

People  
with intellectual disabilities –  
People  
like everybody else!



Abridged Version of the Political Programme of the Federal  
Association of Lebenshilfe\* for People with Intellectual Disabilities

\* Lebenshilfe is the german expression for „Life Help“ for people with intellectual  
disabilities (learning disabilities).



## All people are different, but also equal

To be different is to be normal, because everybody is unique and singular. People are equal in their wishes and rights.

People with intellectual disabilities are people like everybody else: equal and different.

In Germany about 420,000 children, adolescents and adults with intellectual disabilities live among us.

Every 90 minutes a child is born that will live with an intellectual disability:



- It makes progress, however, more slowly.
- It thinks, however, a bit simpler.
- It learns, however, not that easily.

These children will need life-long help. But: They will be happy, love others, love to live.

**They are children like every other child.**

## The Right to Live and the Quality of Life

People with intellectual disabilities have the same rights as every other citizen. This is granted by our Constitution.

People with intellectual disabilities must not be deprived of the right to live, with no reason whatsoever.



Rather do they have – regardless of the kind and degree of their disability – the right to live an ordinary life.

People with intellectual disabilities want to live independently, among us, equally and respected. They need partners who listen closely. People with intellectual disabilities want to be taken seriously – even if they are not able to make themselves understood in words.

**„People who cannot count, count nevertheless!  
People who cannot speak, have much to say.“**

## People with Intellectual Disabilities have the Same Basic Needs as Everybody Else

**Like everybody else** people with intellectual disabilities feel safe and secure with their families. Therefore, it is important for the family to live without being blamed or discriminated against, without fear, and respected by others and knowing that their disabled children will be taken care of until they are old.



**Like everybody else** people with intellectual disabilities want to make progress, go to a kindergarten and to school, play and learn together with other children: Children need children!

**Like everybody else** people with intellectual disabilities have the right to a home of their own, a private living space they may fill according to their wishes. To leave the parental home is part of growing up. How people with intellectual disabilities want to live depends on their preferences and skills.

**Like everybody else** people with intellectual disabilities want to work. They have the right to be included into the world of work, to a humane working place, to a fair payment and participation.



**Like everybody else** people with intellectual disabilities become men and women. They have the right to sexuality and partnership.

**Like everybody else** people with intellectual disabilities want to make friends, plan their leisure-time, have fun with games and sports, take part in further education programmes, find their way to God.

**Like everybody else** people with intellectual disabilities want to get old in dignity.

## To be able to live like everybody else people with intellectual disabilities need:

- friendly and understanding fellow beings
- highly motivated and well-trained staff
- scientists and specialists who constantly work on basic issues and concepts of further development
- politicians who advocate the rights of people with intellectual disabilities
- a legislation that guarantees compensation for any disadvantage whatsoever
- public authorities who do not see the „case“, but the person
- an open-minded population that is prepared to spend sufficient means, be it public funds or donations on people with intellectual disabilities
- a society that does not impede them by excluding them

**... and moreover special help in all areas of life:**



Early intervention, counselling and respite care services, special educational support, assistance in areas such as residence, work and leisure time – **a network of help.**

## The Federal Association of Lebenshilfe for People with Intellectual Disabilities

A network of help– that’s what the Federal Association of Lebenshilfe is.

It represents the interests of people with intellectual disabilities and their families – as an association of disabled people and their parents, as a professional association and a facilities maintaining organisation. The Association of Lebenshilfe is independent as regards denomination and party politics, considering itself to be a self-help organisation of people with intellectual disabilities, parents and experts. Equal relationships are given absolute priority.



The local Lebenshilfe associations offer practical services, lots of them in facilities such as early intervention programmes, kindergartens, schools, living facilities and special workshops. Moreover, counselling and information, sports and leisure time activities, parents’ meetings and respite care services are being offered...

**The Association of Lebenshilfe supports more than 150,000 people with intellectual disabilities.**



# Lebenshilfe

Bundesvereinigung  
Lebenshilfe für Menschen  
mit geistiger Behinderung e.V.

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Photos: G. Lau (p. 1),  
A. Kuhn-Osius (p. 2),  
U. Schecke (p. 3),  
R. Wichert (p. 4, 6, 7),  
H. D. Beyer (p. 5)

Bundeszentrale  
Raiffeisenstraße 18, 35043 Marburg, Germany  
Tel.: +49(0) 64 21/4 91-0, Fax: +49(0) 64 21/4 91-1 67  
E-Mail: [Bundesvereinigung@Lebenshilfe.de](mailto:Bundesvereinigung@Lebenshilfe.de)  
Internet: [www.lebenshilfe.de](http://www.lebenshilfe.de)