

Group home dilemma

Public fear persists despite studies that show property values don't decrease

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Despite scores of studies concluding that group homes have no impact on property values and the experience of real estate experts which support those conclusions, the public fear that a home will hurt them persists. It surfaced on Staten Island last month at a community board hearing.

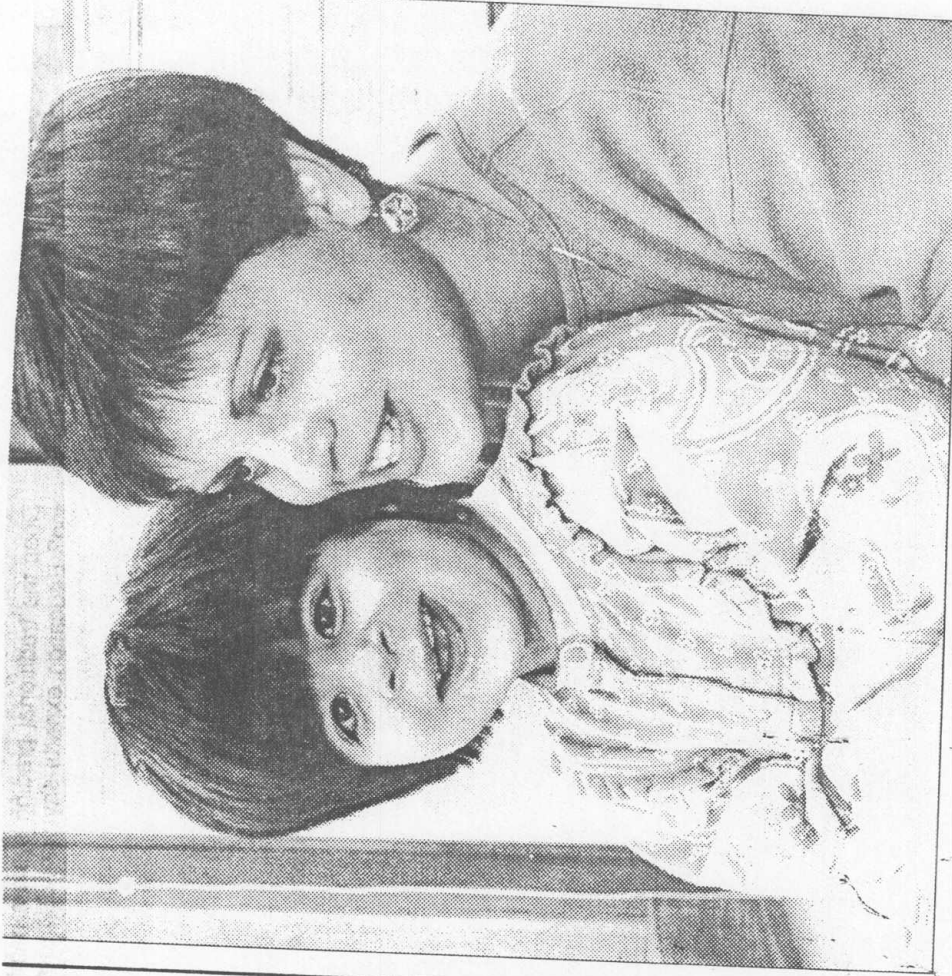
Group homes for developmentally disabled people of all ages are scattered throughout Staten Island, from exclusive blocks such as Diana Trail on Emerson Hill, to the end of Amboy Road in Tottenville and throughout the

North Shore. There is no evidence that the real estate market in these neighborhoods has suffered.

Still, the fallacy persists, even after more than a dozen years of experience with the siting of group homes: in all types of neighborhoods and the findings of real estate experts who consistently say property values remain unaffected.

Last month, residents of Great Kills, at a public hearing of a committee of Community Board 3, cited the property-value issue as justification to oppose a group home for eight developmentally

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ADVANCE PHOTO/IRVING SILVERSTEIN
Elizabeth Caminiti sits in her mother Anne Marie's lap in their Great Kills home. Mrs. Caminiti's bitterness toward opposition on the siting of group homes is detailed below.

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