

The Ten Underlying Ideas of Independent Living Philosophy

1. Civil Rights

Equal rights and opportunities for all, no segregation by disability type or stereotype.

2. Consumerism

A person ("consumer" or "customer") using or buying a service decides what is best for herself or himself.

3. De-Institutionalization

No person should be institutionalized by a building, program or family on the basis of a disability.

4. De-Medicalization

Individuals with disabilities are not "sick" as prescribed by the medical model, and do not require help from certified medical professionals for daily living.

5. Self-Help

People learn and grow from discussing their needs, concerns, and issues with people who have had similar experiences; "professionals" are not the source of the help provided.

6. Advocacy

Systemic, systematic long - term and community-wide change activities are needed to ensure that people with disabilities benefit from all that society has to offer.

7. Barrier Removal

In order for civil rights, consumerism, de-institutionalization, de-medicalization and self-help to occur, architectural, communication and attitudinal barriers must be removed.

8. Consumer Control

The organizations best suited to support and assist individuals with disabilities are governed, managed, staffed and operated by individuals with disabilities.

9. Peer Role Models

Leadership for independent living and disability rights is vested in individuals with disabilities (not parents, service providers or other representatives).

10. Cross-Disability

Activities designed to achieve these principles must be cross-disability in approach. The work to be done must be carried out by people with different types of disabilities for the benefit of all persons with disabilities.