Defining Natural Supports

Natural supports are personal relationships typically developed in the community which involve give-and-take. These relationships enhance the quality and security of lives for people. They may include:

- family relationships
- friendships within the community
- association with fellow students in regular classrooms
- people from a 12 step meeting
- members of a congregation
- acquaintances from a support group
- colleagues at the work place
- daily or regular contacts made with those who work in the neighborhood
- associations developed thru participation in clubs, organizations or civic activities

"My advocate wife sees to it nobody gives me a raw deal. I don't know where I'd be today if it hadn't been for my wife."

- Consumer

"...paid providers will come and go... The only constant in anyone's life is the connection with family and friends."

- Cathy Ludlum

"I have heard people say 'I am getting more out of this support group than from my doctor, my talk therapist, or anywhere else.'"

- Consumer

"Having a friend is a way of feeling comfortable with who I am, having more esteem and respect—esteem and faith in myself and trust to let go and be who I am in a social setting..."

- Consumer