

**Resources, Services
& Opportunities for
Community
Involvement**

- Food & Nutrition
- Employment
- Education & Training
- Health & Medical
- Housing
- Utilities
- Legal Assistance
- Mental Health & Counseling
- Transportation
- Clothing
- Childcare
- Recovery from Addictions
- Immigration & Cultural Connections
- Money Management
- Communication & Conflict Resolution
- Healthy Relationships: Parents & Children
- Healthy Relationships: Partners
- Recreation & Social Opportunities
- Senior Services
- Special Challenges
- Volunteerism & Political Activism

The GEARS CONNECTION

a neighborhood-based, self-advocacy center

When GEARS (Gaining Empowerment, Access, Responsibility & Support) began just four years ago, we did most of our work during 'coaching' visits to resident's homes. We knew that many neighbors appreciated the convenience of this and were able to participate with GEARS despite the typical barriers such as lack of transportation and childcare. Coaches have encouraged hundreds of families to set their goals and then have assisted them in identifying the steps to achieve those aspirations. This continues to be a successful model, but we have realized that not every family needs or desires this level of involvement.

Some families already know their goals and how to achieve them; they simply need access to additional resources and services. Other families appreciate home visits, but feel that they want opportunities to meet in the community so that they can break the pattern of isolation in their lives. In addition, our collaborative partners continue to request that we be present at their locations to supplement the services they can offer to drop-in visitors. From these responses, we developed the GEARS CONNECTION model. We now have six sites open and operating in southeast Portland.

Community members come by to receive information and referrals regarding resources and services. Yet, the GEARS CONNECTION sites are more than traditional resource centers. These spaces are staffed by GEARS coaches and volunteers who offer emotional support and self-advocacy skill-building in addition to referrals. We help individuals and families navigate through the social service network. Just as we do with all GEARS participants, we invite those who utilize our centers to 'give back' to the community by volunteering at the sites.

We have placed GEARS CONNECTION sites at a variety of locations: Lane Middle School, SE Works (a neighborhood job center), two branches of Adult and Family Services, the Southeast Community Court and the Providence Family Health Clinic. This model adapts easily to a variety of settings and we hope to develop a mobile GEARS CONNECTION site soon. We continue to offer in-home visits and extensive coaching for those families who identify those needs. Our CONNECTION sites have made it possible for us to reach hundreds more community members and provide them with the level of service they have needed.

**For more information, call us at
988-5952**

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A place to start...

One GEARS CONNECTION participant had this to say:

This is a place to start. There are lots of agencies, but it's hard to know who does what. Sometimes it just feels so overwhelming; you don't want to pick up a phone again or tell your story one more time... these people care. If the first try doesn't work, they don't give up.

Self-Advocacy

Empowerment and Self-Advocacy at **GEARS**

Self-Advocacy is a skill.

In relation to social services, self-advocacy helps individuals to navigate the sometimes difficult and often confusing system of assistance. In practice, this means that GEARS team members demystify this process by 'coaching' people through it. We offer participants information about available resources and walk them through the process

Participants identify goals for themselves. We assist them in establishing the steps to achieve those goals. We don't make the phone calls for them; we help them to strategize how they will make the call. Participants case manage their own lives.

The GEARS' empowerment-based philosophy reminds us that we should never do for others what they are able to do for themselves. If we ignore that tenet of our work, we may unintentionally diminish a person's sense of their power to effect change in their own life.

Empowerment should not be confused with self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency emphasizes that society members are responsible for themselves. The term is often interpreted as synonymous with independent. Empowerment work is designed to remind us that we are *interdependent*. Yes, we are ultimately responsible for ourselves—including our ability to ask for help when we need it. In addition we are responsible to, and for, others in our community and society. Empowerment work asks each of us to identify what we can contribute to the lives of others.



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What does it take to start up a GEARS CONNECTION site?



*A
Neighborhood-
Based,
Self-Advocacy
Center...*



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of Metropolitan
Family Service*

Phone: 988-5952
Fax: 736-6102
Email:
karenl@metfamily.org
or
danas@metfamily.org

It takes community interest.

The success of a GEARS CONNECTION site depends upon the community in which it is set. Our program currently serves SE Portland neighborhoods. Any community that we work within must express a desire to utilize the services and resources that we make available. In addition, our model asks neighborhood residents to volunteer within the site so as to extend our capacity to serve the area.

It takes commitment and collaboration.

Our success also depends upon the host site's interest and commitment to the project and to the philosophy. Our self-advocacy centers are built upon on an efficient and compassionate referral process. We have found that two structures help to create that quality system within a site: a specific host site liaison and a regularly scheduled collaborative meeting. These efforts facilitate communication about goals and procedures and prevent potential conflicts.

It takes money.

Every project requires funding; GEARS makes every effort to be creative about securing programmatic resources. We do ask that host sites offer rent-free space, a phone and a locking cabinet. We also require the use of a copier and a computer with internet access. Staffing costs are dependent upon the number of hours each week that the site is open. Each GEARS CONNECTION model is flexible to fit the needs and interests of various sites, so expenses will vary.



GEARS Connection Site Volunteers

GEARS (Gaining Empowerment, Access, Responsibility and Support) is a community-based organization offering a wide array of social services. We emphasize access to culturally appropriate health care, school-based services and assistance for families and individuals in overcoming poverty. GEARS creates and promotes opportunities for community involvement.

GEARS Connection sites are a place to start.

The current system of resource and service providers in our area can be intimidating, even overwhelming, to families and individuals who need to utilize them. GEARS Connection sites are neighborhood-based, self-advocacy centers. Each site offers a library of over twenty resource notebooks, internet access and phones to utilize. Staff and volunteers provide visitors with information about opportunities, emotional support and coaching about how to best navigate through the system.

GEARS Connection Site volunteers are...

- Excited to help people help themselves.
- Sensitive and caring listeners.
- Confident communicators and natural ambassadors.
- Happy to work as team players.
- Enthusiastic to learn and operate within the GEARS philosophy and ethics.
- Aware that our efforts to serve others are truly gifts to ourselves.

*"Everybody can be great... because everybody can serve.
You don't have to have a college degree to serve.
You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve.
You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love"*

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Call GEARS at (503) 988-5952 for more information.

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THE GEARS Connection Evaluation

Please circle the most appropriate response for each statement:

1. At the GEARS Connection I learned about resources and/or services for me or my family.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. The resources and/or services I learned about were useful to me or my family.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. At the GEARS Connection site I was able to meet neighbors or connect with organizations in my community.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Agree

4. The staff at the GEARS connection site helped me to see ways I can (or already do) contribute to my community.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Agree

5. The GEARS Connection staff were respectful listeners. They understood my concerns and goals.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. Coming to the GEARS Connection helped me to feel more control over my situation.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. The GEARS Connection staff were respectful of my culture (my age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender & spiritual faith).

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Agree

If you would like to add any comments, or have suggestions for improvements, please feel free to add them on the back of this sheet.



GEARS Connection Sites

	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Locations</i>
8 AM	OSE AFS Lane 8-11 8-10		SE Works 9-12		OSE AFS Lane 8-11 8-10	OSE AFS Outer Southeast AFS office 8129 SE Malven 257-4226
8:30						
9:00						Lane Lane Middle School 7200 SE 60 th Ave. 988-5952
9:30						
10:00						SE Works Neighborhood Job Center 6927 SE Foster 772-2300
10:30						
11:00						Community Court * 12:30-3:30 SE AFS 1-5
11:30						
12 PM						Community Court *(1 st & 3 rd Thursdays) Brentwood-Darlington Community Center 7211 SE 62 nd 988-5961
12:30						
1:00	SE Works Lane 1-5 1-3	SE Works SE AFS 1:30-5 1-5	Lane SE Works 1-4 1-5	SE AFS 1-5		Providence Family Clinic (by appointment) 4104 SE 82 nd Suite 250 775-9117
1:30						
2:00						SE AFS Southeast AFS Office 3975 SE Powell Blvd. 731-3181
2:30						
3:00						
3:30						
4:00						
4:30						
5:00						

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GEARS Connection Sites

	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
Southeast Works 772-2311 6927 SE Foster	1:00-5:00	1:30-5:00	9:00-5:00		
OSE AFS 257-4244 82 nd & Flavel	8:00-11:00				8:00-11:00
SE AFS 731-3181 39 th & Powell		1:00-5:00		1:00-5:00	
Community Court Brentwood-Darlington Community Center 988-5961 7211 SE 62 nd				12:30-3:00 1 st & 3 rd Thursdays	

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6-1-00

GEARS

Gaining Empowerment Access Responsibility Support

- GEARS is a team of multilingual neighborhood leaders and social workers committed to building on individual and community strengths.
- GEARS promotes **Health, Education and Resource** networks in the neighborhoods of Brentwood-Darlington and Lents.
- GEARS supports family and community strengths by building natural support networks.
- GEARS **collaborates** with hundreds of organizations and individuals.
- GEARS encourages participants to **give back** to their community.

"I needed a focus and needed to reach out and make more friends...[GEARS] was so supportive in setting and meeting my goals. Thanks again for the opportunity for being a participant in your program, and I look forward to working with you as a part of the community."

HEALTH

SelfCare Parties

Nutrition / Cooking Groups

GEARS is committed to providing **health education** and access to medical care for our community members.

Health Care Events

Walking Group

Oregon Health Plan / Insurance Paperwork Help and Support

Russian- and Spanish-speaking Community Health Coaches

Family Coaches

RESOURCES

GEARS provides access to a wide variety of **resources and services** in the neighborhood.

Community Events

Volunteers

Lane and SE Works: Staffed, Family Friendly Resource Centers

EDUCATION

Lane Middle School
SUN

(Schools Uniting Neighborhoods)
a Full-Service School Model

FAST - Families and Schools Together

GEARS supports **school success**.

Mother and Daughter Book Group

Cultural , Education Classes

Mental Health Support and Information

After-school Activities

Student Activities in Spanish, Russian and English

Social Service Networks

Family Activities

Addictions Recovery Support and Information

Family-friendly Resource Center

VOLUNTEER

Parent Helpers

Events

Bilingual Assistance

GEARS offers many opportunities to **volunteer** in the community.

Opportunities for all ages

Group Facilitators

Neighborhood Cleanups

Activism

Office Assistance

Classroom Aides

Come by and visit us or become a volunteer at:

- **Lane Middle School**
7200 SE 60th Avenue
(503)988-5952
- **SE Works**
6927 SE Foster Road
(503)772-2300 x311
Call our main office (503) 988-5952
Or fax: (503) 988-6102



Welcome to:
Lane Middle School & THE
GEARS Connection

Have you been involved with GEARS before? Yes No (Please circle one)		
Name		
Phone		Today's Date
Street Address		
City	State	Zip Code
May we add you to the GEARS' mailing list? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (We only use this to let people know about upcoming community events.)		
The following questions are optional; we do appreciate your answers.		
Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	Age <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-29 <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and up	How would you describe your ethnicity? <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic, Latina, Latino <input type="checkbox"/> African-American, Black <input type="checkbox"/> Euro-American, White, Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> Native American, American Indian, Eskimo <input type="checkbox"/> Asian-American, Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Racial, Bi-Racial <input type="checkbox"/> Would rather not answer <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown

What brings you here today? How can we be of help?		1 = Very Important 2 = Important 3 = Not Very Important 4 = Not Important			
What types of resources, services & opportunities interest you? (If your specific interest is not listed, please mention it.)		1	2	3	4
Childcare	Finding a childcare provider, financial help for childcare, trading childcare with neighbors.				
Clothing	Clothes for work & Interviews, clothing exchange events, clothes closets				
Communication & Conflict Resolution	Neighborhood mediation, information about effective communication				
Education & Schools	GED or completing a high school diploma, reading, writing or math skills, Improving English, job skills training, Schools & learning opportunities. Funding options				
Employment	Job search, preparing resume' and cover letter, job interview skills, filling out job application, keeping a job, planning career & occupational opportunities, vocational or occupation testing.				

What brings you here today? How can we be of help?	1 = Very Important	1	2	3	4
	2 = Important				
	3 = Not Very Important				
	4 = Not Important				

Food & Nutrition	Food banks & boxes, WIC, information on nutrition & meal planning, Food stamp eligibility				
Health & Medical	Oregon Health Plan, Medical & Dental services, Eyeglasses, Information on maintaining good health				
Healthy Relationships: Parents & Children	Information on parenting & child safety, recognizing abuse & neglect, parenting groups				
Healthy Relationships: Partners	Creating safe & healthy partnerships, recognizing and addressing domestic violence				
Housing & Utilities	Emergency shelters, Transitional housing, Buying a home, Assistance with utility costs				
Immigration & Cultural Connections	Citizenship and legal resident status, Opportunities to be involved in cultural activities & groups,				
Legal Assistance	Prior convictions creating obstacles to employment or housing, low or no-cost legal representation				
Money Management	Learning how to budget, counseling for credit issues, Investment awareness				
Mental Health & Counseling	Low and no-cost opportunities for counseling, Information about mental health				
Recovery from Addictions	Understanding pre-employment drug tests, recognizing signs of addiction in ourselves and others, support groups for those with addictions,				
Recreation & Social Opportunities	Involvement in neighborhood organizations and events, affordable activities for the family				
Senior Services & Opportunities	Opportunities and services specific to seniors, retirement and social security				
Special Challenges	Opportunities and assistance for people with disabilities				
Transportation	Information on transportation options, bus lines & schedules,				
Volunteerism & Political Activism	Opportunities to become involved in issues and organizations that interest you				
Other	Any topic we have not included on the list?				

Please look over your answers and circle up to three areas that describe your most important concerns today.

How will you know when you've met your goal?

This is a copy of the intake we ask participants to complete + the evaluation.
Dave
Also our site schedules

GEAR through... g for the GEARS Connection has been provided by Community Development.