

National Core Indicators™ Data Highlight



What do NCI Data Tell Us About Participation in Religious Services or Spiritual Practice and Having Friends Who Aren't Staff or Family?

In the 2017-2018 In-Person Survey data collection cycle, 41% of respondents said that they attended a religious service or spiritual practice at least once in the past month.

Why does it matter? Engagement in religious services or spiritual practice is a way that many people find community, cultural identity and connections. For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), faith communities can provide the same kind of welcome and belonging. To reinforce that aspiration, NCI data from the 2017-2018 In-Person Survey show that people who attended religious services or engaged in spiritual practices were more likely to have friends who were not family or paid staff – 81% compared to 75% of people who didn't attend services or engaged in a spiritual practice. Person-centered practices emphasize the importance of helping people to maximize both paid supports as well as natural supports to further goals such as inclusion, employment and relationships. And perhaps most important, person centered planning uses discovery of rituals people find meaningful to assure the presence of what is important to the person. Faith communities can contribute to the realization of a person's goals in these areas, with information and guidance.

Questions to ask: Are person centered planning frameworks, such as Charting the Life Course, that address spiritual preferences and participation in faith communities, or rituals available to case managers? How can local providers or administrative agencies work with community-based organizations to include faith leaders in community engagement efforts? How can the state support community-based organizations including service providers and advocacy groups to ensure people with I/DD are included in the spiritual communities of their choice?

Want to know more?

- American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities & The Arc. (2010). *Spirituality: A joint position statement of AAIDD and the Arc*. Washington, D.C.: Authors <https://aaidd.org/news-policy/policy/position-statements/spirituality>
- Carter, E.W., Kleinert, H.L., LoBianco, T.F., Sheppard-Jones, K., Butler, L.N., & Tyree, M.S. (2015). Congregational participation of a national sample of adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*. Vol 53. No. 6, 381-393.
- Charting the Life Course™. Understanding: Life Domains. UMKC Center on Human Development. <http://www.lifecoursetools.com/principles/understanding-life-domains/>
- Taylor, C.E., Carter, E.W., Annandale, N.H., Boehm, T.L., & Logeman, A.K. (2014). *Welcoming People with Developmental Disabilities and Their Families :A Practical Guide for Congregations*. Vanderbilt Kennedy Center. <https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/assets/files/resources/CongregationPracticeGuide.pdf>
- TASH. (2010). TASH resolution on spirituality. Baltimore, MD: Author. <https://tash.org/about/resolutions/tash-resolution-supports-community/>

