

# Parent Leadership's History of Effectiveness

Parents of individuals with disabilities have played a critical role in the history of education of children with disabilities. The work of parent advocates has contributed to the development of educational policies and practices at national, state and local levels.



**1947**

Parents of individuals with disabilities form the American Association on Mental Deficiency and host its first convention.

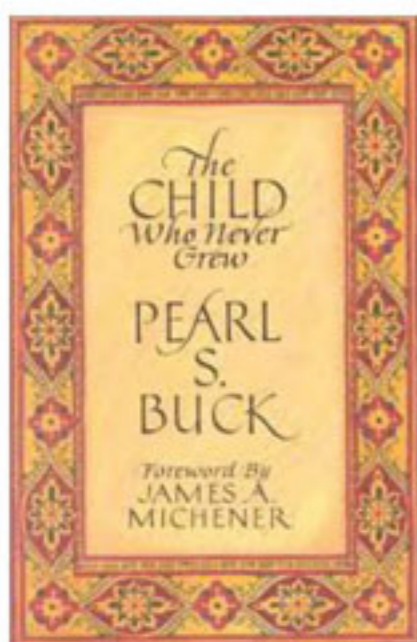


**1949**

Parent of a child with cerebral palsy founds the United Cerebral Palsy Association.

**1950**

Pearl Buck's article "The Child Who Never Grew" is the first disclosure of its kind by a public figure and has an enormous impact on the public's perception of mental retardation.



The article, published in 1950, is about her daughter Carol, who was developmentally delayed due to phenylketonuria (PKU). Buck writes about her struggle to help and understand her daughter.

**1933**

Five mothers of children with mental retardation in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, organize to protest schools' exclusion of their children and establish a special class in the public school.



**1950**

Forty-two parents and others meet in Minneapolis on behalf of children with mental retardation. The result: Establishment of the ARC.



**1954**

Arthur Trudeau, a father of a child with a disability, invites his Congressman and former schoolmate to the Christmas party of the Rhode Island Association for Retarded Children. Congressman Fogarty subsequently held congressional hearings to investigate federal services for children with mental retardation.



**1961**

As president and brother of a sibling with mental retardation, John F. Kennedy's establishes Panel on Mental Retardation to raise awareness on disability issues.



Throughout the 60's, ARC members, professionals, and other parents lobbied hard for federal legislation for children with disabilities.

**1971**

**The parent to parent movement is born.**

The first formally organized Parent to Parent program, the Pilot Parent Program, was started in Omaha, Nebraska, by a young mother of a child with Down syndrome. Also in this year, parents of children with mild to severe retardation sue the state of Pennsylvania to obtain a "free and appropriate education" for all students with disabilities and win the lawsuit.



**1974**

A small group of Texas parents form what is now the oldest existing state-wide parent organization for families with a child with deaf-blindness, the Deaf-Blind Multihandicapped Association of Texas (DBMAT). For nearly 40 years DBMAT has played an instrumental role in the delivery of services to children and adults who are deaf-blind in Texas.



**1976**

Five Parent Information Centers are federally funded as an "experiment," using the concept of a parent-run organization. To this day, parent centers exist in every state.



**1975**

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) is enacted by the United States Congress as a result of extensive lobbying efforts of parents and professionals. EHA is now known as IDEA. Also in this year, the International Parent Movement contributes to the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons.



**1979**

National Down Syndrome Society was created by parents Barton and Betsy Goodwin.



**1981**

The Katie Beckett waiver is created, thanks in large part to the advocacy efforts of her mother Juli Beckett. The waiver changed the Medicaid rules to make an exception that allowed Katie, and children like her, to receive their care at home, while retaining their Medicaid coverage.



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**1992**

The first International Parent to Parent Conference is held in Phoenix, Arizona.



**1985**

The first Parent to Parent National Conference is held in Seattle, Washington.



**1994**

The National Family Association for Deaf-Blind (NFADB) a non-profit, volunteer-based family association, is established.

**2000s**

Help us update the timeline! Let us know of successful parent advocacy efforts at the state and national levels.