



# Introduction to LifeSPAN

## Lifetime Secure Personal Assistance Network

1<sup>st</sup> U.S. and International Affiliate of PLAN.<sup>TM</sup> LifeSPAN is located in Washington State.

We invite you to attend a free one-hour session held monthly to talk about LifeSPAN and our approach to building relationships in the community. You will have an opportunity to speak with members of LifeSPAN who are excited about ensuring a good life for people with disabilities. You will also be able to get more information about membership in LifeSPAN, training workshops, and involvement in Networks and Facilitation.

Sessions are usually scheduled on a Sunday each month at Jackson Place Cohousing 800 Hiawatha Place S. Seattle, WA 98144, one block East of Rainier Ave, at Dearborn. If you have questions, call Kathy Sellars at (206) 522-3099 or email [Kathy@lifespans-wa.org](mailto:Kathy@lifespans-wa.org).

### Directions:

1. **From I-5**, (from the North or South), take the Dearborn exit and head east on Dearborn about 1/4 mile. Cross Rainier Ave and you'll see Jackson Place Cohousing ahead on your right.  
**OR**  
**From I-90**, take the Rainier Ave North Exit and turn East on Dearborn. You'll see Jackson Place Cohousing ahead on your right.
2. Park on Dearborn (fairly steep hill) or Hiawatha Place S. (flat).
3. At the entrance of the main Cohousing building at the corner of Dearborn and Hiawatha Place, ring for Kathy Sellars and we'll open the door for you. (There is wheelchair access and an elevator there to take you to the third floor where the Common Living Room is located.)  
**Note:** If you need to drop someone off, you can also pull into the alley mid-way up the block on Dearborn. Walk across the terrace to reach the Common House.

### Four overarching values guide LifeSPAN's work:

- **Family leadership**

The majority of volunteer leaders of LifeSPAN are relatives of an individual with a disability. Independently, each family is responsible for directing plans with their relative. Together, families view their collective wealth as an economic and social force in negotiating with government and the private sector.

- **Safety through relationships**

Families know that the safety of their loved one is directly related to the number and quality of relationships in that person's life as well as a system of checks and balances established by the family. Relationships are strengthened between families and within communities through sustainable, personal networks of support.

- **Contribution equals citizenship**

A focus on community relationships and the capacity of individuals with disabilities and their families encourages participation and discourages victimization.

- **Self-sufficiency**

Organizational independence from ongoing government funds is necessary to monitor and advocate for people with disabilities when their parents or relatives are no longer able to provide support. Self-sufficiency requires that LifeSPAN rely on community partnerships and charge families a partial fee for services. This also makes LifeSPAN accountable to the families served. (At the same time, LifeSPAN supports individual efforts to maintain and increase personal governmental support.)

### Simple facts:

- 15% to 20% of people have a disability.
- 1 in 10 have a moderate to severe disability.
- Over 2 in 10 people are family members of a relative with a disability.
- 80% of caregivers are relatives.
- 25% of family caregivers are 60 years or older.
- 25% of family caregivers are in the workforce.
- For the first time in history, individuals of disability are outliving their parents.
- Fewer than 50% of these individuals have a viable plan for the future after their parents die.

### About LifeSPAN:

LifeSPAN supports families in Washington State to develop safe, secure, quality futures for their relatives with a developmental disability. LifeSPAN came together in fall 2000, after a PLAN<sup>TM</sup> "Good Life Workshop" for families sponsored in King County by Parkview Services. From the 80 people attending the workshop, 20 stepped forward in an advisory role to bring the PLAN<sup>TM</sup> model to Washington. Eight individuals became founding board members of LifeSPAN in winter 2001.

Early development of LifeSPAN was funded by Parkview Services, a non-profit dedicated to supporting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Parkview Services continues to provide LifeSPAN with significant financial support.

LifeSPAN was incorporated in June 2001 and became an independent 501(c)3 organization in spring 2002. In 2002, LifeSPAN also became the first U.S. and international Affiliate of PLAN<sup>TM</sup>.

### Primary activities of LifeSPAN

- Future planning advisory services.
- Creating and sustaining personal networks of support.
- Family support, mentoring and advocacy.
- "A Lifetime Commitment" to maintaining an enduring network for the individual of disability that is supported, in part, by a modest bequest and understanding stated in the parent's will.

Web: [www.lifeSPAN-wa.org](http://www.lifeSPAN-wa.org) or [www.PLAN.ca](http://www.PLAN.ca)