

What is independent living?

"Independent Living does not mean that we want to do everything by ourselves, do not need anybody or like to live in isolation.

Independent Living means that we demand the same choices and control in our everyday lives that our non-disabled brothers and sisters, neighbours and friends take for granted.

We want to grow up in our families, go to the neighborhood school, use the same bus as our neighbours, work in jobs that are in line with our education and interests, and raise families of our own.

We are profoundly ordinary people sharing the same need to feel included, recognized and loved."

Dr. Adolf Ratzka

Disabled people have an inalienable right to independent living. ... it is about a right to live spontaneously; a right to go to the toilet when you want to; a right to go to work or to study where and when you want to; a right to economic equality; a right to leisure; a right to express your sexuality; a right to determine your own lifestyle; a right to develop hopes and aspirations; a right to be accepted as a full and active member of the community; a right to positively promote our difference as disabled people, but not to have to think of the consequences every hour of the day.

In essence, independent living is a misnomer: as disabled people we should be able to just think about living as anybody else.

Dave Morris