

Microboards™, Social Capital and Quality of Life

A Two Year Research Project by the Canadian Institute for Inclusion and Citizenship at the University of British Columbia, in Partnership with Community Living British Columbia and Vela Canada



Research tells us that the more connections a person has, the greater Quality of Life they will have.

We wanted to learn how Microboards™ (MB) might help connect people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to their communities, and increase social capital and quality of life.

Who was involved in the study

13 MICROBOARDS REPRESENTED

- 3 < 10 Yrs length
- 6 11-20 Yrs Length
- 3 > 20 Yrs Length
- 1 Unknown/not shared

21 PEOPLE OVER 18 INTERVIEWED

- 15 Microboard Members
- 3 People with Intellectual or Developmental Disability
- 2 Paid Staff
- 1 Community Member

5 GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

- 7 Vancouver Mainland
- 2 Vancouver Island
- 2 Interior BC
- 1 Okanagan
- 1 Northern BC



AGE RANGE OF PERSONS RECEIVING SUPPORT

20-55 YEARS

What we learned

We heard that Microboards improved:



1 Quality of Life

Many participants spoke about **increases in general well-being, health, safety, stability and self-determination** of the individuals supported by the Microboard.



2 Social Capital

Participants said individuals were **included more in their community and had more friendships and relationships** (personal and professional).

4 characteristics

of microboards contributed to this increase:

- 1 **Autonomous**
(not part of other organizations or groups)
- 2 **Person-Centered**
(always focused on the person at the centre of the Microboard and what they want and need)
- 3 **Empowering**
(making the person feel like they can do and be what they want)
- 4 **Interconnected**
(being part of the group and everyone being connected to each other)

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

MICROBOARDS™

Microboards were created by Vela Canada to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities use the money provided by government to purchase the particular supports they need.

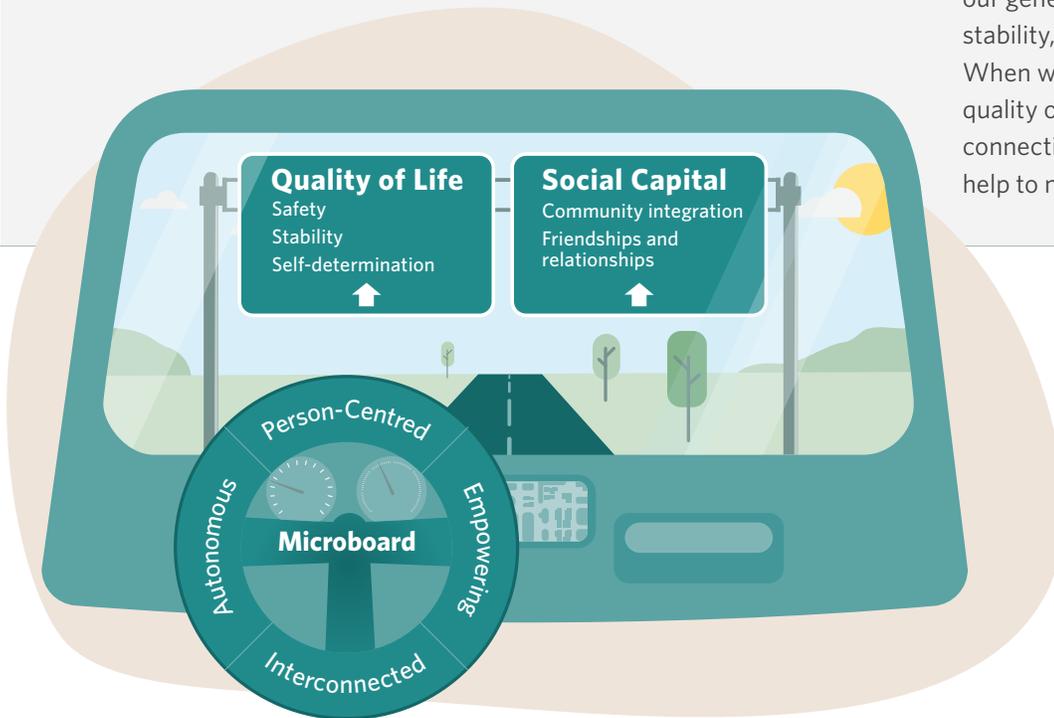
A Microboard™ is a small group of dedicated friends and family who work together to help an individual plan their life, brainstorm ideas, advocate for what they need, monitor services, and connects the individual to their wider community.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social Capital is what we call all the people, connections and networks we have in our lives that we trust and that can help us when we need it.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life means how much we feel satisfied with our life, including our general well-being, health, safety, stability, and self-determination. When we think about social capital, quality of life is about how the people, connections, and networks we have help to make our lives better..



Microboards™ serve as a “vehicle” supporting an individual, contributing to increases in both social capital and quality of life.

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Microboard members say:

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We use our Microboard as our sounding board right now—asking for advice, asking for help if we needed...It's a safety net is what it is.



*Having the Microboard just makes it really flexible for somebody with such high complex needs to **not just exist, but to truly live.** And without the Microboard, [he] wouldn't have the unique, rich life that he does have.*



Our Microboard is the vehicle that we were able to actually have a program and have the funding to pay [our support] people.