



This program is fully funded by DDRB

WILLOWSWAY



# Participant Handbook

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Welcome to Project HEART!

This handbook is to help you have the best experience with Project HEART possible. Your participation in Project HEART will be filled with opportunities to make new friends, learn new skills and gain independence, all while having fun at the same time.

We look forward to working with you and getting to know you better.

Sincerely,

Project HEART



## CONTINUED....

12. We encourage you to get to know others in class and develop friendships. For your privacy and safety, we ask you wait to share any contact information until after you have met someone in several classes. It is best to share only your phone number until you have shared some activities outside of classes.
13. It is important for you keep specific information about your diagnosis, health, medications and personal relationships private. If you wish to ask a question or make a comment in class which may share private information, please:
  - a. Speak first with a Project HEART Trainer or Associate in a quiet area away from the group.
  - b. Keep the information shared "G" rated.
  - c. Use only first names.
  - d. Be considerate of others feelings and opinions.
14. If you are uncomfortable with a question someone asks you, it is okay to say "That is personal," then change the subject. Subjects could include the weather, class topic, favorite TV show or a current movie.



## ADVANCED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

For those interested in more advanced learning, Project HEART allows class participants the opportunity to become a class co-instructor. Participants become eligible by attending classes to learn about living a healthier life and developing the skills need to talk in front of others. Each co-instructor then works with Project HEART staff to plan and design classes.

## YOUR SATISFACTION

Project HEART develops and provides classes we believe meet your needs and interests. If you have suggestions for class learning topics or experiences you'd like us to offer, please share them with us in person, by phone or e-mail. Thank you.

## CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

1. Please be on time to class.
2. If you need to cancel, please call 636-757-0541 before class is scheduled to begin.
3. Be ready to try things that are new and different. Please say "no thank you" if you are asked to try something which you do not want to do.
4. Cell phones are welcome; however, we ask they be off during class. If a cell phone is necessary for you to carry:
  - a. Please set on "vibrate."
  - b. Please step out of the room to have a conversation.
5. Each person's questions and ideas are important. Please respect other class participants by:
  - a. waiting your turn.
  - b. raising your hand to be called on by the trainer.
  - c. allowing one person to talk at a time.
  - d. asking your question or making your comment in simple terms and a short time frame.
6. All participants are to be treated with respect. We encourage:
  - a. positive and polite words.
  - b. hand shakes and high fives.
  - c. the use of please, thank you, I'm sorry, excuse me and no thank you.
7. Many of the activities require that you interact and cooperate with others, so please work together.
8. While sitting or standing, please provide yourself and others plenty of space to participate comfortably.
9. We encourage healthy eating habits. Lemonade, water, ice tea, fruit drinks are welcome. Water will be provided.
10. Making friends is an important part of Project HEART. We ask that you look your best when you come to class, which encourages others to talk to you. REMEMBER your smile is the most important thing you wear.
11. When you see someone you do not know, please introduce yourself by:
  - a. making eye contact.
  - b. shaking hands.
  - c. saying your name.
  - d. politely ask their name.



## WHO WE ARE

Project HEART offers FREE education classes for people 16 years and older with a developmental disability living in St. Charles County. Classes focus on health related topics such as cooking and nutrition, exercising, relationships and much more.

The Project HEART philosophy is that each of us learns best by doing and having fun. Each class is designed for everyone to participate, not just sit and listen. Because of the unique needs of each participant, classroom information and activities change to accommodate learning styles and abilities.

## CLASS INFORMATION

- Project HEART is *FREE* to individuals 16 years and older with a developmental disability living in St. Charles County.
- Calendars are developed and distributed by the 15th of the previous month, providing several weeks to register before the class(es) will be held. Calendars are sent by e-mail or can be accessed on the Project HEART webpage at [www.willowsway.org](http://www.willowsway.org). If you do not have access to a computer, please let Project HEART staff know and we will be sure you get the information you need on a monthly basis.
- Class topics, days of the week and times change each month to accommodate your interests and schedule.
- Classes are held at various locations throughout St. Charles County.
- You may choose to attend any Project HEART class that is offered.
- When you register, we will help you choose the classes which best match your learning style and personality.
- Be sure you have transportation to and from classes you attend.
- Due to participation demands, we ask that you only register for one cooking class per month.
- We want Project HEART classes to be fun for you while teaching you information to live a healthier and happier life. To help us know how much you have learned, you will be asked five easy-to-answer questions on the class topic before and after class. Assistance is provided, as needed. Don't stress though, it's our job to make you look smarter by the end of class.

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Project HEART monthly calendars are available at [www.willowsway.org](http://www.willowsway.org)

Individuals, families, community members and agencies may receive a monthly calendar by submitting their name and email address to [tonic@willowsway.org](mailto:tonic@willowsway.org).

1. Call Project HEART staff at 636.757.0541 for class availability and registration.
1. Access information online at [www.willowsway.org](http://www.willowsway.org)
2. Complete a HEART packet.
3. Make sure you have a support person to attend with you if you receive daily support.

## CANCELLATION

If you need to cancel your registration for a class:

Please contact Sara Willis at 636.757.0541 before the class is scheduled to begin. If you do not get an answer, please leave a message.

Project HEART cancelled classes:

1. Sometimes classes are cancelled due to bad weather. On days that there is excessive heat, thunderstorms, tornado warnings, snow or ice, Project HEART will decide by noon if the class will be cancelled or continued. If the class is cancelled, every effort will be made to contact individuals registered for class. However, we also encourage you to call 636.757.0541, in which a message will be left notifying you of class cancellation.
2. Classes may be cancelled due to other circumstances. If this should happen, every effort will be made to contact individuals registered for class and a message will be left at 636.757.0541.