

# Family Support Program

The United Arc's Family Support Program serves families that have a family member with developmental disabilities living at home. Services are provided in Franklin and Hampshire Counties and the North Quabbin area of Worcester County.

Family Support staff work with every family to create an individual family support plan designed around each family's unique support needs. Families may access the services described below.

## Services available:

### ➤ **Case Management**

A family support advocate works with each family to obtain the goods and services necessary to enhance or preserve family stability and well-being.

### ➤ **Educational Advocacy**

Trained educational advocates work with families to obtain optimal school programs in inclusive settings.

### ➤ **Cash Assistance**

Families have access to limited amounts of cash assistance to purchase respite, equipment, software, or other items needed to support their loved one with a disability.

### ➤ **Intensive Family Support**

With the approval of DMR, The United Arc works intensively with a small number of families in crisis and provides the services and supports necessary to regain family stability.

### ➤ **Person Centered Planning**

Staff are trained in a number of person-centered tools (Maps, Path, Coach, Circles of Support) designed to help individuals and families to dream about the future and make good transitions throughout the life span.

### ➤ **Information and Referral**

Staff help families access available resources. The program publishes an award winning monthly newsletter focused on regional trainings, legislative initiatives and national disability issues. The United Arc also has an extensive library with books and videos on disability, inclusion and transition.

## Support & Resource Groups

➤ **Family Councils** meet monthly in three locations for mutual support, training and program governance.

➤ **Autism/PDD Group** meets monthly to explore topics of mutual interest. Outside speakers are common.

➤ **Parenting Skills & Education Training Groups** are offered both weekly, bi-weekly and monthly in various locations to provide group support and education for parents with cognitive disabilities. These groups are coordinated under the Positive Parenting Resource Center.

## Other United Arc Projects

### ➤ **Positive Parenting Resource Center**

The United Arc provides a variety of supports for parents with cognitive disabilities designed to enhance their ability to parent effectively. United Arc staff also provide consultation to other organizations that want to support these families in the community. For more information contact Susan Jones at (413) 774-2105.

### ➤ **The New England Coalition for Supporting Parents with Cognitive Challenges**

The United Arc hosts and facilitates this Regional Coalition focused on innovative approaches and best practices in serving parents with cognitive delays and their families. Four of the New England states are currently partners in the Coalition.

### ➤ **School Services**

The United Arc's School Services program contracts with a number of school districts across Western MA to promote both the inclusion of students with disabilities in the life of the school community and effective transition support to adult life. The Arc also runs a community based transition program in cooperation with the Greenfield Public Schools that features individual vocational experience and an independent life skills apartment. For more information, contact Tom Bruffee at (413) 774-5558.

## About The United Arc

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

Family Support services at The United Arc are family directed, with families making decisions directly about policies, funding allocations, staffing and other programmatic concerns.

For more information contact:

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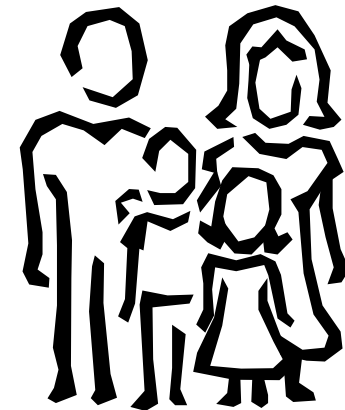
Major funding for this program comes from the Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation.

The United Arc receives additional support from private grants, membership, contributions and fundraising efforts.



*Serving families in Franklin & Hampshire Counties and neighboring communities with a family member with developmental disabilities living at home.*

## The United Arc's Family Support Program



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