

Success Stories

Bill, age 40, has Angelman Syndrome and presents with its typical, forward-leaning gait. He is nonverbal and has been diagnosed with life-threatening pica, cerebral palsy, hyperactivity, and congenital encephalopathy with seizures. Three of Bill's eight therapeutic objectives are taught not only at his Day Habilitation site, but also at the local *YMCA's pool*.

The water transforms Bill's energy: his muscles relax, his weight buoys, and his demeanor appears calm and focused. He is surrounded by people he trusts. Watching him move about the pool, his mother nearly cries, *"This is the first time in my life that I've seen my son up straight on his own."*

Day Habilitation's team of licensed clinicians and professionals designed Bill's therapeutic plan. The team assessed his strengths and needs in the areas of physical, occupational, psychological, and communication therapies. After a medical evaluation, Day Habilitation's Registered Nurse consulted with Bill's primary care physician for his recommendations and approval. On a daily basis, Bill and his direct support professional work to achieve his personal goals. As a result, Bill is living a healthier and more independent life. *Day Hab has made a difference.*

Stories continued on back →

Produced by:

The Arc of Massachusetts

in collaboration with

ADDP

Massachusetts Day Habilitation Coalition

Success Stories Continued...

Janet, age 46, has been diagnosed with a developmental disability, personality disorder, and depression. Before enrolling in the Day Habilitation program she now attends (during her non-working hours), Janet received only one hour of support per week through a state agency contract. She experienced financial exploitation by friends, intermittent hygiene issues, and chronic medical problems, including a bout of severe weight loss. Due to mood swings and improper behavior caused by taking daily medications infrequently, she lost several jobs.

Two years ago, Janet began attending a Day Habilitation program, which provides her with a complement of medical, therapeutic, and collaborative case management supports. She now receives physical therapy, to increase her mobility; behavioral training, to curb her outbursts; social skills training, to help her develop long-term friendships; and physical exercise, such as swimming, to improve her overall health. Janet also receives skilled medical oversight, including medication monitoring and coordination of medical services, from an RN. This combination of services allows the staff to work as a team to ensure that the array of Janet's needs is being met so that she can enjoy a healthy, safe, and satisfying life.

The Arc of Massachusetts



217 South Street
Waltham, MA 02453-2769
Phone: 781.891.6270
Fax: 781.891.6271

Day Habilitation Program

Serves as an integral component in the human service system



Improves the lives
of individuals

Phone: 781.891.6270

Day Habilitation



Bill and his support professional at the *local YMCA pool* where they implement his clinical strategies

What is Day Habilitation?

The *only* community-based therapeutic daytime service in Massachusetts designed for adults with developmental disabilities is the Day Habilitation program. This program provides a combination of clinical services, medical oversight, and life skills/adult daily living training. Services are offered six hours/day, five days/week, 52 weeks/year, at 143 sites throughout Massachusetts. Over 6,900 adults with various abilities are served; the majority have mental retardation. Some recipients require complex clinical and medical supports to sustain their life's functions, while others live and work in the community with partial assistance. For those individuals who live with families or in their own homes, Day Habilitation is often the only component in the community care system that provides these vital services.

Overview

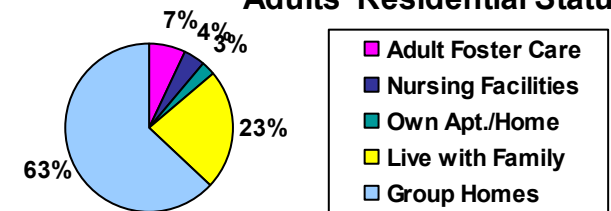
For many individuals with developmental disabilities, medical oversight and coordination of services are essential to their well-being and success in the community. Because of daily monitoring by registered nurses and case managers, expensive medical treatments or hospitalizations are often avoided. Therapies are easily accessed, avoiding expensive hospitalizations or in-home therapists. Additionally, case manager coordination of care from numerous service providers reduces duplication of services and identifies essential services an individual needs for optimal health and safety. With this program, parents may go to work and provide for their families, rather than staying at home to care for the child with a disability.

Adults with severe disabilities require complex clinical and medical supports to sustain their life's functions. Many individuals require feeding tubes, physical therapy, etc. Thirty years ago, these adults would have lived in expensive, state-operated institutions. Day Habilitation is a cost-effective, integral community component in the human service system.

Facts: 6,900 Adults with Developmental Disabilities Served

- Many recipients have secondary disabilities present at birth, such as seizure disorders, legal blindness, hydrocephalus, cerebral palsy, skeletal disorders, Down syndrome, autism, and/or hearing disorders.
- Recipients can also have medical and psychological conditions such as diabetes, circulatory disease, depression, hypertension, arthritis, breathing disorders, incontinence, hyperactivity, heart disease, self-injurious behaviors, and/or ADD.
- Medical: 40% require assistance to ambulate; 30% use wheelchairs; 82% require assistance with personal care; and 31% require 1:1 assistance to eat.
- 99% are below the poverty level.
- Some recipients require feeding tubes, tracheotomies, colostomy care, catheterization, pulmonary care, circulatory care, and/or behavioral management.

Adults' Residential Status



Therapies and Trainings:

- **Alternative therapies** (e.g. movement therapy, music and art therapy, aqua therapy, pet therapy) have proven successful in treating individuals with multiple disabilities.
- **Life skills training** is also important (e.g. nutritional mgmt. and weight control; social interaction and relationship building; problem-solving, decision-making, and personal well-being)
- **Trainings toward independence** are provided (e.g. self-advocacy, citizenship and involvement in the community, understanding of human rights, practicing responsible behavior).
- **Critical clinical/medical services** which promote people's health and well-being (e.g. RN, OT, PT, speech/communication, psychological) are also provided.