



# THE ARC OF TEXAS PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

A statewide membership organization working with Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families to identify solutions to the following issues.

We can connect you with constituents for stories and testimony.



## QUALITY OF LIFE

When Texans with IDD receive individualized supports and services, they're able to make their own decisions about how and where they want to live and work.



## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education policies are necessary to assist Texans with IDD in reaching their full potential – from early childcare settings to postsecondary education.



## CIVIL RIGHTS & JUSTICE

When Texans with IDD have equitable access to justice and services within community, they are less likely to be victims of abuse and crime, and more likely to participate civically.



## INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT

Work is fundamental to adult life, and Texans with IDD have skills the workforce needs. Policies are needed to improve competitive, integrated employment options.

*The Arc of Texas envisions a world where Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities are included in their communities with quality supports and services that meet their needs and choices.*

## WHAT IS IDD?

Intellectual and Developmental Disability

### INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Occurs before age 18.

Characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior, such as social and practical everyday living skills.

### DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

Severe chronic disability attributable to a mental or physical impairment, or combination. Manifests before age 22. Examples: autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome.

[TheArcOfTexas.org](https://TheArcOfTexas.org)

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# Have a Heart for The Arc

The Arc of Texas' annual statewide advocacy event!

**Valentine's Day, Feb. 14**



## A POEM FOR LAWMAKERS

*by Ashley Ford, Director of Public Policy & Advocacy*

In the Lone Star State, under skies so vast,  
**A plea from hearts**, a message steadfast,  
**To the lawmakers**, with power and sway,  
**A Valentine's wish for a brighter day.**

Oh, esteemed voices in the Texas hall,  
Listen closely to our heartfelt call.

**Let compassion guide, let empathy start,**  
**Have a Heart for The Arc, a place in your heart.**

Roses bloom bright, violets stand tall,  
Yet love's canvas paints a broader sprawl.  
**For in this tapestry, rich and diverse,**  
**Disability's part, it's not a curse.**

Love, like access, should be for all,  
**Breaking down barriers, Texas tall.**  
**Inclusion's the melody, a harmonious song,**  
Where everyone belongs, where all belong.

**Beyond the politics, beyond the floor,**  
**Lies a chance to open a welcoming door,**  
To embrace differences, to bridge the space,  
In a state where all find their rightful place.

On this day of love, let it spark a new start,  
To heed this call, to have a Heart for The Arc.  
**In unity, progress finds its chart,**  
**For a Texas that cherishes every part.**

May this echo, sincere and true,  
Happy Valentine's Day, with hope anew.  
**Let hands forming hearts play a part,**  
**For The Arc, from every heart.**

#HaveAHeartForTheArcTX