

For Immediate Release

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The Arc New London County's "Voices" program receives grant from the Southeast Area Women and Girls Fund

The Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut's Southeast Area Women and Girls Fund has awarded \$5,000 to The Arc New London County to continue its successful "Voices" program. Voices is an empowerment group for women with intellectual and developmental disabilities who have experienced or are at-risk of sexual, physical and/or emotional abuse. Understanding how to break free from the control or influence of others allows many survivors to focus on their own healing in order to move forward, realize their goals, and lead independent lives. Support from The Southeast Area Women and Girls Fund allows the program to contract with wellness and support experts who facilitate specially designed interactive workshops on self-care, decision-making skills, and healthy lifestyle choices.

"Thanks to the vision of the Community Foundation, survivors of domestic violence and sex abuse have a safer environment to support each other in healing," said The Arc New London County's CEO Kathleen Stauffer. "Credible studies tell us that as many as 80% of women with intellectual and developmental disabilities are survivors of sex abuse and 40% are survivors of domestic violence. Men are victimized at higher rates than the general population as well. Now people with IDD can develop the self-care skills that aid with healing and better safeguarding one's boundaries."

Voices is a component of The Arc's Community Life & Advocacy program. To learn more, please visit thearcnlc.org or contact Denise Tift at (860) 889-4435, ext. 116.