"I shall tell you a great secret, my friend. Do not wait for the last judgment. It takes place every day."

– Albert Camus

**RESPONSES TO DISABILITY:**
Advocacy for improved institutions and better community services; increased funding for research; parents and professionals begin listening to people with disabilities.

The concept of “normalization” originated in Denmark in the late 1950s. It meant quite simply allowing persons who lived in institutions to enjoy as close as possible to the norms and patterns of everyday life which are the “natural” ways of life in society. The normalization principle helped to convince people that individuals with disabilities should be integrated into normal life. It meant quite simply allowing persons who lived in institutions to enjoy as close as possible to the norms and patterns of everyday life which are the “natural” ways of life in society.

In 1962, President Kennedy formed the President’s Panel on Mental Retardation. At this time, the medical profession was considered the final authority on mental retardation and other disabilities. Consequently, the Panel consisted primarily of medical professionals, with an emphasis on prevention and treatment.

In 1964, Senator Robert Kennedy toured the Willowbrook State School in New York. Accompanied by a TV crew, he compared the conditions of the institution to that of a snake pit. The next year, Dr. Burton Blatt and photographer Fred Kaplan used a hidden camera to capture life, inside of Willowbrook. Their photographic essay, *Christmas at Purgatory*, was published in Life magazine, drawing the largest amount of reader response in the magazine’s history. Dr. Blatt declared that “there is a hell on earth, and in America there is a special inferno” – the institution.

**ADVOCACY BY PARENTS LEADS TO INCREASED FUNDING, BETTER COMMUNITY SERVICES, AND LARGER INSTITUTIONS.**

By the late 1960s, it was becoming increasingly clear that public institutions were failing to meet even the most basic human needs of the people they were intended to serve. Advocacy by parents led to increased funding, better community services, and larger institutions.

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**ININVOLVEMENT BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES:**
Objects of charity; eternal children; increasing participation in the community.

The population of Rome State School reaches 3,940, with 1,000 living in colonies.