

The Arc of Colorado would like to highlight our local units who are the backbone and the grassroots of this organization. Each unit has its own mission and goals and reaches out to meet the needs of their membership and we want to share their work.

The Arc in Jefferson County

History

The Arc in Jefferson County, serving individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in Jefferson, Clear Creek and Gilpin counties, was founded in 1961 and is affiliated with The Arc of Colorado and The Arc of the United States. The organization is dedicated to helping individuals with developmental disabilities achieve their maximum potential and self-sufficiency. The 14-member board of directors is comprised mostly of parents or those with a disabled family member.

Services, open to members and non-members, include advocacy and training.

- **Advocacy**—safeguarding the rights of children and adults with developmental disabilities, facilitating choices, and promoting independence and inclusion in community life. Advocacy occurs in the schools for children, the developmental disabilities system for children and adults, and the criminal justice system when necessary.
- **Training**—educating children, parents, caregivers and self-advocates about opportunities within the community, the educational and developmental disabilities adult systems. Topics covered include self-advocacy, transition, guardianship, accessing community resources (like recreation) and legal rights to education and support services.

Training for Transition Workshop

Easter Seals of Colorado and The Arc in Jefferson County are conducting a new training aimed at individuals and families in the *transition* stage from education to adult services. This training, funded in part by a grant from the Colorado Department of Education, is an important—and unique—opportunity for the entire family.

Just when most families think they have conquered the huge hurdle of deciphering and understanding public education, they learn that navigating the “adult” system will not be so easy. While a “free and appropriate public education” is mandated by federal and state law for children with special needs, there is no such “guarantee” in the adult system. In fact, many people describe the adult system as a “maze”—confusing and complex, where no one really knows what the other is doing.

Training for Transition seeks 1) to provide a map through the maze for each family, 2) to connect parents with others making the same journey and 3) to introduce resources that can help lead the family through the maze. To receive more information, call **Jo Lynn Osborne** at (303) 232-1338 or email: jolynn@arcjc.org.