



# Cracks in the Foundation: Gaps, Barriers, and Red Tape

## Different Housing Options

- Lived on their own and then moved into a group home.
- Married and had just moved into a larger apartment to accommodate their spouse's physical disability.
- Lived in a shared-family home with people who were there to support her, but that she now lived on her own.
- Lived in an institution for 18 years. From there they moved into a group home and for the last 25 years, they have been living on their own with support.

# Challenges and Barriers

- The number one barrier is the cost – rent is going up, not down.
- The right supports are not there to help people make those decisions.
- People don't have the right support in place to allow them to try the type of housing situation that works best for them.
- Physical disability adds to the challenge of finding the right housing.
- The search for housing can be overwhelming – where do you start?

## Challenges and Barriers

- Because there are less options, self-advocates also often end up living with people they don't really know or always feel comfortable with.
- Another challenge is the rules or policies that people often face. They don't always seem fair.
- For example, having a pet or not allowing alcohol.

## Challenges and Barriers

- Sometimes the challenge is the neighbourhood. People want to live where they feel comfortable, safe, and where stores and services are easy to access.
- “Not in my back yard”. This means that neighbours have said they don’t want people with disabilities living next door. Neighbours have pushed to change zoning laws in their community.

## Solutions to Challenges

- Make smaller adjustments so that people can live in their home as long as possible.

For example, working with someone and maybe changing the environment a little bit so that they feel comfortable.

- Let people choose where they want to live and help them get the right supports in place.

## Solutions to Challenges

- We need more people who know the system and know how to support you.
- Talk to your city counsellors – get elected officials involved.
- Build more homes for people that don't have lots of money. Build houses that we can afford.
- We have to voice our needs and speak out.

## What does inclusive housing mean to you?

- It means that you can live in a in a housing where you feel calm and full wherever you are.
- It means that people have the right to live in good housing, as much as anybody else who could afford it.
- I think it means that people could feel good about themselves and their choices.
- Maybe that it's housing they can afford. And maybe they have a little bit of money left over after paying rent and all the bills.



# What does inclusive housing mean to you?

- It's not just about having a house or an apartment. The community they live in needs to meet their needs.
- Inclusive housing should be where the person chooses to live - in their community that they would like to be.
- And they should be able to make those decisions with the right supports in place.
- if a person chooses to live in a smaller environment instead of a big group home, then they should have that option if it's available to them.

# What does inclusive housing mean to you?

- Inclusive housing means that I don't have to answer to anybody. I just come and go. And you know, if I want to mingle with people, I will. If not, I won't. And it just gives me the opportunity of being myself and being happy.
- It means people can have friends over when they want parties and come and go as they please. They don't really have to answer to anyone.

## *Heidi's Story:*

Heidi is from the East Coast and her first living situation as an adult wasn't inclusive. She was living with a family who were there to support her.

She wanted to find another place to live and thought about moving on her own.



# *Heidi's Story:*

Someone told her “I don't think you can ever live alone.” And Heidi said, “Well, I'm going to prove you wrong because I know I can live on my own.” And she did.

Heidi was able to move out on her own after finding housing that she could afford. It wasn't easy but she had people in her life who believed in her and supported her. They helped find the right housing for her.





# *Heidi's Story:*

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- This is a quote from Heidi:
  - “I'm very fortunate and very lucky, because I can live independently... and I've been here for 20 years. I have my own 2-bedroom apartment. I can have people in, I do my own cooking and my own the cleaning...
  - It just allows me to have my independence and make my decisions. My own decisions, for myself.”