

# What will Journey Forward be like?

The WisconSibs Journey Forward program includes two workshops designed for small groups of 5 to 15 adults who have siblings with disabilities plus their guests (which often results in a group of 30-40 participants.) Workshops include a variety of activities, including videos, local area experts with information on relevant topics, large and small group discussions. Workshop sessions are facilitated by WisconSibs staff, along with siblings who have completed the workshops and will share their journeys.

You will receive step-by-step materials that will help you and your family collect information between workshops and move through the planning process.

## May I bring other family members to the sessions?

YES! These *Journey Forward* workshops are uniquely designed to address adult siblings and whoever they choose to include, especially their sibling with developmental disabilities. Adult siblings may invite any family members they wish to attend workshops with them, including parents or spouse.

Sessions for individuals with developmental disabilities are co-facilitated by trained volunteers. Care providers are welcome to attend with the individual with disabilities to support them in the activities.

## What does my sibling with disabilities need to bring?

During workshop #1 and #2, your sibling with disabilities will be working on a scrapbook called "My Journey Forward" and worksheets about their life. Bring photos of people in their lives, things they enjoy doing, possessions that are meaningful, pets, really anything that helps them tell their story to the world. Also bring a 3-ring binder that will suit their tastes and style. If your sibling loves pink, bring a pink binder. We will supply paper, pages, tools and craft supplies.

## What is a Letter of Intent?

You will be working on a Letter of Intent, your own written document that describes a person's hopes and desired future living arrangement, community role, and lifestyle preferences and specifies the available resources and needed supports to achieve these outcomes. Although the Letter on Intent is not a legal document, it provides a road map that families can follow to turn their dreams into reality. It can save time and money when making legal and financial arrangements.

## What if I don't attend both workshops?

You will get the most out of the program if you attend both workshops. But if that's impossible, you are always welcome at any *Journey Forward* offered by WisconSibs in the future.

## How much does it cost?

Thanks to the collaboration of the sponsoring organizations, the cost to participants is minimal.

**More questions?  
Ready to enroll?**

**[wisconsibs.org/what-we-offer/  
journeyforward/](http://wisconsibs.org/what-we-offer/journeyforward/)**

**Or Call - WisconSibs at 920-968-1742**



## What if I've never spoken to my sibling with disabilities about their future?

No problem. In fact, you'll probably be in the majority. Most people attending *Journey Forward* workshops have not previously had a discussion with their sibling. *Journey Forward* workshops will help you determine how you can have successful discussions with your sibling and other relatives.

## Is this the first time this program has been done?

The *Journey Forward* program is based on the successful outcomes of an innovative training model developed by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Aging with Developmental Disabilities at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The first series offered to Fox Valley adult siblings completed in early 2008 and has been repeated annually.

Here are the results for families after attending other *Journey Forward* Workshops:

- Families who attended developed goals for the future.
- 24% developed a special needs trust.
- 64% who had not previously taken action in planning for the future, took action.
- Families who attended the workshops with their relatives with developmental disabilities discussed future plans with relatives to a greater extent.

In addition, compared to groups not attending, families attending reported:

- significantly less feelings of caregiving burden.
- their relatives with developmental disabilities making significantly more choices in their daily lives.
- relief and encouragement from getting to know other siblings experiencing similar joys and concerns



Do you worry about the future for your sibling, yet procrastinate doing anything about it or just not sure where to start?

Has it been difficult to talk to family members about decisions necessary for the future well being of your sibling, your own family and your parents?

Does undergoing a root canal sound like more fun than future planning?  
(Relax. At *Journey Forward*, we also have fun!!)

**THEN DON'T WAIT. *Journey Forward* with us NOW! CALL TODAY.**