UNLOCKING THE POWER

EQUALITY

Are you a person who wants to be a part of a group?

Hey YO, this is the book for you!!

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People First® of California, Inc.

Self-Advocates Training Self- Advocates

Mission Statement

People First of California envisions all people with disabilities will have the opportunity to gain empowerment through UNITY and respect for each other.

Vision Statement

After generations of being invisible we have joined together, with our OWN voice to inspire and educate each other "peer to peer" throughout the state, to start People First chapters. We train, inform, and support all people with developmental disabilities to help our peers learn to:

- Speak up for themselves
- Know our rights and responsibilities
- Make decisions and solve problems

And, stand together in unity, to take our rightful place in the world.

(adopted April 9, 2011)

We Learn and Teach Others to

We learn:

- To find our voices
- To stand up for ourselves and our peers
- Leadership skills
- To run our own meetings
- Our identity and history
- To make system wide changes
- To be involved in our local neighborhoods
- How to make friends
- To organize chapter functions and conventions
- How the political system works
- Respect and kindness for each other

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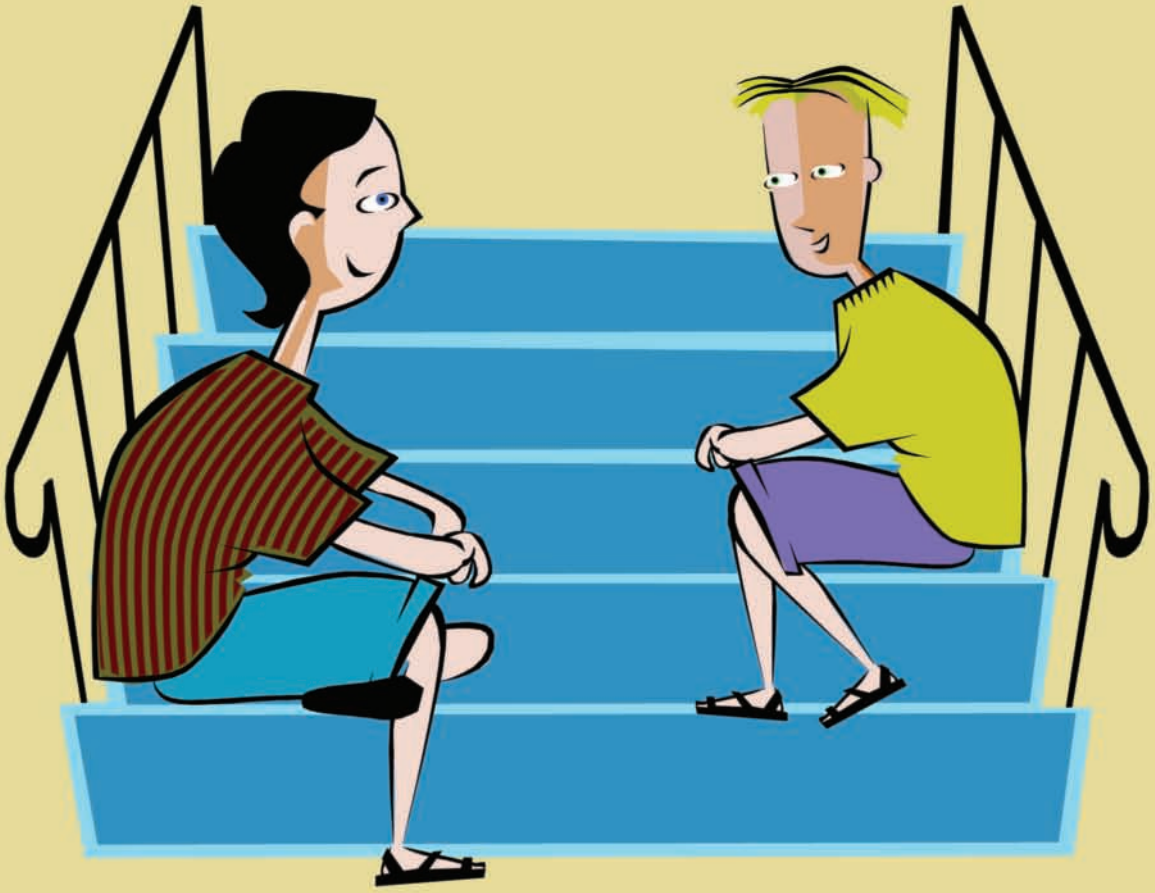


WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW OUR PAST?

1920-1950

Every state had people who lived in institutions. In the beginning they had 25,000 and they grew to as many as 50,000.

Lack of places for people to go for an education and negative ideas about persons with disabilities resulted in putting more people in institutions.

Special education classes were offered mostly in large cities. Many families sent their children to live in the institutions because they believed that was the only place they would receive an education.

1950-1980

Institutions were fully exposed for not meeting even the basic needs for the people that lived there.

In 1974, Federal law stated that all children with developmental disabilities would be provided a public education. People started moving out of institutions, and parents started sending their children to schools in their own community to get a quality education.

1980- till present

Inspired by the advocacy and civil rights groups of the 1960s, and formed partly in reaction to professional and parental attitudes, self-advocacy groups formed their own organizations at the local, state, and national levels.

In the beginning, several people with developmental disabilities from Oregon went to a conference in Canada; they noticed that all the presenters were people without disabilities. They were still impressed by the numbers of people who came together to discuss their common interests.

After going to this conference, people with devlopmental disabilities from Oregon organized a meeting and planned their own conference for 1974. At this planning meeting, they didn't like all the labels that people called them, especially the label "mentally retarded." A woman by the name of Judy Cunio said, "If we want to be known as people first, and our disabilities second, then we should call ourselves "People First." For the first time, many people discovered that their voices did count.

KNOW YOUR VALUE

Believe in yourself and your importance. Your sense of worth develops throughout your life. With this comes confidence, happiness, motivation and the right attitude to succeed.

You have this inner computer which guides you to messages that are positive or negative. Good messages help you build confidence.

Positive messages are:

- I am a valuable person
- I feel good about myself
- I am a beautiful person
- I am one of a kind
- I care
- I like me!!!!

"It's in your hands to grow and develop in life. There are people to guide you; but in the end, the responsibility of helping yourself, depends on you. Be honest to yourself and start developing your own value."

By Shashank Nakate

BULLIES!

At your school, have these things happened to you that stop you from feeling your value?

They come in all ages, sizes, races, religions, and in both genders. Bullies threaten and harass people with both words and physical violence

Girls can be more likely to bully with words, while boys most often resort to physical violence. For this reason bullying by girls is often ignored or not taken as seriously as bullying by boys. The reality is that both types of bullying are very serious.

Words can be just as harmful as physical violence and can cause lasting psychological damage to victims. The old saying, "*Sticks and stones can break your bones, but words will never hurt you!*" is simply not true.

Never try to handle a bully alone. There is always an ally to go to. An ally is a person that sees what is happening, gets help, and does something. An ally is no longer a bystander.

No matter what a bully threatens to do, you must tell somebody in a position of authority and your parents.

Ignoring bullies does not make them stop.

Never suffer in silence!

UNLOCKING THE POWER

We are here today
Because of the history of people that lived and died before us

The invisible generation
Devalued
Locked Away

We have fought through the pain to unlock the doors
For the generations that follow

Freedom
Knowledge
Acceptance

Through our personal stories and experiences
We inspire and educate

Growth
Confidence
Maturity

Sharing our vision and mentoring the next generation

Stand together in unity
Share the power
Embrace our rightful place in the world

WE ARE PEOPLE FIRST!

WHY BELONG TO PEOPLE FIRST?

YOU ARE SOMEONE WHO CAN BECOME A SUCCESSFUL SELF-ADVOCATE

WHAT IS A SELF-ADVOCATE?

Self-Advocate is a person

- Who is seen as **SUCCESSFUL** and **PRODUCTIVE**
- That is **EQUAL**
- That has the right to be **ASSERTIVE**
- That **WORKS HARD** for what they believe in
- Who **CHANGES** society's views of people with developmental disabilities
- That has the **POWER** and **CONTROL** of decision making in their own life
- That **PRACTICES** what they learn throughout their life

Self-Advocate Responsibilities

You have a right to make choices as long as you honor the **Rules** and accept your **Responsibilities**.

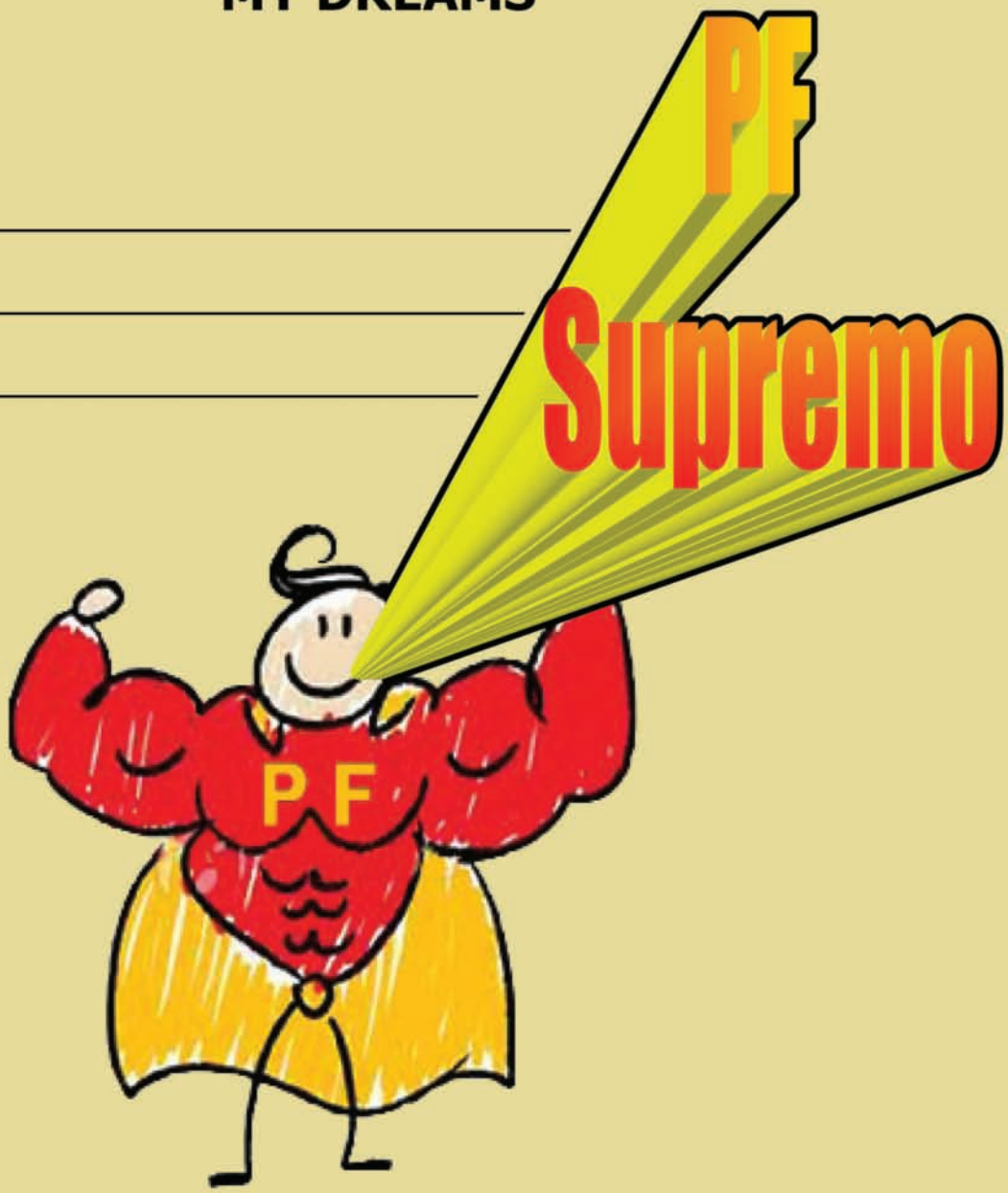
- When you are assertive, be open minded to other people's opinions.
- When you find your power, it is to be used for your **OWN** journey.
- Practicing what you learn gears you up to handle the risks in life.

The biggest task for you as a self-advocate is...

Don't be so intense that you forget your friends!

ENJOY THE RIDE!!!!

MY DREAMS



My Dreams

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How will I make these happen

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

People First Self-Advocacy Word Search

A D R E A M S D R K E E

C C H G E H E G B N G Q

S G C M R C H E V O N U

V D T E I O L M I W A A

K J N O P O W P A L H L

E Z H E N T O T N E C A

O C R G I W A E H D A Z

N R I X E R J N F G A U

J N P R F R F S C E V X

G P E H J M O D E E R F

W K N U F L N W J A J O

T Q Q W T F R V A D O E

ACCEPTANCE **BELONGING** **CHANGE**

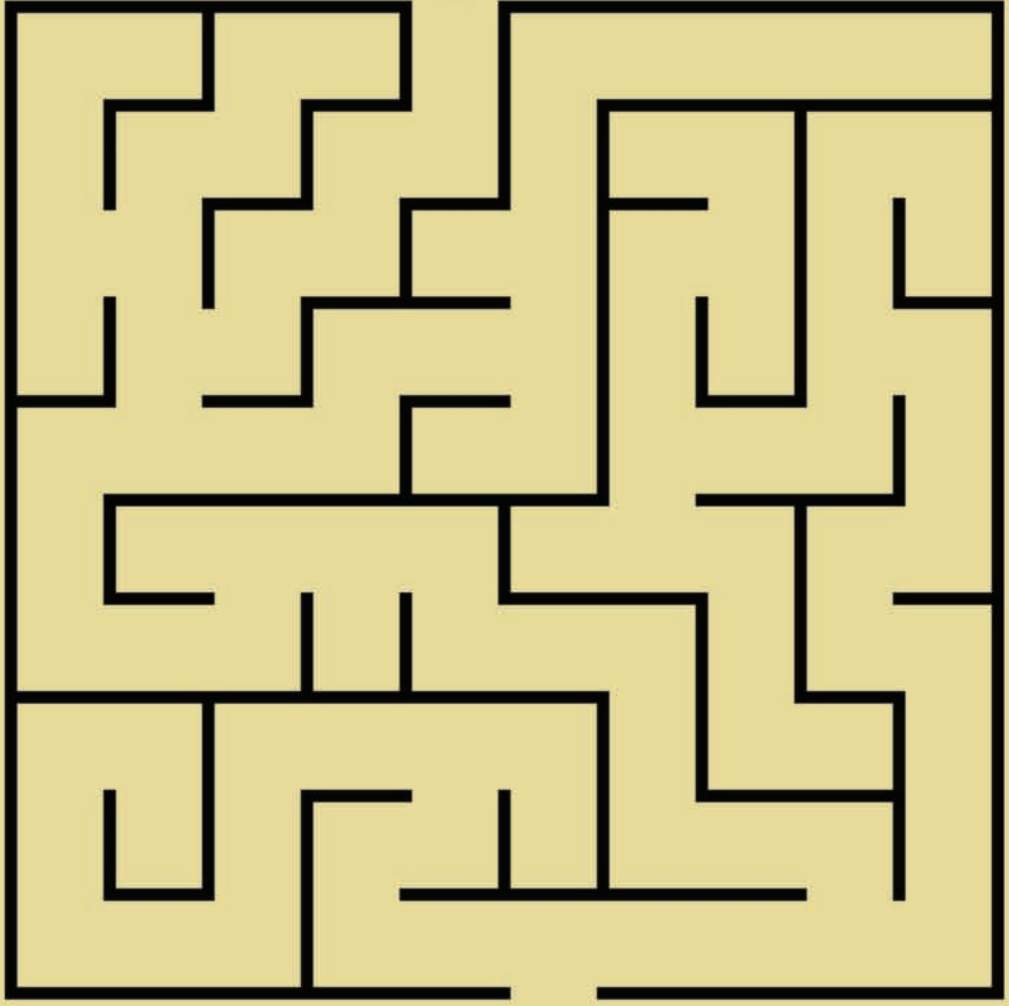
CHOICE **DREAMS** **EQUAL**

FREEDOM **FRIENDS** **FUN**

GROWTH **KNOWLEDGE** **POWER**

The Path to Becoming a People First Supremo

Start



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-Cindi Freshour
-Hallie Long
-Joe Meadours
-Robin Rhoades
-Keith Bonchek
-Kecia Weller

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-Michael Feliciano
-John Cameron

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Educational/Training Committee

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People First® of California, Inc.

Self-Advocates Training Self-Advocates

Your Statewide Self-Advocacy Organization
Run BY and FOR People with Developmental Disabilities

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1225 8th Street, Suite 360 - Sacramento, CA 95814
www.peoplefirstca.org - info@peoplefirstca.org
Phone: (916) 552-6625 - Fax: (916) 441-3494