

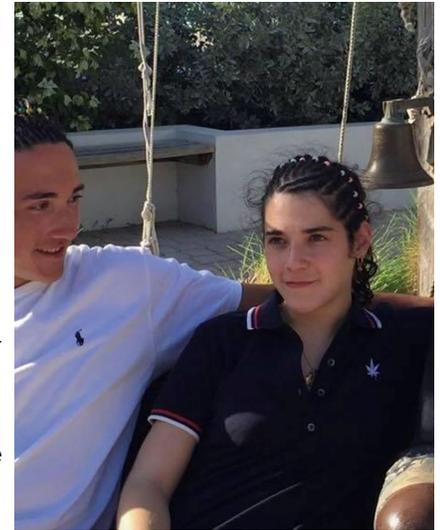


'Hi. I'm Alex.'

"Hi. My name is Alex Mendoza. I am 30 years old and live in Rochester, Massachusetts. I work at the Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust as an office worker and volunteer at Project Grow Integrated Preschool in Rochester. I am a student and have taken photography and childcare classes at Bristol Community College. I practice yoga at the YMCA and I am a swimmer too. I am a horse back rider and ride competitively. I enjoy spending time with my family and friends and love to travel. My life is pretty full. Oh, and by the way, I have cerebral palsy."

Alex Mendoza and her mother, Cathy, recently shared all this information at our recent organization wide staff meeting, Think 'N Grow. They spoke to the group about Alex's experiences in receiving services and what is most important to her. As service providers, it is always important for us to hear from the people we support and their family about what matters most to them.

What has always been first and foremost for Alex is that whatever she does, it is something that she chooses and in a manner which suits her. That is why she and her family have chosen her supports using the Agency With Choice model. This form of service delivery allows Alex to hire staff who will help her plan and support her during the week. Alex and her family have been clear that she does not want to be in a "traditional program" but instead have access to a wide range of supports that will help her reach her vision.



'Alex and her younger brother, Stephen, on vacation in Turks and Caicos.'

They have worked hard to protect Alex's desire of being seen as a 30 year old woman who has much to offer. When situations have come up where key decision-makers need to know how important these supports are to Alex, she and her family bring her photo album to illustrate what Alex's life is like. And typically, upon seeing how Alex's valued social roles have helped her to gain access to more of 'the good things of life' (like belonging, respect, security, good health, autonomy, etc.), has made it more likely that others will want the same for her.

The biggest challenge for Alex is in finding the right people to support her. They should ideally share her interests, be of similar age, fun to be with, and competent in supporting Alex's needs. Fortunately, Alex has that support with Julie Papadakis. Julie is an amazing support person to Alex. Julie knows Alex well, listens to her and works to be creative in finding ways to support Alex in roles that are valued. Isn't this what all of us need? Don't we all need a 'Julie' in our lives? Someone in our corner helping us figure it all out and then championing us along the way.

~Written by Karin Bonesteel

Stay Connected With Us. We Miss You Too!

Find resources, ask questions and find answers by visiting us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/nemasketgroup> and visit our Family Connections Center at <https://www.facebook.com/familyconnectionscenter>

#TogetherAtHome

People who fill roles that are valued by others (example: photographer, employee, co-worker, voter, musician, volunteer, college student) will be granted the good things of life.

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5K WALK/RUN

Due to COVID19 we have changed the way we will do our 7th Annual 5K Walk/Run this year.

#5KYOURWAY

You choose the day between May 1st thru May 31st to walk/run your favorite route to support and raise awareness for The Nemasket Group. Take a selfie showing your support and we will post it on our website and facebook page.



In Memory of Conrad Stone

For more information and to register, visit our website at www.NemasketGroup.org

No Registration Fee. Donations Appreciated.



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A Full Life Ahead

Full Life Ahead is a series of monthly workshops designed for parents and caregivers as they plan for the future of their loved one with a disability. Various workshop topics such as friendships, transition, employment, housing and financial planning are offered. The workshops and resources provided in this series will help lead to interdependent, full lives in the community for people with disabilities.

May 26th, 2020 from 6-8 p.m.

Leaving the School System – what's next?

Please email Kathleen Amaral know if interested at:
kathleen@massfamilies.org

Stay tuned for changes.

Workshop will hopefully be offered "remotely"

amazon

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Did you know that when you shop for essentials at smile.amazon.com/ch/22-2563405, AmazonSmile donates to The Nemasket Group, Inc? It's easy and helps our community!