

What do families think of this?

‘Being a part of this program has made an incredible difference to our family. I was feeling isolated and felt overwhelmed most days. I have four children, one has severe Autism. His behaviour affects our family life, especially his siblings. I was feeling desperate and that’s when I decided to contact the Family Mentoring Project Co-ordinator and make some changes, all for the better. My mentor (Family Partner) gave me insight and hope. It changed my view on our family life. We are able to share information and emotions without prejudice. I have gained knowledge, confidence and very importantly friendship. It really is a fantastic and inspiring project that I would recommend to other families’.

“it’s great to support and be supported at the same time”



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The Side by Side project and ‘Is There a Better Way?’ workshops, facilitated by Youniverse, are part of a Family Leadership project, funded by the Disability Services Commission.

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SIDE BY SIDE

Families supporting families who are experiencing challenging behaviour



About the program

Developmental Disability WA, in partnership with families have co-designed a Family Mentoring program for families of children (young or adult) whose behaviour can be seen as challenging.

There is a matching process between each family and a Family Partner that takes into consideration where people live and the age and support needs of the child/children. The support of a family partner complements any service, therapy or intervention and does not replace the need for a paid service.

Based on contemporary best practice, this program aims to build trusting and respectful relationships not only with the families involved, but also with professionals and external stakeholders.

What families say about Side by Side:

Fostering hope — ‘I now realise that when there is a crisis there are still other things out there, these other families did various things to get better outcomes and I can too’

Building relationships—‘one the best things about Side by Side has been building relationships over all, feeling part of something and worthy and like I belong somewhere’

Validation of me and my decisions—‘involvement in Side by Side has helped me to stop the self doubt about whether I am doing a good job or making the right decisions’

Strength approach—‘The strengths based training has given me a framework to find a more positive way to talk about my son.’

Flexibility—‘We are all parts of families and sometimes goals need to change depending on what’s happening in each family.’



What is a Family Partner?

Someone who has successfully worked their way through similar experiences and is willing to share their stories, skills and insight into how to better support family members.