Officials say the developmentally disabled can thrive in community settings. But the plan has fierce critics.

Closing centers may open doors

"Ultimately, this is not just about finding someone a new program of care, but allowing them to get a new life."

-Derrick De perme of the Community Resource Alliance, a firm hired to help lead the transition

When Gwendolyn Jones-Scott learned Gov. Pat Quinn wanted to close a state center for the developmentally disabled outside Springfield, she was terrified about what would happen to her son.

The family had spent years struggling to find care for Donya's Scott, whose autism and other disabilities meant he was prone to lashing out at times. Violently. The 21-year-old ended up at the Jacksonville Developmental Center, where staff put him on a strict behavior-modification plan, and Jones-Scott said her son seemed happy, sociable and at peace.

Four months after the state moved Scott to a small group home in La Grange, Jones-Scott said her fears have subsided. Not only is her son still doing well, he has his own room. And he's a 20-minute drive away, instead of the four-hour round trip that she had to take.

"It's a godsend. It feels so good to know that he is close by," she said. "He calls me all the time and says, 'Mommy, I love my new home.'"

The case represents a sea change in the way Illinois cares for people with developmental disabilities, an arduous task for families who do not have access to state facilities.

Please turn to Page 8

Some say soda may be to combat obesity

"These people aren't all cut from one cloth. Each has specific needs."

-Rita Durieh, president of the Illinois League of Advocates for the Developmentally Disabled, an arduous task for families who do not have access to state facilities

Romney takes on foreign po

Interested by a post-9/11 surge in presidential nominee Mitt Romney on speech at the Virginia Military Institute, former Sen. Barack Obama's foreign policy, as has been considered a plus for the incumbent, praised the decision to launch a military operation in Libya. Romney said the network remains strong in such nations as France, Germany and Libya. But modern instruments of war are powerful, he said, and they are not substitutes for a new strategy for the East. "I say, let's get it right," he said.

Romney added that he would work to make strategic sanctions in hopes of persuading Russia on such programs. He added that budgeting is being cut too deeply and that our strategy is not one of partnership or"
opmental disabilities, which include a wide range of health, social, and behavioral problems such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorders, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and other mental disabilities.

In 1967, there were only a few large-scale mental institutions in Illinois. By 1980, the state had closed most of these institutions, and the mentally ill were transferred to community-based programs. Today, mental health services are provided in a variety of settings, including hospitals, clinics, and community-based programs. The state operates a number of mental health facilities, including psychiatric hospitals, community mental health centers, and residential treatment facilities.

The state of Illinois is committed to providing mental health services to all residents, regardless of their ability to pay. The state also has a program to provide mental health services to children and families. The state also has a program to provide mental health services to seniors.