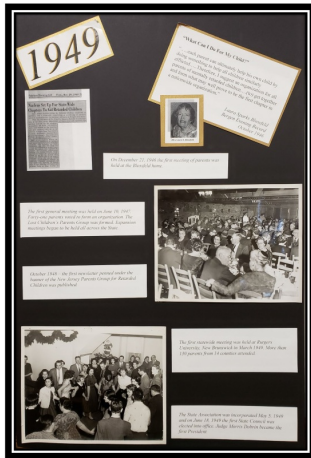


Celebrating 70 Years of Advocacy 1949-2019



October 3, 2019 | Volume 1 - The 1940's



For the next eight weeks, watch the history of The Arc of New Jersey unfold through weekly emails that celebrate the people and events that have made The Arc the strong vibrant organization it is today.

Join us for a celebration of our past and present at **The Arc of New Jersey 70th Anniversary Dinner and Awards** on Thursday, November 21st. Tickets, journal ads and sponsorships are available by visiting our [website](http://www.arcnj.org), emailing cfortin@arcnj.org or calling 732.733.6013.

It all began with a Letter to the Editor....

October 1946

Laura Sparks Blossfeld, a Bergen County mother of a child with I/DD, writes a letter to the editor of the *Bergen Evening Record* suggesting “...each parent can ultimately help his own child by doing something to help all children.....Therefore, I suggest an organization for all parents.....[to] get together and form what may well prove to be the first chapter in a nationwide organization.”



December 1946

After numerous phone calls and letters from similarly concerned parents, a meeting was arranged at the Blossfeld home.

June 1947

The first general meeting of 41 concerned parents was held at the Paterson YMCA, where they voted to form **The Parent's Group**. Membership was limited to parents of children with I/DD but other interested persons would be welcome.

September 1948

Two hundred parents meet at St. Mary's School in Essex County as part of **The Parent's Group Expansion Committee** activities.

October 1948

Laura Blossfeld edits the first issue of *The Parents' Voice*, a monthly newsletter with the motto "There is a limit to what we alone can do for our individual children; but there is no limit to what we as a group can eventually do..."

March 1949

The combined expansion committees of the Bergen-Passaic and Essex Units hold the first statewide meeting, with more than 130 parents from 14 counties attending.

May 1949

The statewide association is formed to coordinate efforts of local groups and act as a liaison between the local units and state government.

June 1949

The first State Council of **The New Jersey Parents Group** is elected. Judge Morris Dobrin becomes the first president.

Fun Fact: The 5 groups attending the first statewide meeting were Hudson, Mercer, Morris, Raritan Valley (Somerset and Middlesex), and Tri-County (Camden, Burlington and Gloucester).

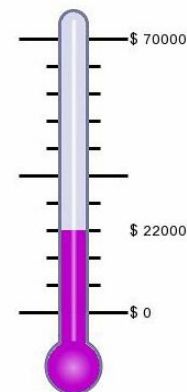
To ensure "singleness of purpose" all units operated under the state constitution but each adopted its own by-laws, elected officers, and determined local programs.

Please Help Us Continue Our Great Work

The Arc of New Jersey 70th Anniversary Campaign

To continue the wonderful work of The Arc of New Jersey, ***we need your help!*** In honor of our 70th Anniversary, The Arc of New Jersey is launching a special **70th Anniversary campaign to raise \$70,000.** Please donate today to help us reach our goal!

DONATE NOW!



The Arc of New Jersey | www.TheArcofNJ.org

