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<https://www.arcsno.org/>

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## Advocacy Spotlight

*Jodie Colello is an active member of our community advocating on behalf of parents and their children with special needs in schools. We asked her to share her thoughts...*

When my child was first eligible for services I connected with the Arc of Snohomish County to learn about resources and supports. I learned what I could, attended speaker nights and asked questions. I've also attended just about every workshop and training available in our community to gain knowledge and guidance on how to best advocate for and support my child.

Along the way, I found myself wanting to get active in the community, and nurtured a passionate belief in inclusion and advocacy for children with disabilities in education. So four years ago, I became an IEP Parent Partner through the Arc of Snohomish County.

Since then, I have attended many IEP meetings as an IEP Parent Partner, helping parents prepare for meetings, taking meeting notes, and offering feedback afterwards. The experience of being an IEP Parent Partner also enabled me to better self-advocate for my child during his IEP meetings, and reinforced the need to hold schools accountable for our children's education.

Sometimes all a parent needs is someone they can talk to, feel heard and know they aren't alone. It is a privilege for me to be able to support parents through the IEP process and go to meetings with them. We all want the best for our children. I have truly met amazing people through this process.

In order to have a greater voice in my son's school and district, I joined the Edmonds Special Education PTSA in 2015, now known as the Special Education Advisory Committee, and where I am a Co-Chair.

Then in 2016, I joined the Alternative to Suspension Committee and the Social Emotional Learning Committee of the Edmonds School District. There we reviewed district policy and made recommendations to reduce suspension and recommend a social emotional curriculum to adopt district wide to the School Board. It is an honor and empowering to be involved at the school district level on behalf of students.

We are all advocates for children and the best way to help fellow parents of a child with a disability is to share our knowledge and resources so they can share and pass that on to the next parent. Advocacy is speaking for your child with a smile. Advocacy is collaborating with a smile. I feel this is part of our role and responsibility as parents and within our community.

No matter what your child's diagnosis is, it can feel overwhelming and often lonely and we don't know where to start. I don't want any parent to feel alone and scared and to not know where to go or how to proceed. My advice to parents just starting on this journey is to ask for help from other parents and attend any seminars, trainings and workshops available. Don't be afraid to ask for help and put yourself out there!



Jodie Collello

*"Start by doing what's  
necessary; then do what's  
possible; and suddenly you  
are doing the impossible."*

- Francis of Assisi

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## Arc News

*The Arc of Snohomish County is very excited to welcome Sopars Tauch - our new Independent Living Coordinator - to the team...*

I feel so honored to have been asked to join the Arc of Snohomish County.

I have a background in the disabilities community through many years of involvement with Washington Autism Alliance and Advocacy (WAAA).

I am also a concerned parent with a child diagnosed with I/DD at the age of two, and have had to advocate proactively to receive any services at the school district, private and state level.



**Sopars Tauch and family**

I got involved with The Arc through their workshops on Wright's Law, IEP Parent Partner, and Helping Parents. I also sought out The Arc for support and understanding, and when I felt at a loss. I wanted to equip myself with the tools I needed in order to best advocate for my son, and The Arc was there to point me in the right direction.

Over the years, I included my family in Arc events such as The Arc Harvest Festival, M-Bar-C Ranch and Arc in The Park. The Arc events promote inclusion and provide a place we can get away as a family without the judgement. I wanted my family members to more than just exist in life, I wanted them to live life when possible.

I truly feel fully supported here at The Arc. As the Independent Living Coordinator, I not only get to apply my passion to assist others, but also learn valuable information and be a part of a bigger mission to help our community as a whole. We are stronger together.

**The 2019 Community Summit** was held at the Wenatchee Convention Center, June 11-13.

The summit brought together self-advocates, non-profit agencies, government organizers, families, educators and community leaders to discuss building inclusive communities where all individuals with disabilities are valued for their unique contributions.

*"I choose not to place 'DIS',  
in my ability."*

- Robert M. Hensel

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# Advocacy in Action

## The 2019 Community Summit: Enriching Lives

Members of the self-advocacy organization People First of Snohomish County, and several Arc of Snohomish County staff attended the Summit. We asked for their insights...

### Did you learn something new about self-advocacy & leadership at the Summit?

Doug Wennerberg: "Yes I learned that it there is a lot of stuff out there to help people learn and live in the community."

Jennifer Martin: "I went to a discussion about what I would like to see in my community and across the country. I would like to see caregivers get paid more, and have the agencies that have caregivers be better staffed."

Leigh Spruce: "I attended a breakout session about how to work together in the workplace in a positive way in order to get tasks done, when others are involved in a project, as well as support someone in a group who is not doing the work."

Nicki Solie: "The summit is 3 days filled with informational, engaging, and social sessions for self-advocates and I learned something new everyday. It reminded me that when we use advocacy as a means for someone to make "progress" it is important to recognize their individuality and autonomy and that it is theirs and not mine to try and control."

Tracy Turner: "To advocate for the police to have the resources to be trained appropriately in how to interact with people with disabilities."

### What was a memorable experience or powerful example for you of self-advocacy & leadership at the Community Summit 2019?

Doug Wennerberg: "I learned a lot. My most favorite takeaway was people centered planning and how helpful it is for people to be more aware of how for myself I say or do things that are not what I mean. For example, I might ask a lot of questions that I know the answers to but I am asking to make sure I am doing the right thing. Another great experience was the keynote speaker's experience with the disability rights movement."

Jennifer: "When I was able to speak up about the community and working with police officers, and making sure all individuals are trained on how to respond. Also self-care and care for each other is very important and we should all advocate for this."

Leigh Spruce: "The Keynote speaker for the Summit was self-advocate Gaelynn Lea. She talked about how we need to not label people, and focus on what people are doing in their communities to look at everyone as equal individuals, as opposed to having them being viewed as inspirational."

Nicki Solie: "As I listened to United By Music rock, I saw people laughing, enjoying themselves and moving to the music. I saw people, not people with special needs or disabilities, just people."

Tracy Turner: "Listening to a music session and appreciating how mentorship, support and resources for music is so important."



People First of Snohomish County members who attended the Community Summit: Edward Barnhart, Jennifer Martin, Doug Wennerberg, Leigh Spruce, Corinna Fale, Tracy Turner



# Advocacy in Action

## Meet your Representatives: Legislative Coffee

*Perhaps the most effective way to advocate is person to person.  
There are various ways and venues where you can meet your local Representatives.*

Leigh Spruce is a member of People First, an Arc staff member and currently enrolled in The Arc of Snohomish County's *Leadership Development Program* for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The program is a 1-year project in collaboration with and funded by the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council ([www.ddc.wa.gov](http://www.ddc.wa.gov)).

A program requirement is for course participants to arrange and host a "Legislative Coffee." Leigh decided a great way to familiarize herself with this task and reach out to her Representatives was to attend the 44th Legislative District Coffee. This was hosted by Representative/Speaker of the House John Lovick and Representative Jared Mead on Tuesday June 25, 2019.

Leigh: "I live in Mill Creek. People raised concerns about the traffic lights, speed limits, and fender-benders in trouble spots, and Representative Mead explained that lots of these issues have to do with whether WSDOT and the County set the limits, on where the boundary lines are drawn to regulate this based on funding. Then there's the population increase. So then we discussed the cost of housing, the need for more apartments, and that rental prices cannot be capped which drive up rental and housing prices.

Representative Lovick talked about the need to advocate for helping people with mental health, by getting them into support programs, and hopefully off the street. He would like a better way to treat these people rather than just 'rounding them up and arresting them', which can make a situation worse. He also talked about wanting to give police more authority to enforce curbing lesser crimes. Finally, I invited both Representatives to our People First Meeting which is being held in September."

## Snohomish County Elections

### August 6, 2019 Primary Election, Snohomish County

**July 18th** | Primary election ballots mailed

**July 29th** | Last day to register/update address *online or by mail* before election

**August 6th** | Last day to register or update address *in person* before election

**August 6th** | Primary Election

#### Register to vote or check an existing registration

<https://snohomishcountywa.gov/3972/Voter-Registration>

#### Accessible Voting Information

<https://snohomishcountywa.gov/1986/Accessible-Voting-Information>

425-388-3444, Washington Relay 1-800-833-6388, 7-1-1 (TTY/TDD)

#### Ballot drop box locations

“The Only Limit To Our  
 Realization Of Tomorrow  
 Will Be Our Doubts Of  
 Today.”

-Franklin D. Roosevelt

# Did you know

## Your Idea Can be State Law!

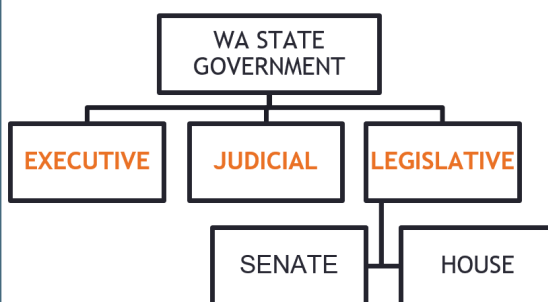
[https://arcwa.org/resources/Your\\_Idea\\_Can\\_Be\\_a\\_State\\_Law\\_2015.pdf](https://arcwa.org/resources/Your_Idea_Can_Be_a_State_Law_2015.pdf)

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](mailto: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.

## How Washington State's Government Works...

### Three branches of Government...



#### EXECUTIVE (Governor & State agencies)

The *Governor* enforces state laws and sign bills passed by the *Legislature*, and can veto proposed laws. The Governor is elected to a four year term.

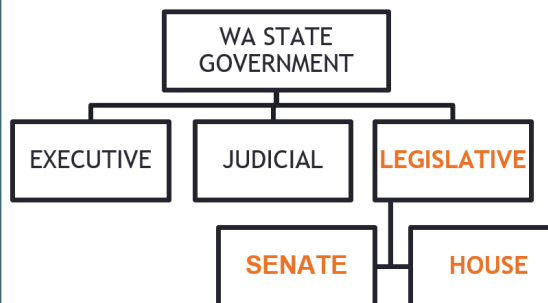
#### JUDICIAL

The Judicial branch interprets state laws. State judges are elected to uphold the State Constitution.

#### LEGISLATIVE (Senate & House of Representatives)

The Legislature writes the laws of the state and determines the state budget. Senators are elected to a four year term & Representatives serve two year terms.

### Washington's LEGISLATIVE Branch...



#### WASHINGTON STATE SENATE

##### Upper House WA State Legislature

Consists of 49 State Senators, each representing a district with a population of nearly 140,000 (49 districts). State Senators are elected to a four year term with no term limits.

#### WASHINGTON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

##### Lower House WA State Legislature

Consists of 98 State Representatives, with two representing a district with a population of nearly 140,000 (49 districts). State Representatives are elected to a two year term with no term limits.

**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](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](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](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](http://www.gosnotrac.org)

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](mailto: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:

<http://b.link/obj42> for current openings on Boards and Commission at the city/town level in Snohomish County. *This list is current as of June, 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 relevant city office 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.



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 called 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. We are stronger together when we join together as a collective movement to ensure that these programs and civil rights are protected.

The Arc of  
Snohomish County

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[Jamie@arcsno.org](mailto:Jamie@arcsno.org)

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# Get Involved

## 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. Please contact Corinna Fale at [Corinna@arcsno.org](mailto: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. Please contact Corinna Fale at [Corinna@arcsno.org](mailto: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.

Please contact Kylie Walsh at [Kylie@arcsno.org](mailto:Kylie@arcsno.org) or 425-258-2459 x121.

## Understanding Insurance: Navigating the Maze

Monday, August 12th | 7-8:30pm

*Connecting Families* presented by Evangeline Zhou, Staff Attorney from Washington Autism Alliance & Advocacy. Topics include: Medicaid, private insurance, understanding benefits, 1st level insurance appeals.

# Federal Bills of Interest

## HR 1573 Disability Voting Rights Act

To amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to promote access to voter registration and voting for individuals with disabilities, and for other purposes. Introduced into Congress on March 6, 2019. Will typically be considered by committee before it is possibly sent on to the House or Senate.