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# News from Cabush, Paul and Associates

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## **Providing for Adult Children with Disabilities** by Joe Cabush

As good parents, you've given lots of love and support, advocated for your child, gone to IEP meetings, 504 meetings, evaluations, and specialists. You've kept the faith when everything seemed impossible and *read too many magazines during your kid's appointments*.

But what about parenting a young adult? It's not something I like to think about but I have found it very reassuring and relieving to know that there are things I can do now should I ever become disabled or die suddenly. Many children appreciate knowing they will be cared for and may voluntarily grant you or a trustee these powers of attorney. While it's a legal process, the psychology of it makes sense to many young adults. So, don't hesitate to discuss with your young adult and other family members what they think they can reasonably manage such as basic budgeting, finances, emergencies, retirement, SSI payments, filing taxes, health insurance, health decisions, etc. Sometimes guardianship just makes negotiating all of the above simpler. Here are some steps to take now if you haven't yet:

- Review your will
- Consider health care power of attorney and/or guardianship
- Attend support groups and volunteer at a PTA or Special Ed PTA
- Contact the ARC of NoVA or a disability lawyer
- Consider an Able Account
- Find mutual parental support groups such as FA, NAMI, PTA, SEPTA
- Contact DARS and the CSB to find out about post high school resources such as job coaching, independent living skills, and mental health supports.
- Find out about Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid as well as a DD (developmental disability) waiver, housing and food supported by the Commonwealth of VA.

[The Arc Northern Virginia](#)

[ABLE Accounts | Special Needs Trust Program](#)

[NAMI Family-to-Family - National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

[Supported Employment Services | Community Services Board](#)

[Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services](#)

[Fairfax County Special Education PTA](#)

[Families Anonymous](#)

## **The 30 Minute Challenge** by David Paul

I think it is fair to say that parenting may be one of the hardest jobs you will ever have. It is particularly difficult when you are struggling to connect and understand your child in the face of their defiance, isolation, and disconnection. A simple, yet powerful way to help interrupt this trend is to carve out 30 minutes once a week to spend with your child. And here is the kicker – 30 minutes doing whatever they want to do with you. The ask sounds something like, "I was thinking this weekend we could spend 30 minutes together – just you and me – doing whatever you want to do." And yes, this could mean spending 30 minutes playing Minecraft or Mario Kart. Try hard not to veto their ideas and definitely do not use this time to work on questions about school, friendships, chores, etc. The spirit of the 30 minutes is to delight in what your child delights in! Take the challenge and see what happens.

## The Power of Friends Groups



Groups create a safe place for shared new experiences, finding acceptance, and challenging oneself. Adventures through our Friends Groups for Middle School, High School, and Young Adults are offered year round. When new groups of up to 6 students form, there is always a beginning feeling of uncertainty which quickly turns into confidence in the ability to find common ground and mutual acceptance.

Three of the groups running now began in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and are soon to be in 12<sup>th</sup> grade. When we resume in the Fall, these groups will be dedicated *Seniors Groups* where we devote special attention to post-grad programs/college. During the past 4 years, those groups welcomed new members along the way and improvised with zoom meetings and outdoor meetings during the pandemic. For over 25 years, we have facilitated over 5,000 Friends Group sessions where young people form life-long friendships through the power of support groups. "Social skills" training groups, per se, are not generally effective in translating skills out to real life. In our unique model we have found that when counselors provide support, coaching, and real life experiences during group meetings, these skills gain traction. We continue to see the power of peer support and connection during the sea change of adolescence among these students. Favorite activities of past summer groups:

- Hiking Billy Goat Trail
- Frisbee Golf Course
- Volleyball, Bocce Ball and BBQ
- Top Golf
- Go-Karts
- Air and Space Museum
- Escape Room
- Indoor rock climbing
- Laser Tag
- Project Horse



## Welcome to Kenneth Johnson, LCSW



Kenneth is a graduate of George Mason University for both his BSW and MSW degrees. Kenneth previously worked for Fairfax County Public Schools as a school social worker and currently works full-time for Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic District Court system as a program manager and therapist. Kenneth's specialties include, Adolescent Growth and Development, Developmental Disabilities, Parent-Child Relational Issues, Trauma, and Crisis Intervention.