

About these Standards

These standards review

- the individuals' relationships within their social circles
- how individuals are treated in their homes, workplaces and communities
- staff's role in
 - supporting individuals to find and build strong, positive relationships
 - helping individuals to be part of social circles that value and show the qualities of friendship, including
 - familiarity, feelings and kindness
 - trust and honesty
 - rights, responsibilities and obligations
 - dignity and respect

Appropriate staff support may include

- assisting with phone calls, letters, e-mail and transportation
- making referrals to family counselling
- providing information and/or education on sexuality
- helping individuals to have cordial relationships with other household members
- helping individuals to overcome barriers to finding and making friends

The expectation is for individuals with disabilities, including those who struggle with mastering social skills, to get whatever support they need to interact with others and build relationships to the same extent as people who are independent. However, unless these relationships transform into a freely-given connection beyond paid staff time, they cannot be considered true friendships.

Individuals also need to have ongoing relationships that lead to **natural supports**.

With any relationship there is potential for risk. Therefore, staff need to

- support individuals to deal with the possible unwanted consequences from a relationship that involved risk
- help individuals end a risky relationship
- help individuals to replace a risky relationship with a safer alternative

CET Accreditation Level 2 is available for organizations that want to strive for a higher level of excellence. For these standards, Level 2 delves deeper into supporting individuals to develop close or intimate relationships and to establish community connections.

See Appendices

- *Relationships and Community Inclusion*
 - *Beyond Barriers*
- *Ethical Principles of the Alberta Council of Disability Services*
- *Rights of Individuals Accessing Service*

natural supports

- People who provide physical assistance, advice or emotional support to an individual without being paid or who are being formally engaged as a volunteer to support the person
- For examples, see Appendix *Glossary*: natural supports

Standard 3: *Individuals have strong, positive relationships*

Quality of Life Level 1 Indicators

1. The individual has natural supports in his life
2. The individual's relationships bring meaning to his life
3. The individual chooses who he wants to spend time with, as well as when and where they meet
4. The individual has activities and/or goes to events that include family members and/or friends
5. The individual meets new and/or like-minded people with whom he can develop positive relationships
6. The individual accesses resources and information to help him
 - a. learn about and have healthy relationships
 - b. build positive social skills
 - c. remove himself from risky or harmful relationships
 - d. recover from the consequences of an unhealthy relationship
7. The individual receives help to overcome any barriers he has to meeting people and forming relationships

Standard 15: *Individuals are supported to build strong, positive relationships*

Quality of Service Level 1 Indicators

1. Staff support the individual to find, develop and benefit from natural supports
2. Staff support the individual to have relationships that are meaningful to him
3. Staff support the individual to choose who he wants to spend time with, as well as when and where they meet
4. Staff support the individual to spend time with his family members and/or friends as appropriate to the situation or setting
5. Staff support the individual to meet new and/or like-minded people from whom he could develop positive relationships
6. Staff provide and/or support the individual to access resources and information to help him
 - a. learn about and have healthy relationships
 - b. build positive social skills
 - c. remove himself from risky or harmful relationships
 - d. recover from the consequences of an unhealthy relationship
7. Staff have strategies to overcome barriers to the individual meeting people and forming relationships