



**“How wonderful
it is that
nobody need
wait a single
moment before
starting to
improve the
world.”**

— Anne Frank



casa's support plans - part seven

*This year we are discussing the components of Casa's Support Plans, highlighting one each month. Please take this opportunity to learn more about these plans and the impact they have on our residents. Our subject this month is **APARTMENT LIVING**.*

The seventh component of our Support Plan is Apartment Living. As part of this plan, staff provides instruction on how to keep apartments clean and organized, while guiding residents through the many components that are involved in living independently. More importantly and often overlooked however, is the importance of having your own apartment.

When Casa began, the idea was not to provide merely a room for someone to sleep, or a space that resembled a college dorm. Instead we believe the apartments should look and feel like other apartments in the local community. A private space to call your own which in turn, leads to a sense of pride and self esteem. Casa's one-bedroom apartments are approximately 600 square feet which includes a kitchen, living room, bedroom, balcony, walk in closet and walk in shower. All apartments at Casa are one bedroom except for (3) two-bedroom apartments where roommates share the living room and kitchen but have their own bedroom and bath.

Of critical importance to the Casa model is that each resident has their own front door keys, and can make their own decisions with things such as running their heating or AC, installing cable TV, internet, phone, etc. There are also no shared bedrooms or baths, something we believe is essential to privacy, dignity and a sense of independence. These living options are unfortunately **very rare** throughout the country for most adults

with intellectual and developmental disabilities. At Casa these apartments are not owned, but each resident can make it their own by painting or furnishing it as they see best. Residents have a lease agreement with all the rights afforded in any tenant/landlord relationship. Each person has their own key to the buildings common front doors. Unlike your typical apartment complex, each neighbor at Casa has chosen to live in a community where they are afforded support as needed from the on-site staff 24 hours a day.

One of the biggest joys we see is watching the change in our residents when they have their own place they can call "home." Before it was "mom and dad's house" but now their home is truly **THEIR HOME!** Many talk about the pride they have in their own place and we catch glimpses of their delight when they show off their apartment to those coming through for tours. In addition, it is not uncommon to have residents introducing themselves and offering to show their apartments - on their own!

Of course this isn't a surprise, when you are proud of something you want to show it off — and at Casa our residents are certainly proud of THEIR VERY OWN HOME!

In honor of our celebration of Independence Day, we asked residents a simple but powerful question . . . How has Casa helped to make you more independent?

We encourage interdependence, that idea that everyone needs support in areas of their life and what is most important, is creating a life that a person is proud of and is in line with what they believe to be important.



Before I moved into Casa de Amma I was living with my parents. Now I can be more independent but if I need help staff are always there to help me.

— Jessica



Casa has taught me how to solve more problems on my own and use my tools.

— Todd

Casa has helped me to be honest and more mature. I also have my own apartment for the first time in my life and I enjoy the peace and quiet! — **Dan**

Casa has allowed me to have my own apartment. I really like the view and my own space.

— Tatianna



The staff at Casa have taught me how to make my own access and now I'm independent with that skill.

— Ellen

Casa has helped me to be more independent and have a great life!

— Chris



I can make new friends at Casa. I like being here because I'm always around my friends.

- Lisa



At Casa I can enjoy freedom and a great life.

— Steve