**D-Net Re-discovered : Benchmark Disability TV series now on YouTube**

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D-Net, The Disability Network, was a news and current affairs television series broadcast on CBC and Newsworld from 1990 to 1997.

“It was the first program at the CBC to employ people with disabilities on air and behind the cameras. It was the first to provide them with professional training and get them started in broadcasting careers. It was also a first to provide closed-captioning and the first to train the people who wrote the captions” says Don Peuramaki, principal of Fireweed Media.

D-Net was a coproduction between the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT), CBC and Fireweed Media, a production company run by people with disabilities. It was a great example of an innovative partnership between the community of people with disabilities, their organizations, public broadcasting, private and public funding.

CILT recently collected and digitized the original broadcast tapes thanks to special donations and the hard work of volunteers.They are now available on YouTube at CILT Toronto. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqstiUIzq2C6IGaHiBn4mOw>

“D-Net appeared at a critical time in the lives of people with disabilities during the long march toward equal rights and public consciousness. It is interesting to look back at these programs and reflect on how far we have come since then… and what remains to be done.” Says Wendy Porch, Executive Director, CILT.

In recognition of this year’s United Nation’s International Day of Persons with Disabilities and the theme of “empowerment”, CILT is highlighting three of its archive of D-Net television specials. The programs may be viewed on YouTube.

* **Two Sisters :The Decade of Disabled Persons** *Produced at the end of the ninth year of the U.N. decade of disabled persons this program provides insights into progress made with one year remaining in a significant period of our nation’s and the world’s history.*
* **Empowerment** *The program looks at the multidimensional aspects of “empowerment”, and how it relates to persons with disabilities. The question “Are we there yet?” was tackled at the* ***REACH*** *Canada Conference in Ottawa in 1991.*
* “**Choices and Rights**” *is a two parter. It takes us back to a major conference held in Vancouver.* ***“Independence 92”*** *features many people from across the country, and around the world, coming together, discussing progress, and experiencing “empowerment” first hand.*

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