

Advocacy Spotlight

People First is a Self-Advocacy organization by and for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. There are over 30 active People First chapters with over 1000 members in Washington alone. The Snohomish County chapter's mission statement is "To facilitate and promote public awareness and appreciation that we are PEOPLE FIRST, our disabilities are secondary, and that we are equal citizens in our communities"

Late last year, People First of Snohomish County began preparations for a trip to the State Capitol in Olympia to advocate for issues important to them. Each member chose a topic. In January, the group began writing letters to their 3 legislators about their chosen topic. The topics chosen included the importance of accessible transportation, affordable and accessible housing, employment, and an increased wage for supported living providers. Each individual's letter also included their photo to add a personal touch.

On March 6th, at 7am, a group of 15 individuals representing People First of Snohomish County piled into two vans in Everett to begin a long day of Advocacy in Olympia. The group arrived for a legislative briefing at 10am, when they learned about important bills of interest such as HB 1706 to end sub-minimum wage for individuals with developmental disabilities, and HB 1199 that addresses healthcare for workers with developmental disabilities. The briefing also included helpful tips on advocating at the Capitol.

After the briefing, the group made their way to the Capitol building for a photo on the Capitol steps. The photo op was followed with a Developmental Disability awareness rally at the Capitol's rotunda.

After the rally, 3 smaller groups were formed with a mission to deliver letters and attend appointments with Legislators or Legislator's staff. Four of seven Snohomish County districts were represented through letters or legislative appointments that day: the 21st, 38th, 39th and 44th.



People First of Snohomish County, State Capitol Building steps, Olympia

Some additional highlights from the day included an opportunity to establish relations with new house member Representative Jared Mead from the 44th district during a floor pull. In addition, a spontaneous appointment with the Legislative Aide for Representative June Robinson from the 38th district occurred while delivering letters.

By mid-afternoon the 3 smaller groups reconvened outside the Capital Gift Shop and excitedly chatted about the day's events before making the long journey home. Finally, at 5:30 pm, everyone arrived back in Everett. Some were tired and sore, but everyone was happy with the outcome of the day's events. As members of People First of Snohomish County, they had spent the day promoting public awareness that individuals with developmental disabilities are PEOPLE FIRST, their disabilities are secondary, and they are indeed equal citizens in their community.

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The Arc of Snohomish County
2500 Hewitt Ave. Suite 300
Everett, WA 98201
425-258-2459

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April

- ◇ Kick off - in person 6-9pm, April 26th
- ◇ Legislative Advocacy

May

- ◇ History of Developmental Disabilities and the Civil Rights Movement
- ◇ Understanding other Cultures & Communication

June

- ◇ Special Education
- ◇ Government Resources

July

- ◇ Family Resiliency/Siblings

August

- ◇ Self-Advocacy

September

- ◇ Community Resources/ Graduation: Sep 20th 6-9pm
- ◇ *Legislative Coffees

Monthly conference calls:
 6:30pm, 2nd Thu of month

In person sessions at:
 The Arc of Snohomish County
 2500 Hewitt Ave. Suite 300
 Everett, WA 98201

Questions?

Contact Autumn Chancellor
Autumn@arcsno.org
 425.258.2459 x 107

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever does
 - Margaret Mead

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Leadership Training

Leadership Development Program 2019

Apply by **April 11th** at: <https://tinyurl.com/ArcLeadership2019>

We invite you to attend this unique training opportunity to become a more effective advocate for yourself, your family, and other people with developmental disabilities.

The Arc of Snohomish County is offering this Leadership Development Program for people with developmental disabilities and their families. This is a one-year project in collaboration with and funded by the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council (www.ddc.wa.gov).

Who Should Apply?

We are seeking a diverse group of highly motivated and enthusiastic men and women to participate in this leadership training. A limited number of participants will be selected with an emphasis on representation from Snohomish County.

- Adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities.
- Parents of children (young or adult) with intellectual/developmental disabilities.
- Any other family members (grandparents, adult siblings, etc.).
- Community members or professionals.

Participants are expected to:

- Attend all scheduled leadership training sessions (in person and virtual).
- Complete homework assignments between sessions.
- Remain involved in advocacy and complete a project at the end of the Leadership Development Program.
- Sign a contract agreeing to meet all program requirements.
- Attend or host a *Legislative Coffee in the Fall in your community.

What's included:

This will be a multi-modality training, and includes:

- Two, in person trainings; one at the beginning and one at the end of the training.
- Monthly conference calls with leadership staff and other participants.
- Self-paced online trainings.

Topics will include:

- The civil rights movement/history of government systems.
- Community systems.
- Skill building.
- Self-determination training.

*Legislative Coffees

This is your opportunity to give input to your representatives, and hear their views on supporting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Your personal stories and connections with your legislators can and will make a difference!

Advocacy in Action

Two Arc Leaders Receive the Children's Trust of Washington Unsung Hero Award

February was *Parent Recognition Month* in Washington. Twenty-eight parents or caregivers in Washington State (one for each day in February) were recognized for demonstrating strength, courage and empathy in their communities. Congratulations to Arc leaders, Kara Flowers and Liliana Alfaro, for receiving this year's *Unsung Hero Award*. They were celebrated at an awards reception in Olympia and their stories were published in Seattle's *Child* magazine.



Liliana Alfaro (left)
Kara Flowers (right)

Kara Flowers' 8 year-old son has multiple disabilities and special health care needs affecting his neurodevelopment, muscle tone, sensory processing, vision, hearing, speech and language. He attends the deaf and hard of hearing program at school where he is learning ASL. Kara is a fulltime stay-at-home mom and she is responsible for all of her son's medical decisions and appointments. Kara fearlessly faces their challenges by increasing her knowledge, identifying concrete supports in time of need, and connecting with and advocating for other special needs families in her community.

Kara has used her experiences as an opportunity for growth and development and is committed to helping other families like hers. She completed leadership training with *Hands and Voices* to support families in the deaf and hard of hearing community. Kara created a Facebook *Special Needs Parent Support Group* to help Snohomish and Island families connect and share disability resources. She participated in the *UW LEND fellowship program* where she worked with doctors diagnosing neurodevelopmental disorders. She actively volunteers in her local Arc Parent to Parent programs. As an *Arc Helping Parent*, Kara is available to offer one-on-one peer emotional support to other parents of a child with a new diagnosis. As an *Arc IEP Parent Partner*, she supports parents at school IEP meetings. Kara is an Unsung Hero as she demonstrates resilience and champions for families raising kids with special needs.

Liliana Alfaro, better known as Lili, is a mom of two boys who have autism. With just a little support and encouragement, this mom has succeeded in every leadership role she participates in. She is a great advocate for her children and our Spanish-speaking community. In April 2015, Lili participated in the leadership training provided by The Arc of Snohomish County. In 2016 she assisted to the Legislative Forum at the Arc and met Rep. June Robinson along with other legislators. In 2017 she went to Olympia with Results Washington to advocate for the Early Intervention program with the support of the Arc of Snohomish County. It was a great experience watching her shine and sharing her experience and her story! After those experiences she became empowered to step up as the co-chair at FICC (Family interagency Coordinating Council). She recently became a member of the PTA at her kids' school.

As a parent with kids with special needs, she encourages other parents to learn, share, get involved and ask for help when they need it. I love to see her shine and be empowered I am so proud of her for speaking on behalf of so many families; I would love for her to be recognized since she is already an example for our Spanish-speaking families!

Change is made by
those who show up.

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Advocacy Days

Advocacy Days in Olympia are a great way to learn about the legislative process in person

Each Advocacy Day begins with an hour briefing at 10:00 in the morning at The United Churches, 110 Eleventh Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501.

The briefing includes:

- Special speakers
- Information on current issues
- Tips for success

Participants can advocate several ways during the day:

- Meeting with legislators or their aides*
- Attending hearings

The Arc would love for you to join us in Olympia.

Please let us know if you would like help setting up *appointments with your legislators or would like to join The Arc caravan.

For more information contact:

Autumn Chancellor
Autumn@arcsno.org
425-258-2459 x107

**Appointments with legislators must be made well in advance.*

March 27th – Community Supports

This legislative session we have a number of protection issues being raised. Most importantly is building community supports to move people out of institutions and let them live near family and friends in the community. Other issues include providing disability information to the Smart 911 database, supported decision-making, protection from institutionalization due to the incredible lack of sufficient resources in the community, guardianship and more.

April 3rd – Autism

Almost 50 years have passed since the first National Autism Awareness month in April of 1970. With the diagnosis rate of children with autism increasing from 1 in every 2000 children in the 1970's to 1 in every 68 children today, we celebrate not just Awareness, but also Acceptance and Appreciation of the autistic community and those who support them. The Governor and the Legislature recognize the incredible value of autistic individuals to our communities. Join us for an Autism Rally at noon.

April 10th – Session End

As the regular session is coming to a close, our incredible legislators are spending most of their time on the House or Senate floor voting on bills. You still have an incredibly important job to do! Many bills never get a chance to be voted on, not because they aren't important, but because there is not enough time to vote on all of them. You can help move your bills up in importance by sending notes in to your legislator while they are on the floor.

Your Idea Can be State Law!

https://arcwa.org/resources/Your_Idea_Can_Be_a_State_Law_2015.pdf

What do you believe needs to be a law to protect people with developmental disabilities, provide a state-funded service or program for them or to update current laws that may be out-of-date? There are multiple steps in the process. Please contact Autumn Chancellor at Autumn@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x107 at the Arc of Snohomish County for guidance to help you sponsor your idea and to get the word out.

**We're here to help
you have a voice**

You are the expert in telling your story and how it relates to decisions being made by lawmakers.

Although impacting government may feel overwhelming, we're here to help you have a voice.

It only takes a few steps:

Be informed

- Sign up for Action Alerts

Get Connected

- Join The Arc
- Join a parent coalition
- Join a self-advocacy group

Take Action

- Visit The Arc of Washington State's Online Action Center
- Send emails
- Make phone calls
- Attend town hall meetings
- Participate in Advocacy Days
- Visit your legislators in person.

For tips on Legislative Advocacy visit *Hot Tips* http://arcwa.org/resources/Hot_Tips_2018.pdf

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Tools & Resources

Sign up

Legislative Alerts & Updates

Arc of Washington State | <http://capwiz.com/arcwa/mlm/signup/>
Sign up for legislative action alerts related to developmental disability. Receive the information you need, to voice your opinions on bills during the legislative session. Alerts provide you with messages for your legislators that you can use as is, or edit using your own words. Enter your name and address and click! Your message will automatically be sent to all of your legislators. Toll free Legislative Hotline 1-800-562-6000. Email or call, action takes less than 5 minutes!

Find Your

Legislative District and Elected Officials

Washington Legislature | <http://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>
Find your legislative district and elected officials.

Hot Tips

Legislative Advocates on Developmental Disabilities

Arc of Washington State | http://arcwa.org/resources/Hot_Tips_2018.pdf
Some of the topics included:

- Tips for meeting with elected officials.
- How to create a short, clear message.
- The bill process—how a bill becomes a law.
- The state budget process.

Resource Library

Arc of Washington State | <http://arcwa.org/library/all>

A comprehensive list of documents and websites that support developmental disability issues.

Transportation Resource Guide and Accessible Travel Map

Snohomish County Transportation Coalition

https://everettwa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16175/SNOTRAC-map-brochure_web_complete

There are many ways to travel and a wide variety of payment options.

SNOTRAC partners and affiliates offer transportation in Snohomish County and throughout the region. www.gosnotrac.org

Save The Date

22nd Annual Snohomish County Transition Resource Fair

Tuesday, March 26th | 4-8:30pm
Cascade High School, 801 East Casino Rd, Everett, WA 98203

Workshops from 4:30pm-8:30pm and resource tables from 4:00pm-7:30pm. This is a great opportunity to meet over 60 community agencies and attend a variety of free workshops that will help you get connected to your community and take the steps necessary to increase your independence. Sponsored by the Snohomish County Transition Network and Everett School District. Contact Megan Edmonds at ddinfo@snoco.org (425) 388-7320 www.snohomishcountywa.gov/dd.

12th Annual World Autism Awareness Day

Tuesday, April 2nd

Joined by the international community, hundreds of thousands of landmarks, buildings, homes and communities around the world, light blue in recognition of people living with autism.

ABLE Savings Plan Presentation

Wednesday, April 17th | 11am-12:30pm

The Arc office

Presented by Christina Gagnon; Department of Commerce
With an ABLE Account, you can: Keep your disability Benefits -Have Access to a prepaid card linked to your account -Save for a big goal or use your funds for daily living expenses -Have parents, guardians, friends, family members, and anyone else contribute to the account.

10th Annual Behavior Workshop

Saturday, April 27th | 9am-4pm
Homage Senior Services, 5026 196th St SW, Lynnwood, WA 98036

Topics include: special education, positive behavioral supports, ABA, autism. For parents, educators, and providers supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *Registration required.*

Please contact Alaina Kube at Alaina@arcsno.org (425) 258-2459 x111.

2019 Infant and Early Childhood Conference (IECC)

Wednesday May 1st - Friday May 3rd
Greater Tacoma Convention Center

Scholarships Available!!!

The purpose of the Conference is to provide opportunities for families and service providers to come together to learn, share and advocate on behalf of all young children, especially those with developmental delays, disabilities and/or other special health care needs. *Family Scholarships:* parents and family members are encouraged to attend this conference. There is a limited amount of funding available to assist parents of young children with special needs with the registration fee and lodging. To apply and be considered for a Family Scholarship, go online to www.ieccwa.org or email Debbie Jackson at djackson@birthtothree.org. Complete the application and registration form by the *April 5th* deadline. DO NOT send payment. Award letters will be emailed 1 week later.

Community Summit 2019 - Enriching Lives

Tuesday, June 11th - Thursday, June 13th
Wenatchee Convention Center, 121 N Wenatchee Ave, Wenatchee, WA 98801

Self-advocates, families, educators, community leaders, non-profit agencies and government organizers discuss building inclusive communities where all individuals are valued for their unique contributions. Engaging keynote speakers, informational sessions, workshops, discussion panels and fun social events. Contact Monica Zumach at monica@gowise.org (253) 307-7475 www.communitysummit.ws.

Find an open board or commission, get involved and have your voice heard!

The Arc can provide support, resources and tools to help you be an effective and successful disability advocate on local Boards and Commissions.

For information contact: Autumn Chancellor at Autumn@arcsno.org 425-258-2459 x107.

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Boards & Commissions

Advocate for Disabilities on Boards and Commissions

Boards and Commissions serve as a bridge between the community and government, ensuring oversight and raising awareness on important community issues. They provide a setting for citizens to volunteer their time and energy in government and on behalf of the community to advocate for issues.

You can be a voice and a leader for developmental disabilities as decisions are made in your community. *The Arc of Snohomish County encourages individuals and family members to participate on boards and committees.*

Vacancies on Boards and Commissions in Snohomish County

Please click on the following Arc of Snohomish County link:

<https://www.arcsno.org/resources/jamies-doc-links/leadership-advocacy/541-vacancies-boards-commissions-3-19/file>

for current openings on Boards and Commission at the city/town level in Snohomish County. This list is current as of March 2019.

When navigating city websites searching for boards and commissions' vacancies, please note that this information may be found either: on one webpage; and/or require additional enquiry from individual Boards and Commission.

If all else fails, one can always call or visit the city for guidance. A general application may be required for consideration. Vacancies may be open until filled or open until a deadline.

Public Policy & Legal Advocacy

Public Policy and Legal Advocacy at The Arc
<https://www.thearc.org/what-we-do/public-policy>

Take a look at the National Arc and sign up for their Action Alerts.

 [Sign up for Action Alerts](#)

The Arc keeps up on many issues that are important to individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and their families.

Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security, Medicare and civil rights laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are critical for people with I/DD and their families, providing benefits, supports, and civil rights protections that help make community living possible.

In 2017, The Arc calls on all advocates to join us in reaching out to the President, Congress, Governors, and state legislators to educate them and to urge them to preserve - not cut - these essential programs and civil rights laws.

These federal programs provide the key to community living and inclusion for people with I/DD across the nation. Now more than ever, we must join together as a collective movement to ensure that these programs and civil rights are protected.

I.CAN Women's Self-Advocacy Group

2nd Tuesday of each month | 10:30am–12pm

*The Arc Office - 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, 98201

*Occasional offsite activities and events. Group of self-advocates open to all women ages 16 and up. A casual environment that combines learning with fun. Sharing of resources and skills, and the belief that everyone has something to share.

For more information contact Corinna Fale at Corinna@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x103.

Self-Advocates in Leadership (SAIL)

2nd Tuesday of each month | 1pm–4pm

The Arc Office - 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, 98201

Group of self-advocates focused on legislative change. Open to all. SAIL is a statewide coalition of people with developmental disabilities that strives to shape public policies that affect people with developmental disabilities.

For more information contact Corinna Fale at Corinna@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x103.

People First of Snohomish County

4th Tuesday of each month | 11am–1pm

The Arc Office - 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, 98201

A self-Advocacy organization by and for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, focused on educating ourselves and others, advocating for our rights, and having fun! We believe we are PEOPLE FIRST and our disabilities are secondary.

For more information contact Kylie Walsh at Kylie@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x121.

Bills of Interest

HB 1706 Sub-minimum wage – Eliminates special certificates that allow an employer to pay below the minimum wage to workers with disabilities.

Passed Chamber in the House. Introduced to the Senate and referred to Labor and Commerce Committee on March 13th.

HB 1199 Healthcare for disabilities - Prohibits the Health Care Authority from establishing restrictions for the Health Care for Workers with Disabilities (HWD) program based on a person's income or maximum age. Directs the Authority to seek federal approval to exclude resources earned while a person is enrolled in the HWD program from being counted when establishing eligibility for a Medical Assistance program.

The Arc of
Snohomish County

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