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## Advocacy Spotlight

### LEGISLATIVE COFFEES

2021 Virtual and In-Person Hybrid

## Legislative Coffees

Connect with your local legislators on issues impacting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

*Presented by*  
The Arc of Snohomish County



Legislative Coffees are nonpartisan community events for legislators and constituents to meet over coffee and discuss legislative priorities. Your personal stories and connections with your legislators can make a difference! If you are interested in hosting or participating.



Please feel out [our questionnaire here](#). Or Contact:  
Jake Murray | [jake@arcsno.org](mailto:jake@arcsno.org) or 425-258-2459 x105  
Rachel Kube | [rachel@arcsno.org](mailto:rachel@arcsno.org) or 425-258-2459 x107

THE ARC  
AMPLIFIED

## WELCOME



[VIEW BLOG](#)

**The Arc Amplified** is a new online publication and source for sharing stories of inclusion and belonging, bold activism and local change-makers in action. The mission of this platform is to amplify diverse voices and “good news” stories

from within the disability community in Snohomish County and across the region.

Do you have a story of inclusion you want to share?  
Are you leading local advocacy efforts?  
Has your family or loved one benefited from activities or programs in Snohomish County that are designed to advance community inclusion?

We want to know! Email Whitney Stohr, Parent to Parent Coordinator,

Stop.  
Breathe.  
You got this.

Achieve with us.®

# Quarterly Focus

## TRANSPORTATION

New to the newsletter, we will begin have a topic page focusing on an important area for the DD community. We kick things off with our first Quarterly Focus on Transportation.

Transportation is an essential service of everyday life. Whether it's going to the store, work, a doctor's appointment, or simply visiting a friend, everyone needs transportation. For the DD community accessible transportation continues to be difficult to obtain.

### SNOTRAC

Snotrac advocates for connecting people and communities in Snohomish County and beyond with safe, equitable, and accessible transportation. Snotrac's priorities include creating & coordinating mobility services, education, outreach, and engagement, planning & design of livable communities, securing public support & funding, and emergency response coordination. For more information on Snotrac or to join in their advocacy efforts, check them out at <https://www.gosnotrac.org/>

### DRW

At Disability Rights Washington, access to transportation is consistently listed as one of the top concerns for their constituents. Those who can't drive or don't have access to a car are more likely to be disabled, BIPOC, indigenous, and immigrants. There are also elders and young people, as well as those who can't afford to own or maintain a vehicle.

DRW believes in a model of change that begins with sharing stories with each other. DRW's organizing and these stories will begin to shift the narrative that only drivers in Washington State have mobility needs worth prioritizing.

[Read DRW's research paper](#), and if you're a nondriver and live in Washington State, DRW wants to connect with you, through their story map. For more information about DRW, check them out at <https://www.disabilityrightswa.org/>

## COMMUNITY TRANSIT TRAVEL TRAINING PROGRAM

Need help figuring out the bus system? [Community Transit's Travel Training program could be the tool you need](#). The Travel Training program is designed to teach the basic skills necessary to ride Community Transit's bus service. Travel Trainers ride with you during training, guiding you through the transit experience all the way to your destination. Travel Training is geared for anyone who needs a little extra help navigating the transit system, including

- Senior citizens
- Students
- People with disabilities
- Non-English speakers
- New residents
- New riders

The program is customized to meet your individual needs and can last from one hour to several sessions — as long as you need to feel safe and confident. Signing up is easy and there is no cost to you.

### EVERETT TRANSIT

Everett Transit is committed to providing equal access to all our services. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities. [Information for Everett Transit ADA compliance and complaints can be found here](#)

Want to know more? Contact [jake@arcsno.org](mailto:jake@arcsno.org) for more information!

# What to Know

## CONSUMER DIRECTED EMPLOYER

Beginning winter of 2021, the Consumer Directed Employer (CDE) will become the legal employer for Individual Providers (IPs) for in-home personal care. As the legal employer, the CDE will assume all IP employer related responsibilities that are currently managed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DSHS) and Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). For providers in Snohomish County, this will begin January 1, 2022.

The move to a Consumer Directed Employer (CDE) model will shift the IP employment-related activities to the CDE and will help DSHS realize the goal of increasing the capacity of DSHS/AAA case management, customer service, and other social services staff to focus on core case management activities. The contracted CDE vendor is Consumer Direct of Washington (CDWA).

IPs and Clients who receive in-home personal care and respite services will be contacted by DSHS and CDWA with plenty of time to prepare for the transition to the CDE. For Snohomish County, the goal is to have this done by April 1, 2022.

For questions on the CDE or about CDWA, you can contact them directly [here](#)  
[Click this link](#) for a handy map with the rollout dates statewide



## HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES ACCESS ACT

Many people with IDD have to leave their families and live in institutions to receive the daily supports they need because of their disability. The system of services and supports for people with IDD has come a long way in the past 70 years, but many people with IDD and their families still struggle to plan for the services that their loved ones need to live a quality life in the community in the future. Many people with IDD wait years to get off the waiting list for services only to find few direct support professionals available to provide the services they need in the community and even more limited affordable and accessible housing. Even when they do find a home in the community and a trusted professional to meet their needs, they often have to start their search all over again in six months or a year because the turnover in the field is so high. Or worse, they move to another state to be near family after their parent dies and end up on the waiting list for services all over again. Congress has finally proposed a bill, the Home and Community-Based Services Access Act (HAA) to make changes to the system of support for people with disabilities to ensure community-based services are there for all people with disabilities who want to live their lives in the community, with their friends and family.

For more information on this act, check out [this webinar](#) by the Arc of the United States.

*Why fit in when you  
were born to stand  
out?  
- Dr. Seuss*

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*If you desire to make a difference in the world, you must be different from the world.*

*- Elaine S. Dalton*

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# Around The Arc

## NEW HIRES!

### Whitney Stohr

My name is Whitney Stohr. I am a mom and wife, family-caregiver, community volunteer and advocate for social justice, equity and inclusion. I am a new face here at The Arc of Snohomish County as I am stepping into the role of Parent to Parent Coordinator and working with the Sibshops program.

My new role at The Arc is something of a career transition as I previously worked in community engagement and economic development. I am an attorney by training with experience in public policy, and when my son Malachi (age 3) was born with a disability and complex medical needs, my interest in policymaking began to veer in the direction of disability justice, healthcare and inclusive education policy, community accessibility and universal design. In my free time, I serve on the Family Advisory Council at Seattle Children's Hospital; the Parent Advisory Group for the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF); and, locally, as a member of the Snohomish County Children's Commission and the City of Lynnwood Parks & Recreation Board. I also volunteer with the Spina Bifida Advocates of Washington State (SBAWS) and Spina Bifida Association of America.



I live in Lynnwood with Malachi, my husband (Jason), and our two little dogs (Neptune & Marmalade). Jason directs e-commerce sales for a manufacturing company that makes accessibility equipment such as access ramps and other personal use items. Malachi attends virtual preschool through the Edmonds School District and, in our free time, we RV-camp together as a family. You can connect with us on Instagram at @rollin.w.spinabifida.

### Courtney Criss

My name is Courtney Criss, and I am the new Independent Living Coordinator for the Arc. My husband and I live in Marysville with our four beautiful, talented, amusing children. Two of them were born with Down syndrome. I have served on the Board of Directors of The Down Syndrome of Puget Sound and I currently volunteer with them by teaching a parent class about inclusion in education (Ready Set Kindergarten). I have been a stay-at-home-mom for the past two years and excited about returning to employment in a field that means so much to me and my family.



**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
- Meet with your legislators virtually

For tips on Legislative Advocacy visit [Hot Tips](#)

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# Tools & Resources

**Sign up**

## Legislative Alerts & Updates

The Arc of Washington State | <https://arcwa.org/action-center/>  
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

The Arc of Washington State | <https://arcwa.org/action-center/> 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.

## Self Paced Leadership Training

The Arc of Snohomish County invites you to become a trained Arc leader in our self paced Virtual Leadership Training!

Our 8 course training is designed to provide you with the knowledge and skills you need to engage in community leadership. Whether you are interested in joining a local board or committee, speaking with your legislators, or learning more about disability advocacy, our training is a great place to start!

Course topics include: Community resources, Family resiliency and siblings, Government resources for developmental disabilities, History of developmental disabilities and the disability rights movement, Language, culture, intersectionality and disability, Legislative advocacy for the developmental disability community, Self advocacy, and Special education

[Register here](#) if interested, or contact [Rachel@arcsno.org](mailto:Rachel@arcsno.org) for more

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## Get Involved



Mark your calendars!

### **Annual Notebook Meeting for the 2022 Legislative Session**

Monday, December 6th, 2021

10:00am-3:00pm

**REGISTER HERE**



## Did You Know?

### **It's never too early to advocate!**

The legislative session is right around the corner, but that doesn't mean you can't start advocating! You can continue to reach out to your legislators to tell them the importance of I/DD issues, and participate in other advocacy programs such as legislative coffees. For more information on any advocacy suggestions, contact [Jake@arcsno.org](mailto:Jake@arcsno.org) to answer any questions you might have, and GET INVOLVED!

## Federal Bills of Interest

Senators Casey (D-PA), Cassidy (R-LA), Hassan (D-NH), and Young (R-IN) and Representatives Bonamici (D-OR), Bucshon (R-IN), McMorris-Rodgers (R-WA), and Kim Schrier (D-WA) introduced the Respond, Innovate, Succeed, Empower Act (RISE Act) (S. 2550, H.R. 4786) in Congress. This bill would improve the process for students who qualify for disability services by requiring colleges to accept a wider variety of documentation to prove their disability, including individualized education programs (IEPs), 504 plans, notices from doctors, and evaluations by psychologists. Additionally, the bill would provide funding for a technical assistance center that provides students and families with information about available disability services. It would also require colleges to report on how many students with disabilities are being served, the accommodations provided, and the outcomes for these students. The Arc of the United States supports this legislation.