

The Arc-Wisconsin Disability Association, Inc.

PUBLIC POLICY PRINCIPLES

The following principles shall guide The Arc-Wisconsin in taking positions on legislation and other public policy issues:

Overall: Legislation and public policy should promote quality of life opportunities for people with developmental and related disabilities that means having choices, community living options, work opportunities, recreation possibilities, friends and social contacts.

The following specific principles shall be the guide:

1. Each person with developmental and related disabilities needs understanding, opportunities for education in an integrated setting, while at the same time considering individual differences and needs. Individualized education plans must meet the needs of each individual person with appropriate appeals and safeguards in place to assure the rights of each student are guaranteed.
2. Community services must be available to any person with developmental and related disabilities and their families to assure community living opportunities with the necessary supports which also allow for choices, having family, neighbors and friends to interact with and to be able to be a full community participant.
3. Quality services must be assured no matter where the person lives. Work force issues must be addressed to ensure services are provided by qualified professionals earning an appropriate wage.
4. Support prevention of developmental and related disabilities.
5. Early intervention services must be available to prevent or reduce further harm and ameliorate the effects of the various disabilities. This applies to both children and adults and requires early identification and appropriate assistance even if only minimal services are needed to reduce risk, provide safety and an optimum quality of life.

6. Work and jobs are a central and critical part of the lives of most people. However, whether through a job or financial assistance, sufficient economic support must be available to guarantee that basic needs can be met.
7. Full citizenship must be assured. No public policy should infringe on the rights of people with developmental and related disabilities to live, work, recreate or participate fully in the life of the community. Public policies and legislation should support self-determination and enhance individual rights.
8. Support closure of Northern and Southern Wisconsin Centers within five years.
9. Support bipartisan campaign finance reform.
10. Public accountability for public money is required.
11. Support the concept of revenue enhancements with Wisconsin's tax system insofar as a portion of any increased state revenues would be used to fully support education and community services for children and adults with disabilities.

Approved by Board of Directors:
3-13-04