

## 9.3 ADVOCATE AND FRIEND INVOLVEMENT

We value the essential roles that friends and advocates play in the lives of people with disabilities. These roles include:

- Providing support, love, caring and understanding;
- Providing a person with unconditional acceptance;
- Promotion of self esteem through:
  - The provision of a sense of connection to the larger community and,
  - The value of being cared for by someone who is not paid to care;
- Acting as advocates whose prime interest is the person whom we serve;
- Acting as an additional monitoring agent;
- Ensuring individuals have access to legal entities for appropriate representation, self-help support services, and advocacy support services.

Given the importance of these roles, we encourage the participation of all friends and advocates in the lives of those people we support. We respect the differences between people and the different types of relationships that may develop. We will, with the knowledge and consent of the individual:

- Encourage friends and advocates to visit the homes at any time;
- Foster in whatever ways possible the relationship between friends and advocates and the people whom we serve;
- Keep friends and advocates aware of happenings, issues, and concerns with respect to the people that we serve;
- Ensure that friends and advocates are aware of planning that concerns their friend and we will make every effort to include them in the planning process.

### **Linking Policies:**

- 1.1 Vision & Mission Statements
- 1.2 Guiding Principles
- 1.8 Code of Ethics
- 1.12 Corporate Responsibility Policy
- 9.1 Rights & Responsibilities of People with Disabilities
- 9.4 Promoting Friendships of People with Disabilities
- 9.5 Involvement in Decision Making