



Canada
Voir au-delà du handicap
Promoting a new perspective on disability

Investing in Independent Living

2008

December 3rd is the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This year's international theme is the "Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities: Dignity and Justice for All of Us". "Dignity and Justice for All of Us" is the theme for this day as well as the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Did you Know?

- The Independent Living (IL) Movement is a philosophy, a way of changing the way society views people with disabilities and the way people with disabilities view themselves.
- Independent Living (IL) Centres provide information, peer support, community development and skills building programs that enable individuals to participate as full and equal citizens in Canada society.
- The social, economical, political and cultural contributions of persons with disabilities create a stronger, accessible and more inclusive country.
- The Independent Living Movement is world wide with thousands of Independent Living Centres in both developed and developing countries.
- The United States (US) Government provides Independent Living Centres with over 70 million dollars of core federal financial support to IL Centres.
- Many countries provide financial support to IL Centres including Japan, Sweden, Korea and more.
- In February, 2008 the United Kingdoms' Office for Disability Issues released an Independent Living Strategy which recommends the development of one Independent Living Centre per municipality.
- In 1988, the Government of Canada, based on the recommendations of a Parliamentary Committee, agreed to financially invest in the development of Independent Living Centres throughout Canada.
- The amount of operational funding for IL Centres has remained at basically the same level for over 20 years.
- Many communities need an IL Centre (as identified by their disability community); however, lack funding and resources for development.
- The number of people requiring supports and services from existing IL Centres increases substantially every year.

Solutions:

- Talk to your local Member of Parliament and tell them how important your local IL Centre is to you and/or your family and that a financial investment in IL builds a stronger financial and social economy at the local and national levels.
- Ask them to work with all political parties to create a long term federal investment for IL which in turn is an investment in the human and economic potential of Canadians with disabilities
- Help us expand our services in rural and remote communities so that Canadians with disabilities have access to the Independent Living model and Centres in under-serviced areas in Canada.
- Work with IL Canada to promote citizenship rights and responsibilities, support independent living, and help reduce physical, intellectual, societal, and attitudinal barriers that create disabling conditions.
- Recognize the value and effectiveness of the IL model.
- Explore partnerships and program delivery opportunities with IL Centres.
- Visit, support and encourage greater awareness of Independent Living Canada and its network of member Independent Living Centres.
- See contact information below for more information on IL Canada and IL Centres.

“Individual control and empowerment has been identified as one of the most important factors to the success of community services in facilitating skills development, community and social integration, consumer satisfaction and improvements in quality of life. Services based upon independent living principles are more effective in this regard than traditional, professionally driven services.”

From Lessons Learned – HRSDC (1997)