



Housing at Sinneave: What we know, what we still need to learn, and where we are headed

Housing is one of the biggest topics facing Autistic and neurodivergent adults and their families. Conversations about autism and housing are often oversimplified. Families and individuals are sometimes told that “specialized, supportive autism housing” is the answer. While housing options specific to Autistic folks do exist in some places, they are often expensive, designed for people with higher support needs, and can limit choice and independence.

At Sinneave, we are taking a different approach.

Autistic and neurodivergent people live across the entire [housing continuum](#) — not only in supportive housing. Housing also changes across a person’s lifetime depending on income, relationships, work, health, and goals.

Because of this, we are focused on understanding how the housing system works, why it can feel inaccessible or overwhelming, and how we can make it easier for people to navigate.

Over the past six months, we reviewed what our community shared about their housing experiences. We are analyzing our data to understand what we know, what we still need to learn, and where we can make the greatest impact.

What We Know

We know that affordability matters — a lot. But finances are only one consideration.

Many people simply do not know where to start when looking for housing. They may not know what options exist, what they can afford, or how to search for housing that fits their needs and preferences. That is why we are working to simplify and clarify housing information so people can feel more confident taking next steps.

Our [Information & Navigation Service](#) is a helpful starting point for people exploring housing and independent living. In a focused 30-minute conversation, we learn about your current situation, goals, and priorities, then help identify manageable next steps.

This may include understanding your income and expenses, joining housing waitlists, exploring skill-development programs, or clarifying what is essential, flexible, or negotiable when it comes to your housing and independent living needs.

We want to help people live well now. The Bright Ideas Book, developed by our friends at The Accessibility Institute, is full of great ideas informed by Autistic Canadians on [how to optimize your current living situation for your needs](#). Think of these as “Home Hacks” for Autistic and neuro-divergent folks to make day-to-day living more comfortable for you.

What We Still Need to Learn

Our data highlights important gaps in our understanding.

For example, we know that many Autistic adults continue living with aging parents or caregivers well into adulthood. However, we do not yet fully understand the day-to-day support these natural supports provide. That makes it harder to develop learning resources, programs, or services that truly prepare people for greater independence. We believe the best way to learn to live independently, is to live independently. We also recognize that transitions can be challenging and require the right supports.

Another important insight is that many Autistic adults express a strong preference for living alone. We understand there can be many reasons for this, including wanting more control over one’s environment, routines, and sensory experiences. At the same time, today’s housing market often makes solo living difficult financially.

Shared living is commonly a first step toward independence for many people, and we want to better understand how to make those experiences safer, more supportive, and positive. The Bright Ideas Book includes some ideas on [how to make shared living work](#) through clear communication and even a template for a [Roommate Agreement Form!](#)

Sinneave continues to work on filling the gaps in data and our knowledge by listening to the community and approaching problem-solving strategically and rigorously alongside those with lived experience.



View the Bright Ideas Book by clicking on the cover image.

Where We Are Headed

This work is not happening in isolation.

Collaboration continues to be central to how we work in housing. We are building relationships with affordable housing providers, market housing developers, researchers, educators, service providers, and community organizations across Calgary and beyond. We know no single organization can solve housing challenges alone.

One exciting example is our collaboration with the Community Housing Transformation Centre around the return of the RentSmart curriculum to Alberta. RentSmart helps people better understand renting, tenancy responsibilities, communication with landlords, and housing stability. We are optimistic about the role this type of learning can play in helping people succeed in housing.

Sinneave's ongoing work includes developing independent living learning and skill development opportunities for our community members, along with contributing to conversations about neuroinclusive housing design in upcoming affordable and mixed-income housing developments.

Housing progress can feel slow, but meaningful work is happening behind the scenes every day. We are excited to bring this work to life throughout the rest of the year and beyond.

Our goal is simple: better housing and independent living outcomes for Autistic adults in Calgary and beyond.

If you are exploring housing or independent living options, we encourage you to:

- [Book an Information & Navigation meeting](#)
- Visit the Neuroinclusivity in Housing website Nihouse.ca
- Watch our [Events Calendar](#) for housing-related events and workshops
- [Stay connected](#) through our newsletter and social media for future updates and opportunities