



For Immediate Release

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The Arc New London County launches *The Arc Network*

Online Service offers access to small – but growing – database of caregivers

Families seeking care-giving supports for loved ones with intellectual and developmental disabilities can learn about an exciting new database during a seminar hosted by The Arc New London County at 125 Sachem Street, Norwich, at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17.

Developed by The Arc New London County, ***The Arc Network*** links trained professionals interested in working independently with member families seeking supports for loved ones with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Available exclusively to members of The Arc New London County, and involving only those employees in good standing at The Arc New who have expressed written interest in working directly with families independent of their work for The Arc, ***The Arc Network*** allows members to enter such criteria as “time of day” in an effort to find an available, trained professional. Members can then contact the direct care professional directly to arrange for service needs and payment.

The Arc Network holds the potential to dramatically reduce Respite costs in Southeastern Connecticut while significantly reducing stress for families as well. Respite services, or the ability to have short periods of time away from the pressures of care-giving, has been identified in a number of surveys as the No. 1 need of families supporting dependents with disabilities at home. Providing primary support for a loved one who has a developmental disability can be overwhelming and exhausting, reducing the capacity to be an effective and resilient caregiver.

When family-based support systems break down under the physical and psychological pressures of care-giving without adequate respite services, when families are forced to find residential services for loved ones outside their homes, then the true cost of not providing adequate respite services becomes apparent: In Connecticut, the cost of a full time residential placement with a private provider agency like The Arc New London County ranges from \$60,000 per year to as much as \$150,000 per year – compared to about \$18,200 yearly for in-home respite services

In fact, most parents of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities much prefer to provide supports in the home at costs that minimally impact systems and taxpayers compared to the far more expensive alternatives. In building ***The Arc Network***, The Arc New London County hopes to test a respite alternative for families and taxpayers that, over time, could greatly reduce respite costs regionally while greatly enhancing opportunities for families to obtain quality respite supports.

Clearly, finding new ways to provide in-home respite is critical not just for allowing families to keep loved ones at home but for saving dollars in the current economic crisis.

Established in 1952 by parents of children with intellectual disabilities, The Arc New London County provides services and advocacy for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities and facilitates full participation and inclusion for all people in Southeastern Connecticut.

The Arc New London County is a full-service provider offering supports ranging from employment and community integration to residential and in-home respite. Founded in 1952 by families seeking greater opportunity for their children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, The Arc New London County has grown steadily, most recently merging with Seacorp Inc, in Uncasville. The Arc's current operating budget is more than \$9 million

NOTE: The Arc of New London County is New London County's agency of choice for many people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Located at 125 Sachem Street in Norwich, Connecticut, The Arc was established in 1952 by parents of children with intellectual disabilities to serve the citizens of New London County. Board of Directors: John Fournier, President; Enrico DeMatto, Vice President; Linda Rhodes, Secretary; Emily Fournier, Treasurer; Jessica Clark-Starling, Program Representative; Members: Shannon Aiello, Karen DiSaia, Dawn DeCristofaro, Mary Ann Duchene, Deborah Gregoire, Alan Messier, and Alice Munyan. Immediate Past President: Diane Aubin.