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For those of us who lament lack of community capacity for appropriate or imaginative, customized use of CILA funds - Some perspective we got yesterday when reading about the Olmstead decision (19 years ago today.)

This was spring of 1999. Where were you in April of that year? Anyone remember the tragic Columbine school shooting that gripped our nation's attention? Columbine happened the day BEFORE oral arguments were presented before the Supreme Court justices on Olmstead. We don't recall this even being on our radar screens at the time, do you?

Then there was this sobering fact nestled deep into the history of the case: TWENTY SIX STATES signed an AMICUS BRIEF SUPPORTING THE STATE OF GEORGIA'S POSITION THAT THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT DID NOT REQUIRE THEM TO PROVIDE SERVICES OR SUPPORTS TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, OTHER THAN IN INSTITUTIONS.

And no, we don't know if Illinois was one of those states or not. But the fact remains, twenty seven states were against funding outside of institutions. In 1999.

Fast forward to today and yes, it's been nearly 20 years since that decision, but just think of how far we've come, how much we are indebted to the Herculean efforts of those who advocated before us, and yes, how far we collectively still have to go.

To this end, IPADD today rededicates itself to the values and beliefs that got us started in the first place. Here are a few things we'll be doing in the coming months:

1. Soliciting your input about what's most important to you and to your family or clients via a nifty Facebook poll. 😊 And then creating monthly "themes" or topics around those things where most of you are seeking information.
2. Beefing up our website resources around those topics that membership feels are the greatest needs for information (seeking volunteers to help locate or upload resources.)
3. Starting with the month of July, we'll start that thread on How to Create a Meaningful Day and what kinds of relationships, places, and activities members have found useful to their young adults from all around the state. And [Susan Hudkins](#) has volunteered to record our thoughts into a saveable IPADD Tips for Families document so we can refer back to it later. Yay!
4. In August, we'll feature a thread on unique or time-tested CILA arrangements (Yorkville, we're looking at you!)
5. Last but certainly not least, we have an election coming up, as if we could forget. Deb Hamilton is again laboring over a legislative scorecard from this past session, and we'll rely on everyone to share info about upcoming candidate forums, position statements, etc to help us make informed voting decisions.

It's a lot of work, yes, and all unpaid. But we hope many of you will pledge with us, that in this next year leading up the 20th Anniversary of the Olmstead Decision, we won't forget the importance of this work we do. We'll share and learn, support each other, network, laugh, and yes, sometimes cry together.

In our opinion, we owe it to people like Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson who fought for rights we, today, kind of take for granted. We owe it to families, to our adult children with disabilities, and to all the future children with disabilities who one day will grow into adulthood.

Let's get to work. Let's make it better. If you're willing to help me and Ellen or others with some of the work, please Messenger one of us or email jeruefamily@comcast.net.

Thanks,

Laurie and Ellen