



Really Useful Knowledge

www.leapireland.com



Rachel Cassen

Director, Leap

I have been a community service provider, educator, consultant and advocate on behalf of people who are societally devalued for over 30 years.

I have travelled extensively and worked with many different people including persons who have themselves been marginalised by society, advocates, family members and disability service providers.

I am also a mother of two children, one of whom is on the Autism spectrum.



*Assisting Families of Children
with Disabilities to Take Action
for an Inclusive Life*

Who we are:

- Leap is a family-led, non-profit organisation working alongside families who have a son or daughter, brother or sister with a disability.
- We work with families who are seeking to build an inclusive, personally meaningful and enriching life for their family member.



- **Inspire**
 - Share really useful knowledge to encourage families to dream big and believe in possibilities.
- **Imagine**
 - Assist families to find and connect their allies, convene their network and create a vision and plan.
- **Include**
 - Build their family members valued social roles, their relationships and belonging.

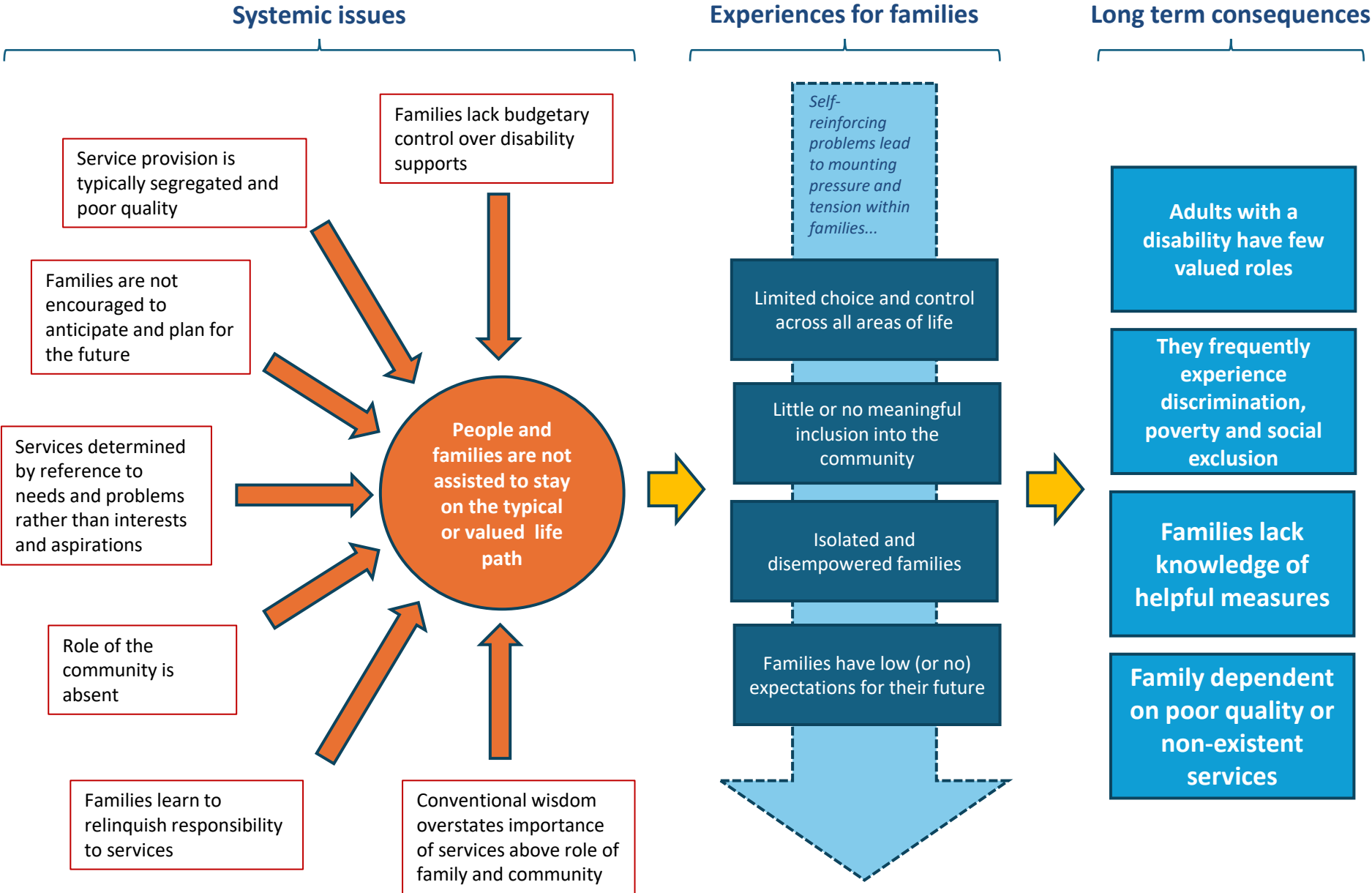


What we value



LEAP

Problem definition



An Inclusive Pathway

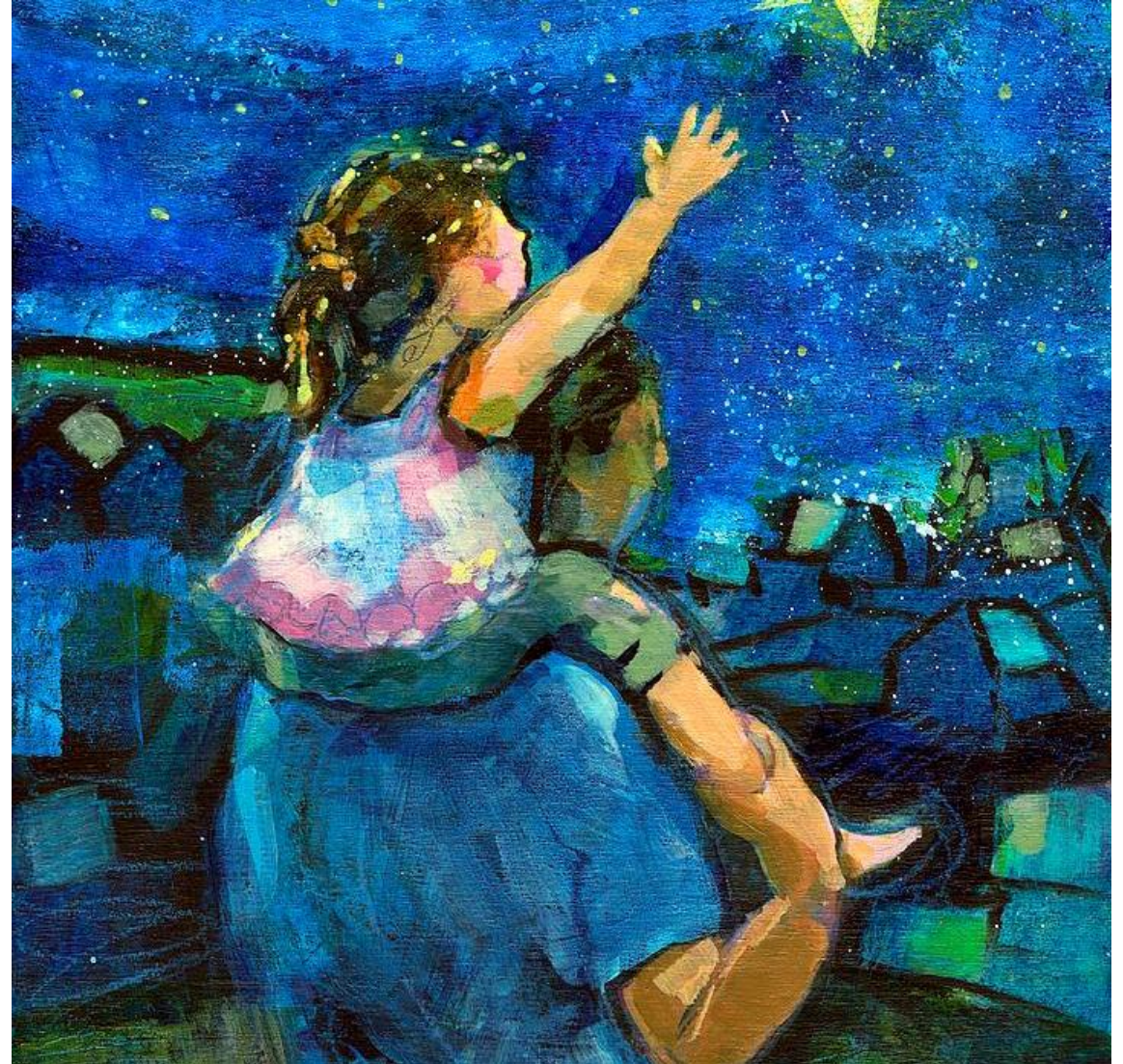
“An inclusive pathway is the primary means to a life of meaning, belonging and possibilities, requiring immersion in the valued, normative pathways of family and community life over the life-span.”

~ Bruce Uditsky



A vision is a description of a desirable future for your family member.

- A vision is like your north star – it gives you direction and focus and lights the way in times of darkness or uncertainty.
- Having clarity of vision allows you to be decisive when facing tough choices and to maintain perspective when facing challenges.

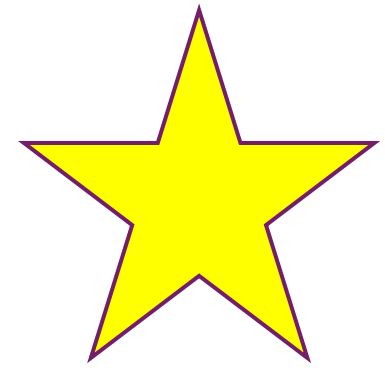


We need a Vision of an Inclusive Life

- To experience a **good life**
- To have the “**best**” as would be true for any of our children
- To know what a meaningful life could like, be like, to see the **normative pathway**
- **Resist** being pushed/pulled from an inclusive life pathway
- To help **create** full meaningful inclusive lives with / for a family member/ an individual:
- Move **forward** and to **stay on track**

“Without a vision, the people perish” (Old Testament)

*“We need to
dream big
and imagine
better”*

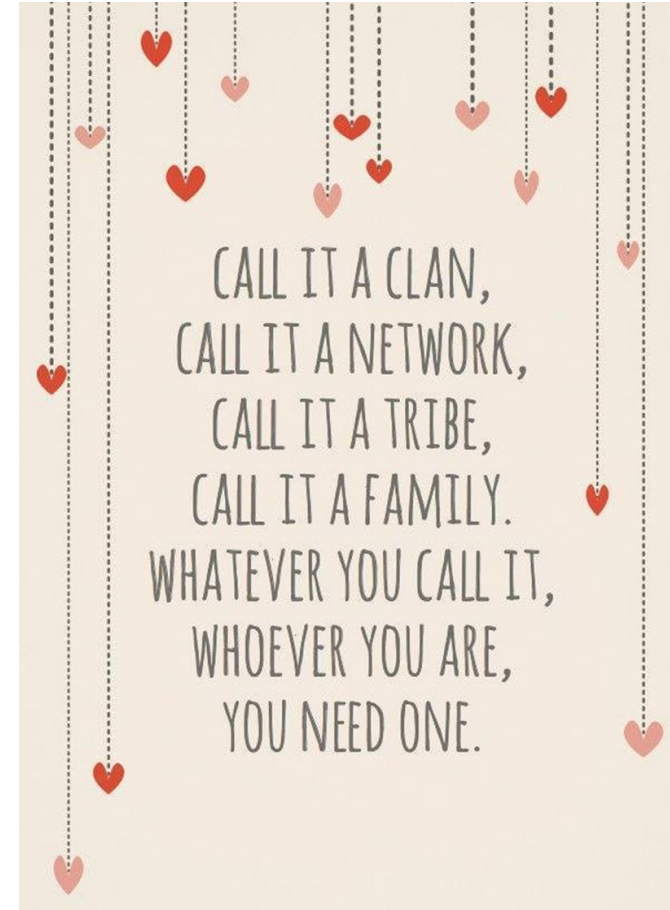


**Inclusion is counter-cultural,
so we need to be intentional
to get what others take for
granted.**



The importance of a developing a network

- We need to connect our assets by reaching out and connecting with others who will share and amplify our vision.



Intentional Family Leadership Development

- Initial Meeting
- Visioning & Planning Session
- Telephone support
- Monthly zoom meetings
- Bespoke training
- Developing community capacity
- Mentoring for job/ life sampling
- Establishing and facilitating a Circle of Support
- Negotiating funding
- Advocacy support

The Art of positive introductions



Accurate positive description
rather than diagnosis and labels

Start with what's strong

Use what is Culturally Valued

How would the person you're
supporting like to be introduced?



Thank you

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