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The ache for home lives in all of us. The safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned.

Maya Angelou



WHAT MAKES A HOME?



Lenny Berry prepares breakfast in his kitchen

What ordinary people may think of as a “real home” is not necessarily shared by agencies and systems paid to support people with disabilities, especially people with intellectual disabilities. Typical people consider a real home as not just an address but rather a place that is personal, private, and uniquely theirs.

However, when people require assistance in their lives, often their dependence upon others impacts *how* and *where* they live. For too many people with disabilities, “home” is actually a space owned and controlled by a service provider.



Courtney Cyr vacuums her living room

KFI is one agency that believes people with disabilities deserve to live in homes of their own no matter the amount or complexity of their support needs. We are never the landlord. Why? Owning someone’s home and being the service

provider is a conflicting relationship that we believe would give KFI too much power over people. Instead, people who own or rent their homes from typical landlords get to decide where they live, who comes and goes, and establish a routine that is personal to them.

KFI has the distinction of assisting 12 people to become home owners! People with intellectual disabilities, once thought to be incapable of knowing how, where, and with whom they wanted to live, are now tax-paying citizens. Remarkable for its ordinariness!!



Brent Savage relaxes with his dog Lizzie

Adapted from: **Kendrick, Michael J., “How Genuinely Supportive Persons, Agencies And Systems Can Enable People To Have Real Homes Of Their Own”, *Crucial Times*, Issue 40, 13-15, Brisbane, Australia, 2008**

Everyone Can Work !



Leo's career started much like most people with intellectual disabilities – underemployed in a sheltered workshop. But thanks to Leo's genuine desire to work, the efforts of many dedicated family members, and KFI Employment Services, Leo is now in his 22nd year at Katahdin Federal Credit Union in Millinocket. His job tasks have changed over the years but he has taken that in stride and remains a loyal and dependable employee. Leo has said he has no plans to retire and will continue to work until he can't work anymore.



VOLUNTEER BRIGHTSPOT



Julie Hendsbee is busy making a difference in the lives of children and

families when they needed joy to find it most. Every week Julie can be found at the Ronald McDonald House in Bangor baking goodies in the kitchen or playing with the kids where her infectious smile and sense of humor bring much needed joy to families facing difficult health situations. When asked why she loves it so much she said "I'm a people person. I love being with the kids and making them smile and laugh."



DSP SPOTLIGHT



DSP's make a difference everyday!



Darlene Cookson

The term "Advocate" is not just a job title to Darlene Cookson. Throughout her 6+ years working for KFI in various capacities, she has always demonstrated a natural affinity for advocating for others. Darlene is motivated to provide the best quality of life supports for people. Her background in healthcare as a CNA has been particularly helpful as she was thrust into the role of health care advocate for a man facing multiple decisions regarding treatment options. Her voice and support helped his medical team come up with options to help him stay in his own home in Bangor and maintain his independence rather than go to a nursing home (often the default for older adults with intellectual disabilities who have healthcare needs). Now that he is back home, she is exploring ways to deepen and maintain relationships that he forged during his lengthy hospitalizations and convalescence!

IN MEMORIAM... Edwin Niles 8.20.55—2.23.14

Ed Niles passed away quite unexpectedly this past February. Many people at KFI, and indeed throughout the community of Lincoln, will always remember Ed fondly for his many years as a dedicated employee at McDonalds, a friendly neighbor and homeowner, and as an avid outdoorsman. Ed taught us that no dream is too big, no desire too small, and that life can and should be lived to the fullest.



Home is the nicest word there is.
Laura Ingalls Wilder

Lessons Learned

One of the things that Ed helped us to learn is that in order to live a rich and fulfilling life people need to know you for who you are. We have learned over many years of trial and error that the best way to do this is to assist people to try new things where their gifts and talents can be appreciated. This helps people get to know each other in different roles. Co-worker, neighbor, and friend are all examples of roles that many of us are in day-in and day-out but are often lacking in the lives

of adults with intellectual disabilities. It is these roles, and many others, that give our lives meaning. When we get to know someone as an artist, a handyman, gardener, or a workout buddy then that is how we think of them and anything else about them becomes secondary. This is why KFI believes it is so important to support people to get out in their communities and do what they love, so people in the community see the whole person and not just a label.

For more
We want to know....

www.kfmaine.org/wewanttoknow

To read and see more about how living in one's own home makes for a better life!



Congratulations and gratitude go out to Holly Bean of Lincoln for her 25 years of dedicated service to KFI and all the people she has supported in her time as Community Advocate and Support Coordinator.

Thanks Holly!



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Visit us on the web
www.kfmaine.org

We want to know...

What do you love about your home?

"I am happy to be a homeowner. It lets me be independent."



Dan Crosby



Curtis Glidden

"I like my apartment because there is more to do in Lincoln than in Springfield. I like living alone. I get to make my own rules."

"It's quieter here than when I lived at home. I can come and go as I want to."



Richard Shephard