

# INDEPENDENT LIVING RESOURCES

FOR PROSPECTIVE POST-  
SECONDARY STUDENTS

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# INTRODUCTION

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## WHAT IS THIS GUIDE?

The purpose of this guide is to provide guidance and resources for guidance counsellors, students and relevant organizations to aid students with physical disabilities seeking to live independently after high school and facilitate the transition to a post-secondary institution. This guide provides an overview of the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto and its services, introduces attendant services, and highlights institutions with attendant services, post-secondary scholarships and relevant resources. To enhance accessibility and usability, this guide integrates several visuals and embedded links.

A summary diagram and decision tree have been included to give an overview of independent living services and help students determine the option best suited for their needs.

These visual guides for students can be found on [pages 8 and 9](#).

## Tips for navigating this guide:

1. This guide has been created with text-to-speech in mind
2. Click on the links! Underlined words lead to the relevant web page.



# CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING IN TORONTO

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The Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT) is a non-profit resource organization based in the Greater Toronto Area. CILT is a consumer-controlled, community-based organization dedicated to empowering people with disabilities. The organization's vision is a society where people with disabilities achieve social and economic equity, promoted through an inclusive approach based on the independent living philosophy.

CILT helps people with disabilities learn independent living skills and integrate into the community. CILT develops and implements dignified social services that empower individuals rather than create dependencies, and encourages people with disabilities to take control of their own lives by exercising their right to examine options, make choices and take risks.



The Centre for Independent Living in Toronto is a community-based resource organization run by people with disabilities for people with disabilities.

# BACKGROUND

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Students with physical disabilities can encounter various barriers to performing everyday tasks that people without disabilities often take for granted. While in high school, most students with disabilities live with their families and/or have caretakers who assist with these tasks. However, students who plan to attend post-secondary face the challenge of performing these tasks without the support they have had living at home. As a result, students can be deterred from attending post-secondary education due to the lack of accommodations for these barriers.

## WHAT ARE ATTENDANT SERVICES?

**Attendant Care Services** offers a solution to this issue. Attendants are support staff who provide physical assistance with routine activities of daily living that a person cannot perform due to a permanent physical disability. Service users are responsible for directing, training and instructing their attendants on where they need support and how best to meet these needs.

**Attendants DO NOT provide professional services or medical care but instead offer services such as:**

- Bathing and grooming
- Eating
- Transferring
- Getting dressed
- Toileting (bladder and bowel care)
- Preparing meals



# ATTENDANT SERVICES APPLICATION CENTRE

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## WHAT IS ASAC?

The [Attendant Service Application Centre](#) (ASAC), offered through CILT, is the centralized point of access for individuals with physical disabilities applying for Attendant Services in the Toronto and York Region. With a single application, applicants can apply to a variety of projects and programs offered by different attendant service providers.

## Application Process

1. Ensure eligibility for the program.
2. Complete the [application package](#), including the **ASAC Supplementary Student Form** and return it to ASAC; retain a copy for future reference
3. ASAC will assess the application, enter it into the database and contact applicants for an assessment interview.
4. Service providers will contact applicants for vacancy interviews.

## Eligibility

**A student is eligible to apply for attendant services if they...**

- Have a valid Ontario Health Card (OHIP)
- Are 16 years of age or older
- Have a **permanent** physical disability
- Require **ongoing** physical assistance with activities of daily living
- Are able to direct their own services
- Are able to have any medical/professional needs met by the existing community health network on a visitation basis.

Students looking to attend an institution outside the Toronto and York Region may still apply or contact ASAC for support in finding attendant services.

## Types of attendant services available:

- **Attendant Outreach Services:** provided on a prescheduled basis from 6 a.m. to midnight in the service user's home, school or place of work.
- **Traditional Supportive Housing:** accessible apartments integrated throughout a larger apartment building. Attendant services are offered on a prescheduled and 24-hour on-call basis.
- **Mobile Supportive Housing:** attendant services are provided on a prescheduled and 24-hour on-call basis in a specified geographic area.
- **Shared Living Attendant Services:** a communal home setting with attendant services for those who have multiple service needs or have limited capacity to self-direct.
- **Transitional & Life Skills Programs:** provides the opportunity for learning and practicing the skills necessary to live and participate in the community.

# DIRECT FUNDING

The [Direct Funding Program](#) is a partnership between CILT and the Ontario Network of Independent Living Centres. This program is suited for those with physical disabilities who are willing and able to take on the extra responsibilities that the program demands.

The Direct Funding Program enables adults with physical disabilities to receive monthly funds for attendants of their own choosing, to schedule as they please - whether their needs are at home, at work, or in the community. Individuals self-manage their lives, making their own choices with greater flexibility and control. This involves being the employer; responsible for recruiting, hiring, scheduling, and paying their own attendants.

## Eligibility

A student is eligible to apply for the Direct Funding Program if they...

- Are aged 16 or over
- Are a resident of Ontario
- Require attendant services due to a **permanent** physical disability
- Are able to complete the written application on their own initiative and in their own words (they may receive physical assistance to complete the form; however, submissions may not be made by professionals, family members or others on their behalf)
  - Are able to meet with a selection panel to discuss their needs and determine their eligibility for the program
  - Are able to schedule attendants
  - Are able to hire (and fire, if necessary), train and supervise one or more attendants
  - Are able to meet all the legal requirements associated with being an employer
  - Are capable of managing and accounting for their funding, according to the program guidelines

To apply for the Direct Funding Program, individuals must require attendant services for at least 2 of the following activities (at least one must be from 1 to 4):

1. Turning in bed, lifting, positioning or transferring
2. Washing, bathing, showering, shaving or personal grooming
3. Dressing or undressing
4. Catheterization, emptying and changing a leg bag, using the toilet, urination or bowel routines
5. Breathing, or caring for a tracheostomy or respiratory equipment
6. Eating
7. Meal preparation, dish washing, laundry or other housekeeping tasks
8. Essential communication



# POST-SECONDARY ATTENDANT SERVICES

Several post-secondary institutions across Ontario offer attendant services

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## **Algonquin College, Ottawa**

- Attendant services for students living in residence
- No cost for residents of Ontario, students outside of Ontario and International students may be sponsored by their own governments for a portion of their expenses
- 24h/day, 8 months of the year

2

## **Brock University, St. Catharines**

- Attendant services for students
- Offered by the Ontario March of Dimes
- Services run from September to April

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## **Carleton University, Ottawa**

- Attendant services for students living in residence
- No cost to students
- 24h/day, 12 months of the year
- Attendants are fellow students who receive extensive training and are hired by a panel which includes students with disabilities

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## **Seneca College, Toronto**

- Attendant services for students living in residence and commuting to campus at the Seneca@York campus
- Offered by the March of Dimes Canada
- Application through ASAC

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## **York University, Toronto**

- Attendant services for students living in residence and commuting to campus at the Keele campus
- Offered by the March of Dimes Canada
- Application through ASAC

# SCHOLARSHIPS

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Numerous post-secondary scholarship opportunities are also available for students with physical disabilities.

## Bursary for Students with Disabilities (BSWD) and Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment – Students with Disabilities (CSG-DSE)

- For eligible full- and part-time students studying at an Ontario
- Self-identified as having a permanent, prolonged or persistent disability and your status as a person with a disability has been verified for OSAP purposes
- Helps pay for eligible disability-related services and equipment needed to participate in post-secondary studies
- BSWD: \$2,000, with eligible items subject to individual funding maximums
- CSG-DSE: \$20,000, with eligible items subject to individual funding maximums

## Empowered Kids Ontario Scholarship Program

- For students with disabilities pursuing post-secondary education in a degree-granting program
- Received services from one of the Empowered Kids Ontario General Member organizations
- Six scholarships of \$2,500

## Tamara Gordon Foundation Scholarship

- For students with a permanent physical disability enrolled in degree programs at post-secondary institutions within Ontario
- Financial awards ranging from \$750 to \$3,000

## Easter Seals Scholarships

- For students with a permanent physical disability pursuing a post-secondary education
- Various scholarships available



More scholarship opportunities can be found at [DisabilityAwards.ca](https://DisabilityAwards.ca), a resource designed to aid post-secondary students across Canada.

# DECIDING THE BEST FIT FOR YOU

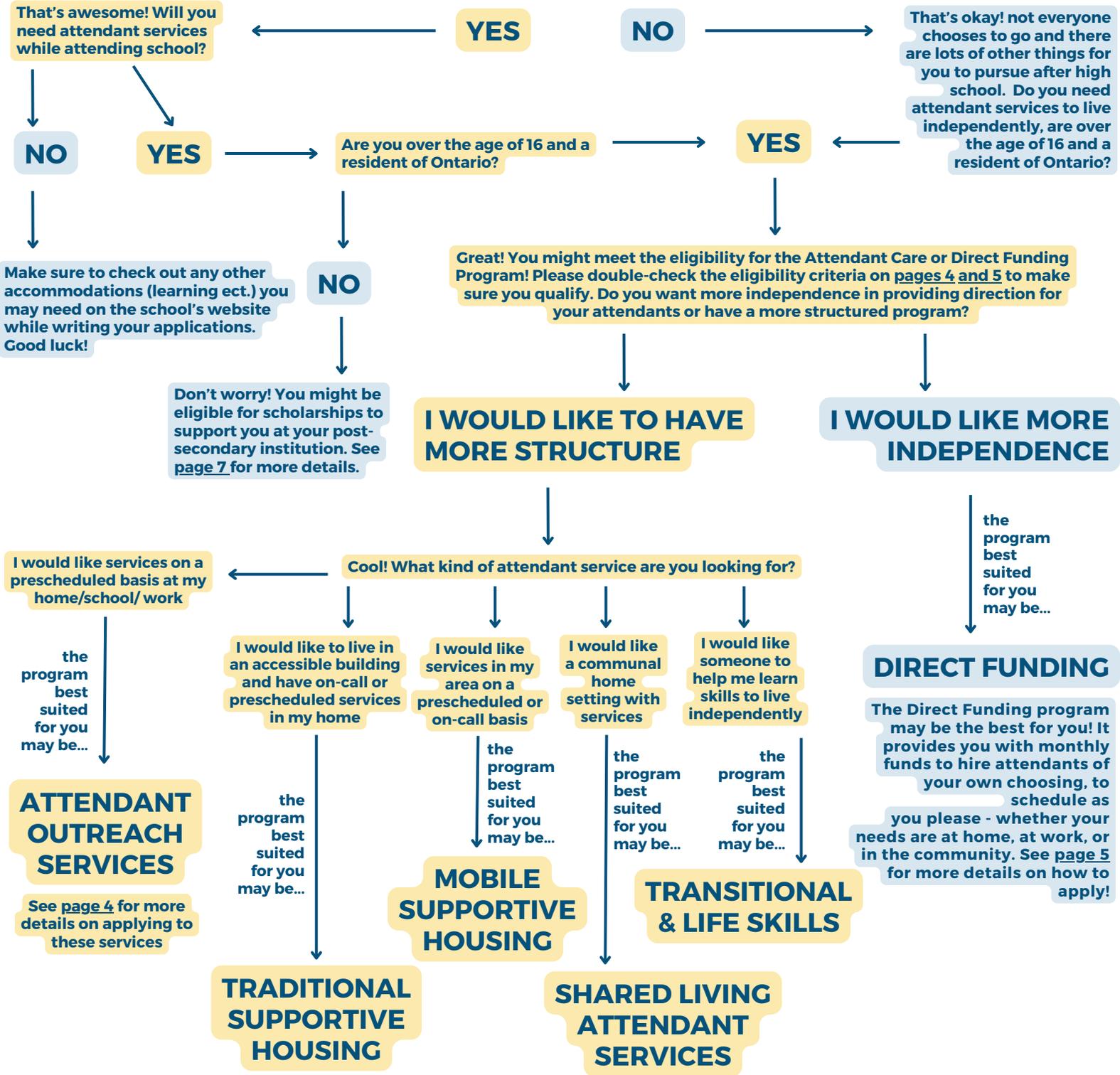
If you are a student seeking support for independent living during your post-secondary education, these services could be of assistance. A variety of factors must be considered when deciding which program is the best for you. A summary table is provided here to break down different factors and aid in your decision-making process.



Attendant services	Direct funding	Scholarships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Offers different types of care and frequency in various settings such as;<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ at home, school or place of work</li><li>○ on a regular, prescheduled basis</li><li>○ in specific accessible buildings</li><li>○ on an on-call basis</li><li>○ in a shared living situation</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ More freedom to schedule and control when, where, and how services are provided</li><li>✓ Requires greater independence</li><li>✓ Funding amount is determined by the level of assistance required</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Must be studying at a relevant post-secondary institution</li><li>✓ Services and direction dependent on the scholarship</li><li>✓ Funding amounts pre-determined by the organization offering the scholarship</li></ul>

# DECIDING THE BEST FIT FOR YOU

DO YOU WANT TO ATTEND A POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION?



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This guide was created by Nitya Kuruvila, Kyara Liu, Jackelyn Salmini and Julia Tan, from the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health, with the guidance of Danielle Daoust, CILT.

The guide is the property of CILT and is subject to modifications by the organization.



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