

The Arc of Tennessee Resolution on Developmental Center Closure

Whereas, The Arc of Tennessee opposes the institutionalization of people with intellectual disabilities;

Whereas, people with intellectual disabilities have fundamental human rights;

Whereas these rights include the right to a full life in their communities, free of unduly restrictive living environments;

Whereas in the 1999 Olmstead decision, the United States Supreme Court affirmed a person's right to receive services in the community;

Whereas individuals with intellectual disabilities can live meaningful lives in their homes and communities when provided with appropriate quality supports;

Whereas across Tennessee, people with intellectual disabilities who require supports similar to those provided in Tennessee's institutions, live in and are supported by their communities;

Whereas research and experience demonstrate that quality of life is much higher for people living in their communities;

Whereas The Arc of Tennessee affirms that families who choose institutional placement do so based on the belief that their family member is best served in that setting;

Whereas research shows that most families who initially oppose deinstitutionalization nevertheless report increased satisfaction after their family member has moved into the community¹;

Whereas the evidence is clear that large congregate facilities are unnecessary, inappropriate and not cost-effective;

Whereas, Tennessee ranks 40th in the country in supporting people with intellectual disabilities in their homes and communities²;

Whereas the average daily cost of institutional care in Tennessee is four times the average daily cost of home and community-based services;

¹ Lakin and Larson, *Parental Attitudes about Residential Placement Before and After Deinstitutionalization: A Research Synthesis*

² United Cerebral Palsy, *A Case for Inclusion, "2008 Tennessee Report"*

Whereas there is a strong national trend away from warehousing people with intellectual disabilities in costly, unnecessarily restrictive institutional settings;

Therefore, be it resolved that The Arc of Tennessee calls for the closure of Tennessee's state-operated developmental centers, Arlington, Clover Bottom and Greene Valley;

Be it further resolved that The Arc of Tennessee calls for a transparent, planned, person-centered and timely closure process involving families and advocacy organizations;

Be it further resolved that the closure process must acknowledge and address the concerns of families who oppose deinstitutionalization;

Be it further resolved that the closure process should set clear targets for census reduction, service capacity development and quality assurance;

Be it further resolved that the closure process should be accomplished in a manner that minimizes the disruptions in people's lives;

Be it further resolved that The Arc of Tennessee opposes any new development of institutional facilities;

Be it further resolved that The Arc of Tennessee opposes any new development on the campuses of Tennessee's developmental centers;

Be it further resolved that The Arc of Tennessee supports a locally-based decision-making process so that people receiving services through the Division of Mental Retardation Services and those close to them have the ability to determine their own lives;

Be it further resolved that The Arc of Tennessee urges DMRS and TennCare to ensure that federal and state dollars are redirected to a community-based service system predicated on choice, independence, self-direction and community participation;

Be it finally resolved that The Arc of Tennessee affirms that all people with intellectual disabilities have the right to the individualized, quality services they need, and that those services, including medical and behavioral supports, can be provided safely and cost-effectively in home and community-based settings.

Adopted by the Board of Directors, March 20, 2009