

Significant Events Regarding Disability Issues



460-357 BC	Hippocrates, the “Father of Medicine,” asserts that seizures are the result of physical causes, not “divine intervention” as commonly believed
1914-1918	World War I rages across Europe, resulting in nearly 20 million wounded soldiers – over 7 million with permanent disabilities. Within two years, the legislation expanded to include vocational rehabilitation services to civilians, including people with disabilities.
1946	The National Mental Health Foundation is founded by Eleanor Roosevelt. It exposed the abusive conditions at state mental institutions and became an early impetus behind the push for deinstitutionalization.
1949	The National Foundation for Cerebral Palsy is chartered; in 1950, it is renamed the United Cerebral Palsy Association and became a major force in the parents’ movement.
1950	Representatives of 88 parent groups from around the U.S. organized the beginning of what is now known as The Arc, one of the nation’s leading advocacy organizations for people with developmental disabilities.
1954	Brown v. the Board of Education ruling assuring that all children have the right to a public education; in the 1970s, the Supreme Court provided the basis for the legal challenges for the rights of children with disabilities
1961	President John Kennedy appoints a 26-member President’s Panel on Mental Retardation.
1964	Civil Rights Act passed
1968	Special Olympics created
1975	PL 94-142 – Education of All Handicapped Children Act passed; outlined the concepts of free appropriate education, least restrictive environment, and individualized education plans for children with disabilities. (see 1990 – IDEA)

Some of the information shown in the Timeline is from the “Partners in Time E-learning Course found at <http://www.partnersinpolicymaking.com/history/>

1975	United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Disabled Persons recognized that people with disabilities have the right to a normal full life.
1981	International Year of Disabled Persons, sponsored by the United Nations, begins ... recognizes the rights of people with disabilities to fully participate in society.
1982	The Home and Community-Based Waiver program is introduced, allowing federal Medicaid funds to be used for non-institutional, community-based services.
1984	The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act is expended to include definitions of developmental disabilities and supported employment, and extends the age limit to 22 years.
1990	Americans with Disabilities Act is signed into law, the most sweeping disability rights legislation in the nation's history.
1990	The Education for All Handicapped Children Act is renamed "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" (IDEA). Students with disabilities were required to be involved in developing their transition plans, and their interests and preferences were to be considered. The bill won't be passed until 1997
1991	New Hampshire closes its last state-run institution, becoming the first state without a state-run institution.
1997	IDEA is passed. It completely overhauled the nation's special education system and focuses on integrating students with disabilities into regular classrooms.
1999	Olmstead Supreme Court Decision affirms the right of people with disabilities to live in the community and requires state and local governments to provide support services in the most integrated setting possible.
2001	The "New Freedom Initiative" created to remove barriers to community living for people with disabilities and long-term illnesses.
2004	Since 1991, 160 institutions (nearly half of the nation's large institutions) have closed in 38 states.