



1971

GOALS FOR CHANGE

through

PUBLIC ACTION

Minnesota Association for Retarded Children

1911 NICOLLET AVENUE • MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55403

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Goal: State funds should be used to develop a modern, statewide system of small, individualized residences in proper locations. Remodeling funds at large state institutions should be used only to meet health, safety, privacy and program requirements.

Recommendations:

- 1) The state law should be amended to provide 90% state matching funds for community residential cost of care. Sufficient funds should be provided to fully fund the 90%.
- 2) The law should require Department of Welfare determination of need and suitability before construction or establishment of additional community facilities. These shall be according to a state plan. Cost of care funds shall not be paid unless requirements are met.
- 3) State funds should be appropriated to non-profit agencies on a 75/25% matching basis to aid in the development of community residential facilities.
- 4) Laws should be enacted which will place licensing of public and private facilities for mentally retarded children and adults under the authority of the Commissioner of Public Welfare, who shall establish and enforce program requirements. Additional staff must be provided for adequate inspection, program consultation and surveillance.
- 5) Each state institution for mentally retarded people should have a single administrative head who is a medical doctor, educator, social worker, psychologist, or who has another related program specially.
- 6) The salary levels for medical doctors in state institutions should be increased.
- 7) Staffing level in state institutions should be increased.
- 8) There must be adequate funding for equipment in institutions.
- 9) The per capita daily food allowance to state facilities should be increased in order to provide an adequate diet.

ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAMS

Goal: To improve state level guidance and development of services for retarded people.

Recommendations:

- 1) Establish an adequately staffed separate Division of Mental Retardation within the Department of Public Welfare.
- 2) The laws governing the DPW Medical Policy Committee should be amended to include experts in mental retardation and consumer representatives.
- 3) There must be a separate program and separate program director, when mentally retarded children or adults are placed in state institutions for the mentally ill, responsible directly to the medical services director of DPW.

EDUCATION

Goal: To insure that all handicapped children receive appropriate educational services through a state system of mandatory special education.

Recommendations:

- 1) Mandatory Special Education should be required for all handicapped children of school age through an amendment to the special education laws.
- 2) Special services, which schools may purchase, should be expanded to include, in addition to, other necessary services, day activity center services and vocational training for handicapped children.
- 3) Inter-district units should be established throughout the state to improve the delivery of special education services for handicapped children.
- 4) Funds should be provided for additional staff in the Special Education Section, Department of Education.
- 5) The present law, which allows school districts to transport children to day activity centers and receive state aids, should be made mandatory.
- 6) State aids for transportation of handicapped children should be increased from the present \$225 per year and an additional pro rata allowance for summer school provided.
- 7) Sufficient funds should be appropriated to support preschool education for all children with handicaps. (Funds are now available for deaf only.)

DAY ACTIVITY CENTERS

Goal: Expansion and refinement of Minnesota's day activity centers to provide services in all counties of the state.

Recommendations:

- 1) State funding for day activity center programs should be increased to \$5,000,000 to meet the needs of present centers for their expansion and to establish new centers.
- 2) Rent should be subject to state reimbursement.
- 3) Funds should be available to expand Department of Welfare consultation to day activity centers.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Goal: To develop the potential and existing abilities of mentally retarded adults so they will be productive workers.

Recommendations:

- 1) State appropriations for sheltered workshops should be increased to \$1,800,000.
- 2) The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation should be allowed 26 new positions to enable it to expand its program of early intervention.

MENTAL HEALTH-MENTAL RETARDATION AREA BOARDS

- 1) The community mental health center law should mandate a specific responsibility for mentally retarded persons.
- 2) Provide supplemental incentive funds to stimulate mental health centers to carry out their responsibilities to plan and provide services to mentally retarded persons.



BLASTS from the State Capitol

A Periodic Legislative Report from
the Minnesota Association for Retarded Children



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No. 1

The following are comments on developments at the State Legislature since its opening. It includes legislation which is already submitted or soon will be.

1. The Governor's Budget. At first glance we can applaud the governor's emphasis on Community Alternatives with corresponding designated \$10, 000, 000 for construction of 50 residential facilities of eight persons each. We also applaud the added amounts of money to take care of persons leaving state institutions to live in the community, such as added monies for DACs, sheltered workshops and special education.

At this time it appears, however, that no specific new monies are included to comply with Welsch vs. Likins decision to take care of the people who are retarded in our State hospitals. This seems to be ignoring the issue of the decision and the people remaining in the institutions even if community alternatives program does get implemented and it really does place 700 mentally retarded in the community.

2. The Guardianship and Protection Law for mentally retarded persons is being submitted in both the House and the Senate. They will be heard in the respective Judiciary Committees. This law recognizes and makes provision for a full range of protective services tailored to needs of individuals without depriving them of rights he/she is capable of exercising. It separates the guardianship statute from the Minnesota Hospitalization and Commitment Act. This legislation is numbered S.F. 78 (Davies, O'Neil, Doty) and H.F. 48 (Berg, Savelkoul, W. Kelly, Parish, Knoll).

3. The Zoning Bill is in to the Revisors to be drafted into bill form. It will be introduced in both House and Senate. It provides that State licensed group homes for persons who are mentally retarded or physically handicapped may be established and considered residential use of property for purposes of zoning. The chief author on House is Representative Frank Knoll of Minneapolis; in the Senate, the chief author is Stephen Keefe.

4. Special Education: (a) Reimbursement of 80% of salaries of essential special education personnel with no ceiling. (b) Extend special education aid to vocational education programs for students who have graduated from high school.

5. Human Rights Amendment: Law to include handicapped persons in sections of public services and public accommodations. This bill is H.F. 4 (Stanton, Menning, McCauley, Jude, Kahn). No companion Senate bill has been introduced at this time.

6. Funds for pilot study of parent subsidy to keep children who are mentally retarded or physically handicapped at home. The governor's budget has included \$1.9 million for this new program.

12. **Sheltered Workshops.** The Governor's Budget has \$1.25 million. Department of Education requested \$2.5 million. The last biennium appropriated \$750, 000.

	<u>Governor's Budget</u>	<u>DPW Request</u>
1. Pilot Study of Parent Subsidy of Children who are Mentally Retarded	\$1.9 million	
2. Nutritional Supplements for Pregnant Women	\$ 3 million	
3. Start-up Costs for Residential Facilities	\$500,000	
4. DACs Appropriation	\$9.2 million	\$11.7 million
5. Foster Grandparents	\$462,000	
6. Sheltered Workshops	\$1.25 million (Dept. of Ed. Request \$2.5 million)	

PEOPLE NEED PEOPLE AND THE ARCS NEED THE MENTALLY RETARDED AS MEMBERS

Mel Heckt has written us another fine article, which follows. We hope that it will result in a great deal of thought on the part of our members. In addition, we ask that our members respond and react to the article — either by contacting Mel or the MARC office. Thank you.

We know that a substantially increased membership is essential if our mentally retarded citizens are to have their constitutional rights protected and are to secure the services so desperately needed and so woefully lacking.

However, have we ever asked ourselves:

- A. Why are mentally retarded adults and children not members of our ARCs?
- B. Should our mentally retarded citizens become members?

Why are they not members of local or youth ARCs?

There are at least three basic reasons:

- 1. Your and my attitude toward them is still too pessimistic, pity-centered and paternalistic.
- 2. You and I either do not listen to them or do not encourage them to express their needs or desires.
- 3. You and I have not encouraged them to advise us as to how they can become involved as members and have not tried to involve them.

We know a retarded adult is not a child, but don't we still tend to treat him as one?

We know many retarded adults and children can express their likes and dislikes about their food, clothing, home or room, school, recreation, work and social life, but don't we believe that only we can speak and know what is best for them?

We know many can dress themselves, ride buses and get to work on time if trained, but don't we tend to judge them irresponsible and incapable of doing the job or undersell their capabilities? (Parents and experts have in the past generally so erred because of our lack of knowledge).

We know many can understand and contribute, but don't we say they would be embarrassed, not interested in membership or too poor to pay? Yet one mentally retarded young man sold more tickets than any one "normal" member in a recent Minneapolis ARC fund-raising venture. One mentally retarded adult was a better advocate before our Minnesota legislature than many of us who thought we were good advocates. Many retarded adults either work and earn money or receive Aid to the Disabled funds and have fund balances not being expended for them. Are we really certain that either they or we as their parents are too poor to pay their dues?

Some of us say our retarded sons and daughters can't read; some can't; some can read if the printed material is written for them; others can understand when read to; others can appreciate a membership card and emblem; others can benefit from the person caring for them, reading and keeping informed of the latest information from our ARCs.

Should they become members?

(continued on page 8)

MEMBERSHIP FOR THE RETARDED (cont'd)

We have set certain goals for the retarded:

1. Humanization and not Dehumanization.
2. Equal opportunity to develop to the maximum of their capability.
3. Love, affection, and dignity.
4. Appropriate food, clothing, grooming, home or residence, education, vocational education and training, employment or sheltered work opportunity and the funding necessary to guarantee same.
5. First class citizenship and as many of our civil rights as may be appropriate and possible.

How is it possible to attain these goals if:

1. Our attitudes toward them are negative, pity-centered, pessimistic and overly-paternalistic?
2. We do not listen to them and encourage them to express their wants and needs.
3. We do not involve them as first class members or as members of some of our committees.

They don't have to become officers or members of the budget, financial or constitution revision committees, but should they not be encouraged to tell us how they can become contributing members of their association, or what they like and dislike about their residence, food, clothing, education, recreation, employment, social life and care?

We must continue to be citizen advocates for many of them, but many of them can be our best citizen advocates for advancing their cause.

Are not many of them minority or poverty persons? Must we make the same mistakes as we have in the past in involving people from the minority and poverty groups? Can't we learn from them?

What can we do?

1. Ask them. Listen to them. Encourage them to tell it like it is. Involve them.
2. Ask your local, state and national ARCs and youth ARCs to focus attention upon this question.
3. Invite them to form a committee to advise us.
4. Invite them to serve on our ARC committees.

I sometimes wonder who is mentally retarded, my daughter Janice or her father who authored this article? Incidentally, I just mailed in Janice's dues and membership application to my local ARC. How about you?

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MODEL NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES (cont'd)

WE STILL NEED VOLUNTEER DRIVERS -- every Monday evening for Sunshine-Inn Group (7 to 9 pm), a social-recreational group for young adults and adults -- OR every other Friday evening for Family Nite (6 to 8 pm) -- for families with retarded children.

You could drive your own car or the MARC van. Won't you let these people know you care? Please contact MARC, 866-0091, if you can be of help. Thank you.