



Speaking out for people
with intellectual disabilities

www.vor.net



Feedback or question? info@vor.net

VOR Weekly E-Mail Update

News and views for VOR advocates

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VOR and YOU

1. Videos added to VOR's website. More to come

Two great new videos from Utah have been added to VOR's "[Watch Videos](#)" section of our website. Additional videos from members will be posted over the next several weeks, so visit often.

Consider sharing the [Watch Video](#) link with your legislators and policymakers. Seeing is believing.

2. Is your membership expiring soon? Renewing and donating is easy with our online form

Your membership dues and donations help ensure that you continue to receive the VOR publications and other support that you have come to rely on in your everyday advocacy on behalf of your family member and friend with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

If your membership is expiring soon or you would like to donate to VOR, consider using our easy online giving form.

**Renew or
Donate Online**

If you prefer to renew or donate by mail or fax, visit [VOR's website](#) for details.

3. Reminder: Submit your story: How has VOR helped you?

Dear {FIRST_NAME|VOR Member},

For 27 years, VOR has been the **only** national advocacy organization representing the right of individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families to choose from among an array of quality residential options. From statewide advocacy, to facility-level advocacy, to family level advocacy, VOR has been there for countless families.

VOR would like to compile examples how families and individuals have been helped. When legislation is defeated, a legal battle is won, or a facility saved, we get the good news and often share it here, in this Update, or in *The Voice*, our print publication.

Don't forget to check out [Wrightslaw](#) for some great tips on effective "story telling" and see also VOR's "[Great Story Submissions](#)" for some compelling stories. You can e-mail your story to me at thopp@vor.net.

With gratitude,
[Tamie Hopp](#)

Director of Government Relations & Advocacy

State News

4. MASSACHUSETTS: Once again, we're waiting for the administration's cost records

COFAR Blog * David Kassel * August 30, 2011

As we've [previously noted here](#), we've been attempting to compare the cost of an apparently typical vendor-run group home program with the three developmental centers. We wanted to see whether the Patrick administration was comparing apples to apples in claiming to the Legislature in the last two fiscal years that closing the Templeton, Monson, and Glavin centers will save tens of millions in state funds. As we reported, a group home contract, which we did receive last May from DDS, specified a yearly cost per resident of \$104,400. In its cost savings analysis, the administration compared a very similar residential cost based on group home contracts with an average calculated cost of care at Templeton, Monson, and Glavin. However, the group home costs did not include the extensive nursing, medical, clinical, and therapeutic staffing that exists at the developmental centers and to which the residents of DDS group homes are entitled. It's getting clearer and clearer that the administration wasn't counting all the community-based costs of care it incurs when it told the Legislature there would be major savings in closing the developmental centers. [Read more and comment.](#)

5. MASSACHUETTS: COFAR releases updated Advocacy Guide for family advocates

[COFAR](#), the Massachusetts Coalition of Families and Advocates, Inc., , has released an updated [Advocacy Guide](#) for family advocates of individuals with intellectual disabilities. The Advocacy Guide is intended to help families and personal guardians advocate for the best possible care and services for family members with intellectual disabilities. It's designed to help navigate the complex state system and simply offer more information about matters relating to the care of family members in the system. The Guide includes tips and advice on, and summaries of, applicable Massachusetts and federal regulations on care and services, eligibility issues, Individual Support Plans, guardianship, and other issues.

6. NEW JERSEY: Editorial: Closing developmental centers / A better process

The Atlantic City Press (Excerpts) * Tuesday, August 30, 2011

Closing the Vineland Developmental Center - indeed, deciding to close any of the state's seven centers that house the developmentally disabled - is an extremely difficult decision.

Professional advocates for the disabled are unequivocal in their position: The developmentally disabled are entitled to live in the least restrictive environment possible.

But what about the individuals who do not want to move out of an institution and into a community setting? Advocates for these folks - their parents and longtime developmental center staffers - argue that it would be cruel to make these people move. And it would be cruel. In some cases, these people have lived their entire lives in a particular developmental center. The staff have become their family. The institution is their home in every sense of the word, indeed perhaps the only home they have ever known.

Another critical factor: New Jersey already has an 8,000-person waiting list for people with developmental disabilities who hope to move into a group home. Almost 5,000 people are considered priorities because they are living at home with aging parents. [Read full editorial](#) and the submit a [Letter to the Editor](#) (name, address, daytime and evening phone numbers required; the shorter the better).

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