

# ***Nothing About Me, Without Me***

Some people with disabilities need services, supports, or assistance in order to enhance their abilities. They work with providers, advocates, state and local officials, and other parties in order to organize and maximize their services. However, this collaboration with other parties does NOT mean that people with disabilities no longer want to have a voice of input about their own lives. Including the involved person with a disability will ensure that the needs and goals of the individual are being properly addressed.

Remember, nothing about me, without me!

## **Useful Tips on Nothing About Me, Without Me**

- Have the involved person with a disability be your focal point. Everyone has an ego and has ideas on what would be sufficient. Instead, focus on what ideas would be best for the person with a disability even if it conflicts with your own personal opinion.
- Always include and have the involved person with a disability in attendance at any meetings about treatment, services, goals, or program plans. If the person cannot attend the meeting that day, reschedule the meeting just as you would for any other party.
- Ask the person with the disability what his/her ideas and preferences are. He/she may have the best idea on how to approach the plan of action. Remember, people with disabilities are the best judge of their own abilities and needs.
- Have an open mind when working with the person with a disability. Attitudinal barriers are the most difficult to break through.
- Remember to collaborate, not dominate. This is important for all parties. You have come together to find the best possible solutions for the individual. Having a collaborative effort will ensure that a comprehensive plan will be actualized.



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