

# 1970s

## Humanity Prevails

### The Consent Decree, Special Education Law Enacted

*It was a frightening period. These communities did not want our children living next to them.*

—Jane Smith



The Community Plan within the Massachusetts Consent Decree sets a new foundation for services. As a result, people from the community are served along with those leaving state institutions. Chapters of The Arc, along with many new organizations become the service providers.



Along with the landmark Massachusetts Special Education Law (Ch. 766)—the first such law in the nation, Community Clinical Nursery Schools are transferred to the Local Education Authorities.



The community opens up choice for individuals to achieve independence based on their abilities and desires.

Self-advocacy provides the opportunity for individuals to shape their own futures. In 1978, The Arc of Massachusetts and Gunnar & Rosemary Dybwad co-sponsor the first Self-Advocacy Conference called “Yes We Can.”



# The Arc of Massachusetts

## Remembering the past.

## Celebrating the present.

## Securing the future.