



# Ability Connection

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ENRICHING THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES...ONE PERSON  
AT A TIME


# Our Philosophy

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We believe a disability is a naturally occurring part of life, not a defining characteristic. Disability exists when there is a gap between a person's capacity and the demands of a situation - be it living, working or enjoying the community. Ability Connection helps to fill this gap with quality services and supports.

Our Core Values of Compassion, Respect and Results drive us to provide world class services to people, regardless of the severity of the life impact of their disability. Each individual person and their family defines what "world class" means to them, and we have an obligation to meet those expectations.

Through our "one person" focus, we learn what the person, along with their family, needs and values for a purposeful life. We arrange for and/or provide services to address those needs and values.



# Our Core Values



## Compassion

- We care for our members and their families
- We care for our teammates
- We care for our community

## Respect

- We respect the preferences of our members
- We respect the wishes of our families
- We respect the contributions of every teammate

## Results

- We commit to helping members achieve THEIR outcomes
- We commit to meeting the needs of families
- We share accountability for achieving agency results



# Programs

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# Adult Medicaid Waiver Programs

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## Home and Community Services (HCS)

- The Home and Community-based Services program provides individualized services and supports to persons with intellectual disabilities who are living with their family, in their own home or in other community settings, such as small group homes.

## Texas Home Living (TxHmL)

- TxHmL is a Medicaid waiver program that supplies essential services and supports to Texans with an intellectual disability (ID) or a related condition so that they can continue to live in the community.

## Community Living and Support Services (CLASS)

- CLASS provides home and community-based services to individuals with related conditions as a cost-effective alternative to an intermediate care facility for individuals with an intellectual disability or related conditions (ICF/IID). A case management agency (CMA) and a direct services agency (DSA) help CLASS Program individuals in organizing various services needed to achieve maximum levels of independence

# Residential Services

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- ❖ Ability Connection Operates 7 group homes in the DFW area. Four of the homes have 4 bedrooms and three have 6 bedrooms.
- ❖ We follow these principles for service in our group homes:
  - ❖ We continually foster independence and decision making skills for members
  - ❖ We consistently offer choices
  - ❖ Activities and engagement are purposeful and tied to the members plan
  - ❖ We use “trial and error” to learn preferences for members who don’t use words to communicate
  - ❖ We help members maintain good health and hygiene
  - ❖ Members are actively involved in daily life
  - ❖ Training Occurs Every day
  - ❖ All interactions reflect respect and dignity
  - ❖ We communicate with families based on their preferences

# Training Centers – Day Habilitation

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Training Centers offer tiered support based on the needs of the individuals

We offer three programs:

- Life Change
- IMPACT
- FOCUS



# Life Change

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- ❑ Life Change focuses on training in these program pillars:
  - ❑ Independent Living Skills
  - ❑ Inclusion and Social Development
  - ❑ Continuing Education
  - ❑ Vocational Skills
  - ❑ Health and Nutrition
  - ❑ Volunteerism
- ❑ Life Change follows a Club House Model (Based on the Fountain House Model) where every member contributes to the “community”. Members voluntarily take on duties necessary for the operation of the clubhouse and develop a sense of accomplishment and pride.

# IMPACT

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- ❖ IMPACT is a goal-driven day program and training center for adults with disabilities 16 and older.
- ❖ Staff and Volunteers engage members individually to assist them with their goals
- ❖ Members achieve personal goals through:
  - ❖ life skills
  - ❖ education
  - ❖ personal growth
  - ❖ training
  - ❖ recreation and leisure activities
  - ❖ community inclusion
  - ❖ socialization



# FOCUS

- FOCUS is designed for members who are medically fragile and/or require full care.
- These members often benefit from hand over hand assistance.
- Onsite nursing staff is available to help with any medical issues that may arise while attending the program.
- The emphasis for the program is on sensory engagement for each member, while providing exceptional care. This includes:
  - Tactile stimulation
  - Verbal interaction
  - Visual stimulation
  - Manipulation of objects
  - Stretching
  - Olfactory stimulation



# Camp Connections - Beginning in 2021

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- ❑ Thanks to a grant from the Crystal Charities Ball, Ability Connection will be launching Camp Connections program in Dallas County for teens, between the ages of 12 and 17 who have disabilities in 2021. The program will consist of :
  - ❑ 10 week summer program focusing on maintaining IEP goals for skill regression prevention and incorporating recreation
    - ❑ Program will run from June through August
    - ❑ Year 1 will take place at Oak Hill Academy. A northern location will be added in the second year and an eastern location will be added in the third year
    - ❑ The program will be staffed by special education teachers and aid
  - ❑ Care Giver relief at the Ability Connection building on alternating Friday evenings and Saturday days
    - ❑ Teens will enjoy activities, games, movies and snacks while their care givers take some time away for themselves
  - ❑ School holiday Program at Ability Connection
    - ❑ There are roughly 25 school holidays in a school year. Camp Connections will operate a day long program so that family members who work will not have to take time off to care for their child.

# Spotlight: Ability Connection

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# Our Plan on a Page

## 2021 – 2023

<u><b>Our Quest</b></u>	To be the foremost resource for People with disabilities and the families who love them			
<u><b>Our Mission</b></u>	The mission of Ability Connection is to enrich the lives of people with disabilities through the delivery of World Class Services			
<u><b>Strategic Map Key Impact Areas</b></u>	<b>For The Person A Purposeful Life</b>  Personalized Care and Support Life Long Learning Work skills and jobs Options for where to live Enjoy Their "Best" Life	<b>For The Family Peace of Mind</b>  Exceptional Care and Support for Family Member Temporary Relief from Caregiving Access to Information Connected with Services and Resources Have an Advocate for Their needs	<b>For The Community Resource and Connections</b>  Information and Education A workforce/Service for Companies Opportunities for Volunteers to Engage Celebrate the Contributions of People with Disabilities	
<u><b>Key Strategies</b></u>	• Continuous Quality Improvement • Site Map • Additional Group Homes • Supported Housing • New Training Centers • Business Focused Employment Services • Contract Employment • Summer Programs for Youth • Weekend Respite • Holiday Programs for Youth • After School Programs • Drop in at Training Centers • Serve People on Waiting List • Expand Waiver Services • Connection Companions for members • Assist Members to Volunteer in the Community • Robust Recreational Opportunities • Tiered Training Center Curricula • Personal Outcome Measures			
<u><b>Our Focus</b></u>	<u><b>Brand Advancement</b></u>  • Remaining the provider of choice • Developing more fans and friends • Expanded brand awareness • Continued financial support • New financial support • What makes us unique?	<u><b>Relationships</b></u>  • Business partnerships • Schools • Sponsors/Donors • Other non-profit partners • Foundations • Faith based organizations • Vendors	<u><b>Capacity</b></u>  • Use of existing space • Staff resources • New space • Job Responsibilities • Volunteers • Funding	<u><b>Supporting Structure</b></u>  • Policies • Standard operating procedures • Organizational structure • Staff and volunteer development and growth • Incentives and rewards • Core Values
<u><b>Our Execution</b></u>	• Strong media relationships • Exceptional customer experience • Exceptional Quality • Expand ways to connect people with services • Strategic advancement of brand through differentiation	• Establish long term productive relationships with foundations • Create formal collaborative relationships with other agencies/programs to expand reach. • Engage businesses on multiple levels (volunteer, sponsor, hire) • Establish mutually beneficial relationships with vendors	• More diverse and robust funding streams • Create adequate workspace • Establish new cost effective locations • Increased financial/billing efficiencies • Complete capital campaign for home(s) • Additional staff capacity • Adjust job requirements to meet demands	• Maintain consistently high standards of operation and execution • Develop employees • Match skills and interests of volunteers with needs of Ability Connection • Expand community information • Effective use of communication technology

# Needs Assessment Survey

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Ability Connection wants to hear from you!

Please complete a short 2 minute survey so we can plan future programming in your area.

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/abilityconnection\\_Needs1](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/abilityconnection_Needs1)

# Contact Directory

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For Training Center/Day Habilitation and Employment programs:

- Jill Rodriguez, Vice President
- 214-351-2500 ext 2246 [jrodriguez@abilityconnection.org](mailto:jrodriguez@abilityconnection.org)

For Residential Services program:

- Kris McLauchlan, Senior Director
- 214-803-2068 [kmclauchlan@abilityconnection.org](mailto:kmclauchlan@abilityconnection.org)

For Camp Connection (2021 Summer), Holiday, and Respite program:

- Jim Hanophy, President/CEO
- 214-351-2500 ext 2201 [jhanophy@abilityconnection.org](mailto:jhanophy@abilityconnection.org)

For Waiver programs:

- CLASS- Amy Crooks, Director 512-468-7645 [acrooks@abilityconnection.org](mailto:acrooks@abilityconnection.org)
- HCS/TXHML Katrina Weger, Director 214-351-2500 ext 2253 [kweger@abilityconnection.org](mailto:kweger@abilityconnection.org)