



# Welcome to 3LPlace!

For more information, or to apply, you can call us at (617) 764-3280 or email [admissions@3LPlace.org](mailto:admissions@3LPlace.org)

**We're building exciting opportunities and a warm, diverse community for adults with developmental disabilities, across the lifespan.**

**In this package you will find information about 3LPlace: about our philosophy, our commitment to lifelong, individualized, self-determined learning, our modules, and schedules for day, evening, and weekend programming. We also share our exciting plans for our future home in a multiple use, inclusive community site in Somerville.**

3LPlace, located near vibrant Davis Square, came about through the efforts of a group of parents seeking more options for their own maturing children.

Together, we are on a journey:

- Exploring community and what it means to live in one
- Thinking more critically
- Expressing creativity
- Exploring careers
- Supporting job choices and placement
- Becoming more aware of body/mind connections and fitness
- Practicing the life skills we need to live successfully in our choice of housing, and in the community.

We offer a menu of highly individualized day, self-determined day, evening, and weekend programming based on [our unique 3LPlace Curriculum](#).

Our year-round programming welcomes adults with a mix of developmental disabilities. Potential members might be living with autism, or Down's syndrome, or another diagnosis. What everyone has in common is their readiness to explore a path to a meaningful, gratifying, healthy and connected adult life, within the community.

3LPlace's program begins by building a thorough understanding of each individual, particularly about their interests, passions, and goals in life. We believe that those personal interests can be harnessed to accelerate the development of self-direction, independence skills, friendships and social behavior.



## 3LPLACE MODULES

Our learning Modules are offered throughout the week. Regardless of what activity is going on, participants at 3LPlace are continuously and simultaneously working on goals and individual skills in the areas of:

- Executive function and critical thinking
- Creative expression
- Self- and social awareness
- Relationships
- Self-determination and person-centered planning
- Life skills
- Mind/body awareness and activity

Our programming is organized into the following Modules, with intentional overlap between them. Our Modules are taught/facilitated as small group sessions with a minimum staff to participant ratio of 1:3.

### **DARING TO DREAM MODULE.** (1½ hours per session, 3 days a week)

The Daring to Dream Module begins with a community meeting where participants reflect on issues of importance to them: upcoming calendar, current events, exchange of opinions, priorities for future activities.

Participants are provided opportunities and activities to practice and stretch their creativity in their interactions, ideas, creations, communications and actions. By following the lead of participants, staff facilitate participants to tap into their own creativity, encouraging them to develop and pursue an interest or passion or new area of creative interest.

The Daring to Dream Module is a shared environment where participants engage in imagining and goal development in a framework of creative exploration and expression.

Activities include: collaborative arts projects encouraging group problem solving; arts-oriented outings; guest speakers; media-based problem-solving; brain games; improvisation and role playing; related research projects. We also incorporate mind/body awareness activities including yoga.

**COMMUNITY MODULE. (2–3 hours per session, 4 days a week)**

The Community Module focuses on:

- What is “community?”
- Why and how we live in a community
- What we get and what we give to our community
- How we live supportively with others in community
- How we weave isolated bits of knowledge and skill into a vision of the whole

Experiential learning activities include:

- Visiting places where critical abstract concepts can be made concrete, such as: City Hall, State House, local libraries, JFK Library, using maps to navigate and plan visits.
- Exploring and contextualizing what’s happening in the world, whether it’s an election, a natural disaster, social conflicts within the United States or the world, big think topics like global warming, immigration, discrimination.
- Digging deeper into familiar landmarks. What is the difference between the Museum of Fine Arts and the Museum of Science?

During the Community Module, staff and participants work to develop new, deeper and more connected knowledge utilizing books, internet, community activities, museums, travel, speakers, and theatre. Together we strive to put old and new knowledge in context of the whole – where are we in Time? Space? Why do we study history? Why do we count and measure things and why is math important to us? Why do we choose to live in societies? Why do we have laws and rules?

This module also focuses attention on the smaller communities we inhabit: our families, our personal networks, and our work, program and/or academic environs.

3LPlace largely uses public transportation to access the wide world of greater Boston. This means all our participants walk a lot! This also promotes mind/body goals.

**WORK AND CAREER MODULE (1 ½ hours, 2 sessions a week; also a 2-3 hour session one day a week)**

In the Work and Career Module, we focus on exploring and developing work and career paths. We consider it essential that each participant has the opportunity to pursue jobs or careers that are personally meaningful and interesting. We accomplish this by focusing on each participant as an individual, examining their passions and goals, strengths and challenges, as we support them to explore and develop their career interests and skills as workers. By taking this approach, we increase motivation, independence, personal satisfaction, and self-determination.

We begin by working with each participant on a four-part lesson of self-discovery that looks at sensory, emotional, physical and relational elements of working. The process results in the development of “My Work Profile,” which assists individuals as well as staff in evaluating opportunities as they continue the process of work exploration.

The Work and Career Module seeks to increase awareness, to enable students to reflect, stretch their thinking, self-evaluate, and begin to make informed choices. The cognitive work in other 3LPlace Modules prepares them for adventures of trial and error and to experiment to find what tasks, environments, and experiences feel rewarding and which cause challenges.

In most cases, creating real, personally meaningful work and career possibilities requires taking the time and necessary steps to construct a solid foundation. Traditionally, work and career exploration involves taking inventory of one’s skills and interests, conducting lots of research, completing questionnaires, making site visits, and drawing upon executive function support and other commonly used tools and methods. We incorporate additional key ingredients into the process to ensure the experience is positive, motivating, and ultimately successful for each student:

- Placing high value on curiosity, creativity, passion, and personal preference
- Leading with individual strengths and finding creative ways to acknowledge and address challenges
- Supporting flexibility and resiliency: trial and error, trying new things, changing one’s mind, going in a different direction, and learning from experiences that did not go well
- Accepting that this process is dynamic — interests change and shift as participants grow, learn, become interested in new things, and discover new talents
- Underscoring that work and career choices come from thoughts, feelings, sensations, and opinions generated within us. There is no external rulebook for what career or job we are supposed to have.
- Modeling a healthy balance of optimism and realism
- Informing participants about the types of work supports that are available for people with disabilities and about the right to accommodation in the workplace, and helping them determine what might be appropriate for them.
- Emphasizing that career choice is something that can be re-evaluated at any time and that most people will change their job and/or career several times.
- Infusing the process with joy, humor, enthusiasm, and wonder.

Working together in this Module, participants and staff will begin at the foundational level focusing on interests and passions, strengths and challenges. Background investigations begin, followed by exploration that is more field-based. These two processes enable participants and staff to examine options through the lens of reality-based considerations such as suitability and opportunity. Once a career or job is selected, staff and participant review the requirements to confirm or modify selection, and develop goals and an action plan

for beginning work. Once in a job, the student and staff continue to evaluate, reflect, and make changes where necessary.

**LIFE SKILLS MODULE. (3 hours, 5 sessions a week)**

Life skills mean different things to different people. Because other 3LPlace Modules address broadly the skills and abilities to live a meaningful life in the community, we choose to focus on skills of daily living in this Module. These include:

- Nutrition, meal planning, meal preparation, cleanup
- Dining together
- Money math and personal budgeting
- Travel training and navigating the community
- Laundry skills
- Organization and general cleaning skills
- Body fitness and health
- Personal hygiene
- Getting along with others in community

**RECREATION MODULE. (Available now on Saturdays)**

Our Recreation Module focuses on social and recreational activities, taking advantage of the rich opportunities offered across the Greater Boston area. Outings include museums, performances, sports events, outdoors activities and more!

**3LPLACE SAMPLE SCHEDULE**

|            | MONDAY          | TUESDAY         | WEDNESDAY       | THURSDAY        | FRIDAY          | SATURDAY                              |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 10 am-noon | Daring to Dream | Work and Career | Daring to Dream | Daring to Dream | Work and Career |                                       |
| Noon-4 pm  | Community       | Community       | Community       | Work and Career | Community       | Recreation Module<br>(Noon to 5 p.m.) |
| 4 pm-7 pm  | Life Skills     |                                       |

*Note: Support for regulation and expressive/receptive language is built into all activities.*



## **Our Approach.....**

**We believe** clinicians and educators can view individuals through a holistic lens and acknowledge an individual's developmental, physical, sensory, emotional, social and cognitive needs.

**We believe** we can provide a rich and rewarding educational experience that is intentional, and individualized in all domains of their adult lives: career development, life skills, community involvement, social relationships, self-care and recreational choices.

**We believe** in humor, creativity, and joy because these are the energizers and social connectors that enliven and deepen relationships and experiences.

**We believe** in the power of an individual's personal preferences and interests to increase internal motivation, infuse enthusiasm and increase social engagement.

**We believe** in strengthening the foundational capacities of regulation, engagement, reciprocity, and social problem-solving that lead to increased resiliency, adaptability, self-care, effective communication and social connection.

**We believe** in a person-centered approach to ensure an individual finding their own unique, fulfilling way to participate in their lives, form lasting and meaningful relationships, and contribute to their communities as who they are and who they are becoming.

**We believe** in individuals and their loved ones having a chance to dream big and embrace optimism while still addressing the real world demands and challenges they face on a daily basis.

**3LPlace ... Learning, Living and Linking for a Lifetime**

# Meaningful inclusion

*3LPlace's vision for the future*



*Above, an artist's concept sketch of the view from Broadway.*



*At left, an interior courtyard.*

**Over the next 18 months, we're planning to move 3LPlace into a multigenerational, inclusive community, called Powder House for Somerville, that's developing now.**

Our partners in this development are some of the most visionary educators and urban planners in the nation.

Everything about the Powder House project is consistent with the mission of 3LPlace.

3LPlace and its participants, while continuing to grow the wonderful program we've developed, would join a vibrant, dynamic and collaborative community that includes opportunities for learning and relationship-building.

The plan is for our participants to share flex spaces and activities with local artists, students in a maker-focused innovation academy, and resident seniors in a Collaborative Living Project. We've received funding from the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation to create a sophisticated sensory gym as part of our Powder House life skills learning studio.

We are excited about the opportunity this environment presents to foster and elevate our ability to support active, meaningful participation in the broader community for adults with developmental challenges.

**3LPlace**

**Building community and opportunity for adults with developmental disabilities**