

# Finding the Balance Between Safety and Dignity of Risk

Presented by:

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Safety

Dignity of Risk





the learning community  
for person centered practices



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
Center on Disability  
& Development



# Introduction





What  
Does  
Dignity of  
Risk  
Mean to  
You?




What's the  
riskiest  
thing  
you've  
ever done?

Think about your child or student, do they have the same opportunity to take risks?



# How Did It Feel When Others Focused Just on Health and Safety?

- Made me feel different from others, treated like a baby
- Like I wasn't making progress, my skills weren't growing
- Made me annoyed, frustrated, unhappy
- I hated being at school, imprisoned
- Made me not trust adults, even my mom

A child wearing a white protective suit and a black helmet is being adjusted by an adult. The child is looking upwards. The background is dark, suggesting an outdoor setting at dusk or night. The text "What Are Your Worries/Concerns?" is overlaid in white serif font.

What Are Your  
Worries/Concerns?



# Taking Risks Can Lead To:

- Increased confidence
- Gaining more independence
- Overcoming fears
- Pride and accomplishment
- More opportunities
- Learning from mistakes





Safety



Dignity  
of Risk



Dignity of  
Risk



Safety



Dignity  
of Risk

How do we help others  
to make informed  
choices when it comes  
to risk?



## Important For

- Health & Safety
- Being Valued

## Important To

- People
- Status & Control
- Things To Do/ Places To Go
- Routines
- Identity and Culture
- Pace of Life
- Things To Have
- Purpose and Meaning

A Quick  
Reminder!

Foundation  
of Person-  
Centered  
Thinking

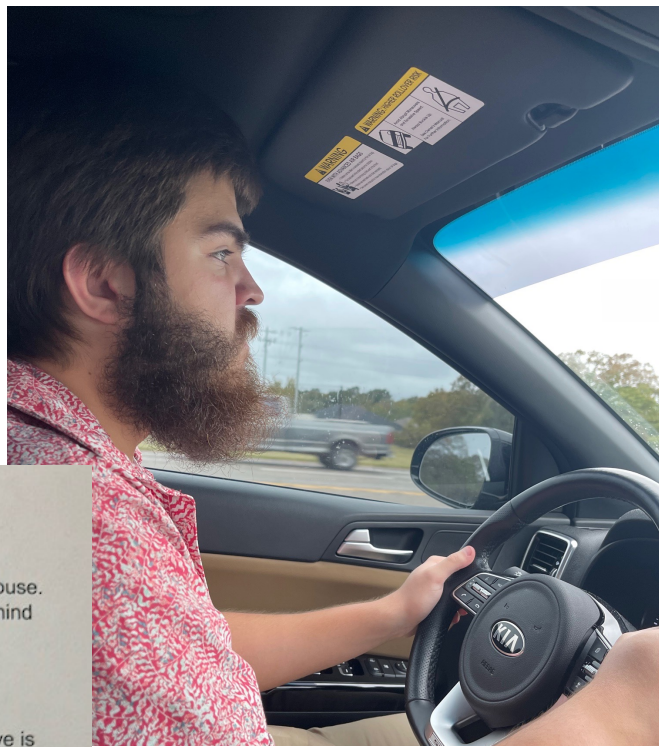
# Ask yourself these questions:

- Have you discovered the Important To tied to that experience/risk?
- Have you taken steps to inform them of any risks associated with that experience? Have you discussed and addressed the Important For of the experience...find the balance? Made accommodations as needed?
- Did you discuss what was learned from their attempt? Even if it was a negative experience?
- Did you discuss what they think should be done differently next time? Do they want to try again?
- Would YOU have to get permission before doing it? Even if there was a possibility of injury or if it's harmful to your health?
- Would YOU have to prove you could do it perfectly before taking that risk?

# Riding a Bike Around Town

- What was the Important To tied to that wanting to learn to ride a bike?
- Did we talk about the risks associated with riding a bike? Did we talk about staying safe? Did we practice?
- What happened the first time you rode your bike to campus? Did anyone follow you to watch?
- What did you decide you would do differently next time? Did you keep riding?
- What was the next big negative bike riding experience we learned from?
- I had to ask myself:
  - Would I have to get permission before doing it? Even if there was a possibility of injury or if it's harmful to your health?
  - Would I have to prove I could do it perfectly before taking the risk of riding a bike around town?





### After School Safety Rules for Ty

1. When you get off the bus, use your keys to go in the house. Be sure the kitty doesn't get out and **lock the door** behind you.
2. Call mom to let her know you are home and are safe.
3. You can make yourself a snack. No cooking! Microwave is okay for popcorn.
4. If someone rings the doorbell, don't answer it. Pretend that you are not home. Don't go to the window of the door to look.
5. Do not go outside unless mom or dad are home.
6. In case of a fire- leave the house and go to the neighbor's house. If you have your phone, call 911 **after** you leave the house. Call mom or dad after you call 911. Don't worry about toys or the kitty. The firefighters will save her.



# Experiences Which Led to Ty Getting His License

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Staying Home Alone (6<sup>th</sup> grade)

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Bike (8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

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BTD Bus (10<sup>th</sup> Grade)

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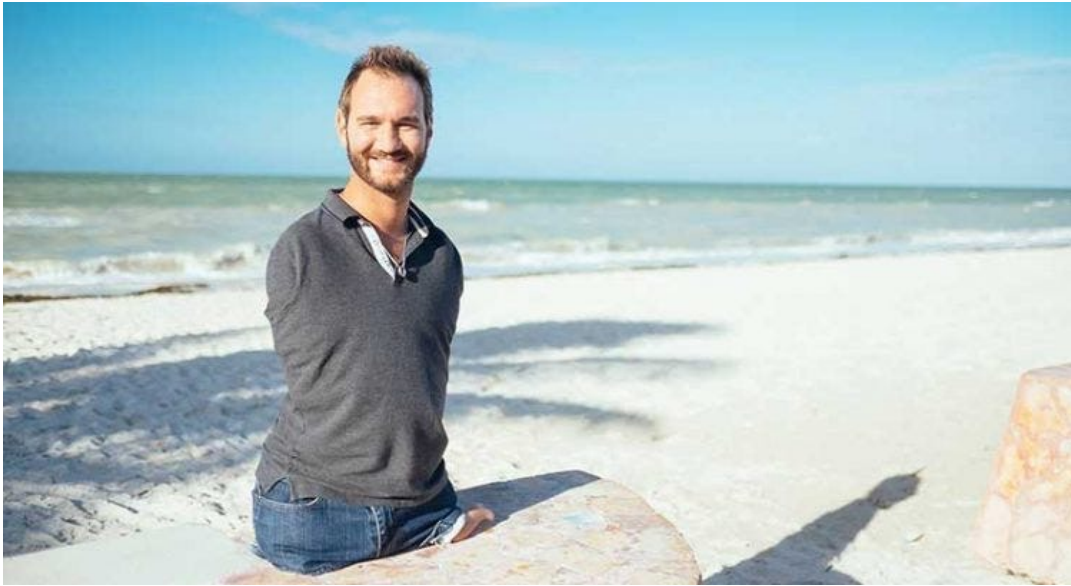
Uber (10<sup>th</sup> Grade)

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Parent Taught Drivers Ed (11<sup>th</sup> Grade)

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Driver License (12<sup>th</sup> Grade)



“Risk, then, is not just part of life. It is life. The place between your comfort zone and your dream is where life takes place. It's the high-anxiety zone, but it's also where you discover who you are.” –Nick Vujicik



“Independent Living isn't doing everything by yourself — it's being in control of how things are done.” – Judy Heumann

Questions?  
Thank you!

