Disability Advocates
Empowering Kent County

Impacting the Lives of Individuals and the Community

History
- Serving Kent County since 1981
- Started as Grand Rapids Center for Independent Living
- Centers for Independent Living (CILs) started in the early 1970s, created by persons with disabilities for persons with disabilities
- Ed Roberts - father of the independent living movement
- Over 400 CILs nationwide, 15 in Michigan

Our Vision
We aspire to achieve equal access and opportunity for all persons with disabilities.
We Believe in Empowerment!

Independent Living Philosophy - persons with disabilities have the right to live independently and have the same options as those without disabilities with regard to:

- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Recreation
- Socialization

What Sets Us Apart

- We are who we serve
- We teach leadership skills to persons with disabilities, so that we advocate with people, not for people
- We believe people have the right to make decisions that impact upon the success or failures in their lives

Community Services

- Public transportation advocacy
- Housing accessibility and universal design
- Employer/employee awareness trainings
- Disability awareness training
- Accessibility analyses of public and commercial spaces
- Community organizing training
- Family support, connecting with
Individual Services

- Connecting and referring people to community resources
- Assisting to identify and remove barriers to living independently
- Assessing homes to provide optimal independence and accessibility
- Offering equipment for use from our extensive loan closet
- Advocating for improved housing, accessibility and transportation
- Building skills for employment readiness
- Transitioning individuals from nursing homes to community based living

Information and Referral

- First point of contact
- Resources and referrals
- MI Bridges
- SSI/SSDI
  - By appointment only
- Assistive technology
- Voices for Health
- Contact Jenny at 618-949-1100 ext. 249
Independent Living Guide

- Services
  - Goal Setting
  - Independent Living Plan
  - Community resources
  - Person centered planning
    - Financial stability
    - Housing
    - Transportation
    - Independence Skill building

AND YOUR CHILD IS SUPPOSED TO MAKE THESE DECISIONS?

Family Support and Services

- Services
  - ASSIST
  - GUIDE
  - EMPOWER
  - SUPPORT
Family Support and Services

- EMPOWERMENT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY
- SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PWD

Family Support and Services

- 4 PARTS

Family Support and Services

- PART 1
  - PWD/Family as a whole = Main focus
  - Financial = SS/FS/Medicaid
  - Social = Friends/activities
  - Self-Determination
  - Education/CLS/HH

- PART 2
  - AGENCIES
    - Collaboration
    - Agencies of DD/Family expertise
    - DAKC working together
Family Support and Services

PART 3
Presentations/Training/workshops
- How to navigate the system
- How to make knowledgeable decisions
- Educating the community

PART 4
HOUSING
- Finding the right one for you
- Group Homes
- AFC's
- Independent living
- What do they do well?

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Visit our Website at www.dalco.us
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