

2010 Arc of Florida Priority Issues

Purpose

The purpose of this legislative platform is to communicate with legislators and other policymakers, the public and the media where we stand on issues that impact the quality of life for Floridians with developmental disabilities.

General Principles

Community life is enriched when individuals with developmental and other disabilities have the opportunity to become contributing members and are included in the life of their communities. Individuals with developmental disabilities can become active members of their communities when the necessary supports and services are provided to assist them in maximizing their potential and protect their health and safety.

Issue: Funding is key to providing the necessary services and supports for Floridians with developmental disabilities. The current Medicaid waiver tier system and long waitlist for services is inadequately funded to meet the health and safety needs of these constituents.

Solution:

- Allow no funding cuts to the already devastated funding system for the developmental disabilities Medicaid waiver system administered by the Agency for Persons With Disabilities. The Legislatively mandated Tiered waiver system must be revised or eliminated in order to more effectively and efficiently serve individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Support **Senate Bill 2200** by Senator Altman and **House Bill 943** by Representative Proctor for a specialized lottery scratch off ticket to fund services through the Florida Department of Education Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- The Agency for Persons With Disabilities and the Agency for Health Care Administration should continue to bring representatives of stakeholder groups together for a mandated comprehensive review and reform of policies and regulations.
- Allow no funding cuts to the already devastated funding system for the developmental disabilities Medicaid waiver system administered by the Agency for Persons With Disabilities.
- Utilize the current OPS employees at the Agency for Persons With Disabilities who are currently administering the QSI assessment instrument to become case managers for individuals on the waitlist.
- Reduce the high overhead costs of providing services to individuals under the Developmental Disabilities Home and Community Based Waiver by conducting a system wide review of unfunded mandates and unnecessary and redundant paperwork requirements.

Issue: Create opportunities for families to participate in the cost of care similar to the Florida Pre-Paid College Tuition Plan.

Solution:

- Support **Senate Bill 2192** by Senator Peaden and **House Bill 1111** by Representative Ford to create a Pre-Paid Developmental Disabilities Savings Plan.

Issue: The general public should have the opportunity to make voluntary donations for persons with developmental disabilities.

Solution:

- Support **Senate Bill 1138** by Senator Fasano and **House Bill 399** by Representative Kelly to create a voluntary check off box for donations on driver's license renewals and vehicle registrations. These funds will go to the Arc of Florida for local services for persons with developmental disabilities.

Phone: 850-921-0460

Fax: 850-921-0418

E-mail: arcflorida@gmail.com

**THE ARC OF
FLORIDA**

02-25-2010

2898 Mahan Drive Suite 1
Tallahassee, FL 32308

2010 Arc of Florida Priority Issues

Issue: The administering of punitive disciplinary measures to children with disabilities should always be a last resort in the educational system.

- Support **House Bill 81** by Representative Hukill and **Senate Bill 2118** by Gardiner.
- Make aversive techniques a last resort only after positive behavioral supports have been implemented.
- Support timely parental notification any time an aversive technique is implemented, require that staff be trained and certified for any such technique and prohibit the use of prone restraints in the educational setting.

Issue: It is a well documented fact that individuals with developmental and other disabilities are more likely to be sexually abused in their life time than other citizens without disabilities. Florida has a Bill of Rights for the Developmentally Disabled in Florida Statute 393.13 (a) which currently states that individuals with developmental disabilities have the right to be free from sexual abuse in residential facilities.

Solution:

- We support striking the words “in residential facilities” in F.S. 393.13 (a) to make the statement that individuals with developmental disabilities must be free from sexual abuse in all settings.

Issue: Individuals with developmental disabilities who receive SSDI Income may lose important health benefits when they go to work. Medicaid Buy-In has already been implemented by 41 other states as a work incentive.

Solution:

- Support **Senate Bill 2038** by Senator Crist and **House Bill 837** by Homan which creates the Medicaid Buy In Program.

Issue: The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities has changed the diagnosis of mental retardation to intellectual disability.

Solution:

- Support **Senate Bill 1388** by Senator Haridopolos which changes Florida Statutes containing the term mental retardation to intellectual disabilities.

Issue: Provide increased access to community-based services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Solution:

- Support **House Memorial Bill 1349** by Representative Skidmore which urges Congress to support opportunities to provide increased access to community-based services for individuals with developmental disabilities.