

Friends Helping Friends Challenge

Crisis management is a process, not a verdict, in which we must identify the danger and define the opportunity. We knew the immediate danger was the health and safety of our staff and clients. Within a few short days in March we quickly made the decision to close the office, coordinate remote work, suspend site based programs at the direction of the governor, develop safety protocols, and cancel all family and community events. We knew this was the right thing to do. We assumed it would be for just a short time...*but then it wasn't.*

2020 has brought us new vocabulary like COVID-19, PPE, superspreader, and Derecho. References to pandemic, asymptomatic, social distancing, tree removal, and generators became all too familiar. Like all of you, we had to find a new normal. By partnering with local agencies and funders we redefined what it meant to meet the critical needs of those we serve.

We stepped outside of our comfort zone to find solutions that presented opportunities:

- *A client was experiencing anxiety and isolation due to the closure of our Day Habilitation program, so we took the program to her home. The team was very creative in developing a plan that included exercise, art projects, cooking, and virtual tours just to name a few. Her parents shared that they were very appreciative of the flexibility that allowed their daughter to remain living independently.*
- *Teleservices was implemented and offered a lifeline for those who relied on The Arc's staff as their primary natural supports to assist with day to day needs. The ability to maintain regular contact with clients during a time of fear and uncertainty prevented escalating mental health issues.*
- *When clients were unable to leave their homes Arc staff were able to assist with critical errands and shopping on their behalf. With direction from the client, our staff shopped and shared the experience via video sessions that allowed clients to actively participate in the process.*
- *The Arc was allowed to provide respite services to parents who were forced to work from home and had lost their daycare, allowing them to maintain their income and protect their employment.*

Even with our collaborative and creative efforts, we still have our work cut out for us. Overall we are at less than 60% of our revenue compared to last year. We know the path ahead is yet to be paved and the financial impact remains uncertain even with the receipt of grants and stimulus funds that help to offset lost revenue and unexpected expenses. We know the turnaround will take time and we respect the decision each family must make about the safety of their loved ones. **Yet we remain hopeful.**

An anonymous donor with longstanding ties to The Arc is stepping up with an incredible opportunity: **Friends Helping Friends Challenge**. Their goal is to provide a source of funding for families in need. For every dollar you donate, your gift will be tripled up to a total of \$20,000! That's right, if you act now, your gift can have triple the impact! A \$100 gift will grow to \$300, a \$500 gift becomes \$1,500...just multiply times three to see the potential. Let's end 2020 on a positive note and make this donor proud by meeting their challenge of matching up to \$20,000 in donations.

As this year comes to a close we would like to thank you for walking alongside us. From The Arc family to yours, we wish you happiness and good health in the year ahead.

*P.S. Don't wait, make your donation today!
Do your part to support the Friends Helping Friends Challenge.*