What are Centers for Independent Living? | CPD

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Centers for Independent Living (CIL) are non-residential, community-based service, education and advocacy organizations that serve all people with disabilities, regardless of disability, age, gender, race or religion. CILs promote the philosophy that people with disabilities do not need to be “fixed,” but have the right and responsibility to make their own life choices, to live as independently as possible and to participate as equal citizens in their communities and in society.

Centers for Independent Living in Utah are OPTIONS for Independence, with locations in Logan and Brigham City; Active Re-Entry, with locations in Price, Vernal and Moab; Ability First of Utah in Provo; Red Rock Center for Independence in St. George; Utah Independent Living Center in Salt Lake City and Tri County Independent Living Center of Utah in Ogden.

The CILs must have a board of directors and staff, consisting of persons with disabilities. Their primary emphasis is on working with communities to make them more accessible, eliminating stereotyping, increasing consumer options and control.

OPTIONS for Independence in Logan is also an assistive technology demonstration center for the Center for Persons with Disabilities’ Assistive Technology lab at Utah State University. OPTIONS began as a volunteer organization in 1982, formed by people with disabilities and their friends. Their activities were planned to increase community awareness of disability, to encourage accessibility and to raise money for accessibility projects.

As a CIL, OPTIONS provides information and referrals, education, recreation activities, support groups, independent living services, transportation and advocacy.

A hand-lettered banner adorns the wheelchair of an attendee at the 2013 "meet the legislators" event in Logan, sponsored by the Center for Persons with Disabilities, OPTIONS for Independence and Grassroots Advocacy Partnership.