



The 80's: Great Strides Forward

Turning 22, Family Support and a new Department of Mental Retardation

My daughter, Maura, was a student at the Massachusetts Hospital School where she was the "Queen of the May," but she was turning 22 and there were no community services out there for her after her birthday. She stayed at home for two years because there was no funding. It was difficult because she has excellent verbal skills but is quadriplegic, so there were few opportunities.

Maureen Sullivan,
Arc board member, 1988-1999

Wearing *Don't Turn Twenty-Two* badges, The Arc filed the first in the nation Turning Twenty Two legislation, guaranteeing services for students leaving Special Education.

The parents were coming out of the woodwork, showing up at the State House, at The Arc's 217 South Street office, at our local chapters. The concern was whether we could get through another right to services entitlement similar to Chapter 766. In 1983, with assistance from the Disability Law Center and Human Service Co-Chairs, Senator Jack Backman and Representative Joseph DeNucci, Chapter 688 was passed. Though not an entitlement to services, it was an entitlement to a Transition Plan that assigned individuals to agencies such as the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind or the Bureau of Mental Retardation. It forced the agencies to identify the number of students entering the community services system each year and let advocates know which agencies people were transitioning to. Hardened reporters, along with anxious parents, packed State House press conferences. Everyone was crying. It wasn't perfect, but eventually funding was attached to the law and people stopped showing up at the State House. We knew we were making progress.

Families who kept their children at home were beginning to get limited supports. Weekend Respite Care was started in 1981, but

the Commonwealth wanted a sliding fee scale. With Lucie Chansky leading the way, \$500,000 was allocated with no sliding fee. This program, known as flexible supports, is now funded at more than \$50,000,000 - serving over 12,000 families.

As the consent decree continued to move hundreds of people into community-based settings, the bureaucracy was still encumbered by a medical model of service delivery. Advocates could see a day when no institutions were necessary. Individuals with disabilities were thriving in community-based settings, reaching plateaus no one ever imagined. At the same time, employers began to find people with disabilities to be top-notch employees, and sheltered workshops started the shift to supported employment. Dr. William Kiernan, The Arc's Vice President, became the leader for employment services.

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*Turning Twenty-Two Press
Conference supporting legislation
for students leaving
Special Education.*

Direct care salaries demanded center stage. The quality of care became the single most important issue.

In 1987, legislation filed by The Arc was passed which split the Department of Mental Health into two entities: a Department of Mental Health and a new Department of Mental Retardation. There was no overlap; there were separate Citizen Advisory Boards and separate area and regional offices. Mary McCarthy was named the first Commissioner of the Department of Mental Retardation.

The other major development in this decade was the growth of Early Intervention. Started at the Minute Man Arc in 1981, children from birth to three with either developmental disabilities or considered at-risk were receiving in-home physical therapy, speech therapy, nutritional supports, etc. Early Intervention now serves over 35,000 children each year.

The state budget took a downturn toward the end of the decade, putting extreme pressures on Department of Mental Retardation services. Public hearing rooms at the State House drew standing-room-only crowds of parents and advocates from The Arc.

(left) President Norman Fredette hands out Play on the Parquet Plaques



*Phil Campbell, Executive Director (center)
Florence Finkel and Peg Pyne (right)*

1980's

1980: Respite Care is launched with a \$500,000 state budget line item.

1981: In a major victory for community services, the Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver is enacted. The Waiver allows the federal government to reimburse state costs for community services as it does for institutional care, removing the state's financial disincentive for community services... Early intervention for infants, from birth to age three, begins at Minute Man Arc... Joseph Buonomo becomes President of the National Arc.

1982: Wrentham and Paul A. Dever State School Chapters leave The Arc of Massachusetts due to The Arc's support for community services over institutional settings.

1983: Following a concerted campaign by Arc advocates, the landmark Turning 22 (Ch. 688) law is enacted, becoming a national model (*though funding was left to the Legislature*).

1985: The Turning 22 Coalition of parents is formed under the tireless efforts of Lee Vorderer, working with many Arc members: Dan Becker, Jim Kerkam, Jerry McCarthy, Maureen Sullivan, and Eileen Sousa. Mary Ann Walsh, now at The Arc of the South Shore, becomes head of the Bureau of Transitional Planning at the Executive Office of Health & Human Services.

1986: Phil Gloude mans recruits Boston Bruins' legend Bobby Orr to become a spokesperson for The Arc of Massachusetts.

1987: A new Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) is established after a long battle by Arc advocates. Mary McCarthy is the first Commissioner.

The Arc of Massachusetts secures passage of Chapter 633, a law that allows the Commonwealth to provide transportation to individuals who are competitively employed.

1988: The Arc plays a leadership role in expanding the Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Program for people with cognitive disabilities (regulations are not implemented until 1992). The Disability Law Center, Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston Center for Independent Living and CORD are partners in the effort.

The Arc of Massachusetts works with advocates to establish the Disabled Persons Protection Committee.

Phil Gloude mans, Steve Nazro of the Boston Garden, Colleen Turner and Executive Director Philip Campbell launch Play on the Parquet, an annual fundraiser, now held at the TD Banknorth Garden.



Early intervention takes hold



Arc Executive director Mary Lou Maloney and President Ted Treadwell present media award to Channel 5's Paul LaCamera



Richard and Edith Frye join Bobby Orr at Distinguished Citizens reception



Outgoing President Raymond Nickerson welcomes incoming president Arthur Connelly



Matthew Johnson, Beth and John Havlichek, President Ellen O'Brien, Joseph Andrade, Governor Michael Dukakis