



2011

Vision Garden

Using Your Vision To Grow Results

What is Partners in Community Inclusion (PICI)?

- ♥ *Meeting Series for parents of school age children with developmental disabilities who are seeking meaningful inclusion for their children.*
- ♥ *The series began at Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center 7 years ago in response to parents who wanted help including their children in school.*
- ♥ *The series looks at inclusion globally – beyond the school door.*
- ♥ *Two meeting groups: Alhambra and Santa Fe Springs.*

PICI Elements:

- ♥ *Participants learn to create a long range vision for their children.*
- ♥ *They develop short and long term goals to keep up a steady pace toward their vision.*
- ♥ *Look to the community for natural opportunities for inclusion.*
- ♥ *Grow self-determined kids.*
- ♥ *They work on effective and respectful ways of communicating.*
- ♥ *Partner with schools and agencies that support their dream of an inclusive life and a meaningful future for their children.*
- ♥ *Are invested in their communities through volunteer work as families.*



♥ *Skyscraper*

♥ *Wedding*

♥ *Vacation*

♥ *Garden*



The background features a vertical split: the left side is a solid olive green, and the right side is white. Thin, light-colored stems rise from the bottom, each topped with a heart-shaped flower. The hearts on the left are white, and the hearts on the right are olive green.

What do they all have in common?

*They started with a dream
that became a vision
that became a reality.*

What is a vision?

- ♥ *A picture of the future you are willing to commit to and work for*
- ♥ *Outcomes we want*
- ♥ *Quality of life*

Elements of a Vision

- ♥ *Begins with a value – what is important to you and your family?*
- ♥ *Is general, inspirational and no time limit.*
- ♥ *Inspires commitment and energizes people.*
- ♥ *Establishes a standard of excellence.*
- ♥ *Bridges the present to the future.*
- ♥ *Goes beyond the way things are now.*
- ♥ *Needs a purpose or direction to ensure it is not just wishful thinking.*
- ♥ *Is a driving force for services and supports.*

Values Exercise (5 min)

Choose one of the following areas and describe, based on your values what outcome you want for your son/daughter :

- ♥ *Education*
- ♥ *Career/work*
- ♥ *Where to live*
- ♥ *Friendships/Relationships*
- ♥ *The Community*
- ♥ *Other*

A Vision for Justin

My 10 year old son will make friends at school, learn and enjoy a sports activity, go to college and graduate, and become an independent adult. With our guidance, we hope to empower him with his capabilities



Achieving this Vision



- ♥ *Using our own knowledge and resources to expand on what he learns at school, we are continuously raising the bar academically. I hope that my vision of Justin going to college will one day become his own vision.*
 - *Reviewing his homework with him everyday so I know where his strengths and weaknesses are. I have workbooks at home that are one level above his school workbooks. I use these workbooks to help him reach that next level.*

- ♥ *Becoming an independent adult is an ultimate goal and vision. We hope that he will be able to have his own career, friends and family one day. What I have done to help pave the way is I have given him jobs to do throughout the day everyday:*
 - *When we do the laundry, he hangs up his shirts in his closet.*
 - *He makes his own bed.*
 - *He has his own house key (This took about 6 months of work because he does have fine motor issues, but he is able to do it on his own now without hand-over-hand.)*
 - *He plugs in the outlet air freshener.*
 - *He takes his things out of his backpack; homework and lunch container and rinses it out.*
 - *He helps set the dinner table by placing napkins and silverware for each of us.*

Achieving this Vision



- ♥ *Using everyday situations and experiences to coach/model social skills and communication with his peers in order to create and retain friendships.
- Ex: Encouraging appropriate greetings, i.e. “Good Morning” or “Did you like the movie?”*
- ♥ *Trying different sports activities and encouraging him to try new activities even when he prefers not to.*
- ♥ *Keeping an open communication with school and APE coaches to find out that types of sports activities he enjoys and continuing those activities in natural settings outside of school as well.*
- ♥ *Because we don't have friends with children his age close by, we use the opportunities of birthday parties and family gatherings as times where he can play with his many cousins. Instead of allowing him to go into one of the rooms that has a computer, we make sure he does what the other kids are doing. Playing football, board games, etc.*

Final Tip for Parents

♥ PERSISTENCE

I'd like to share a story about being persistent. My son never enjoyed reading books nor being read to as a baby. I can only describe it as if you were torturing him. He would cry and always try to wiggle away when I would read to him. Even though he reacted this way, I kept reading to him every chance I got. As he got older and understood what I was saying, I would tell him that he had to sit with me until I finished the book and then I would let him go. Most of the times, he would cry and struggle to get away. The other times, he would just gaze off and not even look at the pages, but I would just keep reading until the book was over. This happened for years until he was about 7 years old when he started to appreciate books and actually go get a book on his own, bring it to me and ask to me to read to him. He is now 10 years old and he gets books and reads them on his own. He giggles and laughs while reading humorous books. He finally enjoys reading and I am so grateful that I was so persistent in reading to him.

*“Persistence is key on your part as the parent because your child **WILL** always surprise you along the way.”*

Continuing the PICI Journey

*Alison will continue to love and serve God.
Alison will live inter-dependently - safe and
happily - with little support in the
community.*

*Alison will have the chance to pursue higher
education in her area of interest and to meet
her vocational needs.*

Short- Term Goals:

- ♥ Increase her ability to have healthy and appropriate relationships with others.*
- ♥ Maintain her body fitness and increase her self-care competence*



The PICI Benefits

For Alison:

- ♥ *A great opportunity to join PICI, meet Mary and other ELARC staff*
- ♥ *Create her own vision and revise it as she grows*
- ♥ *Learn to present and express her vision*
- ♥ *Learn the importance of community service and community inclusion*
- ♥ *Attend CAC, Self-advocacy board*
- ♥ *Participate in some ELARC projects : Healthy Living, Employment...etc*
- ♥ *Learn self advocacy skills in a group that shares similar language and thoughts*
- ♥ *Improve and support school's IEP*



PICI Benefits for Our Family:

- ♥ *Learn to develop the long-term and short – term vision for Alison*
- ♥ *Learn to support her and our vision through the daily task*



- ♥ *Expose my whole family to learn about other families' journeys*
- ♥ *Learn the beauty of the community inclusion, self-determination, personal center thinking*
- ♥ *Learn the meeting and public speaking skill*
- ♥ *Learn to give back*
- ♥ *Learn to be a good mentor and mentee with other parents and professional*

Painting a Vision for Laker



Laker will be a happy, independent artist . He will enjoy his art as a career and as his life..



With his unique gift he will touch others; contribute to his community and society. He will have his own home and art studio, where he will be comfortable, happy, and be free to create art.

We will encourage him, support and help him choose resources that will help him maintain independence and a love for art.



What we are doing now to make this vision possible

- ♥ *Taking him to a variety of community art classes, museums, and other places of artistic interest.*
- ♥ *Signed him up for Boy Scouts where he is learning to be independent and have friends*
- ♥ *Allow his art to be integrated within the community (e.g. library, school)*
- ♥ *Showing him how to clean up after himself*
- ♥ *Encouraging him to enjoy his art*
- ♥ *Giving him space to display his artwork.*



Laker has shown us that:

- ♥ *Art is increasing his word recognition skills*
- ♥ *Art brings him confidence and self-esteem*
- ♥ *Art is a way to learn other things like reading*
- ♥ *Art lets Laker share his joy with others*
- ♥ *He can enjoy other interests as well (like Boy Scouts)*

Modeling Community Service

Our community is important to us.

We are showing our son the importance of contributing to our community by:

- ♥ *Participating in the school site council*
- ♥ *Representing in the Head Start policy committee*
- ♥ *Volunteering as a Room Mother*
- ♥ *Being involved in the SELPA's Community*
- ♥ *Advisory Committee*
- ♥ *Being involved with Boys Scouts*
- ♥ *Participating in Partners in Policymaking, a nine month training program, where I learned how to advocate for people with disabilities. My passion now is to advocate for parents like me, notably.*
- ♥ *Asians with difficulty comprehending English, without an understanding on how to help their children with disabilities, to speak out and let their voices be heard. I hope also to share with these parents the importance of having a strong vision for their children*



Our Vision for Wesley

Wesley will live happily, independently and healthily when he has grown up. He will hold a meaningful relationship at work, at home, and in the community. He will be able to support and care for his own family.



Steps We Are Taking to Reach Our Vision

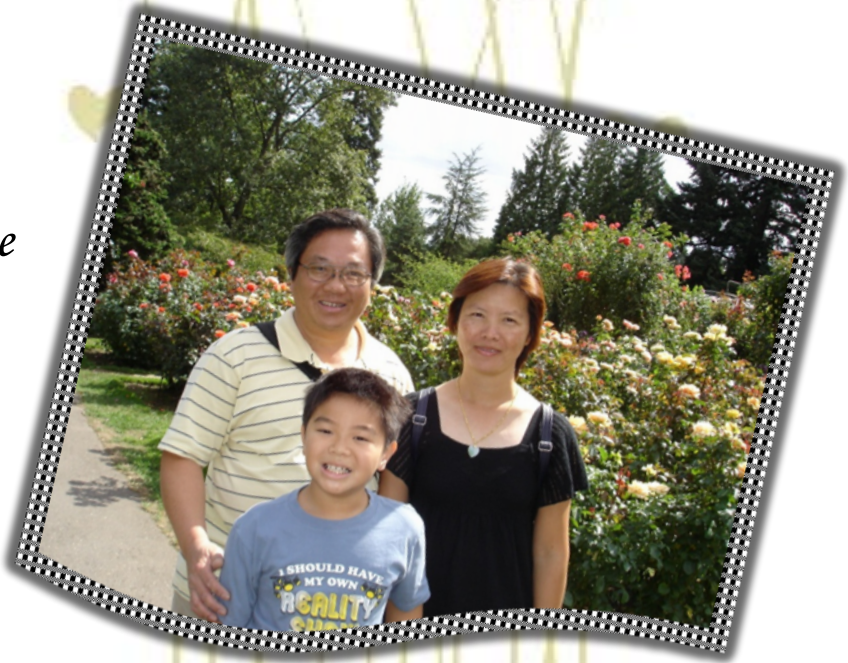
- ♥ *Wesley is participating in a drawing class. He is learning to stay focused with the project and complete it with great passion.*
- ♥ *We are setting goals for Wesley to learn to do house chores. In this way, he is learning his own responsibility to take care of his own items, and he can live independently in the future.*
- ♥ *Wesley is learning to have fun with children he is meeting at play dates in the park,*
- ♥ *We organized play dates in our local park and coordinated many fun activities for Wesley and the children in the neighborhood to enjoy. Wesley is learning how to make friends and in time, we hope the joy of having good friends.*



- ♥ *Wesley is learning to swim and play table tennis. He enjoys these activities very much. They help him to be in good shape, and give him more opportunities to socialize with children.*
- ♥ *Wesley is learning to make his own choices for foods, activities and reading. He is also learning about the consequences of his choices. In time, he will learn to make his own decisions about education, employment or how he will live in the future.*

The Future

We truly believe that Wesley's life will be fully included in his family, at school/college and in the community. We have done our best to set meaningful goals for him that will allow him, step by step, to have an inclusive life. Though there are many challenges along the way, Wesley will never stop learning and growing and feeling our love and support.



Vision for Alex in 2009



My son will be able to pursue a college education and experience the joy of taking classes that interest and challenge him. He will be a safe and independent driver and enjoy the company of good friends. He will learn how to manage the worries and stress of life so that they do not get in the way of a happy and successful life. He will continue to appreciate music and experience the pride of improving his own piano skills.

He will become an experienced traveler with a respect and appreciation for the unique people he meets. He will understand and appreciate the wisdom and love of his parents.

How We're Working Towards Our Vision

- ♥ *We are collecting information and building pathways that will help Alex to make his own decisions.*
- ♥ *Alex is continuing to practice safe driving to become a competent driver who can handle unexpected situations on the road.*
- ♥ *Alex is learning how to socialize with his friends. We model how you entertain friends in your home so that he can have friends over and have a good time. We are teaching him how to plan parties and how to be a good host.*
- ♥ *We are teaching and modeling how friendships and relationships work and are maintained.*
- ♥ *We continuously praise Alex for his good efforts, but also allow him to experience the consequences of his choices.*
- ♥ *We continue to make piano instruction available to him and surround him with music that he enjoys. His confidence will increase as his playing gets better and he will be proud and happy to share his music with his friends.*
- ♥ *Understanding different cultures and meeting different kind of people can open your eyes. Alex learned that even his parents are nervous but still have to solve those problems in a strange country. Now, Alex also can help us to solve those problems along the way. In time, our dream is that Alex will plan a trip for us or even plan his own trips. This is an exciting challenge!*



Reflections...

Alex is now a high school senior. He likes to accept all kinds of challenges even under great pressure. He has the vision to take care of himself in the future or even helping others.



Alex helps me in most of the housework - he's learning the importance of taking care of the place he lives. He knows how to use sports to get rid of his tension but also as a way to enjoy the sport with other bikers. His vision is maybe to one day attend the Ironman contest!

He is eager to learn everything about bicycles; this might become his career in the future. Alex has traveled the

world with us since he was four. He has been to Asia, Africa, Europe, Japan and North and Central America. He's been to over 15 different countries and hundreds of different places. He is ready to take his place in the world! "Dad I love to learn"

Final Thoughts

When a dream is huge, the vision is vast, the commitment is strong, the action is consistent, the supports are appropriate and the circle of support is dedicated, nothing can stand in the way of success.

Special Thanks to Our Vision Gardeners



Sally



Cindy



Mei



Van



Peter



Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center

Presentations can be found at: www.elarc.org