

The Arc of the United States

Strategic Framework for the Future of The Arc
2010 - 2019

A
Clear Path
Forward



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The Arc of the United States *Strategic Framework for the Future of The Arc, 2010 – 2019*, as adopted by the Committee on the Future of The Arc and approved by the Board of Directors February 27, 2010.

Dear Friends:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff of The Arc of the United States, we are pleased to present the *Strategic Framework for the Future of The Arc, 2010 – 2019*. The Strategic Framework is intended to clearly set forth The Arc's vision for the full inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in all aspects of society, as well as for The Arc as their advocate and servant at the national, state and local level. It provides detailed goals and strategies, which if successfully pursued will bring this vision to life, achieving justice and equality for people with I/DD. On the occasion of The Arc's 60th anniversary, the Strategic Framework will provide direction to guide the organization in the next decade.

With the foundation provided by the Strategic Framework in place, The Arc will build shorter-term operating plans, taking into account priorities, opportunities, resources, and the many practical considerations involved in seeking and achieving change. As the decade unfolds, the Strategic Framework will be reviewed and, as necessary, updated, refined and revised to reflect the changing conditions and circumstances that affect people with I/DD and their families, and the organizations that advocate for and serve them.

The Strategic Framework is also intended to be a resource for The Arc's many state and local chapters, informing their planning and action. Chapters are welcome and encouraged to adopt The Arc's new mission statement and some, or all, of the goals and strategies as their own. Selection and prioritization among the goals and strategies likely will vary from place to place throughout The Arc network depending upon state and local conditions and needs, as well as the capacity and orientation of the respective chapters.

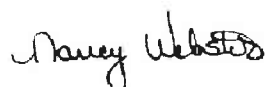
This Strategic Framework is the culmination of a lengthy, collaborative effort that began in spring 2008 and has involved literally thousands of The Arc's volunteer and staff leaders, constituents and other stakeholders. This process included an exhaustive review by management consulting firm, Grant Thornton, of The Arc's past and current operations and external environment, a comprehensive national stakeholder survey, interviews, online discussion, conference calls, small group discussion, e-mail correspondence, and plenary sessions at both The Arc and NCE meetings. We thank all involved both for the candid assessment of the current status of The Arc, as well as the spirited examination of prospects for the future. Particular thanks are extended to members of the Committee on the Future of The Arc and its predecessor, the Affiliation and Planning Task Force, and to members of the Board of Directors and Staff of The Arc for their hard work.

We look forward to hearing your comments, reactions and suggestions in response to the Strategic Framework and to working with you to achieve the vision of inclusion and participation for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Sincerely,



Lynne A. Cleveland
President, Board of Directors



Nancy Webster
Chair, Committee on the
Future of The Arc



Peter V. Berns
Chief Executive Officer



Lynne A. Cleveland



Nancy Webster



Peter V. Berns

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Mission

The Arc promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

Core Values

The Arc of the United States, and chapters at the state and local level, share a commitment to six core values, which influence and inform our work. They are:

People First

The Arc believes that all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have strengths, abilities and inherent value; are equal before the law; and must be treated with dignity and respect. The Arc represents, supports and acts on behalf of individuals and their families regardless of the level of disability or membership in The Arc. The Arc believes in self-determination by empowering people with the supports needed to make informed decisions and choices.

Democracy

A democratic process involving members, through affiliated chapters, is utilized to take positions on important issues, policies and programs.

Visionary Leadership

The Arc leads by promoting its mission and core values and by developing position statements. We lead with integrity, accountability and by open, honest and timely communication. We work with individuals, organizations and coalitions in a collaborative fashion. There is a valued partnership with volunteer and staff leadership at all levels of the organization that provides mutual support for their respective roles.

Community Participation

The Arc works toward and believes in the community imperative that all people have the fundamental moral, civil and constitutional rights to live, learn, work, play, and worship in safe and healthy communities of their choosing. The Arc has a responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals.

Diversity

The Arc values and insists upon diversity in its leadership and membership. The Arc actively pursues and welcomes diverse groups (including but not limited to race, ethnicity, religion, age, geographic location, sexual orientation, gender, and level of disability).

Integrity and Excellence

The Arc conducts its business with integrity. The Arc reflects quality and excellence in all its work.

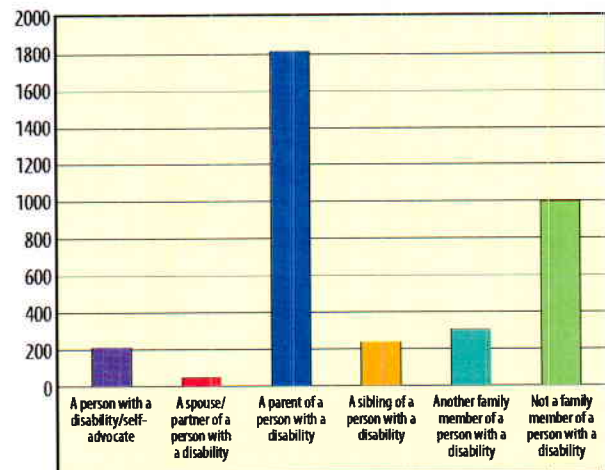
Our Vision for People With Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Their Families

All people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are included and participate as full members of the community. Infants, children and youth with I/DD experience the security of family, while living and learning with their peers. Adults with I/DD lead lives of their own choosing, fully integrated in the community; have the opportunity to engage in productive work for fair wages; participate in civic and community affairs; have good health; and enjoy meaningful relationships.

People with I/DD have access to the full range of home and community-based supports and services necessary to control their own lives; their families have access to needed family supports. Families enjoy the freedom and peace of mind that comes from knowing that their loved ones have the supports they need to live a full and satisfying life.

Valued and accepted, people with I/DD enjoy the respect, dignity, equality, safety, and security accorded to other members of society. As self-advocates, they have a powerful and united voice on the issues that affect their lives and well-being, and they enjoy the broad support of family members, friends, colleagues, and community members. People with I/DD and their families fully embrace The Arc as their preferred partner for advocacy, services and supports.

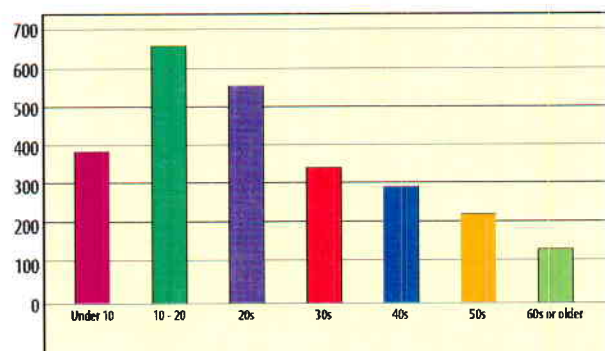
The Arc's Members, Leaders and Volunteers



Of the constituents surveyed, 71% are individuals with a disability or a family member of a person with a disability.

Note: 3,396 respondents, Grant Thornton Stakeholder Survey 2008

Age of Family Member With a Disability



The Arc is a resource for people with I/DD and their families at all stages of life, which is reflected in the age breakdown of the survey respondents' family members with a disability.

Note: 2,593 respondents, Grant Thornton Stakeholder Survey 2008

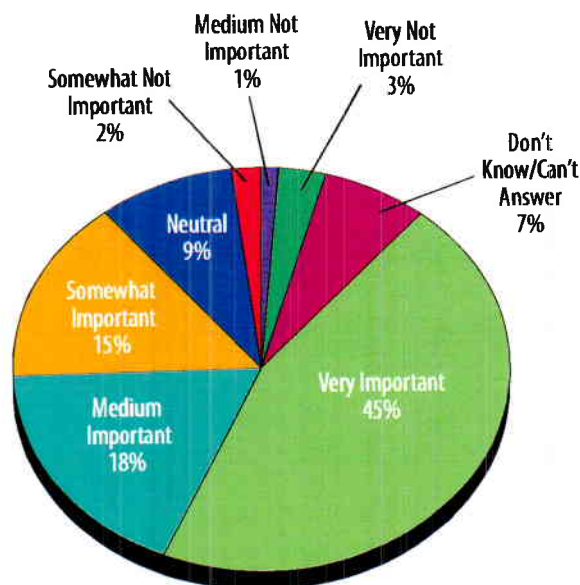
Our Vision for The Arc of the United States and Our State and Local Chapters

The Arc is the nation's leading advocate for all people with I/DD and their families and the premier provider of the supports and services people want and need. The Arc actively involves people with I/DD; their parents, siblings and other family members; caregivers; colleagues; neighbors; and friends as leaders and activists in a movement dedicated to the inclusion of people with I/DD in all aspects of society. The Arc assures that the human rights of people with I/DD are attained, and that sufficient resources are available to meet their needs, in every community in our nation.

The Arc is the standard bearer for best practices in supports and services for people with I/DD and has a demonstrable record of success in achieving the outcomes people want for their lives. Welcoming people of all races, ethnicities and socio-economic status, and providing both a sense of purpose and of belonging, The Arc is the resource of first choice for people with I/DD and their families regardless of the diagnosis and at all stages of life.

The Arc is active, vibrant, well-known, and respected in communities throughout the United States. With state and local chapters throughout all 50 states and the District of Columbia, The Arc is regularly sought out by elected and appointed government officials, media, business, academia, and other nonprofits as the authoritative source of information and advice about the needs, issues and concerns of people with I/DD. The Arc is an effective, responsive and sustainable organization that is constantly evolving to meet the changing needs, desires and circumstances of people with I/DD and their families. It enjoys substantial philanthropic support from individuals, corporations and foundations on par with other successful national nonprofits.

Importance of The Arc to People With Disabilities and Their Families



Of the stakeholders surveyed, nearly 80% believe that The Arc is important to people with disabilities.

Note: 3,361 respondents, Grant Thornton Stakeholder Survey 2008

Summary of Goals

The Arc's goals over the next ten years are to assure that:

- I. Infants, children and youth with I/DD have access to the supports and services they need to live in their family homes, to succeed in school and to partake in all of the experiences of childhood.
- II. Adults with I/DD have the opportunity to lead lives of their own choosing, to be free from poverty, to be employed, to reside in the community, and to live independently with ready access to whatever services and supports they need.
- III. People with I/DD have the opportunity to participate in civic activities, volunteerism and community service, religion, art, culture, and recreation alongside their peers without disabilities.
- IV. Individual members of the public value, respect and accept people with I/DD as equal members of society.
- V. Quality health education, health promotion and health care are widely available and accessible, enabling individuals to avoid known environmental causes of I/DD and to prevent secondary health problems for people with I/DD.
- VI. The Arc is a powerful advocate for people with I/DD, leading a vibrant, engaged and growing movement of people with I/DD; their family members, friends and colleagues; and the nonprofit organizations that serve them, committed to the full inclusion of people with I/DD in society.
- VII. The Arc is a catalyst advancing best practices among all community-based service providers and the preeminent provider of inclusive services and supports for people with I/DD and their families.
- VIII. The Arc is a household name, well-known and respected as an effective, responsive, well-managed, responsibly governed, and sustainable nonprofit federation.



Be Included in the Classroom



Experience Meaningful Relationships



Receive Personalized Attention

Goals and Related Strategies

The Arc will utilize the following strategies in pursuit of these goals:

Goal 1. Infants, children and youth with I/DD have access to the supports and services they need to live in their family homes, to succeed in school and to partake in all of the experiences of childhood.

Strategy 1 Increase the availability of early intervention services that are provided in naturally occurring environments.

Strategy 2 Increase the inclusion, participation and integration of students with proper accommodations in their neighborhood schools, as well as in other public and publicly general educational settings.

Strategy 3 Promote best practices in school-to-community transition.

Strategy 4 Eliminate the use of seclusion, aversive interventions and non-emergency restraint of children in schools.

Strategy 5 Increase the involvement of students with I/DD in the IEP process, including in transition planning.

Strategy 6 Increase the quality and accessibility of lay and professional advocates to support people with I/DD and their families, including the development of parent advocate and youth self-advocate groups.

Strategy 7 Reach out to and empower parents, siblings and other family members of infants, children and youth with I/DD, and provide them access to the information they need, when they need it, across multiple media and modalities.

Strategy 8 Actively involve, collaborate with and support other family support/service organizations.



Meet Unique Needs



Provide Educational Support



Gain Independence Through Work



Find Meaningful Employment



Benefit From Regular Medical Check-ups

Goal II. Adults with I/DD have the opportunity to lead lives of their own choosing, to be free from poverty, to be employed, to reside in the community, and to live independently with ready access to whatever services and supports they need.

- Strategy 1** Increase opportunities for integrated employment at fair wages and self-employment for people with I/DD.
- Strategy 2** Increase services and supports necessary for people with I/DD to be gainfully employed or self-employed.
- Strategy 3** Build the capacity and readiness of employers to recruit, hire and retain individuals with I/DD as employees.
- Strategy 4** Identify and promote best practices in services and supports for people with I/DD relating to housing, employment, recreation, and other aspects of community participation.
- Strategy 5** Increase the availability of affordable and accessible rental housing and home-ownership, including supported housing.
- Strategy 6** Increase the availability of personal supports.
- Strategy 7** Encourage, assist and support chapters of The Arc to transition from group homes to providing supported living, as well as to assist people with I/DD to live in their own homes in the community with the appropriate supports.
- Strategy 8** Encourage, assist and support chapters of The Arc to transition from segregated day programs and employment to providing support for integrated, community-based employment and activities.
- Strategy 9** Support chapters of The Arc to facilitate the community-change process necessary to replace the remaining state institutions with community-based services and supports.
- Strategy 10** Promote and support the growth of self-determination and self-advocacy.
- Strategy 11** Rebalance the Medicaid program so that home and community-based services and family support are mandatory and readily available with consistency and portability from state to state.
- Strategy 12** Improve basic income support systems for people with I/DD and their families, and change requirements applicable to benefits eligibility, to reduce the incidence of poverty.

Goal III. People with I/DD have the opportunity to participate in civic activities, volunteerism and community service, religion, art, culture, and recreation alongside their peers without disabilities.

- Strategy 1** Build the capacity and readiness of civic, cultural, religious, governmental, business, and other community organizations to include and support the participation of people with I/DD in their programs and activities.
- Strategy 2** Increase services and supports necessary for people with I/DD to participate in civic, cultural, religious, and other community organizations.
- Strategy 3** Increase voting by people with I/DD and their participation in the political process.
- Strategy 4** Increase the availability of family support, including respite services.



Express Creativity Through Art

Goal IV. Individual members of the public value, respect and accept people with I/DD as equal members of society.

- Strategy 1** Publicize the high rate and specific incidents of bigotry, discrimination and victimization of people with I/DD.
- Strategy 2** Develop and support chapters of The Arc in implementing testing programs to identify discriminatory practices in housing, employment and instances of unlawful failures to provide accommodation.
- Strategy 3** Promote increased public awareness of people with I/DD and their needs, issues and concerns.
- Strategy 4** Monitor the media for negative portrayals and descriptions of people with I/DD in the media, and promote more accurate, respectful and positive coverage.
- Strategy 5** Promote appropriate education and training of medical professionals, legal professionals, law enforcement officials, teachers, clergy, human resources professionals, and others whose conduct impacts the lives and opportunities of people with I/DD.
- Strategy 6** Educate people with I/DD and their family members about their rights and provide them the tools and supports to protect their rights where such are being unlawfully denied.
- Strategy 7** Showcase the positive role and contributions of people with I/DD in society.



Lead Through Self-advocacy



Learn About Health Issues and Prevention



Share Your Views With Political Leaders



Work With Peers to Break Down Barriers

Goal V. Quality health education, health promotion and health care are widely available and accessible, enabling individuals to avoid known environmental causes of I/DD and to prevent secondary health problems for people with I/DD.

Strategy 1 Educate the public to avoid environmental agents and behaviors known to cause I/DD.

Strategy 2 Increase the availability and accessibility of quality routine and preventative medical, dental, vision, and mental health care for people with I/DD.

Strategy 3 Make public and private health insurance universally available to people with I/DD.

Strategy 4 Prevent discrimination against people with I/DD in the delivery of health care services.

Strategy 5 Build the capacity of medical professionals and health care organizations to provide health care services to people with I/DD, including by expanding relevant specialized training.

Goal VI. The Arc is a powerful advocate for people with I/DD, leading a vibrant, engaged and growing movement of people with I/DD; their family members, friends and colleagues; and the nonprofit organizations that serve them, committed to the full inclusion of people with I/DD in society.

Strategy 1 Build the capacity of all chapters of The Arc to engage in both public policy advocacy and individual advocacy for people with I/DD.

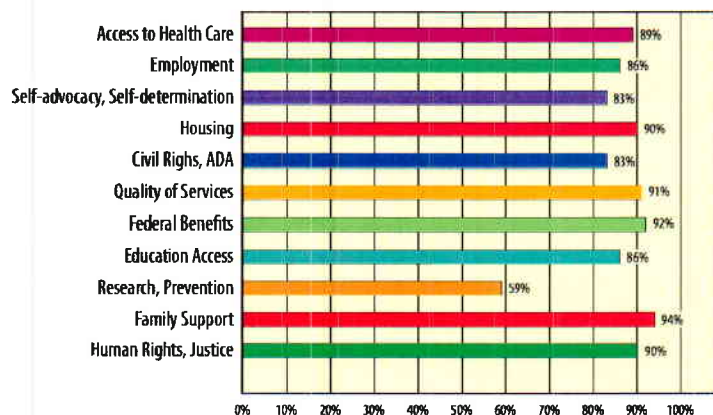
Strategy 2 Assure and sustain a state office or chapter in every state or a combination of state and regional offices that provide a presence in all 50 states.

Strategy 3 Dramatically expand the number of members and activists, including obtaining greater participation of families of younger children and people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Strategy 4 Promote and support the development of people with I/DD as leaders, advocates and spokespersons on issues of their concern.

Strategy 5 Actively collaborate with and support self-advocacy organizations and involve them in all aspects of the work of The Arc.

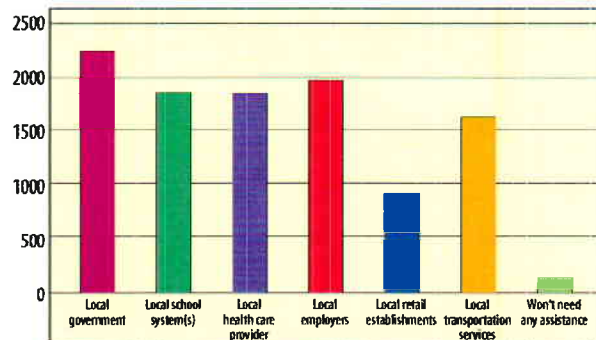
Areas Where Advocacy is Needed



The constituents surveyed rated the importance of these issues "Medium High" or "Very High" for people with I/DD and their families.

Note: 3,363 respondents, Grant Thornton Stakeholder Survey 2008

Anticipated Need for Systems-change Advocacy



The constituents surveyed envisioned The Arc advocating in the future for systems change to these government entities and service providers.

Note: 3,336 respondents, Grant Thornton Stakeholder Survey 2008

Strategy 6 Develop a network of well-trained, empowered and informed self-advocates.

Strategy 7 Build the capacity of board and staff leaders of state and local chapters, as well as individual members and volunteers, to engage in advocacy.

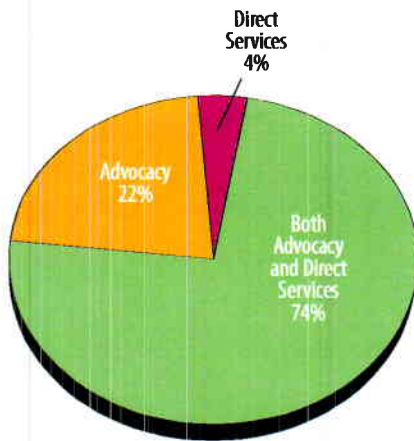
Strategy 8 Collaborate with culturally focused groups to increase awareness of The Arc in communities of color, as well as the accessibility of advocacy, supports and services for people with I/DD.

Strategy 9 Develop benchmarks and compile state-specific rankings of the accessibility and quality of supports and services for people with I/DD and their families.

Strategy 10 Empower people with I/DD and their families to tell their stories.

Strategy 11 Position The Arc as the leading resource for the media and the general public about I/DD.

Chapters of The Arc Provide



Chapters of The Arc provide direct services, advocacy or both.

Note: 1,247 respondents, Grant Thornton Stakeholder Survey 2008

Goal VII. The Arc is a catalyst advancing best practices among all community-based service providers and the preeminent provider of inclusive services and supports for people with I/DD and their families.

- Strategy 1** Establish a knowledgebase of best practices in supports and services for people with I/DD, as well as of the specific programs, services and supports offered by chapters of The Arc.
- Strategy 2** Conduct or commission research to assess the quality of outcomes attained by people with I/DD served by chapters of The Arc in comparison to other community-based service providers.
- Strategy 3** Set clear direct-service standards for what are best practices in services and supports for people with I/DD and their families, as well as a system of education, training and support to promote organizational improvement consistent with the standards.
- Strategy 4** Provide ongoing professional development and education for program staff of chapters of The Arc, promoting best practices in programs, services and supports for people with I/DD.
- Strategy 5** Develop and implement mechanisms for promoting continuous quality improvement in the supports and services provided by chapters of The Arc.
- Strategy 6** Develop and implement processes to effectively address complaints from the public about programs, supports and services provided by chapters of The Arc or other evidence of conduct that is incompatible with the best interest of people with I/DD and their families.

Goal VIII. The Arc is a household name, well-known and respected as an effective, responsive, well-managed, responsibly governed, and sustainable nonprofit federation.

- Strategy 1** Rebrand The Arc to establish its position as the leading advocacy and service nonprofit for people with I/DD in the United States, including supporting chapters in implementing the new brand identity.
- Strategy 2** Reaffirm The Arc's relevance and role on behalf of all people with I/DD, regardless of diagnoses and at all stages of life.
- Strategy 3** Develop a collaborative approach to fundraising among national, state and local chapters that maximizes philanthropic resources.

Strategy 4 Strengthen and expand the depth and breadth of the network of local chapters, including:

- i. Directly recruiting new local chapters in states where there is no state chapter;
- ii. Supporting and coordinating with state chapters to recruit new local chapters; and
- iii. Promoting mergers and consolidation where necessary and appropriate to advance the mission of The Arc.

Strategy 5 Establish a nimble, seamless, state-of-the-art model for involving parents, family members and interested individuals as members of The Arc that is educational, mission driven, flexible, rewarding, and high impact.

Strategy 6 Recruit and involve businesses, professionals, consultants, government agencies, associated nonprofits, and other organizations in The Arc.

Strategy 7 Develop dynamic partnerships with major corporations to promote inclusion, as well as to provide ongoing support for The Arc at all levels.

Strategy 8 Provide ongoing professional development and education for executive and program staff of chapters of The Arc, promoting best practices in programs, services and supports for people with I/DD.

Strategy 9 Develop the Board of Directors to be composed of a majority of parents, family members and people with disabilities themselves, while also including business, philanthropic, media, and academic leaders, as well as others capable of providing resources and expertise necessary for the success of The Arc at the national level.

Strategy 10 Increase use of technology, including social networking, in all aspects of the organization's work.



Enjoy Integrated Employment



Participate in Community Events