



Canadian Association
for Community Living

Association canadienne pour
l'intégration communautaire

Diversity includes. On se ressemble.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CANADIANS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES ARE STILL POOR, UNEMPLOYED AND EXCLUDED

Parliament Hill, Ottawa, ON - December 3, 2009 - Today in Canada, the overwhelming majority of Canadians with intellectual disabilities share a common experience. It is an experience of poverty, unemployment and exclusion. It is an experience that contradicts the knowledge and evidence on how to support persons with disabilities; it is an experience that is created by the systems and structures that aren't making the grade. Today, on Parliament Hill, on International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) releases its stark report card on the status of Canadians with intellectual disabilities.

The 2009 National Report Card on Inclusion of Canadians with Intellectual disabilities highlights and examines how Canada measures up on three of a ten-point, ten-year Agenda, which was designed to guide Canadians and governments into building a more inclusive Canada. The three objectives explored in the report card are: Closing Institutions (Deinstitutionalization), Eradicating Poverty and Achieving Employment Equality for Canadians with Intellectual Disabilities.

“This Report Card makes clear that working-age Canadians with intellectual disabilities continue to be among the poorest of the poor in Canada.” said Michael Bach, Executive Vice-President of CACL. “It also makes clear, that it doesn't have to be this way. We have numerous examples of adults with intellectual disabilities living good lives with economic security – when they have the supports, valuing relationships in their lives, the employment opportunities, and the income assistance which make belonging in Canadian communities and workplaces possible. We need governments, the private sector and community leaders to step up, and make the difference. We're here to help and lead the way, but we can't do it alone.”

The future of an inclusive Canada begins with recognition that people with developmental disabilities are still not treated equally. Change is needed to eradicate this shortfall, and the future of a healthy Canadian society begins with acknowledgement that those living with a disability experience exclusion, isolation and poverty.

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About the Canadian Association for Community Living

The Canadian Association for Community Living is a Canada-wide association of family members and others working to advance the human rights and inclusion of persons of all ages who have an intellectual disability.

Founded in 1958 by parents of children with intellectual disabilities who wanted supports and services within the community instead of in institutions, CACL has become one of Canada's ten largest charitable organizations, and has grown into a federation of 10 provincial and three territorial associations comprising of 420 local associations and over 40,000 members.

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