



Beyond Fairview: An Oregon Story of Supporting Inclusive Community Living

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Why is community living important?

"When people are released from institutions they will have new freedoms that were impossible to realize before moving into society...Having a sense of belonging is a feeling like none other. When people routinely see an individual, regardless of their outer shell, barriers start to drop, and friendships blossom...Everyone needs to connect and feel a part of a group, because it's a basic fundamental human trait." -Jan Staehely, Self Advocate



"I like to be in the community and to help people like I do at Meals on Wheels." - Sherri Osburn, Self-Advocate and former Fairview resident



"Living in the community is extremely important because it is the least restrictive and allows people with disabilities the autonomy to make more decisions in all aspects of their lives. Historically people with disabilities have been left out of conversations that directly affect them and their quality of life. Living in the community provides a chance for disability to be normalized providing more opportunities for equality." - Kiersi Coleman, Self-Advocate



What advice do you have for other states that have not yet closed their large institutions?

Disability advocate and former Fairview resident, John Calhoun, shared his advice for advocates during a recent interview. He said that advocates can push their states by organizing with other advocates and working together to put pressure on governors and other elected officials. To achieve deinstitutionalization, John says advocates should take the following steps.

- ◆ talk to other advocates, organize, find allies, and work together
- ◆ put pressure on governors and other elected politicians
- ◆ keep mentally strong and stay positive, even in the face of seemingly impossible tasks

"Start slow so you're not overwhelming your systems. On the other hand, keep track of the success stories." -Jan Staehely, Self Advocate



Background

For nearly a century, many Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) were housed in institutional settings. The Fairview Training Center was Oregon's longest running residential and medical facility for people with disabilities. The Fairview Training Center was a self-contained community, largely isolated from the general population. In addition to isolation, residents of Fairview endured other abuses, such as forced sterilizations, physical and chemical restraints, and physical abuse. In Oregon and across the country, many people admitted their family members to institutions on the advice of medical professionals or because they felt they had no other options.

What led to Fairview's Closure?

During the 1980s, advocates exposed the abusive treatment of Fairview residents to the public and put pressure on the state to begin dismantling the Fairview Institution.

- ◆ Federal investigation into human rights abuses
- ◆ Medicaid funding withdrawn due to violations of federal law
- ◆ Expansion of community-based services
- ◆ Wider recognition of the importance of community integration
- ◆ Disability rights advocates
- ◆ Lawsuits



Photo: Fairview circa 1920. Credit: Oregon State Archives, Oregon School for the Deaf, OSD0057

What is the Fairview Trust?

Amount:	Scope:	Terms:
\$12.9 million from sale of the Fairview Compound deposited into the Fairview Trust Fund	To adapt , maintain, and provide appropriate housing for children and adults with I/DD.	Interest from the principle investment to be spent on housing .

Fairview Community Trust Grant Program: 2000-2011

\$1,924,700 in trust interest helped **1,158** families with home modifications

- ◆ lifts
- ◆ wheelchair ramps
- ◆ door widening, and more

2010 Medicaid expansion and Oregon's Community First Choice Plan began to cover home modifications, making community grant program duplicative. **The Fairview Trust Grant Program was suspended in 2011.**

What's in store for the Fairview Trust Fund?

- ◆ Oregon must fulfill its promise to use trust funds to support community living
- ◆ Oregon state legislature has made several attempts to use trust funds to balance the state budget, and currently owes the trust \$6.9 million
- ◆ Advocates are fighting hard to protect the funds from budget grabs in the state legislature
- ◆ Stakeholders are currently exploring options for the trust fund, including:
 - ◆ Public-private partnerships
 - ◆ Incentives for building I/DD accessible housing
 - ◆ Assistance with move-in costs

1907: The state of Oregon purchased **672** acres of land for the "Institution for the Feeble Minded"

1908: The first **39** residents were transfers from the Oregon State Psychiatric Hospital

1962: Resident population peaks at more than **2,700** people
Fairview complex consisted of **60** buildings

1979: Facility renamed Fairview Training Center



Photo: Entrance Sign Credit: The Fairview Memory Book. Oregon Department of Human Services, 2000

1981: State Legislature requires plan to reduce resident population of Fairview

1996: State issues plan for closing Fairview

2000: Last Fairview resident leaves