

Hi, I'm Jennifer Budwig with today's community comment

If you or someone you know has a disability, or have questions about disability issues, there is an organization in Eureka that is here to help.

Tri-County Independent Living provides information and services to residents of Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity Counties.

The U.S. Census Bureau says one in five Americans have some type of disability meaning nearly 27,000 people are included in that statistic in Humboldt County alone.

Most people think that a person with a disability is someone who uses a wheelchair or is blind or deaf. While mobility and other disabilities, such as hearing or vision impairments may be apparent, some disabilities are less visible, such as a head injury, mental illness or perhaps a condition such as multiple sclerosis.

Tri-County Independent Living Center was established in 1978 under the name of Humboldt Access Project and has worked for 35 years to support people with disabilities in our community. The name was changed to Tri-County Independent Living ten years ago to more accurately describe the services it provides.

Tri-County works to ensure that persons with disabilities have the right to make decisions about their own lives and with the appropriate support, live with dignity in their own homes while fully participating in their community.

A telephone call to Tri-County can provide important information about programs and services available to promote independent living, with the ultimate goal, to ensure that persons with disabilities have control over their lives.

Independent Living Specialists will assist callers and those who come to the office in Eureka, in taking the necessary steps to enhance and/or gain their ability to remain living self-sufficiently. Working together, the consumer and Independent Living Specialist may identify the specific needs to be addressed and the resources available to meet those needs. This could include a variety of things such as learning about the guidelines for service animals, applications for Social Security or other benefits or services, help with developing basic living skills such as budgeting or navigating public transportation, and assistive technology.

Assistive technology devices such as magnifiers, talking alarm clocks, computer keyboards with large keys, large number telephones, and mobility devices such as walkers and wheelchairs can help many persons with disabilities perform functions that might otherwise be difficult or impossible.

Did you know that Tri-County Independent Living has an Assistive Technology Lending Library? A variety of devices are available for no-cost, short term loan so persons with disabilities can learn about, select, and try out devices most appropriate to their needs.

You can support Tri-County Independent Living by attending their annual fundraiser. The event is known as the 'Annual Humboldt Pie' which includes pie baking and eating contests and provides fun for the entire family. So mark your calendars for March 30th for the 6th annual Humboldt Pie event to be held at the Redwood Acres Fairgrounds in Eureka.

If you would like more information about Tri-County Independent Living, you can call their office at 445-8404, or check out their website at www.tilinet.org. That's www.t-i-l-i-n-e-t.org. Their office is located at 2822 Harris St in Eureka.

This has been Jennifer Budwig with today's community comment.