

**This presentation will  
be recorded for later  
access.**

**Leave your camera off  
and your audio muted  
during the  
presentations.**

**For live captioning,  
click the link in the  
chat.**

# Virtual Transition Fair

**September 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Independent Living Supports**

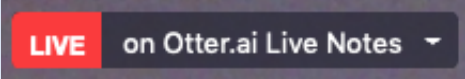
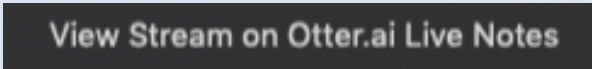


# Welcome!

- Hosts: Emily Barker and Ben Schwartzman
  - Educational Consultants with Transition TN
- This presentation will be recorded for later access.
  - Please leave your camera off and your audio muted during the presentations.
  - You can type questions in the chat box during the presentation.
  - There will be breakout rooms grouped by specific institution type.



# Live Captioning

- Click on arrow by: 
- Click on this: 
- Alternatively, click on the link in the chat.
- Live captioning is instant and will only work in the main Zoom room, not breakout rooms.

# Transition TN

- The goal of Transition TN is to improve transition outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities.
  - Register at [transitiontn.org](http://transitiontn.org)
- Resources from previous transition fairs are available on our website.
- Tonight, our presenters will be sharing information regarding independent living supports.

# Independent Living

- Independence looks different for each one of us.
- True independence encompasses much more than just residential life.
- Independence means living, working, and enjoying life.
  - Relationships with families and friends
  - Work
  - Interests and hobbies
  - Health
  - Money
  - Food
  - Transportation

# Schedule for Tonight

- General Overview of Independent Living Supports in Tennessee
- Residential Services Example
- Participant Panel
- Breakout Rooms
- Final Wrap-up

# Independent Living in Tennessee

## IL Motto

- **Nothing About Us Without Us!**



# Statewide Independent Living Council



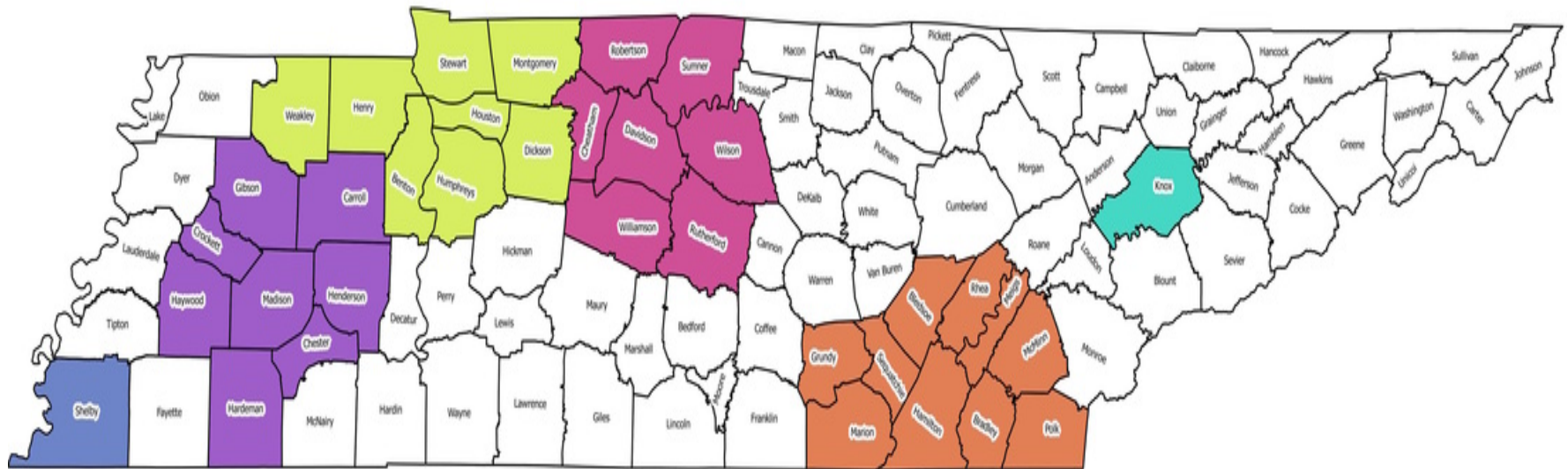
## SILC

- The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), is an independent nonprofit governed by people with disabilities. Our goal is to advance advocacy and independence for Tennesseans with disabilities by collaborating with all interested parties. We believe that people with disabilities are the best experts on their needs.

# Tennessee Centers for Independent Living

- Centers are not residential facilities
- Centers do not make decisions for anyone
- Centers will not do all the work for an individual
  
- Centers will provide: advocacy, skills training, peer support, information and referral, transition services –Nursing home to community life and School to life for young adults

# Current Center Coverage



# OUR PLACE

## N A S H V I L L E

TRANSITION FAIR  
ON INDEPENDENT  
LIVING: HOUSING

Our Place Nashville empowers adults with developmental disabilities by providing homes that are affordable, work that is meaningful, and inclusive communities in which to live.

# What is your residential model?

Our model has individuals with and without disabilities living together, alongside each other, in Our Place Nashville communities.

We currently have two models, with two more in the pipeline:

- 1) Friendship Houses – Individuals with development and/or intellectual disabilities (“friends”) living side by side Vanderbilt graduate students, primarily from the Divinity School. We have two Friendship Houses. The first, which opened in 2015, is made up of one apartment building that has four two-bedroom units and four one-bedroom units. There are four friends, six graduate students, one wife, one teenager, one toddler and one newborn.

# Divinity Friendship House at Vanderbilt - I





Divinity  
Friendship  
House at  
Vanderbilt –  
II

Our second Friendship House, which opened in 2016, accommodates 22 residents: eight friends and twelve students (one of whom is married and has toddler). They live in two apartment buildings, each with 10 1-BR apartments, facing each other across a courtyard. There is a community building which has a large gathering space (big enough for all residents to share a communal meal, a laundry room and mailboxes). The community is gated.





# Divinity Friendship House at Vanderbilt II

---

# What is your second residential model?

In addition to our two Friendship Houses, in 2019 we introduced our first Our Place shared living house. It is a large, three story duplex with 10 one-bedroom units on each side, with each side having a shared kitchen/dining area, laundry and back deck. They share a large living room on one side of the house. We begin integrating older adults into this model. This third house has 20 residents: nine friends, four graduate students and seven older adults.



Our Place Community #3  
Lester House & Cook House

---



Our Place Community  
#4 – Edwards House



Our second shared living community will open in October 2020 with two ranch-style houses, each accommodating eight. We will have 16 residents: seven friends, seven older adults and two resident directors, probably paraprofessionals from MNPS.



Two more shared living communities are in the pipeline for early 2022, adding 80 more residents to Our Place Nashville's roster. One will have five modernized Cape Code style houses, each accommodating 10 people, for a total of 15 friends, 25 older adults and 5 others. The second community will have three houses, accommodating 12 friends, 15 older adults and 3 others. Both communities will have separate buildings for large gatherings – communal meals, meetings, parties and offices.

Two more  
models are in  
the pipeline.

One model is a three-floor apartment building in downtown Nashville. The third floor is Our Place Nashville's, while the other two are earmarked for two other non-profit organizations. This floor will be our pilot to accommodate friends with more profound challenges. The plan is to have 14 residents: three more able friends, three less able friends and eight musicians, all of whom are trained as personal assistants. Each resident has a small one-bedroom apartment, and there is a large common area where they all can gather to eat, watch television and practice/rehearse music.

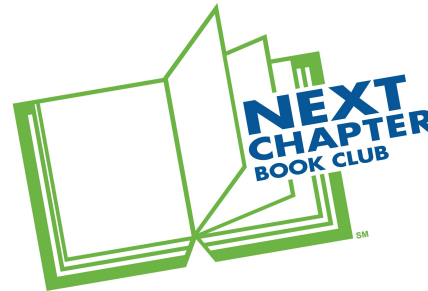
The second model is a community of 12 tiny houses with a mix of friends and neurotypical adults (possibly MNPS paraprofessionals, retired teachers, veterans or refugees).

What other services do you offer related to independent or supported community living?

Our Place Nashville provides/coordinates:

- Weekly communal dinners
- Weekly life skills classes
- Weekly book club
- Twice a week gatherings to talk about our goings on with each other
- Saturday night movie
- Weekly journaling session
- Monthly parents' group
- Seasonal parties
- Bi-annual community-wide meetings
- Training activities
- Arts workshops (singing, songwriting, comedy)

A sample of those services ...



### My Path Back to Career after Traumatic Brain Injury

By [Name]

After my career as a [profession] ended due to a traumatic brain injury, I found myself in a dark place. I had lost my identity, my purpose, and my ability to perform my job. It was a devastating blow that left me feeling lost and alone. However, through the support of my family and the help of a professional counselor, I began to see a path forward. I started by taking small steps, such as volunteering and attending networking events. I also sought out mentors who had experienced similar challenges and were able to provide me with valuable advice and encouragement. Over time, I was able to rebuild my confidence and skills, and eventually landed a new career that was a great fit for my abilities and interests. This journey was not easy, but it was worth it. I am now thriving in my new career and grateful for the support and resources that helped me get back on track.





Do you provide  
any other  
services?

Our Place Nashville guides our residents to job placement programs. When needed, we work with other residents to develop jobs, and have had success in a number of areas, ranging from ASCAP, the YMCA and On the Avenue to volunteer opportunities with the Nashville Human Society and Saddle Up! Until the pandemic, 95% of our resident friends were employed.

We help prepare families for the transition to independent living for their sons and daughters, help them navigate service providers, refer them to resources provided by other non-profits and government agencies, and work to increase awareness of the many gifts our community of friends bring to our city.

# What population do you work with?

We primarily serve adults with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities over the age of 21. To date, they have sufficient mastery of independent living skills to live with a modicum of services in a supportive environment. Our residents are on the autism spectrum, have Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, Fragile X, receptive/expressive language disorder, Tourette's and more. They also are funny, resourceful, kind, hard-working, resilient, present, proud, persistent and over-the-top smart about cars, Disney, video games, genealogy, sports teams (Go Preds!) and the best places in town to grab a burger.

We have had graduate students as supportive community members since 2015 and began integrating older adults into our communities in 2019.



# How can people get connected with your program?

For more information, people can:

- Visit our website at [www.OurPlaceNashville.org](http://www.OurPlaceNashville.org). Scroll to the bottom of our home page where you can ask to join our mailing list.
- Like us on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/OurPlaceNashville](http://www.Facebook.com/OurPlaceNashville).
- Contact our Executive Director, Carolyn Naifeh, at [Carolyn.Naifeh@OurPlaceNashville.org](mailto:Carolyn.Naifeh@OurPlaceNashville.org) or 615-651-0060.
- Ask to be placed on our waiting list.

# How is your program funded?

Our Place Nashville has succeeded because we have the most amazing partners and because we operate on a shoestring.

Since being founded five years ago, we have received two Barnes Housing Trust Fund grants from the city totaling \$3M; these funds were earmarked exclusively for bricks and mortar.

Our funding also comes in the form of foundation grants, in-kind donations, fundraising events and individual donations. Our largest grant, outside of the Barnes Fund, was for \$107,000. Our largest individual donor has given us \$62,000 over the past three years. Our average individual donations are \$25, \$50 or \$100, some recurring monthly. Our legal and public relations/marketing needs are met on a pro bono basis.

Do you have any recommendations for people wanting to replicate your services in their cities?

Partner, partner, partner. Our Place Nashville would not exist without partners, primary among them are the non-profit organizations that provide affordable housing. We do not duplicate the services of other disability groups; we partner with them so we can each stretch our dollars. We now are building relationships with groups focusing on aging. We partner with schools/universities; medical/long-term supports and services groups; city and state leaders; state agencies; employers; faith-based organizations.

If you choose to create a non-profit organizations, secure STRONG Board members who are not shy about fundraising and who can provide you with strategic planning, constructive advice, and introductions to other people who can move your mission forward.

What skills can families/students work on in middle school and high school to prepare for independent living?

Our Place Nashville uses an inventory of transition skills that accurately evaluate individuals according to their current skill level. This will help determine what they will need to work on to gain sufficient mastery of the skills needed to live independently with success.

If you would like a copy of this list, email [Carolyn.Naifeh@OurPlaceNashville.org](mailto:Carolyn.Naifeh@OurPlaceNashville.org) and she will send you a pdf.

## Participant Panel

We will hear from young adults that are currently living independently.

# Participant Panel

What is your name, and what kind of housing do you live in?



## Participant Panel

How long have you been living on your own or with a roommate?

# Participant Panel

How long have you been living in your current housing?

# Participant Panel

How did you find your housing?

## Participant Panel

Do you manage your own healthcare, or does someone help you?

# Participant Panel

How do you prepare your food?

# Participant Panel

What types of transportation do you use to get around your community?

## Participant Panel

How did you know when you were ready to live on your own/with a roommate?

# Participant Panel

What's your favorite part of living on your own?



# Participant Panel

Who helps you?

# Participant Panel

Do you have any challenges living alone? How have you overcome them?

## Participant Panel

What advice would you give to people who want to live on their own? What should they do now to prepare?

# Breakout Rooms

- You selected a breakout room during registration.
- If there is an issue with getting into your breakout room, Emily Barker will help.
- Once we start the breakout rooms, you will need to click the invitation to join your room.
- We will record the breakout rooms and save the chat.

# TN Disability Pathfinder

## *Services Database*

Search for disability and community services from more than 3,400 statewide agencies based on keyword service categories and counties/regions

## *Contact*

Contact staff for assistance via phone, email, or an online request form

- Phone: (800) 640-4636
- Email: [tnpathfinder@vumc.org](mailto:tnpathfinder@vumc.org)
- Website: [www.disabilitypathfinder.org](http://www.disabilitypathfinder.org)

YOUR NAVIGATOR ON THE PATH TO COMMUNITY SERVICES

## TENNESSEE DISABILITY PATHFINDER

Contact our qualified staff for one-on-one assistance

800-640-4636  
or  
[tnpathfinder@vumc.org](mailto:tnpathfinder@vumc.org)

Do you have questions or need help finding services?

Pathfinder staff are here to help Tennesseans navigate available disability services in their area

### CHOOSE YOUR PATH

 Need Help? Contact Us!	 Find Supports and Services Here	 Community Events Near You	 Multicultural Program
-------------------------------	--	----------------------------------	------------------------------

# Final Remarks

- Thank you for joining us!
- Upcoming Transition Fair
  - October 13, 5:30-7:00pm CDT- College Application Supports
  - For more information or to register, check out [transitiontn.org/transition-tuesdays-virtual-transition-fair/](https://transitiontn.org/transition-tuesdays-virtual-transition-fair/)



# Contact Information

- Statewide Independent Living Council of Tennessee
  - Sandi Klink, [sandi@mcil.org](mailto:sandi@mcil.org)
- Our Place Nashville
  - Carolyn Naifeh, [carolyn.naifeh@ourplacenashville.org](mailto:carolyn.naifeh@ourplacenashville.org)
- The Jackson Center for Independent Living
  - Beth James, [information@jcil.tn.org](mailto:information@jcil.tn.org)
- The Memphis Center for Independent Living
  - Christina Clift, [christina@mcil.org](mailto:christina@mcil.org)
  - Tim Wheat, [tim@mcil.org](mailto:tim@mcil.org)
- The TARP Center for Independent Living
  - Desiree Heckard, [info@tarp1.org](mailto:info@tarp1.org)
- Empower Tennessee
  - Brandon Brown, [info@empowertn.org](mailto:info@empowertn.org)
- The disABILITY Resource Center
  - Mike Scripa, [mscripa@drctn.org](mailto:mscripa@drctn.org)
- Brother's Keeper
  - Cecile Huddleston, [info@BrothersKeeperTN.org](mailto:info@BrothersKeeperTN.org)
- Transition TN
  - Emily Barker, [emily.j.barker@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:emily.j.barker@vanderbilt.edu)
  - Ben Schwartzman, [ben.schwartzman@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:ben.schwartzman@vanderbilt.edu)

