



Saskatchewan Voice Of People With Disabilities Inc.



SELF HELP GUIDE TO INDEPENDENT LIVING

A booklet designed to assist people with disabilities and their families in accessing services and providing information for becoming independent.

OUR HISTORY

☞ In 1973, the Saskatchewan Voice of the Handicapped was formed following “A Voice of Our Own” conference in Moose Jaw.

☞ In 1995 our name changed to Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities

☞ The Voice was founding member of the Council of Canadians. As adults and citizens we can and do speak for ourselves

given the opportunity

☞ Traditionally, others have spoken for us and defined our needs from their perspectives.

OUR GOALS

☞ Promote the full and equal inclusion of people with disabilities in society.

☞ Promote a positive image of the abilities of people with disabilities promote independent living principles including quality of life, consumer control, dignity and respect

Acknowledgements

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Editors: Debra Klashinsky, Michael Huck and Bev Duncan

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Self Help Guide to Independent Living

I HAVE A DISABILITY . . . NOW WHAT???

About this project: This project was initiated by the Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities as a tool to assist people with disabilities to answer the question: **now what?** Unfortunately many specific questions can not be addressed, however the major areas of concern within the disabled communities in Saskatchewan will be discussed.

A special thank you is extended to all the groups and individuals with disability concerns who participated in the focus groups that were conducted across the province. Your input was invaluable to the development of this guide.

Special recognition is given to the South Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre for their invaluable resources and time given to this project. Their assistance and dedication to this project was greatly appreciated.

About the authors: This project has a very special meaning for the authors as they both live with disabilities. They were born and raised in Saskatchewan and have a strong passion for disability issues in the province.

Anita Powless is a single parent of two children who lives with Multiple Sclerosis. After her diagnosis she attended the University of Regina and completed her degree in Psychology. She now works for the South Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre and the Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities. She is highly involved within the disabled community in advocacy and volunteer work and has a special place in her heart for the Multiple Sclerosis Society. She is a member of the Regina Chapter Board of Directors with the MS Society (Public Education) and facilitates a support group for people with Multiple Sclerosis.

Diana Rempel is also a person with multiple disabilities as a result of an auto accident in 1994. She obtained her honours degree in Psychology at the University of Regina in 1998 and has been actively involved in the disabled community for several years. Diana is a member of the Regina Chapter Board of Directors with the MS Society (Social Action) and is an advocate for people with disabilities.

What is a Disability?

Various definitions of disability

Impairment

Impairment is the medical term where an injury, disease or other disorder produces a reduction in an individual's physical or mental function.

Disability

A disability is any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.

Handicap

A handicap is not a condition but a barrier in the environment. It is a description of the difficulty that results from the impairment or disability.

An IMPAIRMENT is what causes a disability; the DISABILITY is in the individual; the HANDICAP is the environment, which limits inclusion.

Common Types of Disabilities

Mobility Disabilities

Persons who have difficulty with agility; balance; co-ordination; fine and gross motor skills; range of motion; endurance; strength or reflexes.

Hearing Disabilities

Persons who are deaf; late deafened or hard of hearing.

Visual Disabilities

Persons who are nearsighted, farsighted, have blurred vision or poor focusing ability.

Communication Disabilities

Persons with difficulty in speaking, expressing; understanding ideas.

Intellectual Disabilities

Persons whose intellectual age is less than their chronological age and may have difficulty adapting to their environment or lack social skills.

Learning Disabilities

Persons with difficulty in one or more of the following areas: attention, co-ordination, calculation, memory, spelling, social competence, reasoning, writing, reading, communication or emotional maturation.

Mental Illness

Mental Illnesses take many forms and can also be referred to as psychiatric disorders. Some psychiatric disorders are schizophrenia, mood disorders, personality disorders, anxiety disorders, eating disorders and organic brain disorders.

Environmental Disabilities

Persons who have environmental sensitivities such as allergies, sensitivity to light, chemicals, perfumes, etc.

Causes of Disabilities

Disabilities can be caused by a number of factors. Some of the more common causes are:

☞ Injuries	☞ Illnesses
☞ Progressive Diseases	☞ Transferable Diseases
☞ Trauma at or before birth	☞ Genetics
☞ Ageing	☞ Environmental Conditions

Did you know?

- ☞ Approximately 20% (1 in 5) of Saskatchewan residents have a disability
- ☞ Nationally, 15.5% (4.2 million) of the population have a disability
- ☞ Nationally, 7% of children under the age of 14 have a disability
- ☞ It is expected that the number of people with disabilities will double over the next 25 years
- ☞ Only 48% of working aged people with disabilities are employed compared to 73% of able-bodied people
- ☞ Approximately 12.9% of women in Canada have a disability and more than 50% of these women earn less than \$5 000 annually
- ☞ Approximately 80% of people considered disabled have invisible disabilities

What is Independent Living ?

The goal of Independent Living (IL) is for people with disabilities (consumers) to control their lives and live independently in their communities. IL stresses the consumer's right

to make decisions relating to their lives. The consumer's disability is not emphasized; what are emphasized are the types of supports the consumer needs to succeed in their environment.

The Independent Living movement is based on the theory that if a person is given the proper support services, accessible environments, access to reliable information and the opportunity to learn skills for daily living, people with disabilities can actively participate in all aspects of society.

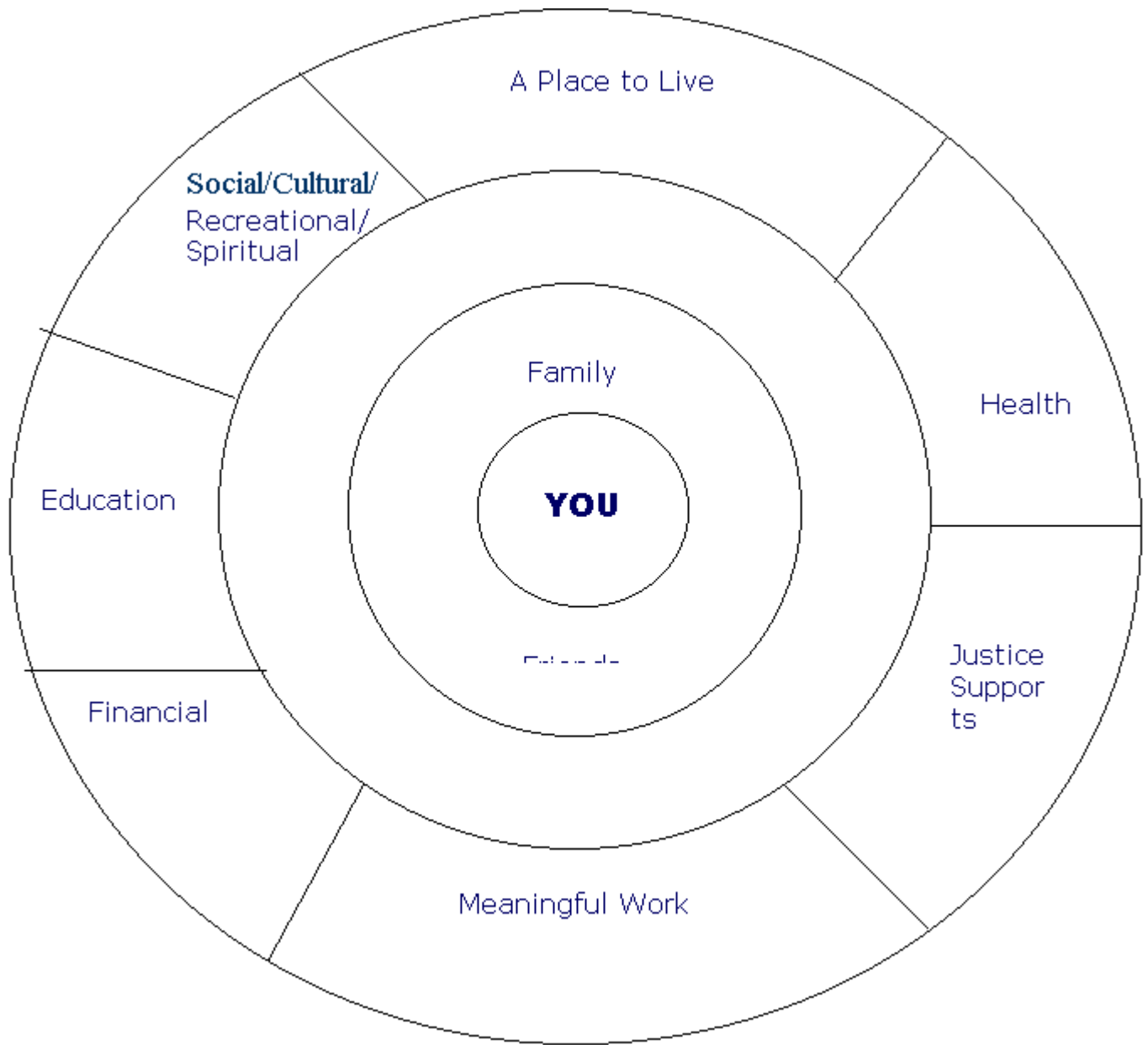
The logic behind independent living is that people with disabilities are the experts in knowing what their needs are. Through the independent living philosophy they are able to find solutions to problems surrounding disability issues. The Independent Living Model is designed to adapt the environment to meet the needs of the individual as opposed to changing the person to fit the environment.

The IL Movement uses the term "consumer" to describe a person with a disability.

Consumer – One who selects and has decision making control over services. They should be able to select, use or decline services on the basis of their own needs and preferences (or the quality of services).

Based on consumers interests, needs, and personal decisions, inclusion in the community is to the consumer's desired level. Supports may be used to make up for deficits in each consumer's environment so he or she can successfully be included in the community..

Tools to achieve Independent Living Basic Needs and Supports



“YOU” have the world in your hands!

You are the centre of your basic needs and supports...

- ☛ “you” have the right to make decisions
- ☛ “you” have the right to make mistakes

- ☞ “you” have the right to dignity and respect
- ☞ “you” have the right to be included in the community
- ☞ “you” have the right to a place to live
- ☞ “you” have the right to education
- ☞ “you” have the right to meaningful employment
- ☞ “you” have the right to take risks
- ☞ “you” have the right to justice
- ☞ “you” have the right to equality
- ☞ **“YOU” HAVE RIGHTS!!!**

WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

Discrimination is the action taken against others based on stereotypes and prejudices. It denies people benefits and opportunities that others enjoy like housing or employment – areas that are essential to quality of life.

A **stereotype** is a generalization that defines a group of people based only on what one member of the group says or does.

Prejudice is a thought or attitude – usually negative – about a whole group of people. It’s a pre-judgement based on stereotypes we create with inaccurate information.

Did you know - it is against the law for someone to discriminate against you in?

- ☞ Employment
- ☞ Education

Publications

Public Services (restaurants, stores, hotels, government services etc.)

Contracts

Housing

If you think you have been discriminated against, you may be able to file a complaint with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. For more details about your rights contact:

The Human Rights Commission
3rd floor – 1942 Hamilton Street

Regina, SK

(306) 787-2530

Toll free 1800- 667-8577

This information is located in the blue pages of your phone book under Government of
Saskatchewan

“Your” Rights are Guaranteed Under the Law •

THE SASKATCHEWAN HUMAN RIGHTS CODE:

Promotes and protects an individual’s dignity and equal rights – that is the goal of The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code. It is the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission’s job to discourage and eliminate discrimination against everyone under provincial jurisdiction.

THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

What is the Canadian Human Rights Act?

The Canadian Human Rights Act is a law passed by Parliament in 1977 to prohibit discrimination in employment and services within federal jurisdiction. For example, it covers services and employment matters concerning banks, telephone companies, airlines, railroads and the federal government. It also prohibits some forms of hate messages

For more information about the **Canadian Human Rights Commission** please contact their Prairie Regional office at:

Telephone: (204) 983-2189

TTY: (204) 983-2882

Family and Friends

Your family and friends are an important part of your *basic needs* and *supports*. Include your family and friends in all aspects of your life. It is okay to confide in and ask for help when you need it. Share how you feel with your supports so they are able to understand what you are going through. It is important to feel loved and have a sense of belonging.

Keep building on your relationships, stay involved and keep your family and friends informed. Make new friends...you can do this by joining a support group, getting involved with community activities and joining a club.

Services for Children with Disabilities

What to do if I suspect my child has a disability?

Act on it immediately. Start with your family doctor or pediatrician. They can help you make the right decisions regarding your child's care or treatment. If they recommend further investigation -- follow up on it!

Once you have a diagnosis, remember you are not alone. There are many places to go for help. Ask a medical social worker for a list of community resources that are good for your child. There are social workers at Wascana Rehabilitation Centre if you're accessing services through the children's program.

There are many peer support groups for parents who have children with disabilities.

Hint: libraries have an extensive and updated list. Call your local library for the directory of Community Services.

Depending on the nature of your child's disability here are some good places to start.

Early Childhood Intervention Program (E.C.I.P.)

What is E.C.I.P.?

A home-based early childhood intervention program which is designed to benefit those families with children ranging in age from birth to five years who are:

Developmentally delayed

Visually impaired

Hearing impaired

At risk for delay

Mentally disabled

Physically disabled

Program Services

Individual program co-ordination for each child by the family and Early Interventionist;

- ☞ Demonstration of various teaching methods for the family to stimulate the child's development
- ☞ Regular home visits to encourage total family involvement
- ☞ Provision of reading materials to families who wish to learn more about their child's disability, and how to improve their teaching and parenting skills
- ☞ Assistance in the co-ordination of supplementary community and government services
- ☞ Toy/equipment/information library
- ☞ Assistance in the organization of parent support groups and training workshops

For more information please contact the Early Childhood Intervention Program nearest you.

Socialization Communication Education Program (SCEP) For young children and their families.

What does SCEP do?

Daily Remedial Group Sessions for Pre-schoolers

- ☞ Ongoing assessment
- ☞ Program adaptation
- ☞ Socialization activities
- ☞ Communication based

Individualized Remedial Sessions for Pre-schoolers

- ☞ Therapeutic play

- ☛ Communication

- ☛ Pre-academic/academics

Training and Support for Enrolled Families

- ☛ Weekly parents group

- ☛ Individual conferences

- ☛ Parent services co-ordinator

Assisted Transition to Regular Classrooms

- ☛ Planned, supervised visits

Specialized Assistance for Adoptions and Foster Care Placements

SCEP Centre's Day Care Friends Program

- ☛ Hands-on training in SCEP methods for day care workers

Education/Training for the Community

- ☛ Practicum placements

- ☛ Workshops/seminars

- ☛ Speakers

How do I get more information?

Contact:

SCEP Centre

3105 4th Avenue North

Regina, SK

S4R 0V2

Phone: (306) 543-6944

Fax: (306) 545-0199

Support/Self Help Groups

Support groups are generally based on the peer support model. Meaning it is run by and attended by people who have common disabilities, goals, concerns, and share similar interests. Most disabilities have some sort of support system in place either through an organization, society, chapter or association. **If you are looking for some type of supports for your disability issues, concerns, or just wishes to meet others who share similar experiences regarding your disability:**

☞ Your first step would be to look in your telephone book under the name of your disability and see if there is an established organization that suits your needs. The organization would be able to let you know if there is a group already in place that you could check out.

☞ To find out more about your disability, if it is not listed in the phone book, check in the Resource Directory at your library or check out the Internet to see if there is a group or organization that exists in your area.

- ☞ There are also cross disability agencies, such as the Independent Living Centres, Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities, that would either include you in their services or refer you to an agency that is more individualized to your needs.
- ☞ Ask your doctor, health care provider, or medical social worker if he/she is aware of support groups or services available.
- ☞ One option might be to start your own group. People who see the need to start a support group in their area often establish groups.
- ☞ **Note**** there is information in the library about self-help groups and how they work if you are interested in starting your own group. Just ask your librarian to help you find what you are looking for and you are on your way.

For more information or assistance finding an agency that can help you please contact The South Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre (Regina), Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities (Regina) or North Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre (Saskatoon).

Education -- Thinking about going back to school???

Undecided and confused about what you want to do with your life???

Steps to take::

- ☞ Talk about your options with friends and family
- ☞ See a Career and Employment Counsellor - these can be found at any educational institution or an Independent Living Centre
- ☞ Vocational testing – there are many tests to find out what your interests and abilities are. Your counsellor will be able to help you with this

Now that you have decided:

- ☞ Educational institutions have different entrance requirements

- ☞ Once you have been accepted, Contact a vocational counsellor for advice on classes

- ☞ Paying for your education??? Paying for your education is your responsibility. When you and your family cannot pay the total costs of your education, you should look for other sources of assistance. To assist you, call the **Career Information Hotline** and request a copy of Saskatchewan Scholarships, Bursaries, Awards and Loans. Apply for any non-repayable types of assistance you qualify for.

- ☞ Contact the school you would like to attend and request a list of their scholarships and bursaries. Some awards may be based on scholastic achievement; others may be based on financial need.

- ☞ There are companies and unions that have programs to help pay the costs of post-secondary education for employees, members and/or their children.

- ☞ CD Place Check foundations, religious organizations, fraternities or sororities, and town or city clubs that provide scholarships. Include community organizations and civic groups such as Kiwanis, Chamber of Commerce, Royal Canadian Legion, etc.

- ☞ Find out if organizations connected with your field of interest provide assistance (for example, chiropractic associations, medical associations and engineering organizations).

- ☞ If you are a First Nations person, contact Indian and Northern Affairs Canada or your Band/Tribal Council for information on possible funding.

**Contact
Career Information Hotline**

1-800-597-8278

*****NOTE*****

Saskatchewan Access Awareness provides a \$1 000 Educational Scholarship. For more information and an application contact:

Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities

Phone/TTY 569-3111 or Toll Free: 1-877-569-3111

Email: voice@saskvoice.com

Website: www.saskvoice.com

Financial Help

Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD)

What is EAPD?

The EAPD Program provides funding to assist adults with disabilities to prepare for, secure, and maintain employment. Various supports are offered, including training-on-the-job, vocational and work assessments, psycho-educational assessments, job coaching support for employers and disability related costs in a wide variety of post-secondary education and training programs.

When required, income support is provided through Student Financial Assistance or Provincial Training Allowance. EAPD Funds are not available to cover the normal costs of going to school, including living costs, tuition, books and transportation.

There have been recent changes to the EAPD program, which place a limit on where the funding is allocated.

For more information, or to request an application form, contact one of the following agencies or a local Canada-Saskatchewan Career Employment Services office.

You can also call the Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services (CSCES) Career Information Hotline at 1-800-597-8278

Saskatchewan Provincial Training Allowanceii<![if !supportFootnotes]>[12]<![endif]>

The Provincial Training Allowance (PTA) is funding to assist with the costs of living for low income adult clients enrolled in basic education and bridging programs. In addition, the PTA provides assistance for Short Skills Training of 4 to 11 weeks.

Allowances are based on an individual's status. For example: Single living with parents, single, living away from parents, Married, with or without children

- ☞ Single client living away from parents - \$480 per month;
- ☞ Single client living with parents - \$300 per month;
- ☞ Married client (no children) -\$885 per month;
- ☞ Child allowance (added for each dependent child) - \$165 per month;
- ☞ Single parents living away from parents - \$720 per month (plus \$165/month for each dependent child);
- ☞ Client's with gross assets totalling \$150,000 or more are *not* eligible for the PTA.
- ☞ Supplementary health coverage will be provided for clients who qualify for the PTA.
- ☞ Clients with special needs or extenuating circumstances whose needs are not met by the PTA may apply for social assistance in addition to the PTA.
- ☞ Clients coming to the PTA from Social Assistance who are commencing studies (i.e. first year of training) will be provided with \$150 start-up allowance from Social Services.

The Provincial Training Allowance is different from Social Assistance Program

For more information about PTA contact:

Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training at:

1-800-597-8278

Student Loans:ⁱⁱⁱ^{<![if !supportFootnotes]>[13]<![endif]>}

When applying for a student loan it can be confusing. Remember that there are different types of loans. Students are **automatically** assessed for assistance under the **Canada and Saskatchewan Student Loan Programs when they apply**.

STUDENT LOANS ARE AVAILABLE FOR FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STUDENTS

For information regarding criteria and admission requirements contact your nearest Student Loan Centre which can be found in the phone book in the blue pages under The Government of Saskatchewan. **The toll free number is 1-800-597-8278.**

A brief overview^{iv}^{<![if !supportFootnotes]>[14]<![endif]>}

Programs to Address Special Needs		
Special Incentive Plan	SK	Saskatchewan has in place a Special Incentive Plan (SIP) which provides additional provincial assistance above the "regular" Student Loan limits to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• single parents;• Non-Status Indian or Métis persons; and• Northerners (including non-Aboriginal and Indian [First Nations] persons)
Permanent Disability Benefit	Fed	Students unable to repay Canada Student Loans because of disability may be eligible to have the federal government pay it on their behalf.
Educational Assistance for	Joint	Through this joint program, with costs shared equally between the federal government and the province,

Persons with Disabilities (EAPD) Program		financial assistance is provided to students who are disabled and vocationally handicapped to attend training/education programs.
Special Opportunity Grants for Students with Permanent Disabilities	Joint	This federal/provincial study grant provides a grant to a limited number of Saskatchewan students each year to cover exceptional expenses directly related to the students' disabilities to a maximum of \$7,000 per student (\$5,000 federal, \$2,000 province).
Special Opportunity Grants for Part-time Students	Joint	Part-time students with demonstrated financial need may qualify for a grant of up to \$2,000 (\$1,200 from the federal government and \$800 from the Government of Saskatchewan)

The following are examples of exceptional education-related costs, which may be covered:

Services:

- ☞ Note-taker
- ☞ Tutor
- ☞ Reader
- ☞ Interpreter (oral, sign)
- ☞ Specialized transportation

Equipment:

- ☞ Technical aides such as Braille or computer
- ☞ Alternative formats such as large print, Braille or audio cassette reading materials

For more information contact:

Human Resources Development Canada

P. O. Box 2090, Station D, Ottawa ON

K1P 6C6

Telephone: (819) 994-1844

TTY Line: (819) 994-1218

Fax: (810) 953-6057

Another resource for disabled students is the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS). They can advise you of your rights and opportunities that are available for students with disabilities. They can be contacted at:

4th Level Unicentre
 Carleton University
 Ottawa, Canada K1S 5B6
 (613) 526-8008

Now that you are finished school...Repaying the STUDENT LOANS....

Be advised...you may qualify for the following programs:

Debt Management Programs		
Loan Forgiveness	Sask	Students "with high need" may be eligible to have a portion of their student loans forgiven when they successfully complete each period of their post-secondary study program
Loan Remission	Sask	Students receiving benefits under the Special Incentive Plan (SIP) are eligible for Loan Remission benefits (additional loan forgiveness) beyond Loan Forgiveness benefits
Canada Interest Relief Program	Fed	Students unable to cover Canada Student Loan payments without hardship may be eligible for the Canada Interest Relief Plan
Saskatchewan Interest Relief Plan	Sask	Students unable to cover Saskatchewan Student Loan payments without hardship may be eligible for the

		Saskatchewan Interest Relief Plan
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For more information regarding these programs telephone 1-800-597-8278.

Knowledge is power.... Ask for the booklet that outlines these programs in more detail

Did you know...

Special Needs Services are available through your educational institution?

Some accommodations you can request are as follows:

- ☞ Extended exam time
- ☞ Extensions for assignments
- ☞ Separate rooms to write exams
- ☞ Note-takers
- ☞ Enlarged print for textbooks
- ☞ Access to specialized equipment (i.e. Dragon Dictate)
- ☞ Medical Deferrals
- ☞ Special needs parking

=====

For more information contact the educational institution's main switchboard for the contact name and phone number of the Special Needs Advisor

Employment

When looking for a job here are a few hints:

- ☞ Look in your local newspaper under the classifieds or
career section

☞ Research the Internet

A useful website to check out is “www.sasknetwork.gov.sk.ca”

☞ Use Job Banks (in various locations, for example, use the computerized job bank at the Canada Employment Centre)

☞ Networking (friends, family, Community Based Organizations, etc.)

☞ Use the available resources in your community (i.e. Community Based Organizations that incorporate Employment Services for people with disabilities). They can help you not only with finding a job but also with resume writing, interview skills, transportation arrangements, and appropriate accommodations. For example:

The South Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre provides an employment service for people with disabilities who wish to enter the competitive job market. The Job Developers will work with the consumer to break down barriers, make work place accommodations and provide ongoing supports to both consumers and employers.

NEW FUNDS TO HELP PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FIND JOBS

The provincial government has allocated an additional \$1.3 million to help people with disabilities find jobs. “The goal of this new funding is to help people with disabilities find permanent, sustainable employment,” Minister Responsible for Disability Issues Harry Van Mulligen said.

One million dollars of the new funding will go to the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) program provided by Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training. This program provides funding to assist adults with

disabilities to prepare for, find and keep jobs. A variety of supports are offered including on the job training, job coaching, support for employers and coverage of disability related costs in a wide variety of post-secondary education and training programs. “We are helping people with the disability related costs associated with post-secondary education and training,” Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Minister Glenn Hagel noted. “This will help create the opportunities people need to participate fully in the workplace and society.”

An additional \$300,000 from Saskatchewan Social Services will be used to help people with intellectual disabilities who are working in sheltered workshops find sustainable employment within the community.

Interested in starting your own business?

Check with your local Community Based Organization or Independent Living Centre to see if they offer an Entrepreneurial Program. v<![if !supportFootnotes]>[15]<![endif]>

They may help with:

- ☞ Developing a customized business plan
- ☞ Mentoring and counselling
- ☞ Training in business development
- ☞ One on one assistance
- ☞ Identifying needs for specialized equipment and identifying where to acquire it
- ☞ Access to capital

When applying for a job...To Tell or not to Tell???

DISCLOSURE

This is entirely up to you. As you know it is illegal for a potential employer to ask if you have a disability. However, in some cases where the job is being advertised under the Employment Equity Program it may be a benefit for you to disclose.

Be aware of your rights...

Inappropriate Interview Questionsvi<![if !supportFootnotes]>[16]<![endif]>

Under The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, employers are not allowed to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, colour, sex, marital status, **disability**, age, nationality, ancestry, and place of origin, family status, sexual orientation or receipt of public assistance. All areas of employment, including the hiring process, must be **free of such discrimination**. Therefore, employers **cannot** ask questions about any of the above topics. **Questions should relate to your skills, abilities, and experience. And relate to the requirements of that specific job/position.**

Stop this from happening to you.... KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

If you are asked inappropriate questions

Reply with an answer that relates to the job and not the personal information. For

example:

If asked whether you have, or plan to have children,

If asked whether your age may interfere with your ability to do the job, you could

respond "**My past experience, including ..., has prepared me for this type of work**".

If an employer persists in asking inappropriate questions, or if you feel you were discriminated against based on the factors listed above, **contact the Saskatchewan or the Canadian Human Rights Commission for advice.**

Accommodating People with Disabilities in Employment

If you have disclosed your disability an employer may ask:

" What accommodations could be made which would allow you to do the work adequately?"

If there are accommodations that could be made by the employer, there is a legal obligation to do so, unless the accommodation would cause undue hardship for the employer.

"Accommodations" should

- ☞ providing technical aids or services such as tape recorders, Braille computer accessories, sign language translators
- ☞ changing job duties, such as exchanging telephone duties for other duties in the case of a speech impairment
- ☞ working flexible hours to allow for therapy or medical appointments
- ☞ job-sharing and job coaching for someone with a psychiatric or learning impairment

Accommodations may also be made during the hiring process:

- ☞ employers may provide information on job openings in Braille, large print, or cassette tapes

- ☞ employers may bring in a sign language interpreter to help interview a hearing impaired applicant

- ☞ "job carving" - employers create a position according to your abilities

Financial Assistance

Social Services

YOUR RIGHTS

The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan is a program that provides social assistance to people in need

- ☞ You have the right to apply for social assistance

- ☞ You have the right to be treated with dignity and respect

- ☞ Social assistance is **not a loan**. When you cannot meet your basic living expenses with your own resources and you are eligible for assistance, you will be **given** the money

- ☞ You have the right to live your life, to make decisions and to accept the services offered. Some decisions may affect your eligibility for assistance but they are your own choices

- ☞ You have the right to all moneys and services allowed by law to meet your needs

- ☞ You have the right to appeal decisions made by your worker

- ☞ You have the right to have your affairs handled with confidentiality

Childless couple	\$125 + 20% of the next \$625	Maximum \$175
Families	\$200*	Maximum \$250

SASKATCHEWAN EMPLOYMENT SUPPLEMENT helps parents with the child-related costs of going to work. The Supplement is provided to parents who receive income from work, self-employment and child or spousal maintenance. To qualify you must have children and a combined income from these sources of over \$125 per month.

TO APPLY FOR THE SUPPLEMENT CALL: 1-888-488-6385

IN REGINA CALL: 787-4723

Did you know...

**You are allowed to have some money on hand or in the bank.
Some of the exemptions you are allowed are as follows:**

- ☞ Earnings exemptions – from wages or a small enterprise
- ☞ Trusteeship fees and honoraria
- ☞ Exemptions for employed persons with disabilities living in residential facilities, such as:

- ☞ Special Care Homes

- ☞ Non-Approved Homes

- ☞ Group Homes

- ☞ Approved Homes

Exemptions for people who operate boarding homes, approved homes

- ☞ Exemptions for people who operate approved family day care facilities

- ☞ Exemptions for dependent school children

- ☞ Once only cash and liquid assets exemption, not exceeding the amount of:
- ☞ \$1,500 for a single recipient
- ☞ \$3,000 for a recipient and one dependent, plus \$500 for each additional depe
- ☞ Mortgage interest reduction plan payments
- ☞ Child Tax Credit
- ☞ Federal Sales Tax Credit

SOCIAL SERVICES BEST-KEPT SECRETS!!!

- ☞ **EXCESS SHELTER COSTS** may be available under special circumstances. For example when an individual requires accessible housing and the rent amount exceeds Social Services basic shelter allowance you may request an increase in shelter allowance. Be aware you may be refused in your initial request, however you have the right to **appeal their decision**.

If you need help with your appeal, contact:

The Welfare Rights Centre

1042 Albert St.

Regina, SK

S4R 2P8

(306) 757-3521

Fax: (306) 565-8836

☞ **SPECIAL DIET ALLOWANCE** is available to those who provide medical documentation regarding their disability and need for high fibre, high protein diets (\$52.75 per month)

☞ **EXTRA ALLOWANCE FOR DISABILITY COSTS** with medical documentation of your disability (\$40.00 per month)

☞ **TRANSPORTATION** (Paratransit) (\$40.00 per month)

☞ **SECURITY DEPOSIT** is guaranteed to the landlord

☞ **MOVING EXPENCES** and assistance may be provided, check with Social Worker

☞ **SPECIAL CLOTHING ALLOWANCE** is available for: medical, employment, and/or rehabilitation reasons

☞ **TRAVEL EXPENSES** are available for medical appointments, educational or rehabilitation reasons. Additional travel expenses may be requested if you need to attend a funeral of an immediate family member

☞ **SPECIAL CARE ALLOWANCE** is allowed on a monthly basis for services such as yard work, carrying water, shovelling snow, etc. Usually those services are available to those who need assistance in maintaining their home and who are either physically or mentally disabled

☞ **HOME CARE SERVICES** costs will be covered to assist persons with disabilities who require assistance with housekeeping, nursing and meals

Canada Pension Plan (CPP)

What is CPP Disability?

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) pays a monthly pension to people who have contributed to the Plan and who are disabled according to CPP legislation. The CPP also pays monthly benefits for their dependent children.

How do I qualify for a disability pension?

To qualify you must:

- have contributed to the CPP for a minimum number of years
- be considered disabled according to CPP legislation
- be between the ages of 18 and 65
- apply in writing

What does “disabled according to CPP legislation” mean?

Your disabling condition can be physical or mental. Under the CPP legislation, your disability must be “severe and prolonged”. “Severe” means your condition prevents you from working regularly at any job, and “prolonged” means your condition is long term or may result in your death.

When do I apply?

You should apply when you believe you have a serious long-term disability that prevents you from working regularly at any job.

How do I apply?

You must apply in writing. If you are unable to apply on your own, another person may apply for you. For an application kit, call free of charge: 1-800-277-9914 English; 1-800-

277-9915 French; TTY: 1-800-255-4786. The kit contains the information and instructions you will need to apply and tells you what documents you need, such as proof of birth. It also includes:

- **application forms** for you and your dependent children
- a **questionnaire** for details of your work history and medical condition
- a **medical report** to be completed by your doctor. If you have more than one doctor choose the one who knows most about your main medical problem
- a **consent form** that CPP may use to get additional information
- a form for you to complete if you reduced or stopped working to look after your children under the age of seven
- You may ask for a kit or assistance at any time

Does CPP pay for vocational rehabilitation?

Yes, if the CPP determines that:

- with a vocational rehabilitation program, you would likely be able to return to work
- you are receiving a CPP disability pension
- you are willing and able to undergo a vocational rehabilitation program
- your medical condition is stable and your doctor approves

Can I also get other disability benefits?

The federal government has disability benefits under other programs as well. You may be able to qualify for:

- Short-term sickness benefits under Employment Insurance, which are paid through Human Resources Development Canada

- Disability pensions from Veterans Affairs Canada paid through the Canadian Pension Commission

All provinces and territories have Workers' Compensation benefits. They may also offer social assistance for persons with disabilities who have low incomes.

You may also be eligible for a disability pension from private insurance through your employer or union.

Disability pensions may be available from another country where you lived and/or worked.

Appealing a Decision

What can I do if I do not understand or I disagree with a CPP decision that affects me?

- If you do not understand a decision you may ask CPP about it

- If you are dissatisfied with a decision you can ask CPP to reconsider it. Your request for reconsideration must be made in writing within 90 days of receiving the decision. If you are still dissatisfied after reconsideration you may appeal

THE SASKATCHEWAN VOICE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HAS PREPARED A CPP APPLICATION GUIDE, APPEALS KIT, FACT SHEETS AND VIDEO THAT CAN BE REQUESTED TO ASSIST YOU IN YOUR APPLICATION AND APPEAL PROCESS

For a kit, please contact the Voice office at:

984 Albert Street

Regina, SK

S4R 2P7

Phone/TTY: 1-877-569-3111

Fax: (306) 569-1889

Email: voice@saskvoice.com

Website: www.saskvoice.com

Justice

Need a lawyer?

Lawyer Referral Services

To assist in finding a lawyer, the Law Society has established a referral service in which you will be given the name and address of a lawyer in your area. The initial fee will not exceed \$25 for the first half-hour.

Telephone: (306) 359-1767

Toll free in Saskatchewan 1-800-667-9886

Don't have the money for a lawyer...

There are some options if you can't afford a lawyer:

- ☛ Discuss alternative fee arrangements with lawyers
- ☛ Look into Small Claims Court option
- ☛ Do your own legal work using standard legal form and information from the public library, stationary stores, and other public services
- ☛ If you are a senior, contact the Law Society about their *Seniors Legal Assistance Service*

☞ You may be eligible for **Legal Aid** - you can get further information from the **Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission**

What can you do to help keep costs down?

- ☞ Be organized whenever you contact your lawyer, both in person and on the phone
- ☞ Phone your lawyer only when necessary
- ☞ You may want to consider writing your lawyer instead of phoning
- ☞ Tell your lawyer everything from the beginning even if you think it makes you look bad. Lawyers work best when they have all the information
- ☞ Keep a journal
- ☞ Ask your lawyer if there is anything you can do to keep the costs down

Family Law Division

<p>Saskatoon 700-224 4th Avenue South</p> <p>Saskatoon, SK</p> <p>S7K 2H6</p> <p>Telephone: (306) 933-5930</p> <p>Fax: (306) 933-5535</p>	<p>Regina 2161 Scarth Street</p> <p>Regina, SK</p> <p>S4P 3V7</p> <p>Telephone: (306) 787-8504</p> <p>Fax: (306) 787-0107</p>
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Court based services associated with the Family Law Division include parent education workshops, medication screening and orientation sessions, supervised access program, custody and access assessments. Self-help kits, informational brochures and further information available for the Local Registrar's offices. The Family Law Division is

available throughout the province. The court deals with family law proceedings, including divorce, custody access, maintenance, division of martial property, child protection, and others.

Mediation Services
Saskatchewan Justice

2151 Scarth Street

Regina, SK

S4P 3V7

Telephone: (306) 787-5747

Fax: (306) 787-0088

Mediation is provided in the following areas: Family Law (custody, access maintenance, division of martial assets/debts, estate issues): Farmer/Lender Disputes under the Saskatchewan Farm Security Act, Farm related Disputes, Civil Law (environmental, commercial, community/neighbourhood, business and family partnership issues).

Victims Services
Saskatchewan Justice

14th Floor 1914 Hamilton Street

Regina, SK

S4P 4V4

Telephone: (306) 787-3500

Fax: (306) 787-0081

Provides funding to internal Justice Victims Services programs and organizations which provide crisis intervention services to victims of crime. Also provides compensation to victims for reasonably incurred expenses. Applications are available for compensation through the Director's office.

Ombudsman Saskatchewan

Investigates complaints, about decisions or actions of the government. They promote fairness in the provision of government services.

Inquiries and Complaints

You may file a complaint about a provincial government department

- ☞ decision or actions

- ☞ failure to act

- ☞ delay in service

Ombudsman receives inquires and accepts complaints about the services and practices of provincial government

<ul style="list-style-type: none">☞ departments☞ agencies☞ crown corporations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☞ boards☞ commissions
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If you have a problem with a provincial government department, commission board, Crown Corporation or agency, first discuss the matter with the agency involved. Often the agency will explain a specific policy or will correct the problem to your satisfaction.

If you follow these suggestions but still cannot resolve a problem with a provincial government agency, call the Ombudsman's office:

<p>Saskatoon 344 3rd Avenue South</p> <p>Saskatoon, SK S7K 2H6</p> <p>1-800-667-9787</p> <p>(306) 933-5500</p> <p>Fax: (306) 933-8406</p>	<p>Regina 150 – 2401 Saskatchewan Drive</p> <p>Regina, SK S4P 3V7</p> <p>1-800-667-7180</p> <p>(306) 787-6211</p> <p>Fax: (306) 787-9090</p>
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Health and Well-being

Your rights as a Patient

Here's what to expect from a doctor:

☞ **As much information as you want.** You have every right to know your diagnosis, prognosis (the doctor's estimate of what may happen), alternate forms of treatment, and your doctor's recommendations and the basis of those recommendations (research studies etc.)

☞ **Time to address questions and concerns.** If your doctor doesn't have time to answer questions, you should be able to call him or her or make another appointment that serves as a question-and-answer period

☞ **Reasonable access.** You and your doctor must decide together what "reasonable" means. Do you need weekly, quarterly, or annual appointments? How much advance booking time do you need to get an appointment

☞ **Participation in the decision-making process.** To do this, you'll have to ask questions and be willing to educate yourself about your illness

☞ **Adequate emergency care and the name of your doctor's substitute.** Who do you see in case of emergency, and when your doctor is sick or on vacation? Is there a substitute doctor? Find out in case you need to see the substitute some day

☞ **Knowing who has access to your health records.** How confidential are your health records? Can your doctor release them to just anyone -- your employer, insurance companies, government authorities? What are your doctor's legal obligations with respect to health records, and what are yours

☞ **Knowing what it costs.** Make sure all appointments, tests and procedures are covered by your province before you consent to anything

☞ **The opportunity to change doctors.** Yes, you can change doctors. If you're unhappy with your current doctor, you have every right to switch. Make sure you arrange for your records to be transferred. A consent form has to be signed by you to have your records transferred to another doctor

☞ **A second opinion or a consultation with a specialist.** If your doctor cannot make an adequate diagnosis, you can insist on a referral to a specialist

☞ **A physically accessible** examining room and equipment

What you should do....

☞ **Full disclosure.** Tell your doctor everything (family or medical history, prescriptions, addictions, allergies, eating disorders, specific symptoms)

☞ **Treat your doctor like a business associate.** If you make an appointment, show up. If you need to cancel, give twenty-four hours notice if possible

☞ **Advance planning.** Plan your visit in advance and think carefully about your symptoms. Hint: write down your symptoms

☞ **Questions and interruptions.** If you do not understand something, ask. Interrupt the doctor if necessary and ask for simpler explanations of what is wrong

☞ **Follow advice and follow through.** Take medications as directed and follow your doctor's advice. If you're experiencing side effects to medication or if your condition has worsened, let the doctor know

☞ **Enough time to make a diagnosis.** Some diagnoses take time

☞ **Room for disagreement.** You may not always agree with your doctor, however take the time to listen

☞ **Professional conduct.** Do not request unusual favours that compromise your doctor's moral beliefs, and do not ask your doctor to do something illegal

Transportation Services

If you have a disability, many communities provide public transportation services that are accessible. **Note:** there are no consistent standards across the province and service will vary from community to community. Check the options are available for you in your community.

Low floor buses are accessible buses with no stairs and have special allocated areas for wheelchairs and scooters. Contact your local city transit office for more information and available routes.

Accessible taxi services may be available in your area. They work the same as regular taxi services and can typically be found in the yellow pages under Taxi. Rates may vary from centre to centre. Rates for accessible taxis are higher than regular taxi service

Saskatchewan Transportation Company (STC) has two accessible buses in the province. They travel to over 300 Saskatchewan Communities. In order to use this service you must have an A131 form or letter from the Abilities Council. It is recommended that you **book 72 hours in advance** and confirm 24 hours prior to departure to ensure that you are guaranteed a seat. You must be at the bus depot 30 minutes in advance. Small buses or vans serve some centres. Accessible buses will be re-routed with proper notice. Please contact STC for more information. **Note:** If you require an attendant, she/he can travel with you at no charge.

STC Medical Travel Passes are available for individuals who must travel for medical treatment(s). This applies to STC schedules only. These passes are non-refundable and non-transferable. Your Saskatchewan Health Services Card must be shown at time of purchase and at time of travel and is valid for 30 days up to and including the expiration date. The cost of this pass is \$53.95 per month and has unlimited use for your medical needs. **Note: If you are receiving Social Assistance you may qualify to have this cost covered. You will require the proper medical documentation and have this approved by your worker**

For More Information contact - **STC Special Needs Coach Service At: 1-800-987-7776.**

Airlines or Air Travel. Check with the airlines and inquire about accessibility.

Some questions you may want to ask are; how much in advance should you make your arrangements with the airline; are there special boarding times; what accommodations are available for people with disabilities; what forms are required; what is the cost for an attendant? (Normally half price)

Disabled Parking Permits may be available in your area. Check with your City/Town Hall for permit information and prices. For example, in Regina the permit cost is \$5.35 per month. This allows an individual to park in a metered parking space for a maximum of three hours without having to plug the metre. In Saskatoon, permits are \$20/year. You can park at city parking meter or you can park in loading zones, for which you do not need a permit. To park in a loading zone, all you need is an accessible placard which you acquire from Saskatchewan Abilities Council or an SGI office.

Note: in order to qualify for these permits you must have a disabled-parking placard.

To obtain a disabled parking placard, applications may be mailed or picked up at the Saskatchewan Abilities Council nearest you. Your doctor must approve and sign your application.

Available accessible housing varies from area to area. Accessible housing in Saskatchewan is limited. Be prepared - waiting lists are long and this is where good planning comes in handy. Don't give up here are a few hints to help you with your search.

Renting

☞ Contact various Community Based Organizations in your area and ask if they have a housing directory with accessible homes

☞ Look in the newspaper

☞ Contact Housing Authorities and Housing Co-ops (put your name on their waiting lists)

Helpful hints when renting a home

☞ Let the landlord or Realtor know you are looking for an accessible home -- tell them exactly what this means for you

☞ Ask him/her if there are any stairs

☞ If you are in a wheelchair ask how wide the doorways and hallways are (be sure the bathroom door is also measured)

☞ Ask if he/she is willing to make modifications (i.e. main floor laundry, chair lifts, ramps, grab bars etc.)

☞ **Inform him/her that they may be eligible for Grants to make these modifications**

For more information about tenancy rights and obligations contact:

Office of the Rentalsman

<p>Southern Office: 5th Floor, 2102 11th Avenue</p> <p>Regina, SK</p> <p>S4P 3V7</p> <p>Telephone: (306) 787-2699</p> <p>Fax: (306) 787-5574</p>	<p>Northern Office: 10th Floor, 122 3rd Avenue North</p> <p>Saskatoon, SK</p> <p>S7K 2H6</p> <p>Telephone: (306) 933-5680</p> <p>Fax: (306) 933-7030</p>
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Buying/ owning your own Home

When purchasing a home, be sure that structural modifications can be made. Keeping in mind that as a homeowner you may be eligible for Homeowners Grants to make the modifications. Contact contractors and get at least three estimates on related costs so you know what you are in for.

Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program

The homeowner's grants available under the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) include:

Financial help to modify your property

Landlords

☞ If you are a landlord who rents out self-contained units to low-income tenants or rooms in a rooming house and the rents are below specified levels

Homeowners

☞ Or if you own a home whose value is below a specified figure and your total household income is low and you wish to modify your dwelling to make it liveable for persons with disabilities

Note: Modifications -

must be related to housing and reasonably related to the occupant's disability

☞ Most modifications that make it easier for the occupant with disabilities live independently are eligible for funding. These include items such as a ramp, chair lift,

wheel-in-shower, suitable height adjustments to kitchen workspace and cupboards, and handrails

☞ Therapeutic items, such as portable equipment designed for mobility purposes or care and most household appliances, are *not* eligible for funding

☞ Modifications carried out before RRAP approval are *not* eligible for funding

For more information about RRAP please contact:

Saskatchewan Housing Corporation

500 – 1855 Victoria Avenue

Regina, Saskatchewan

S4P 3V7

Toll Free: 1-800-667-7567

Regina: 787-4177

Something else to keep in mind when renting or buying a home

...Location...Location...Location!

Check Out Accessibility at:

☞ Local schools	☞ Libraries
☞ Stores	☞ Restaurants
☞ Community Recreation Centres	☞ What services are available in your area?
☞ Bus routes	

Travel and Recreation

A good starting point for travel information is the individual Department of Tourism for each province. They will provide literature, accommodation guides and maps free of charge.

Tip 1. When contacting the Department of Tourism, mention that you are disabled, as many will have special accessibility literature.

Tip 2. Also contact the city or town's Tourism Department to get the latest news and information on the area.

Tip 3. Call ahead and make plans before beginning your trip. Information does change - don't be disappointed.

Contact Tourism Saskatchewan about accessible travel, campgrounds, hotels and recreational facilities, they can be reached at:

Toll Free 1-800-667-7191

Telephone (306) 787-2300

Camp Easter Seal is a completely wheelchair accessible resort specially designed for adults and children with disabilities. Located on the shores of Lake Manitou, near Watrous. Camp Easter Seal is operated by the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, and is open from June through August. Eight camping sessions are offered, ranging from five to seven days.

Camp Easter Seal is an ideal way to meet new friends, develop new skills, participate in activities and relax, all in a safe environment.

For more information on Camp Easter Seal, contact Barry Woolhouse at the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, Saskatoon at (306) 653-1694.

Sport and Leisure Programs for People with Disabilities

Check with your local city/town hall about sport and leisure programs in your community. These programs are geared for people with disabilities to participate at a level suited to their ability, interest and in a location that is accessible.

There are children, teen and adult programs available for a nominal fee.

Some examples of sport and leisure programs that may be available in your community are:

- Adaptive Rhythm and Movement Beginner
- Skating
- Wheelchair Basketball
- Swim Programs

Your local city/town hall may offer **Affordable Fun Programs**. The “Fun Card” provides discounts to various leisure programs throughout your community.

For more information contact your local Social Services agency and inquire about how you may get involved!

SaskTel Services for Special Needs

- Provides telecommunications aids, some of which are subsidized, for customers who cannot use standard telephone equipment
- SaskTel Relay Service provides operators who link callers who are deaf/hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities with hearing callers

☞ Operator and Directory Assistance for individuals with mobility impairment. For example: the operator will look up a number and connect you to your party at no charge by using a SaskTel Special Needs Code Number

If you require any of these specialized communication devices or services contact

SaskTel

Residential Sales & Service: (306) 310-7253 (no charge)

TTY: 1 – 800-855-0511

Deaf Access Phone: 1 – 800-552-3595

Helpful tips and hints to Independent Living

Integrated Case Management

Integrated Case Management implies a team approach to case management. A designated case manager is required to ensure the co-ordination of case management activities, which include:

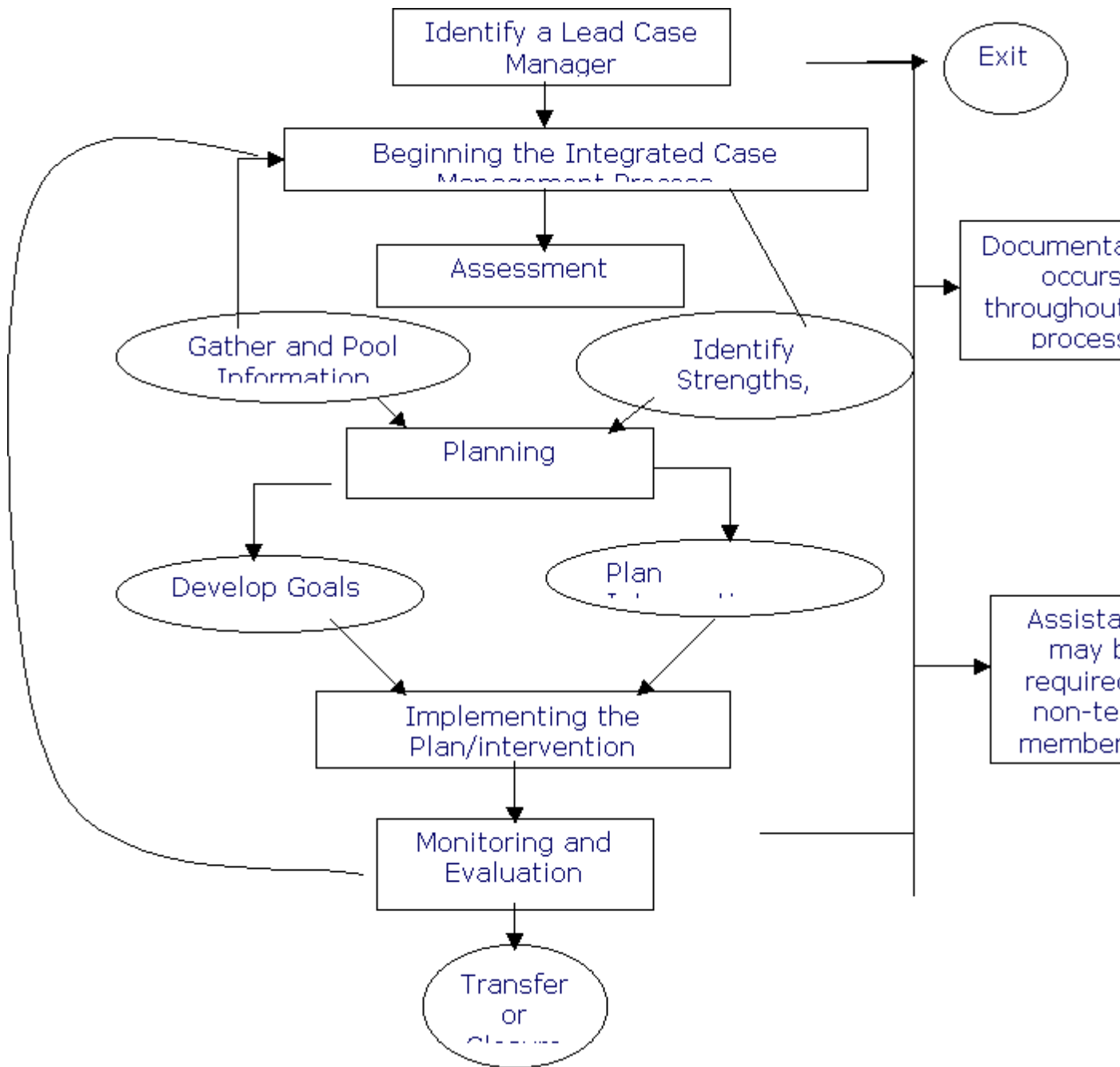
- ☞ Assessing
- ☞ Planning
- ☞ Co-ordinating
- ☞ Implementing
- ☞ Monitoring
- ☞ Evaluating

The Goal of Integrated Case Management

To provide responsive, holistic and effective human services that contribute to the well being of people with complex needs.

**YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL CAN ACCESS AND INITIATE THIS PROCESS.
WHEN YOU ARE DEALING WITH MORE THAN ONE DEPARTMENT OR
AGENCY YOU MAY WANT TO TRY THIS APPROACH.**

Integrated Case Management Flow Chart



Advocating for Yourself

Now that you know your rights are and what kind of services is available it is time to become **“independent”!**

The best advocate for **you** is **you!** **You** know what is best for **you**; **you** know what you need and when **you** need it.

How to advocate

- ☞ Do not be afraid to ask for what you need
- ☞ Do not be afraid to ask for help
- ☞ Speak your mind
- ☞ Research to get information
- ☞ Make phone calls – make sure you write down who you spoke with and document what they told you
- ☞ Exert your rights
- ☞ Let people know that you know your rights
- ☞ Ask for a second opinion
- ☞ Try not to get discouraged after the first let down
- ☞ Stand up for what you believe in
- ☞ Do not let others intimidate you or bully you out of what is rightfully yours
- ☞ Enlist help of others (i.e. friends, family, support group members etc.)
- ☞ Do not be afraid to speak to a person's supervisor if you feel you are not receiving the service you are entitled to
- ☞ Always treat others with the same respect and dignity that you would expect from them

Remember the old saying “you can get more bees with honey than with vinegar”

A USEFUL ORGANIZATION TO UTILIZE WHEN ADVOCATING IS:

Office for Disability Issues

Human Resources Development Canada

Ottawa, Ontario

K1A 0M5

Phone: 1-800-665-9017

TTY: 1-800-561-9706

Fax: (819) 953-4797

Provides information about federal programs and services for persons with disabilities as well as acting as a liaison between individuals and government agencies.

And last but not least, if at first you don't succeed try, try again!!!

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