



a project of the association for individuals with disabilities

#### WHAT IS INDEPENDENT LIVING?

Independent Living is "control over one's life by reducing reliance on others in making decisions and in determining everyday activities." To disabled individuals, independent living means...

- \* Being able to fully participate in life
- \* Being able to work
- \* Having a home
- \* Raising and supporting a family
- \* Taking part in the social, political, and recreational activities of the community
- \* Being recognized as an adult who has the same basic rights, desires, and needs as any non-disabled person

#### WHAT IS DCIL?

DCIL is the Dallas Center for Independent Living, a community-based, non-profit service project of the Association for Individuals with Disabilities, Inc. (AID). DCIL was established to provide services that assist severely disabled individuals increase self-determination and minimize dependence upon others. DCIL provides and coordinates independent living services which are directed, developed, and delivered by/for persons with disabilities.

#### WHAT SERVICES DOES DCIL OFFER?

Services offered include Information and Referral, Peer Counseling, Community Education, Attendant Training and Referral, Employment, Housing and Transportation Assistance, and Independent Living Skills classes. Staff are involved in utilizing and accessing community resources to best meet the needs of disabled individuals who request assistance.

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR DCIL SERVICES?

Individuals with disabilities, regardless of ethnic, religious or racial background. There are no age restrictions.

#### HOW CAN I SUPPORT DCIL?

You can volunteer your time and talents and/or make a tax-deductible donation to the Association for Individuals with Disabilities, Inc., designated for the DCIL project.

## HISTORY OF THE

### DALLAS CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

The Association for Individuals with Disabilities, Inc. dba The Association for the Disabled, advocacy group established in 1977, originally received a two-year Texas Rehabilitation Commission grant in September, 1982, to open the Dallas Center for Independent Living. After renting accessible office space at 8625 King George, Suite 210, and hiring an Executive Director, the center opened for client services on 3/1/83.

In the beginning, staff energies were directed towards publicizing the Center's existence and developing a comprehensive in-house resource library. Job descriptions were modified to more clearly reflect evolving job duties and a detailed operating procedures manual was written.

Considerable effort was made to coordinate Center services with other agencies to avoid duplications and to fill gaps. The Center offers the following services to clients: information and referral, community education/outreach/public relations, employment assistance, independent living skills training, transitional living, personal care assistance, accessible housing and transportation assistance, professional and peer counseling, advocacy assistance, volunteer assistance, accessibility consultation, a used equipment referral, and deaf-blind services.

Currently, the Center has an ten-person staff, most of whom are themselves individuals with disabilities. The Executive Director coordinates the Center's overall operation and maintains a close working relationship with its board of directors; The bookkeeper handles all financial matters for the Center; the Services Coordinator interviews new referrals and makes appropriate referrals within and outside the agency; the Community Living Coordinator handles housing, transportation and attendant care services and also oversees services to the residents in our Transitional Living Program. I&R/Community Education Coordinator handles basic information calls to the center as well as community education to students of all ages, the PR/Employment Coordinator handles employment services for consumers and also publicity efforts including presentations to agencies,

professional staff, civic organizations, etc., the Case Manager handles all clerical duties included in delivering consumer services such as file set-up, requesting delivering consumer services such as file set-up, requesting background information, scheduling case staffings and updating data files on the computer for statistical reporting, the Deaf-Blind Services Coordinator is responsible for locating and serving consumers who are deaf-blind, the secretary is responsible for clerical to all staff, particularly the executive director and the volunteer services coordinator handles recruitment and placement of trained volunteers with appropriate consumers.

The Center has served 1,098 new consumers since opening in 1983. 647 cases have been closed. A majority of our consumers have had physical disabilities, such as spinal cord injuries, MS, MD, CP, and arthritis but we have served persons with other disabilities including mental retardation, epilepsy, vision loss, hearing loss and head-injuries.

Most clients have requested assistance in finding employment, accessible, affordable housing, transportation services through the Dallas area Rapid Transit, and attendant care. Other frequently requested services include I&R, group peer counseling, accessibility consultation, advocacy assistance, deaf-blind services and volunteer assistance.

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