



Achieve with us.

“For people with intellectual, developmental and other life-affecting disabilities.”

To DDS:

My name is Jamie Lazaroff; I am the Self Advocate Coordinator for The Arc Quinebaug Valley. I am also the Secretary of the Council of Developmental Services. I'm responding to DDS's Five Year Plan. First and foremost, in no way do you address the 2,000 families on the DDS waitlist. I know that appropriations you get from the legislature do not match up with your attempts to follow national trends in terms of residential supports, but, older families would like the peace of mind that the state has a plan for their son or daughter when they pass on.

In terms of People and Families, first the new Commissioner needs to support and embrace this project. He or she needs to come to all areas of Connecticut and meet with Self-Advocates, families and staff to hear their concerns. The department needs to engage younger families through the internet and social media as the younger generation uses these avenues to get information. The website needs to be redesigned as it's not easy to navigate for families or adult individuals who receive supports from the department. The information packet idea is a great way of doing this.

Service delivery needs to be a major focus as is written in the latest National Core Indicators Survey. Connecticut is behind the national average in all aspects of choice. Staff training needs to include a person centered approach. I am glad to see DDS is talking about supportive housing and transportation but we need a strategy as these are major roadblocks for people with intellectual disabilities living independent lives.

Thank you,

Jamie Lazaroff

Self-Advocate Coordinator The Arc Quinebaug Valley

Secretary, Council on Developmental Services

Board of Directors, The Arc CT