

My name is Jeffrey Johnson. I have a question for all of you! Can you imagine living in an institution? I have lived in four institutions. It was not fun, I had very little freedom.

The last institution I lived in was at Southern Wisconsin center in 1998. People from Dane County Department of human Services helped me get the supports I needed to move in to my own home. I got a job working to advocate for the rights of people with disabilities. My life is much better now.

Since I moved out of Southern Wisconsin Center , I got to choose where I live, who I live with and where I work. I also get to choose what my life looks like: I get to choose what to wear, what to eat, what to do with my free time and who my friends are.

Everyone wants to make their own choices. That is freedom. All people should be free. People with disabilities should be free.

Group homes are mini institutions. When people live in group settings, they lose personal freedom. Would you want to live with 3 or 4 or 5 people that are not part of your family? Neither do people with disabilities!

Don't take away our freedom by taking away money for supports that help keep us be free too.