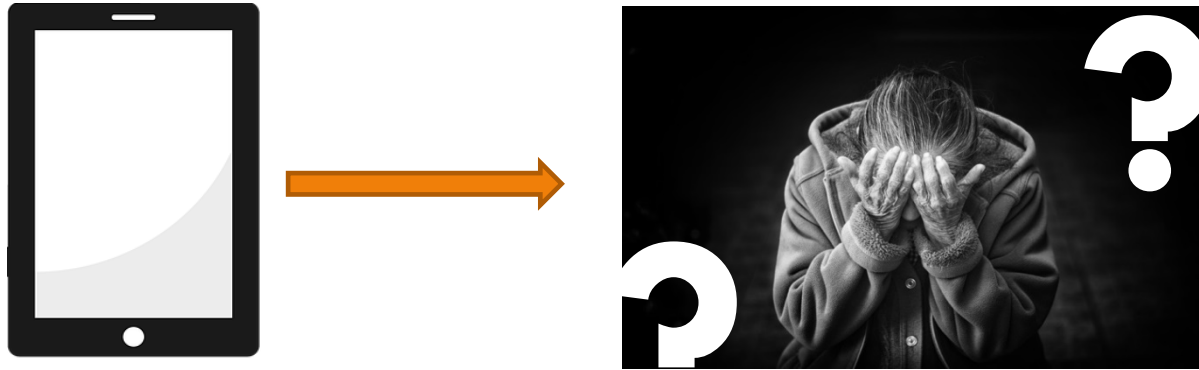
I have the right to use the telephone.



...but what if I use the phone to call 911 a lot, just because I like to, and when there really is no emergency?

Example

I have the right to use my possessions when I want.



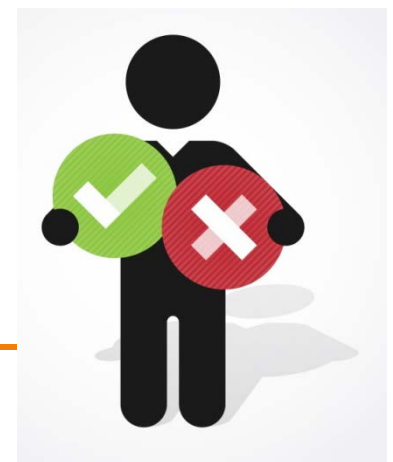
...but what if I wanted to use my iPad to get on the internet to contact strangers and invite them to my house?

Example

Before a restriction is official, this is what must happen:

- I (or my guardian) must give consent
- My ISP team must approve
- The Human Rights Committee must approve
- My doctor (sometimes) has to approve

Restrictions



What Can I Do?



- I can ask questions about why the restriction is necessary
 - I can help the team to develop a plan to get rid of the restriction
 - I can talk to my Human Rights Advocate if I don't feel the restriction is necessary
-

My Responsibilities



- Know my rights
 - Know who to go to for help
 - Speak up to let others know what I need
 - Be **active** in my services and supports
-

My Responsibilities

- Treat others with respect
 - Understand that I share my home or space with others
 - Use my possessions in legal, safe and proper ways
 - Understand that I may have to wait for some of the things I want
-

I Must Also Understand That My Choices Have Consequences

Choice	Consequence
If I stay awake all night...	I may be too tired to go to work the next day.
If I spend all of my money on cigarettes...	I may not have enough money to go to the movies with my friends.
If I don't do my laundry...	I may not have clean clothes to wear when I want to go out.

Who Can Help Me?

- Human Rights Officer (Advocate)
- Human Rights Coordinator
- Human Rights Specialist
- Staff
- Service Coordinator
- Family member
- Friend
- Someone I feel comfortable with



Who Else Can Help Me?

Department of Developmental Services
Office for Human Rights

Director's Office: (617) 624-7738

Human Rights Specialists

Central/West Region: (413) 205-0892

Northeast Region: (978) 774-5000 ext. 528

Southeast Region: (508) 866-8916

Metro Region: (781) 788-5261



Frequently Asked Questions



- The answers to the following questions may be different for someone who needs more support or assistance with safety
 - If these answers are not true for me, then I can notify my Human Rights Advocate and then contact my Service Coordinator to find out why
-

Do I Have The Right To Vote?



YES!

- If I am a US citizen
- If I have registered to vote

...But What If I Have a Guardian?

- Most people who have a guardian can still vote
 - Check your guardianship decree. **YOU CAN** vote unless the decree says you can't
-

Can I Go To School?

YES!

- If I have the money to pay for tuition and expenses
- If I apply and get accepted



Can I Get a Job?

YES!

- If I apply and get hired



Can I Buy a Car and House?

YES!

- If I have the money to buy them
- If all other necessary bills are paid



Do I Have the Right to Have a Girlfriend or Boyfriend?



YES!

YES!

YES!



I can even get married!

Can I Have a Pet?

YES!

- If I have the money to buy one
- If I (not my staff) am able to care for the pet
 - food & water
 - medicine/vet visits
 - cleaning
- If my landlord agrees
- If my housemates agree





Do I Have to Eat What My Staff Made for Dinner?

NO!

- I should eat what I want
 - I should be offered something different
 - If I can, I should be involved in the cooking, so that I can make sure my meals are prepared the way I want
-

If My Staff Don't Practice the Same Religion as Me, Do They Still Have to Take Me to My Church?

YES!

- My staff are paid to support me, and to help me to get the things I need
- I should be supported to get to my place of worship




What If I Don't Like My House, Can I Move?



YES!

- If there is an available room in a house that meets my needs
 - I should bring this up at my ISP meeting
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If your question was not included in this presentation, then contact the Human Rights Advocate who works with you. That person can help you to get the answers you need.

Thank you.

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