

## Innovative Living Options

The traditional choices for out-of-home placement for individuals with disabilities include foster homes, group homes, residential state facilities, state hospitals and private residential facilities. Even with these options, families may have difficulty in finding appropriate placements for individuals with dual sensory impairments.

At this time some exciting living options are being explored which provide more individualized, personalized home settings. In some cases, families are finding it possible to purchase a home in their child's name through creative financing without losing SSI or other subsidies. In other cases, individuals are able to rent a home or apartment by utilizing funding that, in the past, has only been available for group living.

These options are based upon every individual's fundamental right to live in a home of their choice. No person should be forced to live away from her community or in a setting which is based upon the severity or nature of the disability. In addition, interaction between the person with dual sensory impairments, family and friends should be maintained at the desired level.

The creation of innovative living options requires collaboration, support of family and friends and the willingness to strive towards the realization of great expectations.

### Here are some beginning steps:

- ❖ Contact your Regional Center to explore possibilities.
- ❖ Be willing to explore and research until you find support and answers.
- ❖ Contact local support groups like the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC), independent living programs, parent support groups, etc. to find needed support and experience.
- ❖ Look for and attend conferences that address your needs. \* Be aware that building a new living option takes time - anticipate six months to over a year.

Innovative living options will prove worth your time and effort.