



FROM VALUES TO ACTION-

Building a Community Living Movement for a Decade of Change

The community living movement is reaching the half-century mark in communities across the country. In 2008, the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) will celebrate 50 years as a national movement and association. Celebrating 50 years of accomplishment, we also recognize how much there is still to be done.

More and more the rights of people with intellectual disabilities are recognized - in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Human Rights Codes, legislation and public policy. Yet so many are still excluded from regular classrooms and real jobs. For many people family and community are now home, but so many are still exiled to institutions. So many still face violence and abuse. Across the country older families are still unable to find, for their sons and daughters who have spent a lifetime in the family home, the non-segregated living accommodation for which the Association has fought for much of its existence. So many are devalued in a world that imagines 'genetic cleansing' is the answer to social and economic ills.

CACL and Provincial/Territorial ACLs have been working together over the past number of months to chart a 10-year agenda to make headway on the issues we face today. We want to make a decade of change. To do this we are building on the work of our membership in defining our purpose and fundamental beliefs and values.

CACL Statement of Purpose

CACL promotes the valued recognition of people with intellectual disabilities as citizens who have contributions to make to families, communities and society.

CACL promotes the valued recognition of families as gateways to inclusive community life for people with intellectual disabilities.

CACL promotes the establishment and maintenance of social and economic supports so that people with intellectual disabilities are welcomed and valued as full and self-determining members of the community.

CACL promotes a vision of society that is inclusive, respectful and supportive of the rights of all persons regardless of differences in intellectual or other abilities.

CACL promotes the elimination of discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, age, culture, race, ancestry, sexual orientation and other differences.

CACL Statement of Beliefs and Values - *adopted April 2003*

All members of the human family are full persons. Our human essence cannot be reduced to words, labels, categories, definitions or genetic patterns. Every person is unique. No one can be replaced or copied. All persons are ineffable.

- All persons are entitled to respect. Respect requires recognition of and concern for the dignity of every person. Dignity is fragile. It must be protected from all harm.
- All persons have inherent dignity. Dignity belongs to us just because we exist. It is not something we earn or receive.
- All persons have inalienable dignity. Dignity cannot rightfully be ignored, diminished or taken away.
- All persons have equal dignity. Dignity does not depend upon physical, intellectual or other characteristics. Neither does it depend upon the opinions that other people have about these characteristics.
- All persons have inherent and equal worth. Our value as persons is neither earned nor accumulated. It is unrelated to health status or any genetic or other personal characteristic.

- All persons have inherent capacity for growth and expression. Every person has the right to be nourished physically, intellectually, socially, emotionally and spiritually.
- All persons are entitled to equal access and opportunity. Equality demands protection from all forms of discrimination or harm, and access to the supports necessary to enable equal participation.

Values are not enough to make change happen. We need sustained and coordinated action across Canada to put these values into action.

Vision to Guide a Decade of Change

To get from values to action, we need a vision to guide us. At a retreat in May 2005, where we reflected on many years of accomplishment, and what still needed to be done, CACL, Provincial/Territorial ACLs, and other members defined such a vision. In November 2005, CACL membership adopted the following vision statement:

Vision Statement to Guide the Community Living Movement

1. Rights to equality, self-determination, full citizenship, valued recognition and respect from others are legally recognized and assured for all people with intellectual disabilities.
2. People with intellectual disabilities are free from confinement. All institutions for people with intellectual disabilities are closed. People live in homes of their choice, with appropriate supports
3. All children with intellectual disabilities have their rights guaranteed and respected, and have the supports they need to live, grow, and thrive in their families and communities.
4. Families access the supports and opportunities they need to assure inclusion for family members with intellectual disabilities through their lifetimes, and to secure family social and economic well-being.
5. All people with intellectual disabilities are fully included with their peers in regular education, with appropriate supports from early childhood through to post secondary and adult life-long learning.
6. All people with intellectual disabilities have access to, and

acknowledgement of, the disability-related supports they need to live meaningful lives and contribute as full citizens.

7. All people with intellectual disabilities are fully included in their communities, have full access to health care and other public services, and are safe from violence and abuse.
8. Canadians with intellectual disabilities have the income and resources they need to secure a good quality of life and fully participate in all aspects of their communities.
9. Working-age adults with intellectual disabilities are employed at the same rate as the general population.
10. Canada has a major global impact on advancing human rights, enabling inclusion and securing full citizenship for persons with intellectual disabilities and their families around the world.

Benchmarks for Achievement

This vision will not be fully achieved in 10 years. But a decade of change can make a huge difference. CACL and Provincial/Territorial ACLs are beginning to define a set of 10-year objectives and benchmarks to guide efforts and measure success of our movement, communities, governments, and Canadian society as a whole.

1. Achieve Equality Rights and Recognition

By 2015,

- Policies and practices that govern the use of genetic technologies, respect human diversity, and the fundamental principles of community living.
- Legal frameworks, policies, and practice for personal decision-making provide the legal foundation and support for people with intellectual disabilities to fully exercise their right to self-determination.
- CACL's efforts and strategies for change fully include youth, persons with FASD, Aboriginal persons, and minority ethno-racial-cultural communities.

2. Close Institutions and Assure a Home in the Community

- By 2007, there will be no new admissions to large institutions.
- By 2010, all large institutions for persons with intellectual disabilities will be closed.
- By 2013 the number of persons with intellectual disabilities living in inappropriate settings such as long-term care facilities, nursing homes, personal care homes and/or senior's facilities will be reduced by over 50% of its current level.

- By 2015 all supported living environments for persons with intellectual disabilities will be designed and bound by the principles of choice, self-determination and individualized funding.

3. Secure Child Rights and Needed Supports

By 2015,

- A comprehensive Federal-Provincial/Territorial government agenda is in place with effective monitoring and public accountability to advance the full inclusion of children with disabilities and address child poverty.
- An early learning and childcare system is in place in all communities that supports the full inclusion of children with disabilities.
- Age-appropriate and fully inclusive options will be available in all communities for youth with disabilities.
- Frameworks, policy and practices will be in place to prevent children with disabilities from entering the child welfare system for non-protection issues.
- Children with disabilities will have equal access to public parks, spaces and generic recreation programmes and facilities.
- Entitlement and access to disability-related supports for children will no longer be means tested against their parents'/household income.

4. Ensure Families have Needed Supports

- By 2010, a family supportive policy framework is in place that provides needed supports, economic security, community capacity for inclusion, and investments in future planning and security.
- By 2010, governments and communities are investing in a sustainable local-to-national capacity for family leadership, empowerment and networking that advances the citizenship and inclusion of Canadians with disabilities.
- By 2010, strong incentives will be in place for families to: plan for and invest in the future financial security of family members with disabilities; and to ensure that any financial benefits that result do not negatively impact access to government-funded income support programs.
- By 2010, policies are established, and by 2015 fully implemented, that ensure families can play their caregiving role and at the same time participate in the paid labour market, advance in their careers, and have the option to withdraw from their primary caregiving role as their family member enters adulthood.

5. Achieve Inclusive Education

By 2015,

- There is broad public support for inclusive education as essential to quality education for all children.
- Mechanisms are in place to effectively share best practices for

inclusive education between education stakeholders (from early childhood through to post secondary and life-long learning).

- A national strategy on inclusive education is developed and implemented and supported by Ministers of Education, the Canadian Council on Learning, and national and provincial/territorial teacher unions and other education organizations.
- An accountability framework is legislated to direct governments and school boards in implementing policies and practices for inclusive education

6. Secure the Right and Access to Disability Supports

- By 2007 a joint federal-provincial/territorial National Disability Strategy, that fully engages the disability community, is in place. Disability supports and transformation of community supports systems are a key priority.
- By 2008 federal and provincial/territorial governments have significantly expanded investments in disability supports and capacity of communities to ensure Canadians with intellectual disabilities can access supports needed for full participation in school, work, and community life.
- By 2015, legislation, policy, and practice assures access to disability supports by people with intellectual disabilities as needed and based on principles of control, choice, portability and flexibility.

7. Establish Safe and Inclusive Communities

By 2015,

- All levels of government establish funding commitments to community inclusion.
- Community sectors (education, health care, transportation, supports and services) have established policies that facilitate the full inclusion of all persons with intellectual disabilities.
- Communities are designed to be safe and secure assuring that people with intellectual disabilities are free from harm, violence, abuse, neglect, and denial of opportunity.
- Policies and practices are in place to promote and assure safety where people live, work, study and recreate.
- Policies and practices for restraint-free and non-violent supports and interventions are in place in services accessed by people with disabilities.

8. Eradicate Poverty

By 2015,

- The annual income gap between Canadians with and without intellectual disabilities is reduced by over half.
- The poverty rate of children with disabilities will be no higher than children generally.

- The poverty rate of adults with intellectual disabilities will be reduced by over half.
- Non-reimbursable, out-of-pocket, disability-related expenses will be under \$500 per year for people with disabilities and supporting family members/unpaid caregivers.

9. Achieve Employment Equality

By 2015,

- Increase the employment rate of Canadians with intellectual disabilities by over 50%.
- Employers will take leadership nationally in advancing labour force participation of people with intellectual disabilities.
 - Policies and practices will be in place to ensure people with intellectual disabilities and employers have the supports they need to establish and maintain inclusive workplaces.
 - Unions will actively seek accommodations necessary to support employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

10. Make a Global Impact on Inclusion

- By 2010 Canada is recognized as a model citizen internationally for its approach to disability and inclusion - at home and abroad.
- By 2015 all aspects of Canada's international policy - defence, diplomacy, development/aid, and trade/commerce - will incorporate a lens on disability and include specific measures to advance inclusion of people with disabilities internationally.
- By 2015 the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), signed by nations around the world, have been achieved for people with intellectual and other disabilities (as measured by the indicators adopted by Inclusion International for achievement of the MDGs).



Canadian Association
for Community Living

Contact us at www.cacl.ca

