



TASH

Equity, Opportunity and Inclusion for People with Disabilities since 1975

TASH Resolution on Life in the Community

Statement of Purpose

TASH recognizes that all people should have the right to live in the community with the supports they need. Children with developmental disabilities belong in families. Public policy should support this right. Adults with developmental disabilities should have the opportunity to pursue the same range of lifestyles and opportunities as other members of the community.

Rationale

We firmly uphold the basic human and civil rights of people with disabilities to full and equal participation in society as called for in the Americans with Disabilities Act and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. To this end, we condemn all segregation and institutionalization as blatant violations of human rights.

Children and adults with disabilities have a multitude of gifts that contribute to the diversity and strength of communities. These should be at the heart of identifying and meeting people's needs. Emphasizing each person's unique contributions, including their diverse ethnic and cultural heritages, increases the potential for the individual to connect with others in the community and reduces the likelihood that people will be perceived as "clients" rather than as friends, classmates, neighbors or co-workers. All policies and practices should be oriented toward viewing and presenting people first and disability as secondary.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT TASH, an international advocacy association of people with disabilities, their family members, other advocates and people who work in the disability field, believes that all children, regardless of disability, belong with families and need enduring relationships with adults. The actions of states and agencies involved with

children should be guided by the philosophy of permanency planning. As a guide to state and agency practice, permanency planning requires the funding of family support services, encouragement of a family's relationship with their child, family reunification of children placed out of home, and the pursuit of adoption when family reunification or some form of shared care is not possible.

Children and adults with disabilities should have opportunities to develop relationships with neighbors, classmates, co-workers and community members. Adults, whether married or single, shall have the opportunity to make choices about where and with whom they shall live. The preferences of each individual should guide all aspects of the selection of housing, including the neighborhood, and whether the individual will live alone, with his/her family, extended family, spouse, partner or friends. The role of government, agencies and organizations is to determine the manner in which assistance is best provided and to provide requested supports to the individual in meeting his or her needs and preferences.

Individuals with disabilities and families must be entitled to quality educational supports, decent and affordable housing, financial security, transportation, recreation and employment.

To this end, TASH will work toward closing institutions and other segregated settings, including segregated work settings while concentrating its efforts on ensuring that people have meaningful employment opportunities and homes of their own.

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