

Having a
place to go is
HOME,

Having
someone
to love
is
FAMILY,

Having both
is
A
WONDERFUL
LIFE!

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Lifesharing; What's it All About?

ISSUE 6

SUMMER/FALL 2015



PROOF POSITIVE

Over the course of being a Supports Coordinator for the last five and half years I have had the pleasure of working within two different counties and being exposed to various applications of ID services. Throughout my time working out of Lackawanna County I was able to work with Marie who was extremely successful in her Lifesharing home. She answered the question that many families have when looking into this program for their loved one; will my loved one be able to maintain and expand upon their current level of independence? Marie and her Lifesharing family were from different backgrounds both culturally and religiously. In order to maintain her independence and individuality Marie had a monthly bus pass that allowed her to travel throughout the county on her own. Every day she took the bus to and from work, sometimes taking a trip to the mall before going home at the end of the day. On the weekends she would take the bus into town to watch movies on her own. Marie became active in a church of her own choosing in order to grow on her own, spirituality.

While doing many things on her own, she was also heavily involved with family events with her Lifesharing family, such as birthdays and holidays. Marie even went on family vacations with this family, including a trip to Jamaica. Marie is proof positive that with the proper Lifesharing placement, an individual can not only maintain their independence but also excel and truly become part of someone's family.

Phase Two

Linda Whipple and her husband Charlie are new Lifesharing providers, but not new to Lifesharing. Linda was a Supports Coordinator with Westmoreland County for many years and when it came time to retire, Linda saw



Lifesharing as a way to stay involved and continue to care for folks with ID. Charlie, a retired minister, was also on board. Linda stated that she grew up with a brother who had ID and also has a sister-in-law with ID. "Lifesharing is something I always said that I was going to do when I retired. My sister-in-law has been in a Lifesharing setting the past 45 years in New York State...only 3 homes during this time and continues to do well." Linda and Charlie are committed to giving other folks with ID the same opportunity. Linda explains "It's kind of like passing it forward. My brother was a friend and helped everyone, raking leaves in the fall, shoveling snow in the winter and mowing grass in the summer for the elderly. This was just how we were raised, helping those in need. That was just the way life was so I guess that's why through my faith I do what I do to help anyone who needs help". Linda and Charlie didn't waste anytime opening their home to others and already have two folks Lifesharing with them.

*Written by:
Dawn Brown, SC Supervisor-WCSI*

*Written by:
Lindsay Hartman, SC-WCSI*

2015 LIFESHARING CONFERENCE—SNEAK PEAK!

This is the third year for the Lifesharing Conference and those of us on the planning committee are very excited to bring you a bigger and better conference!! These are the top 10 reasons you should be interested in attending this year!

1. **David Hingsburger is the Keynote!** A well-known author and advocate for people with disabilities, he will sure bring a renewed perspective and energy to the conference.
2. **Training Hours are increased!** At this conference, you will have the opportunity to obtain 9.5 training hours.
3. **How-to Track is offered!** This will help new providers, or newer staff at existing providers begin to understand the ins and outs of starting a Lifesharing program.
4. **Best Practices in Lifesharing!** This set of guidelines is due for a revision, be a part of this interactive discussion!
5. **Better food!** Need we say more?
6. **Karaoke!** We heard your suggestions, and not only will there be a DJ this year at the social hour, but there will be a chance to show off your singing talents!
7. **Costs are still low!** It has been a priority for the planning committee to continue to keep prices low!
8. **Networking!** At times, trying to advocate for Lifesharing in this turbulent service delivery system can be tiring, join your colleagues as you share each other's stories and rejuvenate!
9. **Activity Room!** We are again offering an activity room for those who are looking for something a little different. Crafts, movies, guest speakers, and dancing, how could you go wrong?
10. **Relevant & Vital new information!** With break-out sessions centering around hot topics of today, while providing valuable information about where Lifesharing came from, you will not walk away disappointed!

Want to learn more? Stay tuned! Information will be released via, PAR Mail, ODP Email Alert, and the PA Lifesharing Coalition's Email List serv. in August. Want to get involved? Contact Bobbi Segin (bsegin@dauphinc.org)

Written by; Jamie Walker, Program Specialist Westmoreland BH/DS

Pennsylvania's Lifesharing Coalition
Presents...

2015 Lifesharing Conference



Monday, October 19, 2015—
Tuesday, October 20, 2015

Ramada Conference Hotel
1450 S. Atherton Street
State College, PA 16801
(814) 238-3001

What is Lifesharing? Find out More!

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The Mission of Westmoreland County's Lifesharing Coalition is to increase awareness, so that Lifesharing is a commonly recognized concept for providers, Supports Coordination Organizations, individuals and the community as a whole. We aim to encourage people to expand their family circle by inviting others to share their homes, their families, and their lives.



Do you have something to say?

Any suggestions or questions,
please contact Jamie Walker
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We would love to hear from you!