

TEACHER NOTES: Lesson 2: Educating
Children with Disabilities without Public
Schools

**This is a part of the Indiana Disability History Project series:
From Segregation to Integration, Oral History about the Education of
Children with Disabilities*.**

- **Lesson 1: Children with Disabilities in the Age of Institutions**
- **Lesson 2: Educating Children with Disabilities without Public Schools**
- **Lesson 3: Students with Disabilities in Segregated Public Education (1960s and 1970s)**
- **Lesson 4: The Integration of Students with Disabilities into Classrooms (1970s– 2000s)**

*The Indiana Disability History Project is funded by the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent positions or policies of the Council.



Educating Children with Disabilities without Public Schools



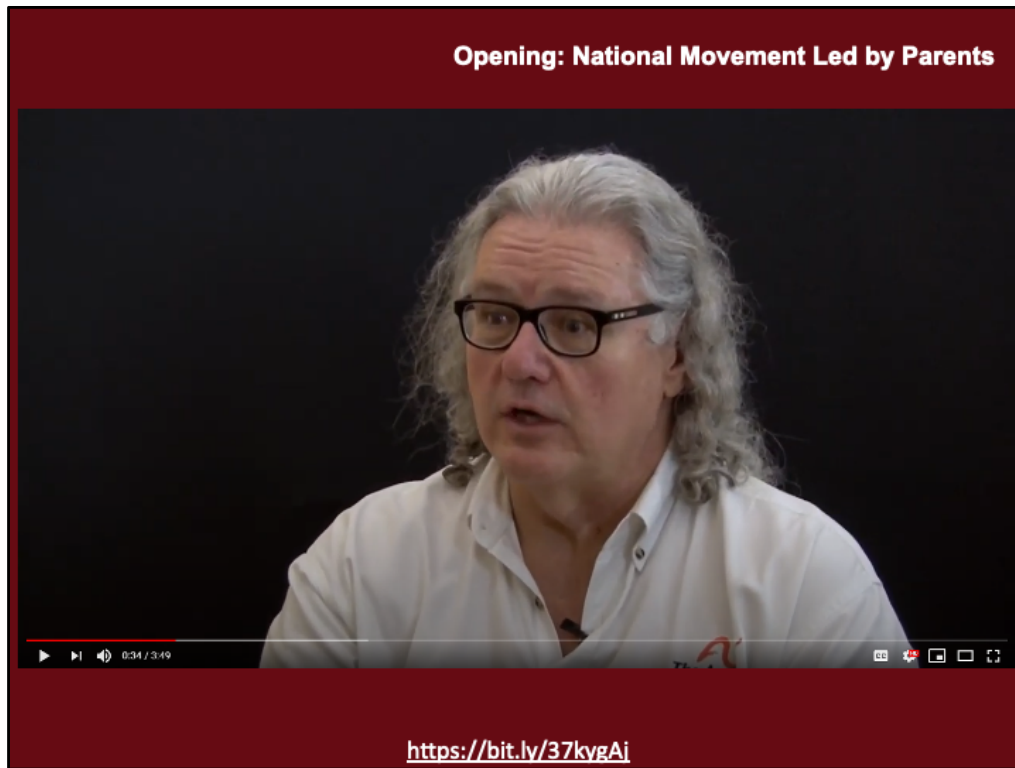
INDIANA INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY AND COMMUNITY
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**GOVERNOR'S
COUNCIL FOR
PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES**



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Opening: excerpt from National Movement Led by Parents (John Dickerson)

- Runtime: 35 sec.

Searching for School Opportunities (Sandy Braunbeck)



Guiding Question

Mrs. Receveur looked for a school her daughter could attend. She was told the only way her daughter could get an education was to start a school herself.

- **Who helped Mrs. Receveur create a school for children with disabilities in a church basement in southern Indiana?**

Things to Know

- The school in the church basement was started in 1953 and was taught by a volunteer teacher.
- The school was later named the Joseph **Rauch** Memorial School. It was named after Rabbi Rauch and was located in New Albany, Indiana.
- WHAS Crusade for Children: Established in 1954 by WHAS-TV in Louisville, Kentucky, the organization raises money for agencies, schools, and hospitals to improve the lives of children with disabilities.

 **Educating Children with Disabilities without Public Schools** 

Notes for Teacher

Video Description: Before there was a public law providing public education to children with disabilities, most children stayed at home during the day. Sandy Braunbeck shares the story of a mother, Mrs. Receveur, in southern Indiana who searched for educational opportunities for her daughter. After discovering there were no other options, she decided to start her own school, Mrs. Receveur found a church willing to house a classroom in their basement.

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Video 1: Searching for School Opportunities (Sandy Braunbeck)

- Runtime: 2 min. 57 sec.

Go to School (Bonnie Smith)



Guiding Question

When Bonnie moved her family to a new town, her daughters started school right away, but her son Brooks had no place to learn or to go during the day.

- **Why does Bonnie say Brooks used to stand at the window crying?**

Things to Know

- Brooks has autism, a type of developmental disability.
- Brooks' family tried several nursery schools. Teachers told Bonnie not to bring Brooks back to school.
- In the 1960s, children with disabilities did not have the opportunity to attend school with children without disabilities.

Educating Children with Disabilities without Public Schools

Notes for Teacher

Video Description: “It was wonderful because he felt like he was going to school.” Bonnie Smith’s family moved to Bloomington, Indiana in 1966. One day, shortly after moving in, a minister from the First United Methodist Church knocked on her door. He informed Bonnie he had found a teacher interested in working with her young son, Brooks, who had disabilities. Bonnie took Brooks to the church every morning, five days a week, for lessons. Bonnie said Brooks was happy because he finally felt he was able to go to school like his sisters did.

About the Clip: Students were introduced to Brooks in lesson 1. Although that video describes Brooks as being in an institution, this excerpt is about a period when he was younger and lived at home with his family.

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Video 2: Go to School (Bonnie Smith)

- Runtime: 1 min. 43 sec.

National Movement Led by Parents (John Dickerson)



Guiding Question

Before children with disabilities were allowed to go to public schools, their parents got together to make sure they had programs to help them learn. Many families went to the first meeting of this kind held in Indianapolis.

- **How did the parents learn about the meeting?**

Things to Know

- The national movement led by parents in the 1950s was originally called National Association for Retarded Children. In 1992, the name was changed to **The Arc**.
- The word “retarded” is no longer used to describe people who have learning challenges. Instead, we say someone “has an **intellectual disability**”.
- Many of parents who created opportunities for their children with disabilities had been advised by a doctor to put their children in an institution.

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Notes for Teacher

Video Description: In the past, many parents sent their children with disabilities to institutions for the rest of their lives, on the advice of physicians. In the late 1940s to early '50s, some parents began thinking differently about their children's futures. Parents across the country began organizing meetings. Two mothers in Indianapolis arranged a meeting expecting around 15 people, but 300 people showed up. One outcome of the parent organizations was the creation of informal schools for children with disabilities, with many starting in church basements.

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Video 3: National Movement Led by Parents (John Dickerson)
• Runtime: 2 min. 32 sec.

Segregated Education for Children with Disabilities (Pat Barber)

Guiding Question

Prior to 1975, the majority of children with disabilities did not attend school with children without disabilities. Agencies providing programs for people with disabilities offered educational opportunities in their facilities for children with disabilities.

- **What did the day look like for children attending Stone Belt Center?**

Things to Know

- There was no law guaranteeing students with disabilities the right to a free, public education until 1975.
- **Stone Belt** center in Bloomington, Indiana still provides services for adults with disabilities today. The agency no longer offers classes for children because they are able to attend public schools.

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Notes for Teacher

Video Description: “No children were really served in a community setting, in a public school, especially children with moderate to severe disabilities.” Pat Barber started her teaching career at Stone Belt Center, an agency that provides services to individuals with disabilities. There were several classrooms in the facility serving infants to school-age youth. In this video, Pat describes what the typical school day looked like for children with disabilities at Stone Belt in the early 1970s.

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Video 4: Segregated Education for Children with Disabilities (Pat Barber)

- Runtime: 3 min. 7 sec.

Discussion/Debrief

Searching for School Opportunities with **Sandy Braunbeck:**



- **Who helped Mrs. Receveur create a school for children with disabilities in a church basement in southern Indiana?**

Go to School with **Bonnie Smith:**

- **In the 1960s, there were no opportunities for children like Brooks to go to school. In his situation, what happened?**

National Movement Led by Parents with **John Dickerson:**

- **Why did families feel the need to organize together? Do you think children with disabilities would have had access to education if the parents had not acted to change things? Why or why not?**



 Educating Children with Disabilities without Public Schools 

The prospective answers of each question are available in [LP2-debrief-answers.pdf](#)

Discussion/Debrief

Segregated Education for Children with Disabilities with **Pat Barber**:

- **Who wanted the agency buses to say "Stone Belt Center for Retarded Citizens"? What did Pat think about it? How can we respond if we hear people using the "R word" (retarded)?**

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Glossary

- **Autism:** a developmental disability affecting the brain so that a boy, girl or adult may learn, act, talk, think, have fun, and understand the world differently, with each student having unique skills and challenges
- **Developmental disability:** a lifelong physical or mental condition that begins at birth or before the age of 22, making it difficult to carry out some major life activities such as movement, talking, or learning
- **Down syndrome:** a condition in which a person is born with an extra chromosome, causing them to have an intellectual disability, delays in development, and distinctive facial features. It is lifelong, not contagious, and may be accompanied by medical problems
- **Intellectual disability:** a lifelong condition related to thinking that can cause a person to develop and learn more slowly or differently
- **Rauch, Inc.:** an agency in New Albany, IN that started the Joseph Rauch Memorial School, organized in 1953 by parents to provide services and supports to people with disabilities
- **Stone Belt, Inc.:** an agency started in 1954 to provide resources and supports to people with disabilities living in south-central Indiana
- **The Arc:** a national organization started in the 1950s by parents of children with disabilities that works to ensure individuals with disabilities are fully included in their communities

