



January 2004

Shattering Myths *about* **Choice**

Q: Should a continuum of services include institutions?

A: No.

- Society has no responsibility to subsidize segregation.
- Society's values change as civil rights, contemporary technology, and new medical and health approaches are incorporated into mainstream society. Outdated technologies and treatment approaches are then replaced by more advanced practice. Institutions are no longer the contemporary approach for the way individuals with disabilities seek to live and receive treatment and supports.

Q: Should parents have the choice to place or keep their child in an institution?

A: No.

- None of us, whether we have a disability or not, has unlimited choices in life.
- Governmental and societal strictures do not allow any of us to choose anything we wish. Some options are excluded or forbidden, either in the interest of the community's overall welfare or as a result of government responsibility to set priorities and allocate its resources.

It is NOT reasonable to segregate people in institutions when experience and research prove that even people with significant disabilities and intensive needs can be supported in the community.

It is NOT reasonable to continue to invest scarce public dollars operating large, inefficient congregate settings.

It is NOT reasonable to deny even one person the right to live among us in the community, where services and supports can be provided.

MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COALITION

**People on the Go of Maryland - The Arc of Maryland - Maryland Association of Community Services
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