

8 Tips to Make Family Caregiving for Loved Ones with Disabilities Easier
By COMMUNITY FOR PERMANENT SUPPORTED HOUSING

txcpsh.org

#1 Health

- Needs:
 - Clear thinking
 - Stamina
 - Long life
- Checklist
 - See your medical professional and follow orders
 - Sleep 7-8 per night
 - Exercise 30 minutes, 2 times per week
 - Drink water
 - Watch for depression

#2 Find Backup Help

- There will be a time when someone else needs to help you give care to your loved one. (you have the flu, you need to see a doctor, you need to take a walk around the block, etc.). The time to establish these connections is before you need their help. "May I call you if I need to run an errand?"
 - Your partner
 - Your loved one's future guardian
 - Your loved one's relatives
 - Your neighbors
- Prepare by creating a one-page tip sheet to help someone care for your LO. Invite them over to visit and get to know your LO.
- Thank them with a small gift or note.

#3 Behavior

- What causes difficult behavior?
 - Medical and psychiatric conditions have been found to play a direct role in "causing" challenging behaviors.
 - Psychological conditions such as feelings of loneliness or isolation may cause challenging behaviors.
- What can caregiver do?
 - Explain to LO's doctor what behavior you see.
 - Ask for a prescription for a behavior and speech evaluations
 - Ask for a home assessment
 - Address behavior in plans (IEP, PCP, etc.)
 - Don't stop medications without MD's OK
- Proactive efforts may make caregiving easier.

#4 Home & Community

- Set up your home so that it is easy to give care.
 - Keep treasured items out of reach
 - Have clear traffic patterns at all time
 - Keep chemicals, medicines, and knives out of reach
 - Keep medical equipment within easy reach.
 - Have a place for the LO's items within easy reach for them.
- Have fun!
 - Sports, playgrounds
 - Travel that is designed for people with disabilities
- Google search: free stuff for people with disabilities

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#5 Teach Your Loved One Independence

- Teach LO do the tasks that they are physically and mentally capable of doing themselves. The more your LO can do the less you have to do.
- *Example: selfcare and eating*
 - *Include your LO in problem solving*
 - *May require repetition/reminder*
 - *Praise any progress*

#6 Find your tribe

- Join groups that are experiencing similar situations
 - for diagnoses
 - at school
 - at social organizations
 - at special needs ministry
- Ask your LO's doctor for referrals
- Ask your contacts who they would recommend for support services.
- Search for wise counsel, not commiseration.

#7 Identify Services

- Contact your Local Authority (by county)
- Contact your medical insurance company

"My child has been diagnosed with disabilities. I would like her to be assessed to identify which services she qualifies for. I need respite as well."

- Look for private pay services.

#8 Plan for the future

- Your LO will likely outlive you.
- It may be traumatic for your LO to live in your home when you pass on.
- Have you talked to siblings about guardianship?
- How does your LO want to live her life in the future?
- Consider:
 - Will, Special Needs Trust or Supported Decision Making
 - A plan to transition to living outside the family home, with support services

COMMUNITY FOR PERMANENT SUPPORTED HOUSING offers:



w: txcpsh.org

f: TxCPSH

- Creating Home News
- My Home Plan Workshop
- Safety Training
- Project Independence Workshop for parents
- Person-Centered Independent Living for Service Agencies
- Planning for Person-Centered Independent Living Guide
- ISPACEhomes app
- Information about HUD Vouchers for People with Disabilities
- Individual/Family Future Planning
- and more!

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