

## GROW's POSITION ON RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

*GROW asserts that development of an ADEQUATE number of APPROPRIATE residential opportunities must be a top priority in meeting the needs of people with developmental disabilities.*

GROW is a parent and family run organization whose dedicated members volunteer their time to advocate for a full range of supports and services to enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities. For almost 30 years we have focused on the ongoing need for community based residential development. The NYS CARES initiative was a positive response to GROW's hard work and resulted in a reduction in the long wait lists for residences.

However, since January of 2008 we have been faced with a moratorium on further development, especially for those who require 24 hour supervision. This is potentially devastating since there are many young people who are transitioning into adult services every year who absolutely need 24 hour supports along with the many who are still on the wait lists.

While there are a number of people who may not need 24 hour supervision, these are a small percentage, not the near 50% that is in OPWDD's plan. In addition, there is no mention of the training these people require as they transition from home, or from more supportive environments.

*While we are planning to meet with OPWDD to explore more cost effective ways to create needed residences, we EMPHASIZE THAT ANY NEW PLANS MUST INCLUDE THE NEEDS OF THOSE WHO REQUIRE 24 HOUR SUPPORT!*

*It is only right that we not ask our most vulnerable citizens to bear the brunt of State cutbacks.*