

SPRING  
2017

# THE STAR



Developmental  
Disabilities Association

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## CHILDCARE AT A CROSSROADS- MYTHS AND FACTS

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# CHILDCARE AT A CROSSROADS

BY ALANNA HENDREN

When DDA first started providing childcare, children with special needs were rarely welcomed into typical child care programs in the community. In recognition of the importance of enriched services during the early years, DDA filled the void with specially-trained child care workers who worked exclusively with children with special needs. Soon after, we recognized the importance of integration in the development of children with special needs, so all our child care programs were comprised of 50% children with special needs and 50% typical children. Then the ideal composition was determined to be 25% special needs children and 75% typical children. About 20 years ago, supported childcare was introduced to allow families to pick whatever child care center they wanted, with the provincial government subsidizing the cost of one-to-one workers for specific children. At about the same time, the provincial government began to offer

incentives for non-profits and private companies to open new spaces, a development that continues to this day.

So, things have changed dramatically since our first days of venturing into child care! There are more and more child care spaces developed in the province and every child development center can now be a special needs childcare center. This kind of inclusion was our goal from the beginning and now we are becoming victims of our own success! When we started providing child care, we were funded 100% by government. Child care agencies no longer funded by government, other than the odd grant. Parent fees have virtually become our only source of revenue for child care. Low-income families and those with special needs children can apply for subsidies and purchase their child care anywhere. Some of DDA's child care centers now have vacancies rather than waitlists, even in our special needs spaces.

Due to large deficits that have accumulated over the past ten years in some of our childcare programs, the Board had to make the difficult decision to close our Waterside child care center, with a target date of August 31, 2017. We have also agreed to continue to operate the program at a significant deficit in order to keep parent fees low until the closure. Our deficits at Waterside have totalled over \$610,000 over the last ten years and costs continue to escalate while parents often struggle to pay the full cost of child care. The Board has also requested senior staff develop a child care strategy, as a few of our other centers are also operating in deficits and we need to find a way to turn this around.

The 12 families impacted by the closure were naturally surprised by the news. While answering their queries, we realized there were quite a few myths about childcare in the community today that need to be dispelled:

## MYTH #1: THE GOVERNMENT FUNDS CHILDCARE

Although the government subsidizes families who have children with developmental disabilities and families with low incomes, there are few subsidies available to child care operators other than some small grants. Our capital costs, like playgrounds and vehicles, are not funded. The annual expenses at Waterside, for example, total \$255,000 per year - of this, government funds \$36,000, or \$3,000 per child per year.

## MYTH #2: THERE ARE LONG WAITLISTS IN CHILD CARE

This was true for many years but with the B.C. government's incentive grants to create more childcare spaces now in their second decade, thousands of new spaces and centers have opened throughout the province. These new services operated by non-profit agencies and private companies have created higher levels of choice for families and competition for existing



operations. At the reporting level, we used to monitor wait lists but we are now monitoring vacancies as competitors who do not have to pay union wages or for pension plans draw prospective families away from more established centers. Wait list numbers are also deceiving. When spaces do become available, families often have already enrolled in a different center. Some families want child care services on specific days, at specific times, in part-time spaces that are much more difficult to accommodate. As vacancies arise, we often don't have children on our lists of the appropriate age. Our special needs spaces also often go unfilled. Since we do not receive parent fees when spaces are vacant, we lose precious funding.

### MYTH #3: THE GOAL IS TO KEEP CHILD CARE AFFORDABLE

Although child care providers understand the burden placed on young families by high child care fees, there are no offsets from the public purse to keep fees affordable. Since Vancouver is the third most expensive city in which to live in the world, securing appropriate real estate and recruiting employees is very difficult. Some childcare centers are now operating exclusively for wealthy parents, charging up to \$3000 per month.

### MYTH #4: UNIONIZED CHILD CARE WORKERS ARE REASONABLY COMPENSATED

Although our workers are covered by a collective agreement, they do not make a "livable" wage for the City of Vancouver. Fees for families are high from their perspective and child care often costs more than college or university tuition. For some families, the cost of childcare prevents one parent from returning to work. Since fees are the only source of funding for centers and there is only so much capacity for families to pay fees, child care workers have been chronically underpaid for years. They provide a service that is nothing less than the early development of our children, our future, but are not rewarded with wages that reflect this important job. At DDA, we pay union wages, but with benefits these are considerably higher than what some of our competitors pay (or what families can afford) and still they do not amount to a liveable wage in Vancouver and Richmond.

*Business in Vancouver* recently (January 27, 2017) reported that the high cost of daycare in Vancouver is keeping women and men who want to work out of the labour market while their children are young. They cited a study recently released by the Early Childhood Educators of BC and the Centre for Spatial Economics that demonstrated \$10 per day childcare would cover the cost of its implementation, citing: "A typical annual rate for a toddler in B.C. is \$11,100. Subsidized at \$10 per day, the average annual rate for daycare for a toddler would be just \$2,600." This would then free up more parents to work and pay taxes.

*Business in Vancouver* further stated: "The BC NDP is promoting a \$10 per day daycare program - a program it calculates would cost the government \$1.5 billion annually" by raising taxes for British Columbians making \$150,000 a year or more. "The Ministry of Children and Family

Development said the tax increase .... would generate only \$200 million per year in additional revenue, leaving a shortfall of \$1.3 billion." Although Quebec offers \$7 per day daycare, the province has some of the highest tax rates in Canada, higher than those in BC in every category other than tobacco. On the other hand, rather than spend tax dollars on childcare, the current provincial government recently announced they are planning on reducing taxes for British Columbians, giving their budget surpluses back to B.C. families. People in BC seem averse to increased taxes based on previous voting patterns, so the probability of \$10 per day childcare in B.C. is low. The article concluded that overall, Vancouver is no longer affordable for young families, a fact that we all must accept.





# THE END OF AN ERA FOR WATERSIDE CDC

BY COLLEEN THOMAS, MANAGER, WATERSIDE CDC

We have been given the unfortunate news that Waterside will be closing its doors for service on August 31 this year. For many this place is a stepping stone, but for me it has been my career for over 15 years and so I wanted to share some of its history with you.

DDA's mission is to maximize the potential of children and adults with developmental disabilities. In the years before I arrived the focus was on special needs children in Vancouver and Richmond and many staff have worked at various settings, but I was hired into and remained at Waterside (with exception of 2 maternity leaves and one 6 month coverage at another child care centre) since being hired by Leanna Logan in June of 2001. I will always be grateful for the opportunity to take care of what was her 'baby' when I stepped into the manager role in September 2009.

Waterside was to be a temporary placement for the Association's Playhouse centre while transitioning to their new home on Brant Street in Vancouver. But when Playhouse moved, there was still a great need for child care in this community within the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. And so Waterside grew roots and has seen many changes as needs grew and diminished over the years. In 2001, when I began we were a toddler centre just as we are today. Except the physical space looked very different. The extra playroom off E. Cordova was where the children napped and the back room was used as office space for our Eastside Infant Development program. In approximately 2003, we opened a 3's program since finding preschool-aged child care in this neighborhood was almost non-existent. We were granted a license to use the front room as a 3-4 year old program allowing families more time to get into the coveted 3-5 daycare spaces nearby. This grew our staff team and put us through a few more physical changes.

Over time, more preschool-aged centres began to open in the developing area and our families were able to move on away from us. This meant that the 3's program we had created was no longer keeping a waitlist and numbers began to stay too low to keep up the expense of the room. We closed that program in June of 2014, bringing our numbers down to 12. And so again, Waterside had some team changes and physical changes to our space. We gained an extra play area for the toddlers and the teaching team gained a staff room! No more eating lunch in the office or off the kitchen island while the toddlers were trying to settle in the nap room!



And now we arrive at a final change. Closing doors. It's hard to believe this is where we are. ChoiPing has been here over 20 years and Fiona over 10. Even though Grace, Flora, Yadira & Janet are relatively newbies in comparison, we have all been present, in what some refer to as the most unbearable part of the city, to keep up this gem of a workplace. We have served so many wonderful families and cared for so many extraordinary children. Each of you have made a unique impact on our lives and created memories we will always treasure. We hope that our paths may cross again soon and we wish all of you the very best!



Please visit [www.develop.bc.ca](http://www.develop.bc.ca) for all our child care locations. Infant, toddler, preschool and after-school care spaces available.

QUALITY  
INCLUSIVE  
CHILDCARE

# HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

BY ALANNA HENDREN

Many families who have adults with developmental disabilities living with them are wondering about where their child will live when they're not around anymore. Younger families with children becoming adults are wondering where their son or daughter will live once they finish high-school and assume the lives of their non-disabled peers. Some families have purchased housing for their adult children and now must try to negotiate the support they will need to live on their own.

Although CLBC often paints a sunny portrait of neighbors helping neighbors and people helping people in the community, the reality is that there are very few neighbors who are willing to contribute their free time to support people with developmental disabilities in the community, regardless of how well-meaning they may be. Vancouver is counted as the 3rd most expensive city to live in – in the world. People are busy working, hustling, moving, making money, spending money, tending to their own needs, supporting their

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... The reality is that there are very few neighbors who are willing to contribute their time to support people with developmental disabilities in the community.  
”



own families, and most barely have time to get a few spare moments for themselves. Most siblings are supportive but they too have extraordinarily hectic lives, so the only realistic option is paid staff support.

So how does housing work for people with developmental disabilities in B.C.?

CLBC issued a paper on Inclusive Housing: “Advancing Good Lives in Welcoming Communities.” On page 2, they clearly state: “CLBC does not have a mandate to fund the cost of actual housing. Our mandate is to: Provide supports to address disability-related needs, including in an individual’s home; Assist individuals and their families to find and use generic and community supports such as transit, recreation, social clubs, etc.; Coordinate amongst various agencies where an individual has complex care needs”.

They go on: “CLBC has several roles in encouraging and facilitating the expansion of inclusive housing...” These roles include convening partners to problem-solve, seek advice and explore innovative and collaborative solutions; Create policy that clarifies CLBC’s mandate and staff roles,



and enable/encourage the leveraging of family and service provider assets; Plan for and provide funding for supports for eligible individuals including the option of Individualized Funding or Person-Centered societies (Microboards) to enable flexible person-centered supports.

Families are also referred to BC Housing, which will fund rental subsidies (although these are extremely difficult to come by these days), or home modifications to improve accessibility.

These policies will leave many, many people with developmental disabilities with no housing of their own. Most families in Vancouver cannot afford to purchase a home for their child with a disability and those who do find it very difficult to receive a commitment for ongoing support from CLBC. CLBC has very little money to meet current demand so people with their own homes are generally considered a low priority. It is hard to imagine how this lack of affordable housing will play out over the long term. Home share includes housing, so that will remain a viable option for some.

Because there is no coordinated policy amongst government departments for people with developmental disabilities,

families are left on their own to negotiate a path for their adult children in the areas of housing, medical services, aging services, employment, community safety and transportation. Some higher level planning that is consistently applied to all those who are eligible for CLBC services would provide a road-map and offer realistic solutions to predictable problems.



# INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Please contact us at [604.273.4DDA](tel:604.273.4DDA) or visit [www.develop.bc.ca](http://www.develop.bc.ca)



# THE FUTURE OF HANDYDART

BY RAY BEYERSTEIN & JANE BARRETT-LENNARD WITH ASSISTANCE FROM DAVID WONG

Jane Barnett Lennard and Ray Beyerstein have been members of the Drop-In Self-Advocacy Group for many years. They encourage people with disabilities to speak out for themselves, especially if they are being treated unfairly. On January 18th, Jane and Ray had the opportunity to take part in a TransLink Service Delivery Review meeting, held at the historic Morris J. Wosk Center for Dialogue, in downtown Vancouver. The review and survey focused on operational policies and services for HandyDart users. Jane and Ray were DDA's self-advocate delegates to the meeting, seeing as they are regular users of the HandyDart service and wished to voice their opinions.

At the meeting, there were representatives from other organizations, customers and advocates supporting positive changes to the HandyDart system. The TransLink representatives provided a written survey which identified areas of concern for stakeholders. There were numerous service delivery areas that were discussed, but the most important issues to Ray and Jane were reducing the number of denied trips and decreasing trip times. With that, TransLink posed some possible solutions including the potential for some HandyDart applicants to use conventional modes of public transportation such as regular bus and Skytrain to reduce the workload of the HandyDart system. Another solution which has already been implemented is the use of taxis to handle demand at peak times, vehicle emergencies and ensuring the schedule remains on time.



These are all good ideas but require additional refinement. Being able to identify a person's ability to use public transit on the application is good but should not disqualify him or her from HandyDart usage. For example, for people who may be sensitive to noise and crowded places, they may be able to take public transit independently during less busy times but struggle to cope during rush hour. At our self-advocate group meeting, there was consensus that HandyDart should be prioritized for those who need it most and many people can be trained to ride regular transit if they have some help.

The use of taxis is a great idea to help with scheduling issues, but it is then important to ensure that taxi drivers receive training in working with people with disabilities. We want the drivers to also focus on our abilities and strengths so that they can support us in a way that maintains our independence and dignity.



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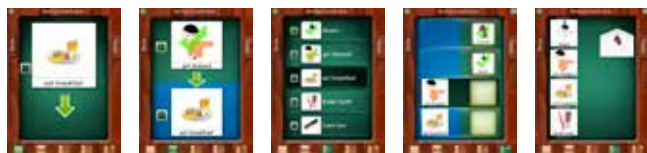


# OUR TOP THREE VISUAL SUPPORT APPS

## FIRST THEN SCHEDULE HD (FTVS HD - IOS DEVICES ONLY) - \$20.99

First-Then HD allows IOS users create schedules in any environment and is fully customizable to include specific needs of the individual. Schedules can be created using a variety of image sources, and can be created to show the steps within specific daily events, or as a reminder of events throughout the day. The timer feature allows steps to be further tailored to the unique needs of the individual, and can be set to include the entire event or for each step within a schedule. Video clips can also be added.

### FIVE DIFFERENT VIEWING FORMATS



## ASD TOOLS- \$5.49

ASD Tools is an easy and multipurpose app, which serves as an assistive tool to introduce learning structures or routines. The app has very easy- inter linking tools that can be used for school, therapy, outings, home, and any other environment.

### FEATURES



123 Steps can be used as a visual schedule, choice board or to break down tasks into simple steps.

First Then is a visual strategy to help the user to move from one activity to another.

The app helps to reinforce and motivate the user to complete troublesome tasks or activities.



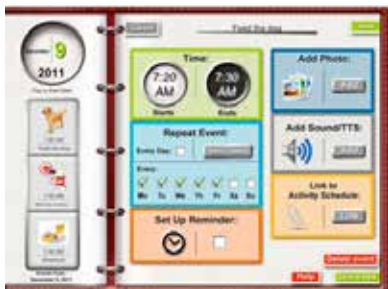
The Timer can teach waiting skills, count down the time to finish a task, monitor skills or to lock in the transition time between tasks.

## VISUAL SCHEDULE PLANNER- \$20.99

Visual Schedule Planner is a completely customizable Audio-Visual Schedule/Calendar specifically designed for individuals who may benefit from the use of visual supports to ease transitions, anxiety or for those who may need to visually represent the "events" in their day. This is especially true for people with special needs such as Autism Spectrum Disorders, brain injuries, learning challenges, auditory processing disorders and developmental delays.

### FEATURES

- Custom images and sound
- Activity schedules
- Video modeling
- Timer
- Checklists
- Notes
- Password protected settings
- Print Daily Schedules



### VIDEO MODELING

Video Modeling can provide a model of the desired behavior or demonstrate how to complete a task.



# JOBS WEST SUCCESS STORIES



BY HAYLEY SCHWARZ

We would like to congratulate Rebecca, who was offered a seasonal, part-time, position at Winners. Winners' fast-paced environment fits Rebecca's outgoing and hardworking personality. Rebecca was introduced to Winners in 2009 when she did a short work experience. LUSH Cosmetics also offered Rebecca a position the same week, but Rebecca choose to work at Winners. Keep up the great work, Rebecca!



BY ROCHELLE REZANSOFF

We would like to congratulate Ben on his new position at the Richmond Ice Centre. Ben's tasks at the Richmond Ice Centre include sweeping refuse from the lobby, dressing rooms and stands throughout the ice centre. Through the collaboration of Jobs West and the City of Richmond Ben has found an ideal opportunity and has been extremely motivated since beginning his position in December, Keep up the great work, Ben!



BY HAYLEY SCHWARZ

We would like to congratulate Pagan, who has been offered a part-time paid position at Starworks. Pagan's work ethic and strong attention to detail have made her an incredible asset to the Starworks team. Pagan was able to secure two paid job offers in a span of only two weeks! Her ability to perform during a working interview has made her a competitive candidate. Hats off to Pagan!



BY HAYLEY SCHWARZ

We would like to congratulate Max, who secured a part-time paid position as a bicycle courier, with Phantom Couriers. You may have seen Max on *Global News*, advocating for persons with disabilities to pursue their dream careers! Max's positive attitude, great work ethic and ability to take initiative make him an integral member of the Phantom team. Awesome job, Max!



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## GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY



BY DAVID WONG

The Richmond Food Bank provides an essential service for its community, receiving donated food from various suppliers and generous contributors which are distributed to individuals and families in need. Hugh Campbell and Michael Naples are part of the team of caring volunteers who take time to help out with various duties. Hugh and Michael are strong believers in giving back to the community and it shows through their eagerness to help. They know it takes caring people to strengthen our communities and fully support people trying to make a difference in the lives of others.

## INDRA AULAK WINS CONTEST



BY SEAN MILES

Congratulations to one of the Drop-In's long-time participants, Indra Aulak, for winning the Holiday Card Contest during the 12th Annual Inclusion Art Show, hosted by PosAbilities. Indra's artwork titled "Mother & Child" earned her a cash prize in addition to her work being used as PosAbilities' 2016 Holiday Greeting card which was printed and distributed. This piece of art was created by a process called Batik, the use of acrylic ink and beeswax on textile. Thank you to Art Teacher, Kim Almond, for facilitating such a creative arts class.

## MY CHRISTMAS PARTY

BY GURPREET DHILLON, SELF ADVOCATE

I went to my family and friends' house at a Christmas party. They have a small house with a big kitchen. There were so many people that I had counted. There were 50 or 60. We had pakora, sweets and Chai tea. They made so many pakora – it was yummy. I talked to my auntie about Indian food and how things are in India.

People dressed up in Indian shirts and saris. The women wear a suit over pants and the men wear an Indian suit with a tie over top. They wore dark colors like red, black, and purple.

There was a lot of loud noise because they were telling stories. They were talking about fighting in India and garment factories. I like to talk about work and about my day program – how the staff are, café club, bowling and the fresh air from walking outside.

I feel happy and good when I visit my family. They make me smile.





# MOVEMBER ON MAIN STREET

BY SASA ALAMANOS, CSW, MAIN STREET DROP-IN

The annual Movember event has made its way around the world all the way to the Main Street Drop In! In honour of the Movember movement, Drop In and CAP participants Willie Amero, Ray Beyerstein, Jane Barrett-Lennard, Hugh Campbell, Elizabeth Carver, Mark Hawsworth, Janet Mathews, Michael Naples, Rochelle Morganstern, Frank Spatari, Jim Turner and Richard Wielgosh created their own moustache props to raise awareness of men's health issues. The team learned some men's health facts and discussed the importance of cancer awareness. Prostate cancer testing can be an uncomfortable subject, although it is an important conversation. The group made the moustaches to show support of Movember values and eliminate the stigma attached to prostate cancer screening. We hope to diminish reluctance to get checked and increase the quality of life for men.



## MY LIFE AT MY DAY PROGRAM

BY MICHELLE WALE-RYAN, SELF ADVOCATE

Fraser Day Program is like family. We help each other, we have each other's backs 100%, we respect each other's space, we love each other and we're nice to each other. I've been learning (being in classes) and being more independent at Fraser Day Program for more than six years.

I am better at cooking class because I've been thinking about not spilling and making a mess. I think it's important for safety reasons for clients and staff. I like to cook because it's fun and you get to taste the food – it's like a surprise to see what kind of meal you're chopping and cooking over the stove.

I started my art class with Kim a few years ago. We moulded and sculpted in clay. I made roses, pots, and my first painting was a bronze kind of metal fish. My art teacher Kim put it in the art show – that was my first painting in an art show. I felt a lot better about my painting after that.

The staff is the best. They have better ideas every day. Sometimes it's good to have new ideas and older ideas mixed in one. It's like a painting you want to spin it around and see what it looks like.

I've also learned to stick with the crew and not get lost. I was a little "wild child" when I first came. I've learned to be stronger in sports. Listening became easier; I wasn't as focused on the rules when I came here at first.



# CREATIVITY WITH OUR FRIENDS AT WEST 8<sup>TH</sup>



BY DEVON HOWIE & ANGIE ACUPAN

For the past five years, a group of clients from West 8th day program have been coming to Creekside on Thursday between 10-11am.

During this time, they help us keep our classrooms clean by washing toys, chairs and tables and they also fold our laundry, sweep the floors and recently started to clean the windows as well.

We thought we would do something extra special with our friends from West 8th, just in time for the holidays. Over the course of a two day period, we created some amazing masterpieces. Everyone was very excited to paint and sprinkle glitter over the canvases.

On December 12th, the toddlers walked to deliver three of the four canvases to the West 8th Day Program. This was such a wonderful experience for everyone involved and we cherish the time we have with all of our friends from West 8th.





# NEW CLOTHING DONATION BINS IN THE LOWER MAINLAND

THANK YOU to our new bin hosts for supporting DDA  
Be sure to drop off your donations at any of our white donation bins!



**Trocadero Pizza & Steak House**  
2411 Nanaimo St, Vancouver



**Dandy Horse Cycles**  
6661 Hastings St, Burnaby



**Next Generation Automotive**  
19427 92 Ave, Surrey



**Ricky's Country Restaurant**  
2160 King George Blvd,  
White Rock



**Players Wanted Games & Collectibles**  
7161 Victoria Dr, Vancouver

**A&C Automotive**  
5412 Imperial St,  
Burnaby

**Parkgate Village Shopping Centre**  
202-3650 Mt Seymour  
Parkway, North  
Vancouver



**Canada Storage Station**  
14742 64 Ave, Surrey



**Parkland Fellowship Church**  
9574 160 St, Surrey



**Squamish Toyota**  
39150 Queens Way,  
Squamish

**Best Veggies Ltd**  
13208 80 Ave, Surrey

**Patrick Equipment Ltd**  
2625 Douglas Rd,  
Burnaby



**Elite Auto Spa**  
9215 120 St, Delta



**Petro Canada**  
7643 Royal Oak Ave,  
Burnaby



**Sunli Lighting**  
5068 Imperial St, Burnaby

**Spice Kitchen**  
100-2955 Gladwin Rd,  
Abbotsford

**Port Kells Building Supplies**  
18981 88 Ave, Surrey

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# LEISURE FAIR 2017

## JOIN US AT OUR UPCOMING LEISURE FAIR!

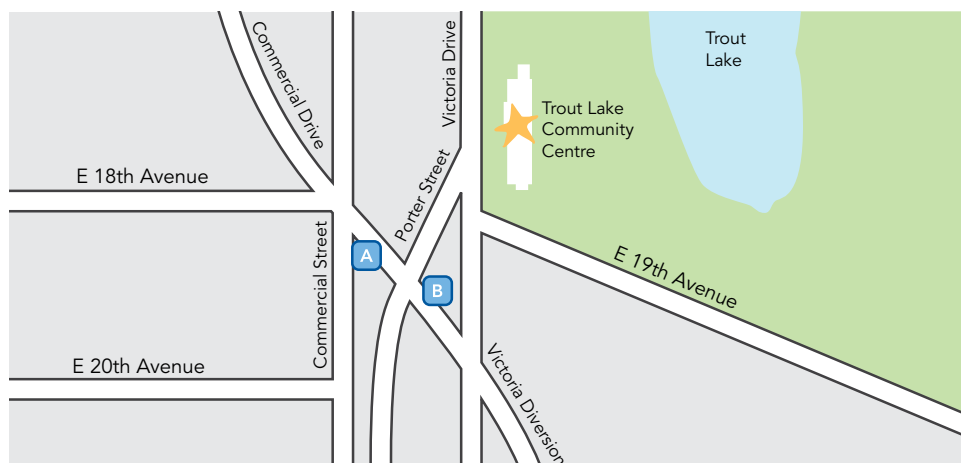
Explore recreation activities for children and youth with disabilities.  
Enjoy demonstrations by Sirota's Alchymy at 7:00pm.

Children are welcome to attend!

**WHERE:** Trout Lake Community Centre (Gym)  
3360 Victoria Drive  
Vancouver, BC V5N 4M4

**WHEN:** Wednesday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**FROM:** 6:00pm to 8:00pm



**A** 20 Victoria (Victoria Diversion and Commercial Street bus stop)

**B** 20 Downtown (Victoria Diversion and Porter Street bus stop)

★ Trout Lake Community Centre (three-minute walk from the stop)

*You can take 20 Victoria from Broadway Commercial Station if coming from the Skytrain. Bus stop is in front of Starbucks.*

For more information, contact Michael Hajduk at  
[mhajduk@develop.bc.ca](mailto:mhajduk@develop.bc.ca) or 604 301 2831  
or visit us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/leisurefair](http://www.facebook.com/leisurefair)



Developmental  
Disabilities Association



# TAX CONCEPTS

BY DAVID CHEN, BSc, BA, CPCA, FPSC Level 1,  
Lead Advisor, DC Complete Financial

In past articles we have looked at specific tax efficient things you can do for disability finances like applying for the disability tax credit. With tax time just around the corner perhaps this would be a good opportunity to go over some general concepts about taxation to clear up the mysteries about them and help you get as much tax relief as possible to financially manage your family's financial challenges.

First, the deductions. These are just expenses that you have that can be used to decrease your income and thereby decrease your taxes owed. Lots of expenses related to caring for your child's disability are deductions (therapy, medications, private specialists, other medical and dental costs, etc.). Knowing about what is tax deductible is very important, but more important is to save all the tax receipts to prove you had the expense. Just keeping your bank statement is typically not enough evidence for Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) in the event of an audit. Also often all of the expenses in a family can generally be stacked onto one tax payer to reap the maximum tax saving benefit.



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The key is to find out which tax credits are available... and when to apply for them.  
”

Tax credits are taken directly from the taxes you owe. Some of these credits you have to apply for (like the disability tax credit) while others can just be applied when you file your tax return. Of note is that some of the credits are transferable like the disability tax credit where they can be transferred from one individual who cannot use it to another tax payer who can and/or are stackable (like a parent with two children with disabilities can claim two disability tax credit transfers). The key is to find out which tax credits are available, which ones have to be applied for and when to apply for them because they only save tax money when you have to pay. Someone who for low-income reasons pays no tax has little benefit claiming a tax credit and it is best to transfer it to someone who can use it if it is transferable.

Even if you have missed prior years of tax returns (as I often find with families too busy just trying to manage financially and take care of their children) filing missed tax returns is super important

for several reasons. First, if you owe taxes, there are penalties and daily compound interest attached to unfiled and unpaid taxes that eventually lead to social benefits being cut off, summary judgements by CRA as to what you owe, collection calls and eventually garnishing or freezing of your bank accounts. Filing the tax returns in this case, even if you cannot afford to pay is super important to start to work with CRA to amicably resolve the situation.

If you don't owe any tax money but haven't filed tax returns for a few years, the positive news is that if you do, you can often get some tax money coming back by filing the returns and you will likely trigger the payment of social benefits that would be very beneficial to your family.

The final concept to think about is if you have a spouse or a common law spouse, consider filing your tax returns together as there are spousal and dependent tax credits that tax filing software and tax filing people can apply to your tax return to save you more tax money if they know to apply them. Some of these are income tested for eligibility so the software or tax filer will need to accurately know what is in the spouse's tax return to apply them.



## Maximizing Tax Credits & Refunds for Caregivers

The important contributions of people who care for someone with a disability are recognized within our tax legislation. It is one of the positive advances that our country has made in the last few decades. Although there is a long way to go, it's a good start. If only those who qualify for these tax credits (and potential significant refunds) would please approach the starting line. If you are a caregiver and you haven't taken a close look at this within the last few years you are not alone.

It is very worthwhile to make the effort and there is a place to go where you can get definitive answers specific to your situation – usually at no cost.

There are six tax credits that should be looked at to maximize results. The entire family situation should be considered because tax credits can often be transferred between family members based on the eligibility of the person they are caring for to qualify for a disability tax credit. Other variables are age, income levels, marital status, other family relationships, transfer options, residency and financial support paid or received.

## NEW! Home Accessibility Expenses Credit

The non-refundable tax credit allows Canadians eligible for the disability tax credit or over 65 years of age to claim renovation expenses that allow the eligible person to safely access and move around their home. The credit extends to the eligible person's caregivers, such as their spouse or children, who can also claim the credit.

Any home renovated must be owned by the eligible person or caregiver, and the maximum amount of allowable renovation expenses is \$10,000. The credit rate is 15%, which means the maximum credit you can receive is \$1,500. For more information, visit this page of the CRA website.

Want to know more about financial planning, tax credits and more? Contact the Family Support & Advocacy program at [604-233-5433](tel:604-233-5433).





## 2017 EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

# VANCOUVER PARENTS TRANSITION GROUP

Do you have a child with Special Needs leaving high school soon? If so, transitioning into the adult world is just around the corner. We are a group of parents who have been there and done that! Come listen to speakers, meet other parents and share your ideas and experiences!

### EASTSIDE LOCATION

Developmental Disabilities  
Association  
Kaslo Hub - 3455 Kaslo St.,  
Vancouver

### WESTSIDE LOCATION

Vancouver Resource  
Society  
2006 West 10th Avenue,  
Vancouver

## MEETING SCHEDULE (JANUARY-JUNE 2017)

DATE	LOCATION	TOPIC
Saturday, January 28 (10:30am)	Westside	Housing Workshop for People with disabilities in conjunction with BACI and posAbilities
Wednesday, March 1 (6:30PM)	Eastside	Sexuality and Safety for People with disabilities
Saturday, April 1 (10:30am)	Westside	One on One help with Transition and Beyond
Wednesday, May 3 (6:30pm)	Eastside	Options after Graduation
Saturday, June 3 (10:30am)	Westside	Programs and Resources for People with Disabilities

For more information, please contact [Liz Cochrane](#) at 604-733-6252 or [Yuko McCulloch](#) at 604-222-2258 or online at [www.vptg.ca](http://www.vptg.ca) and [transitionparents@gmail.com](mailto:transitionparents@gmail.com).



## APPS FOR ACCESSIBILITY

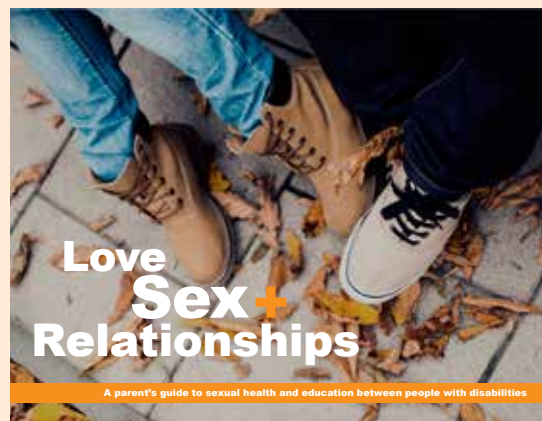
Visual Scheduling, AAC, Life Skills and much more!

**MAR**  
**25 2017**  
11AM-1:30PM  
NO COST

### APPS FOR ACCESSIBILITY

**VISUAL SCHEDULING, AAC, LIFE SKILLS AND MUCH MORE**

With Loubna Kalaaaji, Assistive Technology Specialist  
3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver  
Please call Michael Hajduk at 604-301-2831 to register.



## Love Sex+ Relationships

A parent's guide to sexual health and education between people with disabilities

**MAY**  
**06 2017**  
11AM-2PM  
NO COST

### LOVE, SEX & RELATIONSHIPS

**A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SEXUAL HEALTH AND EDUCATION BETWEEN PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

With Tara Strachan, Occupational Wellness Facilitator  
3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver  
Please call Terry Schenkel at 604-233-5433 to register.



### INVESTING YOUR RDSP

**Saturday, May 27th**

10:30am - 12:00pm  
3455 Kaslo St.  
Vancouver



Please see the Workshops section for more details.

Financial planning services and investment advice are provided by Royal Mutual Funds Inc. (RMFI), RBC Global Asset Management Inc., Royal Bank of Canada, Royal Trust Corporation of Canada and The Royal Trust Company are separate corporate entities which are affiliated.

**MAY**  
**27 2017**  
10:30AM-12PM  
NO COST

### REGISTERED DISABILITY SAVINGS PLANS

**WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?**

With Denise Levine, RBC Financial Planner  
3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver  
Please call Terry Schenkel at 604-233-5433 to register.

# 2017 TAX PREPARATION CLINICS

PROVIDED BY THE CRA VOLUNTEER TAX PREPARATION SERVICE



## RESPITALITY PROGRAM

The Family Support and Advocacy program wishes to acknowledge the wonderful contributions of hotels that make the Respitality Program a huge success. In 2016, 19 parents received a complimentary night stay at a hotel so they could have some rest and relaxation. The Family Support and Advocacy program would like to thank the River Rock Resort & Casino and the Park Inn & Suites for their generosity. After a hotel stay, parents call with words of thanks and tears of happiness. If you know of a family member in need of some rest and relaxation, suggest they enroll by contacting Michael Hajduk, Family Support Worker at 604-301-2831.

### BROTHER OR SISTER OF A PERSON WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY?

Interested in a person-to-person network for information, advocacy and awareness?

Please call Terry Schenkel at 604-233-5433

### THE SALVATION ARMY VANCOUVER HARBOUR LIGHT CENTER

Email	<a href="mailto:taxclinicsa@gmail.com">taxclinicsa@gmail.com</a>
Location	119 E Cordova Street, Vancouver
Clinic dates	March 11, 2017 - December 2, 2017 Every Saturday 10:00am-3:00pm
Clinic type	With appointment Walk-ins are welcome
Client type	For all
Language	Cantonese, English, Mandarin
Number of volunteers	5
Notes	Wheelchair accessible

### TENTH CHURCH

Email	<a href="mailto:taxhelp@tenth.ca">taxhelp@tenth.ca</a>
Location	11 10th Ave West, Vancouver
Clinic dates	Year-Round Every Saturday - 1:00pm-4:00pm
Clinic type	With appointment
Client type	For all
Language	Cantonese, English, Korean, Mandarin, Russian
Notes	Wheelchair accessible Prior and current year returns SELECTED Saturdays only

### VANCOUVER ABORIGINAL TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE SERVICES SOCIETY

Email	<a href="mailto:administration@vatjss.com">administration@vatjss.com</a>
Location	2982 Nanaimo Street, Vancouver
Clinic dates	Year Round Every Wednesday and Saturday
Clinic type	With appointment
Client type	For all
Language	English
Notes	Only serves a specific location Wheelchair accessible Current year returns only

### SIKH COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE

Phone number	604-322-5613
Location	8000 Ross Street, Vancouver
Clinic dates	Year Round Monday-Friday -10:00am-12:00pm
Clinic type	Without appointment Walk-ins are welcome
Client type	For all
Language	English, French, Hindi, Persian, Punjabi, Urdu
Number of volunteers	5
Notes	Wheelchair accessible Prior and current year returns

# UPCOMING

## FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS

SPONSORED BY THE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION

### VANCOUVER CHINESE SUPPORT GROUP

General support for children's and adult's issues in Cantonese and Mandarin.

**MEETING:** 3rd Saturday of the month  
from 6:30-8:30pm

**PLACE:** 4948 Fraser Street, Vancouver

**CHILD MINDING:** Available on site when requested at least one week in advance of meeting

**CONTACT:** [knowledgeaction@gmail.com](mailto:knowledgeaction@gmail.com)

### YOUTH IN TRANSITION

Support information for transition to adulthood.

**MEETINGS:** March 1 & May 3, 2017  
at 6:30pm (3455 Kaslo St., Vancouver)

January 28, April 1 & June 3, 2017

**CONTACT:** Liz Cochrane at 604-733-6252  
[transitionparents@gmail.com](mailto:transitionparents@gmail.com)

### BOLLYWOOD MAZA

Support to families in Hindi and Punjabi

**MEETING:** Wednesdays 3:30 to 4:30pm

**PLACE:** 4948 Fraser St., Vancouver

**CONTACT:** Michael Hajduk at 604-301-2831  
[mhajduk@develop.bc.ca](mailto:mhajduk@develop.bc.ca)

### VIETNAMESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Support to Families in Vietnamese

**MEETING:** Second Thursday of the Month  
6:30pm to 8:00pm

**PLACE:** 3455 Kaslo St., Vancouver

**CHILD MINDING:** Available on site when requested at least one week in advance of meeting

**CONTACT:** Nikki Tran at 778-895-2535  
from 6:00 to 9:00pm

### JAPANESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Lower Mainland general support to families in Japanese

**MEETING:** Date to be determined

**PLACE:** 3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver

**CONTACT:** Chigusa Barnes at  
[chishebarnes@msn.com](mailto:chishebarnes@msn.com)



**United Way**  
Lower Mainland

# DDA AGM

## SAVE THE DATE

For more information about our AGM or becoming a DDA member, visit our website  
[www.develop.bc.ca](http://www.develop.bc.ca)

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 2017**



### VISIT OUR SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING AT DDA AND IN YOUR COMMUNITY.



**FACEBOOK:** [facebook.com/dda604](https://facebook.com/dda604)



**TWITTER:** [twitter.com/dda604](https://twitter.com/dda604)



**YOUTUBE:** [youtube.com/dda604](https://youtube.com/dda604)

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**Developmental  
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We welcome your comments and feedback. Kindly direct all comments and submissions to [communications@develop.bc.ca](mailto:communications@develop.bc.ca).