

## Dear Readers:

Welcome! *The Journey to Community Housing with Supports: A road map for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in Connecticut* was funded by the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities and was adapted with permission from The New Jersey Council of Developmental Disabilities.

Connecticut does not offer a “road map” that details how individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families can navigate the complex service and support system, but we hope this document can serve as a place to start. This resource guide presents the obstacles associated with securing housing and supports separate of services while also highlighting available opportunities. Here you will discover what is or is not available now, what best practices are being considered here in Connecticut and throughout the country, and what we are calling “next practices”, which individuals and families could be practicing if given the opportunity.

This guide should be viewed as a journey toward establishing a home that enables you or your loved one to live as independently as possible. Written for the nonprofessional, the resource guide summarizes housing models through the experiences of individuals and families and offers suggestions for an individual's unique housing needs. There are many barriers to securing housing separated from services which necessitates creative thinking, planning, perseverance, and advocacy. While much of the information is specific to Connecticut and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the funding streams and opportunities described can benefit individuals with autism spectrum disorder and other disabilities. It could also benefit individuals with other housing needs as well as individuals from other states. The content also has value for providers, public officials, and advocates.

We are grateful to those who contributed to the development of this important resource. The Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities recognized the need for this guide, offered critical input, and generously provided grant funding for its development and dissemination; Project Director Melissa Marshall for her tireless attention to detail; Caresse Amenta at CLA design for making this document ready for publication; and Autism New Jersey and Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey who laid the ground work before us. Most importantly, thanks to the individuals and families who shared their personal journeys so that others could benefit from their experiences and who continue to inspire me every day to keep up the fight.

As part of your journey I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the many chapters of The Arc, the advocacy workshops and trainings The Arc offers, and to sign up for Arc Connecticut Advocacy E-Blasts to stay up to date on important issues facing individuals with I/DD and their families.

**For more information, visit [www.thearcct.org](http://www.thearcct.org)**

This resource guide will continue to evolve in its content and presentation; therefore, I encourage you to contact us with feedback, recommendations, and additional ideas.

Good luck on your journey.