

# Future planning for your child having an intellectual disability or autism

A comprehensive workshop by

Donald Bidd, MA, MLS, PPCC

Professional coach/advocate specializing in the area of intellectual disability

October 21, 2016, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Dorval Community Centre

“What will happen to our child having an intellectual disability or autism when we are no longer able to care for or monitor his/her well-being because of age, illness or death?” This is the big question of parents and siblings. A question that can provoke worry, insecurity, avoidance and even anguish. Parents can lose energy and hope because of fatigue, aging, waiting lists or day- to-day challenges. It can be difficult to step back, see the big picture, refocus and recharge with a renewed sense of hope and purpose.

The only real response to the question is for parents to undertake, as early as possible in the lives of their children, a structured current and future planning process which addresses a number of **Safety and Security Factors**. This process puts into place the essential building blocks for a much safer and more secure future for the child, elements such as a facilitated circle of support for the child, financial provisions such as the RDSP, legal protection, advocacy and lobbying for needed or improved services to support the well-being of the child, (such as respite, day programs, educator services, therapies and residential services)...and , to not forget the parent themselves, self-care and couple care. This is the process of defining and sharing a vision for the child’s life (and for the parents too), and making a specific realistic plan to carry out that vision. There’s just no other effective way to confront the question of the future of a child with an intellectual disability or autism. What must be avoided at all costs is not facing the question itself or making untested assumptions, such as assuming that other family members will step in without preparation and take over when the parents can no longer play the role of monitoring the well-being of their child.

Donald Bidd, MA, MLS, PPCC, is a professionally certified coach, WIAIH member and himself a parent of an adult son having a complex disease and intellectual disability. He has been advising and supporting parents of children having intellectual disabilities or autism for over 20 years through facilitation of support groups, advocacy and training.

Mr. Bidd will step parents and sibling through a comprehensive planning tool made up of 14 **Safety and Security Factors**. This tool helps parents and siblings to develop a comprehensive framework of support for the short, medium and long term well-being of their family member with a disability. The tool also supports important conversations and decisions that need to be made about the family member’s future, especially in regard to the time when the parents will no longer be there. The process results in a substantive increase of “peace of mind” because all key issues surrounding the vulnerability of the family member are brought into the open and addressed through an action plan. Building on the internationally recognized support models for persons having intellectual disabilities developed by Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network and his own practice of coaching parents for over 20 years, Mr. Bidd will work through the 14 **Safety and Security Factors** with parents, so that each family comes out of the seminar with an initial specific plan which will contribute to a safer and more secure future for the child.

Date: Monday, October 17, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Location: Dorval Community Centre (to be confirmed)

Cost: \$150 per family (2 participants)

Registration and payment by October 10: Donald Bidd, 514-631-3427, [donaldbidd@gmail.com](mailto:donaldbidd@gmail.com)

Maximum: 10 families (2 members each).

Participants will receive a 20 page *Guide to Planning the Future of your Child Having an Intellectual Disability or Autism*

**The content of the workshop**

In the workshop, Mr. Bidd will step the participants through the following **Framework of Safety and Security Factors**. We will look at each factor, where the family is strong in its current approach and planning, and where it is more vulnerable. Parents will leave the workshop with an initial Action Plan for improving the safety, security and support for their child for the short, medium and long term. Parents will also make key connections with other parents concerned about the same issues.

**Framework of Safety and Security Factors for Future Planning for \_\_\_\_\_**  
**Child of \_\_\_\_\_**

Safety and Security Factor	Current Situation - Strengths, Weaknesses	Actions required	Priority
1. Documented and shared vision for the child’s life, development and future.			
2. Will for each of the parents with a discretionary trust for the child; mandate and power of attorney for each of the parents.			
3. Legal representation and decision-making (private curatorship for adult child as of age 18)			
4. Financial security planning, such as the RDSP, life insurance, other investments.			
5. Community involvement in groups, sports, clubs for leisure, recreation, socialization, skills development.			
6. “Deep community”- involvement in a group where the child and parents come to be known and cared for deeply over time.			
7. Circle of support – a social network of about 8 friends and family members created and by a skilled facilitator			

and maintained over the life of the child.			
8. A home/residence with compassionate and competent caregivers.			
9. School, day program, work, workshop favoring skills development, socialization.			
10. Advocacy with health and educational systems, social services, and politicians to improve or obtain services (respite, educator, therapies, residence, day programs)			
11. Complete documentation on every aspect of the child – health, interests, skills, gifts, vulnerabilities, habits, needs. Shared with all involved with the child.			
12. Visual history of the child and family (photos, videos, documents)			
13. Health and well-being of the parents or curator. Your vision and dreams for your own lives. Evaluating self-care and safeguarding the couple relationship.			
14. Time management – ensuring reasonable and consistent time to work on the future planning project with support of other family members and a coach.			

## **Bio on Donald Bidd, MA, MLS, PPCC**

Donald Bidd has been coaching and supporting parents of children having intellectual disabilities or autism for over 20 years. In this work he has accompanied parents in meeting serious challenges – strategies on challenging behaviors, advocating for needed services, and dealing with the complexity of government services. He draws upon three main sources of knowledge and expertise in his work:

- His own experience as a father of a 29-year-old son who has a complex neurological disease and significant intellectual disability, allowing him to appreciate the many complex situations facing parents and families
- A highly successful career as a program and services manager in the federal government and private sector where he gained a variety of strategic planning, lobbying, coordinating and writing skills which he brings to his work with families
- Specific training and development as a professional coach from the prestigious Concordia University Personal and Professional Coaching program . With graduate degrees in languages and information science, Mr. Bidd has developed a structured approach to the complex challenges faced by families having members with intellectual disabilities.
- For more information connect with “Donald Bidd” on LinkedIn.