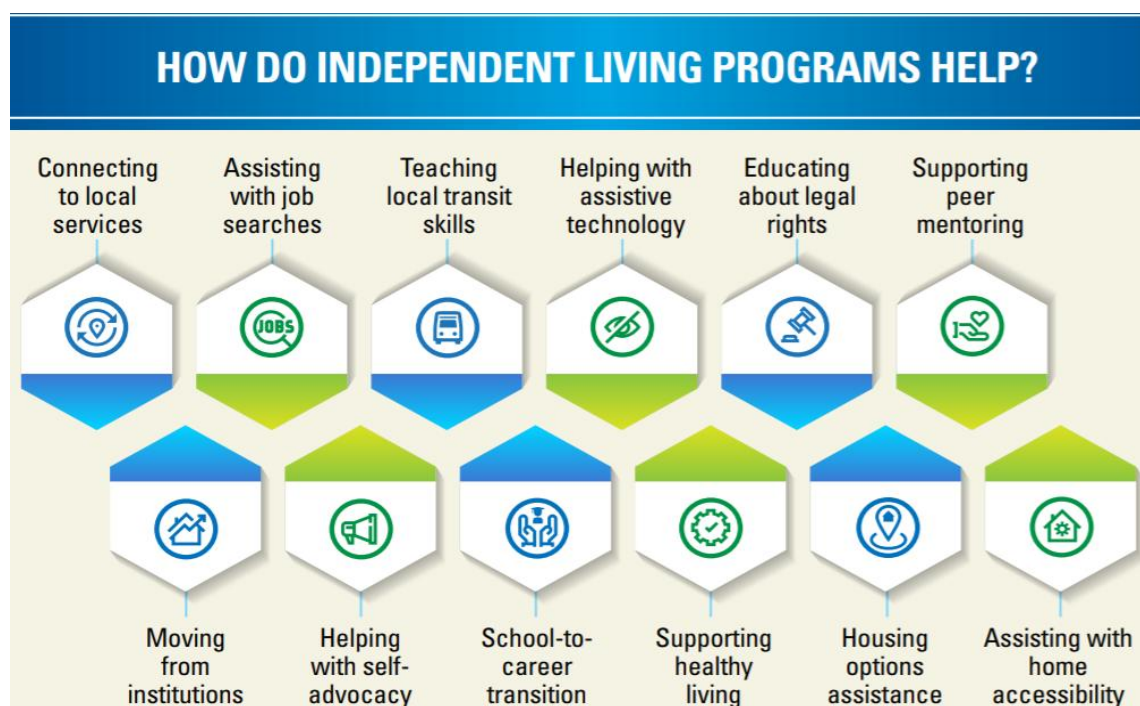




Independent Living



Source: Figure 1:Source: Administration of Community Living

Improved quality of life, self-supporting decision-making, and potential cost savings are just a few of the many advantages to independent living. Born out of the belief that people with disabilities are the most knowledgeable about their own needs and issues, this movement has generated life-changing opportunities for millions of individuals nationwide.

Q: What is the independent living philosophy?

Simply stated, the independent living philosophy follows that people with disabilities should have the same civil rights, options, and control over their life choices as everyone else. Deriving from the deinstitutionalization effort during the civil rights movement in the 1960s, this social and political initiative has generated a shift in culture and values to develop more rights, freedoms and independence for people living with disabilities. Today, independent living initiatives dramatically

improve life for individuals living with a full range of disabilities by focusing on supporting choices, control and community engagement opportunities.

Q: Can I ever live independently again?

For many, the benefits of making the transition from a nursing home back into the community certainly outweigh the challenges. Often, the biggest challenge to transitioning out of a nursing home is not knowing you have a choice. In 1999, the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decision in the *Olmstead v. L.C. (Olmstead)* case found that, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), people with disabilities have a qualified right to receive state-funded supports and services in the community rather than institutions. Centers for independent living offer assistance, resources and training to help ease the transition to independent living. See ACL's list of CILs and SILCs by state (<https://acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks/centers-independent-living>).

Q: What is a Center for Independent Living (CIL)?

Funded by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, there are more than 350 community-based, cross-disability Centers for Independent Living located nationwide, in all U.S. states and territories. Designed and operated by people living with disabilities, these nonresidential programs are run by private nonprofit agencies and offer support, information, and advocacy to ensure everyone has equal access to make their own decisions about where and how they want to live, work and take part in their community.

Q: What resources or services does a CIL offer to help me return to the community?

All CILs are tasked to provide information and referrals, independent living skills training, peer counseling, individual and systems advocacy, and community transition services. Many centers also offer a wealth of other services to improve quality of life and assist with employment and personal and community independence, such as psychological counseling, assistance in securing housing, personal assistance services, transportation referral and assistance, physical therapy, mobility training, rehabilitation technology, and adaptive sports and lifestyle programs.

Q: What is a State Independent Living Council (SILC)?

Each state and U.S. territory is required to maintain a statewide independent living council which works with the state's CILs to develop a State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). The SPIL outlines the needs and priorities to improve the state's independent living services through a unified vision and goals.

Sources: Administration for Community Living

Need to talk to someone?

Our Information Specialists are available to answer your questions.

Call toll-free 1-800-539-7309 Mon-Fri, 7 am-8 pm ET.

Or [schedule a call](#) or [ask a question online](#).

Resources for Independent Living**Administration for Community Living (ACL)**

<https://acl.gov/>

Washington, DC 20201

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services created the ACL to work on supports that will enable people with disabilities and seniors to live in the community.

Administration for Community Living: Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs)

<https://acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks/statewide-independent-living-councils>

Each state has a SILC.

Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL)

<https://www.april-rural.org/>

P.O. Box 203

Plumerville, AR 72127

Phone: 501-753-3400

The Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) is a national grassroots, non-profit membership organization consisting of over 260 members from centers for independent living, their satellites and branch offices, state-wide independent living councils, other organizations and individuals concerned with the independent living issues of people with disabilities living in rural America.

Center for Independent Living

<https://www.thecil.org/>

3075 Adeline Street, Suite 100

Berkeley, CA 94703

Phone: 510-841-4776

Email: info@cilberkeley.org

The Center for Independent Living in Berkeley, CA was the first center of its kind and remains a model for other ILCs across the country. The Center supports people with disabilities in active community participation and self-determination.

Independent Living Institute: Independent Living Centers, Grouped by Country

<https://www.independentliving.org/links/links-independent-living-centers.html>

Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU)

<https://www.ilru.org/>

1333 Moursund
Houston, TX 77030
Phone/TTY: 713-520-0232
E-mail: ilru@ilru.org

ILRU is a national center for information, training and technical assistance in independent living. They offer a directory by state of each independent living center in the U.S.

National Council on Independent Living (NCIL)

<https://ncil.org/>

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A membership organization that advances the independent living philosophy and advocates for human rights and services for people with disabilities to further full integration and participation in society.

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