Join the Movement!

This year and every year, The Arc of Massachusetts enhances the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including autism, and assists their families.

More than 200,000 individuals with disabilities live in Massachusetts. Giving them and their families greater access to community-based lifespan supports and services including early intervention, family support, employment and residential programs, and social-recreational activities is crucial. The Arc of Massachusetts fights to make these opportunities available.

THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ARC’S WORK.

Make a gift. The Annual Fund supports our advocacy and outreach on Beacon Hill and on Capitol Hill, as well as programs such as Operation House Call and Widening the Circle. Make a gift anytime at arcmass.org/donate. You also can make a tribute gift and honor a friend or loved one with a contribution.

Sponsor the annual gala. Sponsorship packages start at $1,000, providing opportunities for corporations, individuals, and agencies to get involved at a range of giving levels.

Become an agency sponsor. If you represent a human service agency serving people with I/DD, join the Agency Sponsorship Program. You will be directly participating in and supporting ongoing work to secure funding and establish effective disability policies and receive great benefits.

Contact your elected officials. Make your voice heard on Capitol Hill and Beacon Hill. Share your stories with your legislators. Help us provide the names and faces that legislators need to understand the pressing need for good policies and funding for services.

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Enhancing the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including autism, and their families. We fulfill this through advocacy for community supports and services that foster social inclusion, self-determination, and equity across all aspects of society.
Established 65 years ago, The Arc of Massachusetts enhances the lives of the more than 200,000 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in our Commonwealth and their families. With our 17 chapters across Massachusetts, we advocate for supports and community-based services such as family support, employment, recreation, and residential. Families banded together in the 1950s to change policies and practices. In the 1960s, special education and de-institutionalization took center stage. In the 1970s, ‘normalization’ became the watchword for services and The Arc advocated for a life in the community. The Arc led the push for funding for adult supports (Turning 22) in the 1980s. In 2000, a ruling was made on the Boulet lawsuit, which The Arc brought against the Department of Mental Retardation. As a result, the 2,437 individuals who were in institutions because their families lacked the supports necessary to care for them at home were given the opportunity to live in their own communities and receive the services they needed. In 2013-2014, The Arc played a key role in passage of four key pieces of legislation: Real Lives, the Autism Omnibus bill, the National Background Check, and a data study of autism.

Today, The Arc remains at the forefront of the fight for better lives for people with I/DD and autism. The Arc works to ensure the rights of people with disabilities, obtain funding for support services, and seek the passage of good policies and laws, such as Nicky’s Law, which would create a registry for care providers substantiated of abuse against individuals with I/DD.

In the coming year, The Arc of Massachusetts will be working to address the workforce shortage crisis among Direct Support Professionals (DSPs); refiling our priority legislation, Nicky’s Law; and advocating for increasing needs in Family Support funding as part of the FY 2020 budget. We will be hosting our biennial Transition Conference in November 2019; providing valuable resources to help families and self-advocates along their life journeys; and continuing the fight on Beacon Hill and Capitol Hill to ensure that individuals with I/DD, including autism, have the equal rights they deserve.