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## Director's Corner

### Advocates Have a Spot at the Planning Table



We receive a lot of requests to act as advocates here at the Arc, many of which involve education. In theory, special education exists to ensure every child receives the support they need to learn, grow, and participate fully in school. In practice, students with developmental disabilities and their families often find themselves navigating a system that was not designed with simplicity in mind. Special education meetings can be intimidating. A single parent often sits across from a table of professionals: teachers, therapists, administrators, psychologists. These professionals may change as the student ages. Even the most confident families can feel overwhelmed. An advocate can help by simply being there to help families feel that they aren't navigating the process alone. That's why advocacy should always be an option to consider when developing an IEP. [Read on](#)

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# Do You Know About?

## House of Everyday Learning



Interview with Laura Kolling, Secretary – Board of Directors House of Everyday Learning

### What services does House of Everyday Learning provide?

House of Everyday Learning was created to help uninsured and underinsured children access therapeutic programming despite financial barriers. Over time, our nonprofit has expanded to offer a wider variety of camps, mobile therapy services, and access to specialty interventions such as equine assisted therapy and music therapy.

We primarily serve children ages 2 to 18. Through fundraising and grant-writing efforts, we are able to offer many of these programs through scholarships, helping families access services that may otherwise be out of reach due to cost, insurance limitations, or eligibility restrictions. Read more

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# Arc Opportunities

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**The Arc**  
Cass County



*Express Yourself!*  
*Creative Studio Art Class*

**Who:** Groups or Individuals  
**What:** Project TBD  
**When:** Feb 23rd @ 1pm or 2pm  
**Where:** The Arc Office  
(215 University Drive N, Fargo)

**Must RSVP to attend - email**  
[arcassistant@arccasnd.org](mailto:arcassistant@arccasnd.org)

# Other Opportunities

**Better Together Conference**  
 EMPOWERING INCLUSION. CELEBRATING FRIENDSHIP. BUILDING LEADERS.

The Better Together Conference is a one-day event that brings together students with intellectual disabilities and their peer mentors from across North Dakota. Through breakout sessions, panels, and inclusive activities, students build leadership skills, explore life after high school, and celebrate the power of friendship.

**FEBRUARY 25, 2026**  
 RADISSON HOTEL  
 BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA

Registration & Light Breakfast @ 9:00am  
 Keynote Starts @ 10:00am  
 Lunch Will Be Provided  
 Conference concludes at 3:00pm



HOSTED BY: **NORTH Dakota** State Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Be legendary.™ HUMAN SERVICES

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Collaboration for Change Webinar Series**

**2026**

*Mark your Calendar*

**Thursdays, Noon – 1:00 pm, CST**  
 March 26 – April 23, 2026  
 More information coming soon!

**Social Work Contact Hours Available**

**“bringing partners together to spark ideas and create meaningful impact”**

**Special Guest Zach Anner**

**Other topics include**

- Mental Health
- Ethics
- Suicide Prevention
- Burnout & Self Care

[ndcpd@minotstateu.edu](mailto:ndcpd@minotstateu.edu)  
[www.NDCPD.org/webinar-series](http://www.NDCPD.org/webinar-series)

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# Check It Out

## Local

- [HHS seeks public comment on five-year renewal of state’s Medicaid waiver for medically fragile children](#)
- [Vocational Rehab 2025 Annual Report](#)
- [Olmstead Annual Report 2025](#)

## National

- [Congress Poised To Reject Trump Changes To Special Ed, Disability Programs](#)
- [Sign The Arc’s petition to Protect Special Education](#)

# Don’t forget to support our work!

Be a part of making an even greater impact in 2026. Give the gift of independence and self-determination by donating to The Arc for Giving Hearts Day through February 12th!



**FEBRUARY 12 Giving Hearts Day**

**2025 points of pride:**

- ♥ 6 scholarships given to prepare future special educators for impactful careers.
- ♥ 640 hours of work experience gave participants confidence and real-world skills.
- ♥ 370 art projects fostered creativity, self-expression, and pride.
- ♥ 6,000 essential items were given, ensuring dignity and stability for families in need.
- ♥ 40 local teachers received tools to create inclusive, engaging classrooms.

**The Arc**  
Cass County  
*Empowering People.  
Strengthening Futures.*

**Serving people with intellectual & developmental disabilities for 70 years.**

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The One Big Beautiful Bill Act OBBBA adds a **new deduction for non-itemizers in 2026**.

Beginning in the **2026 tax year**, taxpayers who do not itemize will be able to deduct:

Up to **\$1,000** in cash gifts (single filers)

Up to **\$2,000** (married couples filing jointly)

This applies only to cash gifts to qualifying public charities.

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