



## Organizational Milestones of the Past 25 Years

**1980** – The Independent Living Movement, philosophy and principles, was introduced by Gerbon deJong, influential American IL theorist, at the Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped (now Council of Canadians with Disabilities) national conference on "Defining the Parameters of Rehabilitation"

**1982** – An all-party parliamentary committee released the Obstacles Report which included recommendations for a special funding initiative to support the development of Independent Living Centres

**1982** – Opening of the Independent Living Centre of Waterloo Region (first ILRC in Canada)

**1985** – Existing ILRCs (5 at the time) and individuals and organizations committed to the Independent Living Philosophy (many who would later become ILRCs) identified the need for national association for the Independent Living movement in Canada.

**1986** – Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC) is formally incorporated and moves its national office to Ottawa

**1988** – First CAILC national conference in Ottawa and an announcement from CAILC, the then Department of National Health and Welfare and the then Secretary of State. Together they announced the "Special Initiative on Independent Living" – a five year demonstration project that allowed for the development of a national infrastructure of community based ILRCs.

**1990** – National IL Conference "Creating an Agenda for the 90's", Calgary Conference

**1993** – The end of Special Initiative and three year renewal

**1994** – Published *The Canadian Independent Living Movement: An Historical Overview*, by Fraser Valentine

**1994** – Winnipeg ILRC/CAILC National Independent Living Conference – "Progress through Partnerships", in Winnipeg, Man.

---

**1993 – 1996** – Major pioneering project to study the issues of family violence and abuse as it pertains to people with disabilities funded by Health Canada's Family Violence Prevention Program. Research resulted in development of the following resources: Responding to Family Violence and Abuse – An Independent Living Approach, Prevention of Abuse against Elderly Citizens with Disabilities, Youth Speak UP! Youth Speak Out!

**1996** – Production and Airing of CBC/Disability Network/CAILC film "Double Jeopardy." A powerful documentary on personal stories of women with disabilities who are survivors of family violence with recommendations to bring about changes that are desperately needed.

**1996** – Expiry of federal government's special initiative, advised all funding would gradually decrease to zero by 1999, many other federal programs for people with disabilities drastically reduced or eliminated

**1996** – Community outcry initiated a Federal Government response through the creation of the "Federal Task Force on Disability Issues", CAILC's National Director voted in by disability community to act as one of three official participant/observers (including Lucy Lemieux-Brassard and Fred Clarke) to the Federal Task Force's national consultation throughout every province and territory

**1996** – October release of Liberal Task Force's report, *Equal Citizenship for Canadians with Disabilities – The Will to Act*

**1996** – All funding for national disability organizations including CAILC retained after report. Report recommended that the Federal Government had a critical role ensuring citizenship for people with disabilities.

**1996** – CAILC publishes the *Impact of independent living resource centres in Canada*. Prepared by Peggy Hutchison, Peter Dunn, John Lord, and Alison Pedlar

**1997** – Corrections Canada funded first of its kind "Opening Doors: Supporting the Re-integration of Offenders with Disabilities Leaving Federal Correctional Facilities" pilot – a CAILC/Halifax ILRC project

**1997 – 2004** – Funding for national employment initiative for CAILC/ILRCs - Navigating the Waters; an Independent Living Approach to Employment for Persons with Disabilities

**1997** – Human Resources Development Canada released *Lessons Learned, Disability and Policy Study* which summarizes lessons learned by the federal government on disability programs in Canada and abroad. Identified in report – "Services based upon independent living principles are more effective in this regards than traditional, professionally driven services in providing the support and skill development necessary

to enable people to make effective use of support service programs and to make decisions about their own lives."

**1999** – CAILC's Bylaws were ratified by its members to include streamlined membership categories: Centre Under Development (CD) and Accredited Membership Status

**2000** – Published Crime Prevention Curriculum Guide: *Working Effectively with Persons with Disabilities*

**2001** – Evaluation of "Open Doors Project". Evaluation proved successful and recommends that ILRCs could play an important role in reducing the recidivism rate of offenders with disabilities when they reintegrate back into society by providing IL programs and support to move back into their communities

**2001** – CAILC began first national and local IL awareness campaign through the United Nation's International Day of Disabled Persons, Dec. 3. Up until this time the UN Day was not recognized in Canada.

**2000 and 2001** – CAILC representatives take part in consultations held in Moscow to help disability organizations and government representatives create a disability agenda and strategy through a Canadian International Development Agency funded initiative

**2001** – Organized a network wide consultation which served as the foundation for an Accreditation process for ILRCs

**2002** – A national consultation took place with Centres and refinement of the Accreditation tool supported by the Accreditation Committee

**2002** – Three CAILC representatives attended Disabled People's International 6th World Assembly in Sapporo, Japan

**2002** – CAILC production of Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Package including *An Agenda for Change, Best Practices for Delivering Entrepreneurial Services to Canadians with Disabilities, Control Your Destiny,; Entrepreneurship – A Career Alternative for Persons with Disabilities* and *A Service Provider's Guide: Working with Prospective Entrepreneurs with Disabilities*

**2003** – *Making Equality: History of Advocacy and Persons with Disabilities in Canada*, by Deborah Stienstra and Aileen Wight-Felske (Chapter 11: "Steering Your Own Ship – The Growth of Individual Advocacy within the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres", written by Cassandra Phillips)

**2003** – Created and implemented a new IL based policy governance framework for national association

**2004** – Development of a New Accreditation Tool and piloting in three sites

**2004** – Planning, groundwork and publication of "The Independent Living Business Case: A Strategic Investment into the Human and Economic Potential of Canadians with Disabilities"

**2004** – Centres began using the "self assessment" portion of the Accreditation Tool to prepare for full accreditation cycle

**2004** – Completion of national literacy and disability searchable data base accessible to the general public

**2004** – Began annual series of "Did You Know" Fact Sheets released every week during the month of November leading up to the United Nation's International Day of Disabled Persons. Fact sheets highlight barriers through statistical data and provide IL solutions to barriers faced

**2005** – Implemented first cycle of Accreditation with 8 ILRCs (Centres need to apply for membership renewal every three years via the Accreditation Process)

**2005** – National Crime Prevention and Independent Living Conference – a first of its kind national conference on crime prevention and people with disabilities for police, other first time responders, disability organizations and ILRCs. Conference hosted by CAILC and Ottawa Police Services.

**2005** – Extensive conference proceeding report published with recommendations for the future of safety and people with disabilities in Canada

**2005** – New agreement with federal government/agreed to support three new Centres developed in under-serviced and under-represented areas in Canada over three years

**2005 – 2008** – Conducted pioneering participatory action research in the area of Substance Use/Misuse and Persons with Disabilities – the Access to Recovery Project

**2006** – Hosted a national Access to Recovery training symposium

**2006** – Development and implementation of the national IL Information and Data Collection System

**2006** – There are now 29 Independent Living Resource Centres across Canada

**2006** – Implemented new three year financial literacy initiative to educate persons with disabilities and family members on the Government of Canada's Registered Educational Savings Program across Canada

**2007** – Implemented a national consultation and rebranding exercise. Adopted new logo and slogan – ***Promoting a New Perspective on Disability!***

**2007 – 2010** – Implemented *Making a Connection – A National Literacy, Disability & Quality of Life: Participatory Action Research Initiative*

**2008** – Official name change to **Independent Living Canada!**

**2008-2010** – Conducted ground-breaking participatory action research on healthy eating and persons with disabilities and distributed results

**2009** – Published the final research results and partnership guide from the Making a Connection Literacy Initiative

**2009** – Secured and renovated new office space for both IL Canada and the Ottawa Independent Living Resource Centre (4500 square feet)

**2010** – Published *Impact – Changing the Way we View Disability* by John Lord (a book about the evolution and impact of the Canadian IL Movement)

**2010** – Successfully secured and implemented government contracts to educate persons with disabilities and their family members on the Registered Disability Savings Plan Program across Canada

**2010** – Government of Canada's Foreign Affairs/and HRSDC ask Traci Walters - IL Canada's National Director - to travel to the United Nations to witness Canada's presentation of their ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

**2011** – Celebrating Independent Living Canada's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary!!!!