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## **The Arc Offers New Services: Professional Development Training And Positive Behavior Support**

**The Arc of Dauphin & Lebanon Counties** is offering two new services—professional development training programs for individuals and groups from business and human services and positive behavior support for individuals with intellectual disabilities (consumers) and their families, caregivers and employers.

“The most important asset every organization has is its people. With our professional development training we can help organizations improve the environment and performance of their employees,” says Barbara Jumper, executive director at The Arc of Dauphin & Lebanon Counties. “We are very excited to have Jeanne Potak-Knowlton on board to facilitate these programs with lasting benefits for our community.”

Professional development training programs are available on more than 50 topics including stress management, diversity, quality service, staff retention, dealing with workplace violence, leadership and teambuilding and can be customized to an organization’s needs. Training sessions can be brought on-site or be held at The Arc’s facilities on Walnut Street in Harrisburg. Jeanne Potak-Knowlton, a seasoned therapist, trainer and teacher will bring her unique, highly-interactive style and nearly 40 years of experience to lead the professional development training sessions.

“Our professional development classes aren’t the traditional lecture format,” explains Potak-Knowlton. “We do a lot of group work and problem-solving so people can walk away with concrete ideas that they can apply in their work.”

Potak-Knowlton will also develop positive behavior support strategies to assist consumers and their families, caregivers and employers with managing behavior. Relatively new in its application to adults with intellectual disabilities, positive behavior support helps individuals manage behavior that interferes with successful functioning.

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***New Services--Page Two***

With a goal of improving overall quality of life, Potak-Knowlton will offer several levels of assistance to prevent and manage behavior that interferes with a consumer's successful functioning within a given setting such as work or residence. Emphasis will be placed on lifestyle enhancement, dignity and preferences of the consumer, positive support techniques and reduction of restrictive strategies.

“About 80 percent of behavior support is preventative and 20 percent is crisis management. The goal is to prevent difficulties from occurring,” explains Potak-Knowlton. “An example would be a consumer working at a home supply store who is drinking all of the coffee intended for the contractors who shop there. We would study the situation to determine what is causing that behavior and give that consumer and his or her employer some tools to take away the need for the undesirable behavior. In this case, it's not that the consumer can't have coffee, he just can't deplete the supply for the contractors. A solution might be providing him with his own supply of coffee in a special thermos each day.”

Potak-Knowlton is a specialist in developmental disabilities and has worked in government, private industry, university and medical school settings. She most recently worked as a personal and professional development specialist and therapist for Riverside Companies. She earned a B.A. in psychology from Muhlenberg College and an M.S. in education from Temple University.

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*The Arc of Dauphin and Lebanon Counties is a non-profit, membership organization providing services and supports with dignity and respect to persons of all ages who have intellectual disabilities. Services include advocacy emphasizing individual rights, public awareness, resources and referrals. More information about The Arc can be found on the web at [www.arcofdc.org](http://www.arcofdc.org).*

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