

Imagine Different Coalition Vision/Mission Statement

We Believe

We believe all children should grow up in families, and with the right supports this can happen for all children with disabilities.

Vision

We envision a Commonwealth that proudly assures that each and every child living here grows up in a family home where they are loved and nurtured.

Mission

Our mission is to champion systemic change and the development of community support to ensure that every PA child with disabilities who lives in or is at risk of being placed in a congregate care setting can alternatively grow up in a well-supported and loving family.

Focus Population

Our initial focus is on:

- Children (ages 0-22)
- With developmental disabilities
- Currently living in congregate care (long term living arrangements which are intended to address disability-related needs)
- While remaining alert to opportunities to prevent such placements

Families can take many forms (nuclear, extended, multigenerational, multicultural, parenting shared across multiple households, foster families, adoptive families, families that come together through programs like Life-sharing and so forth). Common to all healthy and safe families is the presence of at least one (and often more than one) loving adult committed over the long term to nurture, guide, and assure a secure everyday home life throughout a child's life.

"Congregate care" is a living arrangement characterized by a facility housing multiple individuals with special needs, highly regimented schedules, and usually, but not always, includes "shift" staff. It can take many forms including nursing facilities, disability services institutions, residential treatment facilities, psychiatric institutions, children's institutions and group homes. While some congregate care facilities are designed for long-term care, other facilities designed for a short-term need become congregate care when extended to a long-term residence.