HOW CAN WE DEVELOP TEAMS?

The Support Team Network teaches congregations, organizations, and other groups how to develop Support Teams through a Community Support Team Initiative.

An Initiative is a way a community can share common workshops training, and experiences throughout a year to empower persons to develop Support Teams for many years to come.

An Initiative involves five intentional steps:

- **Exploring**—getting ready for an Initiative.
- **Preparing**—introducing the Team Approach, inviting persons to participate.
- **Training**—involving persons in a Support Team Development Training.
- **Developing**—applying what was learned in the training to develop Support Teams.
- **Supporting**—sustaining healthy Support Teams and networking with one another.

A Community Support Team Initiative can involve one congregation or organization, or ideally, multiple groups in a community.

A community may be defined as a neighborhood, suburb, city, town, county, or region.

Contact The Support Team Network, or visit our Web site at [www.SupportTeam.org](http://www.SupportTeam.org) to learn more about hosting a Support Team Initiative in your organization, congregation, or community.

The Support Team Network (STN) is a national training and resource center for the development of volunteer Support Teams for persons with health concerns or other special needs.

The Support Team Network has trained thousands of persons to begin Support Teams since 1994. Teams were originally formed for persons with HIV disease.

The Network expanded to include teams for persons with any health concern or other special needs in 1997.

We teach communities how to develop teams for whatever needs they want to address.

The Support Team Network is sponsored by:
- The 1917 Clinic at UAB,
- The UAB Center for AIDS Research, and
- The UAB School of Medicine.

**CONTACT US**

The Support Team Network
188 Community Care Building
908 S. 20th ST
Birmingham, AL 35294-2050

Local Phone: 205-975-9129
Toll-Free: 877-614-9129
Fax: 205-975-6448
E-Mail: staff@SupportTeam.org

**Support Teams**

Working together to share the care!

- Do what you can,
- When you can,
- In a coordinated way,
- With a built-in support system
WHAT IS A SUPPORT TEAM?

A Support Team is a group of volunteers working together to provide practical, emotional, and spiritual support to individuals and families with health concerns or other special needs.

WHAT DOES A SUPPORT TEAM DO?

A team’s activities may include transportation to the doctor or grocery store, household or yard chores. Some people enjoy running errands, preparing meals, or providing social outings. Others prefer to visit, make phone calls, or provide a break for caregivers.

Team Members simply do what they enjoy doing for others, when they are able, in an organized way, with a built-in support system.

WHY ARE SUPPORT TEAMS NEEDED?

In general, people are living longer with fewer resources. Improved medical treatments help people live longer with certain illnesses, but not always with the quality of life desired.

Families are also more geographically dispersed and two-income families create new caregiving challenges.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF A TEAM APPROACH?

A team approach gives volunteers maximum time flexibility, a built-in support system, and the opportunity to do what they love to do.

Each Team Member’s time involvement is flexible and guilt-free from month to month. Each Support Team has an open door and can rotate on or off the team at anytime.

WHO CAN FORM TEAMS?

Anyone can start a Support Team! Persons from congregations, civic groups, businesses, university students, organizations, neighbors, and friends may want to form a team.

WHAT ARE DIFFERENT WAYS TO ORGANIZE A SUPPORT TEAM?

There are different Support Team models that allow a Team to organize in different ways depending on the need.

- The Basic Model focuses on one person/family and meets a variety of needs.
- The Mission Model focuses on the common need of several persons.
- The Facility Model focuses on one place and meets some of the needs of persons at that site.
- The Education or Prevention Model focuses on sharing important information in creative ways.

WHAT PREPARATION IS NEEDED TO SERVE ON A SUPPORT TEAM?

Orientation usually takes only two to three hours and can be scheduled in one, two, or three sessions on weekdays, evenings, or weekends.

CAN SUPPORT TEAMS WORK WITHIN PROGRAMS ALREADY IN PLACE?

Yes, a team approach can be integrated into any existing program or ministry! Team principles can also be applied to existing groups to help them function more effectively.

Support Teams can be formed for persons with any health concern. Teams are also helpful to seniors, persons with disabilities, children with special needs, and much more.

HOW IS A TEAM SUPPORTED?

Each Support Team meets once a month for fifty-nine minutes (or less) to communicate, educate, and coordinate.

A team designates a Support Team Leader to manage the schedule and meetings, and a Coach can help utilize community resources.

The Support Team Network staff is available for toll-free phone or e-mail support Monday through Friday, 8-5 (CST).