



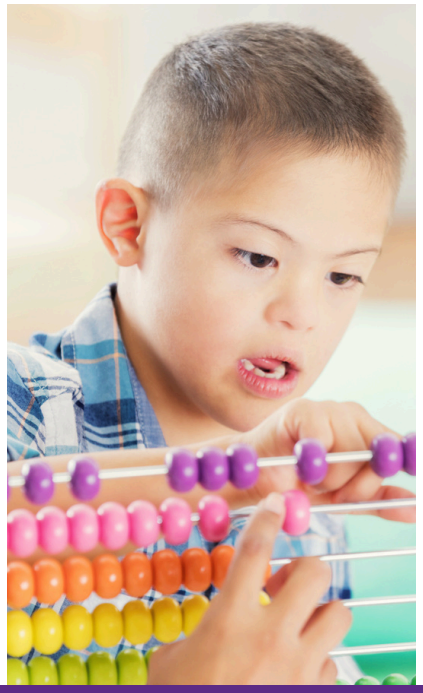




The Arc Indiana

2026 Public Policy Agenda











We Are The Arc



The Arc of Indiana was established in 1956 by parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who joined together to build a better and more accepting world for their children.

With over 35,000 members and 42 chapters representing about 69 counties in Indiana, and 140,000 members in nearly 600 chapters nationwide, The Arc is on the front lines to:

- Empower families with information and resources to assist them in their journey of raising a child with a disability to lead a full and meaningful life
- Empower people with IDD to be self-sufficient and independent to the greatest extent possible
- Inspire positive change in public policy and public attitudes
- Prevent disabilities through education about the dangers of drugs and alcohol while pregnant and advocating for all women to have quality prenatal care
- Serve as a spokesperson and advocate for families and their loved ones

The combined strength of The Arc at the local, state, and national levels makes The Arc the largest national community-based organization serving and advocating for and with people with IDD and their families.

We are pleased to share our public policy agenda for the 2026 session of the Indiana General Assembly, and our overarching vision for people with IDD to have a full and meaningful life where they can live, learn, work, and fully participate in their community.

2026 Priority Issues

Medicaid

Legislative Priorities:

- Support legislation to improve transparency and accountability for the state, providers, and families in the Medicaid program.
- Support policies that promote appropriate services for people with medically complex conditions.
- Support legislation and policy development that ensure any transition to or expansion of managed care reflects person-centered values and leads to better outcomes for people with disabilities.



The Arc of Indiana remains committed to ensuring people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families have access to home and community-based services and are free from threats of institutionalization, including group homes. We will continue to work with the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) and legislators to ensure waiver reset efforts, including creation of a new waiver system, align with the needs of people with IDD and families.

In 2026, The Arc of Indiana will support legislation to strengthen transparency and accountability across the Medicaid system:

- **State transparency**: Requiring FSSA to provide plain-language reporting to families on spending and denials, and publishing annual program-and provider-level spending and quality measures.
- **Provider accountability**: Requiring providers to share billing summaries with families, empowering case managers with better data, and enabling stronger oversight of provider performance.
- **Family stewardship**: Encouraging families to review billing statements, report discrepancies, and engage in thoughtful planning that aligns services with person-centered goals.

These reforms reflect the values of good government and shared responsibility-ensuring tax dollars are wisely spent, providers deliver high-quality services, and families are empowered as partners in care.

The Arc of Indiana recognizes that well-designed managed care can strengthen coordination and improve outcomes for people with disabilities. We are not opposed to managed care; we believe that when implemented thoughtfully, it can lead to better services and a more efficient system. However, managed care must be developed and administered by organizations with experience and a demonstrated commitment to person-centered principles. Any approach must reflect values that prioritize dignity, autonomy, and individual choice. We will support legislation that ensures these standards are upheld and that oversight mechanisms are in place to guarantee managed care delivers on its promise to improve lives, not limit them.

The Arc of Indiana will also engage stakeholders as FSSA plans for waiver reset, monitor the growing waiting lists for services, and advocate for solutions that ensure individuals and families can access needed supports as quickly as possible. We will continue to support effective use of federal Money Follows the Person (MFP) funds to help people transition successfully out of institutional settings and into their communities.



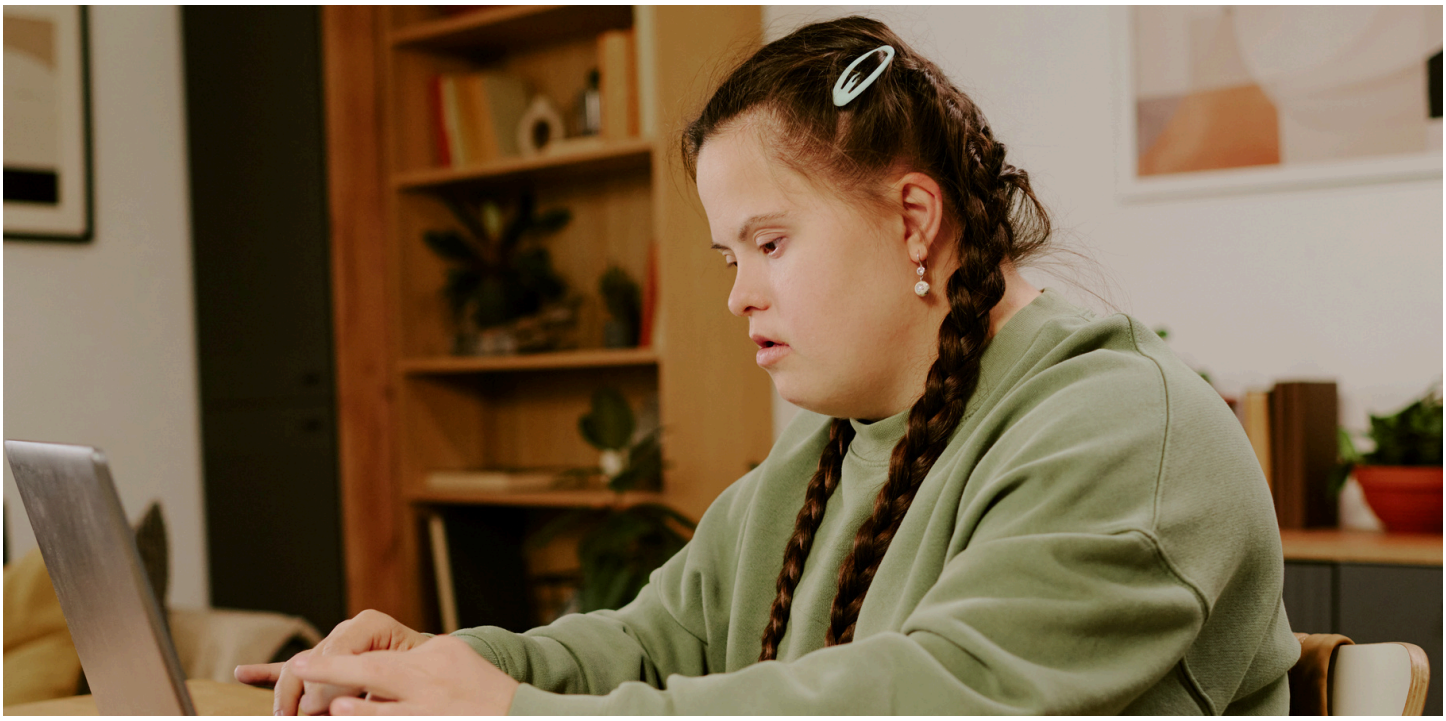
Education

Legislative Priorities:

- Support legislation to increase protections and rights for families of children receiving special education services.
- Monitor the Education Scholarship Account (ESA) Program to ensure families can navigate the program successfully and that students continue to receive needed services.
- Support legislation to ensure access to licensed or board-certified behavior analysts for students whose treatment plans include applied behavioral analysis (ABA) therapy.

The Arc of Indiana believes all students deserve an appropriate education that provides pathways to both careers and post-secondary opportunities. We strongly support inclusion, where students with disabilities learn alongside their peers with the supports and accommodations they need to reach their academic goals.

The mandated transition IEP must focus on employment skills and connections to Vocational Rehabilitation Services before graduation. We remain committed to ensuring every student who can earn a diploma has the opportunity to do so, recognizing that a diploma is a pathway to a career.





In 2026, we will support legislation requiring schools to allow medically necessary services during the school day when a student has a treatment plan that includes such services, ensuring children with disabilities receive consistent, evidence-based support.

The Arc of Indiana will also continue to advocate for eliminating restraint and seclusion in schools, improving reporting requirements, and monitoring new literacy mandates. We will monitor new state accountability standards, diploma initiatives, and attendance requirements to ensure these measures do not create barriers or have unintended negative consequences for students with disabilities.

Employment

Legislative Priority:

- Support legislation that increases employment opportunities for people with disabilities.





A key mission of The Arc of Indiana is supporting and promoting real choice in the employment and career paths that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) pursue. We support career pathways that range from volunteer opportunities and part-time work to full-time competitive employment. People with IDD should be able to focus on their careers without fear of losing important government benefits.

The unemployment rate for people with IDD remains unacceptably high. Hiring people with disabilities strengthens Indiana's workforce and economy. Through the Erskine Green Training Institute and employment services provided by local chapters of The Arc across the state, we will continue to lead efforts to improve employment outcomes and showcase the value people with disabilities bring to Indiana's workforce.

The Arc of Indiana also supports eliminating sub-minimum wage environments and expanding competitive, integrated employment opportunities in communities across the state. In 2026, we will additionally support efforts to modernize Vocational Rehabilitation rules, strengthen transition services, and ensure Vocational Rehabilitation Services is providing the necessary supports and services to effectively serve the individuals it was designed to help. We will also support incentives that encourage employers to hire people with disabilities.

Achieving a Vision for a Good Life

Since our founding in 1956, The Arc of Indiana has strived to ensure individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) throughout the state have the services and supports they need to live a full and meaningful life, across the lifespan, through the growth and intertwined efforts of natural community based supports and local, state, and federal programs. In addition to working to achieve our legislative priorities in the 2026 session of the Indiana General Assembly, we will continue to work on our overarching goals to help people with IDD live, learn, work, and fully participate in their community.

The Arc of Indiana remains committed to making individuals and families aware of the natural supports they can utilize in their community as they cannot depend on government services alone. We continue to promote the use of the Life Course Framework, a tool to help people with IDD, their families, and support network to develop a vision for their "best life" and how to achieve that vision using natural supports as well as government programs.



The first steps to ensuring Hoosiers can lead a full, healthy life begins with all women having **access to quality prenatal and postnatal care** and making sure the public is educated about the dangers and long-term effects of alcohol, tobacco and controlled substances during pregnancy.

When a child is born with a disability, or born with a known risk of disability, it is critical that families have access to **Indiana's First Steps early intervention program** and do not face obstacles in receiving services due to cost participation fees, insurance or other barriers. Families who have children with significant disabilities should have access to **home and community based services through Medicaid Waiver programs.**



Following First Steps services, some children no longer need specialized services, while other children with disabilities transition to **special education preschool programs and K-12 public education.** The Arc of the United States and The Arc of Indiana were instrumental in advocating for all children to receive a free and appropriate public education. We remain strongly committed to this critical principle, and we will continue to defend students' access to the special education services they are guaranteed under state and federal law. At a time when that access is increasingly strained, our focus remains on protecting children's rights and ensuring they receive the individualized services and instruction needed to prepare for independent, meaningful lives.

As young adults transition from school, it is critical that they and their families are aware of **government programs and local resources** that are there to help them live successfully in the community. This can include understanding how to apply for and receive Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance, Medicaid health coverage, the extension of private health insurance, Medicaid Waiver home and community based supports, and employment supports through vocational rehabilitation and other employment programs.

The Arc of Indiana believes that all adults with IDD should be able to live self-sufficiently and independently to the greatest extent possible. To achieve this, they need the support of family, community, and government programs.



Having access to quality services and supports often includes programs offered through **Medicaid health coverage and private insurance.** The Arc of Indiana will continue to advocate for people with IDD to have broad access to primary care physicians, medical specialists, mental health providers, and dentists, as well as access to wellness and prevention programs and habilitative care. It is also imperative for insurance companies to meet their financial responsibilities rather than passing costs on to Indiana's already overwhelmed Medicaid, First Steps, and school programs. In addition, The Arc of Indiana will continue to monitor implementation of Indiana's new **managed care** program for people receiving services on the PathWays for Aging Waiver and people residing in nursing facilities. We will share information regarding how managed care has a very different impact on people with IDD.



An important part of living an independent life is the ability to make your own decisions. The Arc of Indiana supports efforts to educate people with IDD, families, schools, and the public about **alternatives to legal guardianship**, including supported decision making, or the use of supported decision making for people who are under guardianship. This tool allows individuals to retain the right to make decisions for themselves with the help of supporters they choose to assist them. For those who do need guardianship, The Arc of Indiana supports the availability of quality, affordable guardianship programs for those who do not have family, loved ones, or advocates to assist them.

A key component to living as independently as possible is access to available, affordable **transportation**. Many people with disabilities cannot gain meaningful employment, access health care or have the ability to enjoy their community due to the lack of transportation. The Arc of Indiana supports efforts to increase the availability of public transportation programs, including in rural areas.

Unfortunately, people with IDD of all ages may encounter the **criminal justice system** as a victim, suspect, or offender. The Arc of Indiana values all initiatives to ensure people with IDD receive equal access to justice, including those who are victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Self-Advocates of Indiana

The Arc of Indiana believes in Self-Advocates of Indiana's (SAI) motto, "Nothing about us without us." People with disabilities must always be part of the conversation regarding funding, programs, services, and policies that impact their lives.

We will continue to support SAI in their pursuit of achieving equality for people with IDD in competitive, integrated, employment, transportation, safe, affordable and accessible housing, and in addressing the direct support professional (DSP) workforce shortage.





The Arc
Indiana

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