

Micro-Boards

“A micro-board is a small group of committed family and friends who join with a person with a disability to create a nonprofit corporation. Since the micro-board is a structured and legal entity, its purpose is to ensure that the person's circle of friends will endure. The micro-board is dedicated to providing support to that one person. Members of a micro-board have a personal relationship with that person. They act as ‘bridge builders’ to the community, and ensure that the person has opportunities to participate in their community in as many ways as possible.”

Community Opportunities of Blacksburg, VA, an affiliate of VELA Micro-board Association

Quality in Practice

Simply put, Micro-boards are non-profit organizations created around one person. The board is made up of family members and friends who want a structured way to support the person with a disability get the services he/she wants and needs AND to assure the person is or becomes connected to people who are not paid to be with him or her in the local community.

Micro-boards are:

- 501(c)3 organizations
- organized around one person (or two, if a couple)
- made up of committed family and friends
- able to negotiate with funding sources for services
- able to hire staff members directly or contract with an agency to provide services

Common Principles of Micro-boards:

- All board members have personal relationships with the person for whom the board is created.
- All decisions will be made with that one person in mind.
- The person is presumed to be ready to live life as a full adult citizen.
- The community is presumed to be ready to accept all members.
- All services are personalized and customized to the individual no matter how complex the person's needs are.
- Services will be developed if the appropriate services do not currently exist.

There are several micro-board associations that have developed to assist individual micro-boards with understanding all they need to know in order to excel at their work. These include:

VELA Micro-board Association
www.microboard.org

Community Opportunities
www.communityopportunities.org

Tennessee Micro-boards Association
www.tnmicroboards.org