

# 6a2

## Guide

### Do

Draw on the expertise of a person who knows their way around the people and places of the community.

### Story

'Bill is a teenager who has traumatic brain injury and loves heavy metal music, but there are no music clubs in his part of town. A member of his group contacted a music shop in the next town and asked for help. The shopkeeper

invited them in to talk. When they met, the shopkeeper was friendly and gave them the names of three local bands. He said if it didn't work out, come back and talk to him again'.  
*(Amado et al 1990, p33)*

**Hints & Hazards**

A guide is often someone who is an expert on the local community or the community of interest, but may have no formal relationship with the care system. The guide will know a lot of people and be good at linking people together. The guide may have a personal commitment in inclusion. Effective guides have stopped trying to 'fix' the person. They are trusted by people in the community and this is not because they have any institutional authority. They believe that the community has rich veins of hospitality. Read more about community guides in *McKnight 1995, pp119-122*.

Beware of trying to turn the guide into part of the service system, avoid asking them to formal meetings or involving them in paperwork. You will often find that it is their informal and 'free' style that makes them such a good guide. Avoid benevolent coercion – even for the best of reasons.