

# Common Principles on the Inclusion of People with Disabilities in their Communities

**Adopted by the Canadian Association for Community Living, People First of Canada and Community Living Ontario, 2013**

Recognizing Canada's ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and its recognition in Article 19 that:

*States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community, including by ensuring that:*

*a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;*

*b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;*

*c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs.*

And recognizing that Governments throughout Canada are acknowledging the physical, psychological and emotional harm people with disabilities have had to endure as a direct result of having been confined or forced to live in institutional settings,

We are united around this statement of common principles for the inclusion of people with disabilities as equal citizens in their communities. These common principles include the following:

- Canadians with disabilities have equal rights to full inclusion and life in the community; are valued citizens and contributing members of our society; and are entitled, regardless of the severity of their disability, to the right to live in community;
- Disability is a natural part of human diversity and difference. Persons with disabilities, as other human beings, are entitled to human rights and fundamental freedoms as embedded in our Canadian Charter of Rights and

Freedoms, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other national and international laws, conventions and standards;

- Institutions deny full citizenship including the right to live in the community; and do not and cannot contribute to the health and well being of persons with disabilities;
- Institutions are not merely defined by size; there are several forms of residential institutions throughout Canada where people with disabilities are inappropriately placed because of the failure of communities to provide appropriate disability or health related supports to persons in their home; and
- Persons with disabilities have a right to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement.

We recognize that in order to exercise their right to live in community, it is essential people with disabilities have:

- The right to direct and control the supports required to enable a meaningful life in community,
- The right to make choices, and take risks,
- Access to adequate levels of funding and/or support in community, and
- The necessary and appropriate disability related supports needed to fully participate in the community.

**WE, INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, call on all Governments throughout Canada to take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of their right to full inclusion and participation in the community by:**

- Acknowledging that institutions for persons with disabilities have no place in today's society and placing a moratorium on all admissions to institutions;
- Affirming that the unjustified segregation of individuals with disabilities is discriminatory, and that the provision of community-based services to persons with disabilities is the most appropriate option;
- Supporting the right of all people with disabilities to live in the community as equal citizens; and
- Committing the necessary resources to support the development and provision of quality, comprehensive community-based alternatives to institutional care.

**These Guiding Principles are Endorsed by:**

Name of Endorsing Organization:

Contact Information:

Name of Representative:

Signature:

Date: