

History of the Independent Living Center

Commonly referred to by Ionia residents as the “original” Blanchard House, this Greek Revival house was built in 1847.

First located at the site of the present Blanchard House, it was moved in 1879 to Adams Street. On November 11, 1984, it was moved again to it’s current location. Within these moves, the house had a fire which resulted in the loss of some of the original rooms.

The Ionia Historical society had the House renovated including new wiring, plumbing, furnace, drywall and interior trim to assimilate the original. The front basement wall was made using stone from the original foundation.

The Ionia County Intermediate School District purchased the House on October 15, 1990. Purchase of the House was made after the Planning Commission of the City of Ionia granted “special usage” approval. The Michigan Bureau of History gave their complete endorsement for the intended usage of the facility.

Ionia County Intermediate School District

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Mission Statement

The staff, administration and Board of Education of the Ionia County Intermediate School District are collaborating:

- with students, parents and district residents
- with local and other intermediate districts, and
- with community partners and state agencies,

to provide quality services and exemplary leadership in support of superior teaching and learning throughout the district.

www.ioniaisd.org

Robert J. Kjolhede, Superintendent

Ionia County Intermediate School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer



Independent Living Center

201 E. Main St.
Ionia, MI



“the House” - where
Real Life begins.

“Partners In Building
Full Potential”

The Independent Living Center

Who We Are

Located near downtown Ionia, the Independent Living Center is more commonly known as “the House”. The program opened its doors on January 28th, 1991 to provide a functional learning environment for Moderately Cognitively Impaired post secondary students.

What We Do

Students attending the House program follow, as much as possible, the Ionia Public School calendar. They attend full days, and when appropriate, do activities that are held past the regular school day. They do not have a mandatory summer program.

Looking at the educational needs of the students determines the amount of time they attend the House in a week, and they may exit prior to their 26th birthday if they have achieved their goals.



How We Do It

The House has worked with a variety of students who benefit from the functional learning environment in the transition areas of Home Living, community, Recreational/Leisure and Vocational programming.

Home Living Area:

Students are responsible for planning, shopping for and preparing simple meals. They are responsible for the basic up-keep of the House, including simple home repair, yard work and landscaping.



Vocational Programming:

A significant component of the program where students are encouraged to try several work settings to find the one they like and fit with.

Varied work sites are also utilized to provide their basic work habits and skills, both in small groups and on an individual basis.

Outside agencies such as CMH and MRS, are encouraged to become involved with the students and their families while they are still in school. This type of involvement allows for a smooth transition from school to adult life.

Community Living:

This area provides students access to their community to work on specific skills.



Utilizing community sites such as the post office, library, bank, grocery store, hardware store, provide a variety of different learning establishments that allow the students to work on cognitive, social, communication and safety skills.

Physical Education:

Our program consists of working on individual skills such as balance and eye / hand coordination and recreation in the community. The students access sites in their local communities and within the Grand Rapids and Lansing areas. At the House they work on leisure skills such as playing games, using the computer and crafts.

Matt Mahar - Supervisor
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Kevin Christenesen - paraeducator

Dale Miller - para educator

Donna McGillis - paraeducator

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