

Regarding Montgomery County Respite Care through the ARC of Montgomery County.

To our County Council Members:

I understand that a special appropriation is being reviewed for Respite Care through the ARC of Montgomery County. I'd like to take a second to relay how important this program is for families of Special Needs children.

Our youngest son is diagnosed with Autism and Down Syndrome. For his entire life, he has been part of every moment our family shared. Due to developmental issues, he has started becoming more and more unpredictable and has developed aggression issues to the point where we can no longer take him out to eat, to shop, to connect with friends or even join in family gatherings like Thanksgiving, birthdays or Christmas. It has gotten to the point where if my wife and I want to see people together, they have to come to our house.

We've recently been introduced to Respite through the ARC and now we have the ability to catch up with friends and family every other week, as Sean is cared for by Dana, who has instantly become like family. It may not seem like much to those that do not have a Special Needs Child, but the isolation is real. My father passed away recently, and because we didn't have care at the time, my wife and I couldn't be there together.

There is a memorial for my brother who passed away earlier last year in Florida. Normally, we couldn't even consider attending together, but with Respite, we are able to get away for a couple of days to honor his memory.

Services like this are of the utmost importance to families like mine. I hope that the resolution is given the attention and funding it deserves.

Best Regards,

Michael Nolan

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