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Wake Up Staten Island!
**Homes for disabled
make model neighbors**

Wake up, Staten Island! This is the 1990s! Willowbrook is out; small, supported group homes are in.

Shame on you Great Kills residents for protesting a group home on Armstrong Avenue. Why don't you use your energy to learn more about the developmentally disabled population instead of being afraid?

The developmentally disabled are here to stay — no more hiding these men and women in institutions. In every part of your daily life you will come across all different types of people. The developmentally disabled are portrayed on television shows, in commercials; they work in our community and can even be seen in clothing catalogs.

Sure there will be changes in your neighborhood, but you will be pleasantly surprised to find they will be positive ones. The home will be well kept; the residents will be very busy going to programs or workshops to learn the skills that come so easily to you. You will find that these people are model citizens.

And as for the teen-agers taunting these residents, What are we teaching our children on the South Shore? Instead of tolerance, they are learning to fear people who are different and that it is okay to show prejudice by teasing and taunting.

The developmentally disabled have the right to live in any community on Staten Island. Educate yourself and your children. You will be pleasantly surprised.

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