

WHO WE HELP

“Carol,” like hundreds of other people, found herself locked away in New Jersey’s psychiatric hospitals for months and years after being found ready for discharge, simply because the state failed to invest in community housing and services.

As a result, the Bazelon Center and our local partners filed suit. After much work, we secured a settlement requiring the state to develop supportive housing for more than 900 people in Carol’s situation.



For her privacy, this is not Carol.

This is one of many cases the Bazelon Center has spearheaded to force states to comply with the “integration mandate” of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Olmstead* decision, which declared unwarranted institutional confinement discriminatory and, therefore, illegal.

Carol moved into her own apartment and received mental health and supportive services in the community, at much lower cost to the state and much greater benefit to her.

Our work enabled Carol to take part in the everyday life of her community and thrive—living the dream denied her for more than two years.

GET INVOLVED

Learn more
and join our advocacy!
How?

Like us on Facebook

(www.facebook.com/bazeloncenter)

Follow us on Twitter

(@BazelonCenter)

Visit our website

(www.bazelon.org) where you can join our e-mail list for alerts, updates and *The Reporter*.

Support our work

The Bazelon Center’s work is funded primarily through grants and gifts from private foundations and individual donors. Contributions are tax deductible.

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THE JUDGE DAVID L.
BAZELON CENTER
- FOR -
MENTAL HEALTH LAW



WHERE WE STAND

The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law has championed the rights and dignity of people with mental disabilities since 1972.

The Bazelon Center envisions an America where people with mental disabilities exercise their own life choices, enjoy equal opportunities, and have the services and supports necessary to live full lives in their communities.

Our work focuses on five priorities:

Community Integration

We seek to end our country's needless reliance on institutional models of care for people with mental disabilities.

Self-Determination

We work to protect the autonomy of people with mental disabilities, including their right to vote and make choices about the care they receive.

Success for All Children

We advocate for coordinated systems of care that enable children with mental disabilities to become successful adults, and for schools that empower all children to meet high academic standards.

Access to Services

We advocate for robust systems of services to help people with mental disabilities live in their own homes and participate fully in their communities.

Access to Courts

We work for fair and responsive courts by reporting on the credentials of judicial nominees and advocating for legal reforms that help people with mental disabilities get justice in court.



WHAT WE DO

Policy Analysis and Advocacy

The Bazelon Center promotes a progressive mental health policy agenda, particularly at the federal level, to reform systems and programs to protect the rights of children and adults with mental disabilities.

Litigation

Attorneys at the Bazelon Center provide technical support on legal matters and serve as co-counsel on selected lawsuits with private lawyers, legal services programs and advocacy organizations on issues and cases that advance rights, consumer choice, access to services and autonomy for people with mental disabilities.

Public Education

The Bazelon Center pursues public education through a comprehensive strategic communications plan to inform and engage diverse stakeholders; to shape the public debate; and to fully leverage the Bazelon Center's groundbreaking work.

HISTORY

The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law is the nation's premier legal advocacy organization for people with mental disabilities.

In recent years, we have challenged needless segregation and opened public schools, workplaces, housing and other opportunities to people with mental disabilities.

In 1972, forward-thinking legal scholars and advocates founded the organization (then the Mental Health Law Project) to secure the civil rights of people housed in institutional settings.

We have since expanded our advocacy to protecting the right to self-determination and securing access to needed services, so children and adults with mental disabilities can lead their own lives as full members of their communities.

In 1993, we renamed the organization in honor of Judge David L. Bazelon, the federal judge whose landmark appellate decisions pioneered the field of mental health law and whose tireless pursuit of justice inspires our advocacy to this day.

The Bazelon Center's legal victories have been replicated by advocates across the country and have supported reforms at the federal, state and local levels.

On federal policy, the Bazelon Center's leadership in mental health is reflected in laws and policies that today protect the rights of people with mental disabilities and fund critical services.