

Mission Statement:

Positive Parenting Resource Center will educate and build upon the strengths of families with learning differences to enhance their parenting skills and become recognized as valued, contributing members of their community.

Goals:

1. *To educate the community about parents with disabilities.*
2. *To educate parents about their learning differences and help them discover their strengths and how to utilize them.*
3. *To empower parents by helping them learn to negotiate the human service system.*
4. *To assist parents in establishing and maintaining community connections.*
5. *To provide parent education in regards to child development, positive discipline methods, basic care, family life skills, personal safety, and well being.*
6. *To provide parents and children with the information needed so they can ensure a safe home environment.*
7. *To provide services including home visits, parent education groups, mentoring, case management, and advocacy.*
8. *To make referrals when appropriate to other agencies utilizing their area of expertise in order to better serve the family.*

Individuals and families are invited to join The United Arc in carrying out this mission by becoming members of the agency.

The Positive Parenting Resource Center is a component of The United Arc's Family Support Program which serves families living in Franklin and Hampshire Counties and neighboring communities.

About The United Arc

The United Arc has provided support services and advocacy to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families since 1951.

The following statement expresses the agency's mission:

"The United Arc will lead in forging a society that values, respects, includes and recognizes the contributions of community members with disabilities."

~ Adopted June 18, 1994

The Positive Parenting Resource Center was established through an innovation grant from the MA Department of Mental Retardation. Program services receive funding from DMR, The MA Department of Social Services, Children's Trust Fund, United Way of Franklin County, Women's Fund of Western MA, and Community Development Block Grant Funds through area towns, Community Foundation of Western MA, and Arc Massachusetts.

Local agencies serve as partners and collaborators providing meeting space, resources and staff support.



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The Positive Parenting Resource Center



Sponsored by
The United Arc of
Franklin & Hampshire Counties

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POSITIVE PARENTING RESOURCE CENTER



The Positive Parenting Resource Center focuses on the needs of families headed by parents with cognitive disabilities.

The Center provides training, resource materials and consultation to agencies that want to expand their expertise in working with these families.

Center staff facilitate parent training and support groups designed to teach or refine basic parenting skills. Staff offer home visitation, individualized parent education, case management, and service advocacy.

The Center has provided primary support in establishing the New England Coalition for Supporting Parents with Cognitive Challenges. The Coalition sponsors conferences and training opportunities for both parents and professionals.

For more information about the Positive Parenting Resource Center or the Coalition, contact Susan Jones at The United Arc, (413)774-5558 or suejones@unitedarc.org.

Program Models

Parent Education & Support Groups:

Groups provide education and support to parents with cognitive disabilities to assist them in obtaining the skills and expertise they need to become effective, positive and nurturing parents.

Individualized groups target mothers, fathers, couples and non-custodial parents. Family events, children's programs and transportation are provided. There is no fee to participate.

Home Visiting & Parent Skill Training:

Home based parent education and family support is offered to families that are prioritized and referred through state agencies, or that qualify under another funding source. Parent training and service objectives are designed to address the unique issues presented by each family. Staff also provide supervised visitation for families whose children are in foster care arrangements.

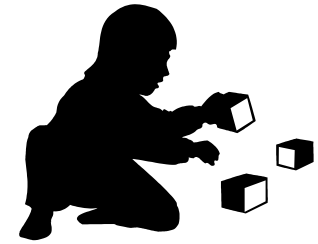
Mentoring Support:

Families receive informal and natural support from community volunteers. Long-term relationships provide families with a "Family Friend". The volunteer can play a variety of different roles such as homework helper, community companion, or simply being an empathetic and listening ear for parents.

Intensive Structural Supported Family Living:

This model provides intensive support to families through a structured living situation in which families live in individual apartments within an apartment building. A host family lives on site to provide mentoring along with support from program staff. Parents will be able to develop their strengths and build upon their capacity to parent, gain family stability, and become involved not only with the complex's "community within a community" but the community at large.

Consultation and Resource Materials



The Center maintains a library of resources and curricula for servicing parents with cognitive disabilities. Subject material includes parent training resources, and professional development materials for parent educators. Individuals are welcome to make an appointment to come browse through the library.

Center staff are available to do training and consultation with agencies to develop their own parent training and support programs. These training options include Effective Communication, Teaching Strategies and Creating Successful Parent Support and Education Groups.

Center staff has been trained by the co-developer, Kathleen Bradley, Ph.D. to implement "The Parent Needed Supports Scale". This is a strength-based tool that can be used not only to assess current strengths but also areas of need.