

SPRING  
2018

# THE STAR



Developmental  
Disabilities Association

## IN THIS ISSUE

**2018: THE SAGA CONTINUES** 2  
Our Goals for 2018

**YOU'RE INVITED: LEISURE FAIR** 5  
Come and See Local Activities for  
Children With Disabilities

**AAC STAFF TRAINING AT DDA** 6  
Augmentative & Alternative  
Communication Training

**JOBS WEST SUCCESS STORY** 10  
Kevin at the Vancouver Aquarium

**NEW PICK UP DONATION TRUCKS** 13  
Book Your Complimentary Home  
Pick Up!

**SPRING CLEANING** 13  
Tips to Clean your Garage

**BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT** 14  
Biological Implications vs Voluntary  
Behaviour

**STARBURST** 16  
Upcoming Family Support Events

## MINISTER OF STATE VISITS BERWICK

PAGE 5





# 2018

## THE DDA SAGA CONTINUES!

BY ALANNA HENDREN

The New Year is always full of predictions and new hopes for the future. Although we continue to have work from 2017 that still needs completion, we have great hopes for 2018 and what it might bring. In addition to health, happiness and the continued success of everyone associated with DDA, here's our wish list (and part of our strategic plan) for 2018:

### Increased staff wages:

Recruitment is our biggest challenge and that challenge is based on the very low wages negotiated in our last sectoral collective agreement, which expires in 2019. We are excited to be working with the Community Social Service Employer's Association and the unions involved to increase our staff pay to a living wage. We will also be requesting a high level review of anticipated worker shortages in the social services sector over the next decade with a plan for how we can collectively keep the sector alive into the future. With baby boomers leaving the workforce, we need to determine where our workforce will be coming from and the training they will need to take care of the aging population who previously supported others but now need care themselves.

### Equitable CLBC funding for our Region:

Based on population demographics, Vancouver is significantly under-funded compared to other regions in the province. This means that families and individuals with developmental disabilities don't have the same access

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With modern technologies, families should be able to enter the disability-support system at any point along the continuum and access different supports as their needs change.  
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to supports (and inclusion) as their counterparts who live elsewhere. DDA has been lobbying for additional CLBC funding for the region ever since CLBC was created. Comparisons of funding distribution show that Vancouver is disadvantaged compared to all regions on a per-capita basis. We are hopeful this may get some attention this year since more Vancouver M.L.A.s are now in Cabinet, but families who are denied service need to demand their fair share of CLBC funding. CLBC needs to develop policies that ensure families have the same access to services regardless of where they live in the province.

### An easier system for families to negotiate:

Between all the programs provided by the Ministries of Health, Children and Family Development (through a variety of agencies), Education (provided through school boards), Social Development and Poverty Reduction (income assistance) and CLBC (offering services through a variety of providers), families often get lost in the morass of referrals, procedures, eligibility requirements, and funding or spaces available. With each new bureaucracy, families have to tell their stories and yet another gate-keeper and, with high turnover in Ministries and service providing agencies, individuals often get lost in the shuffle. Yet another barrier to getting the support they need. There has to be a better way.

Four Liberal Cabinet Ministers of Health, Education, Social Development and Children and Families once signed an agreement to develop a more seamless,



cooperative system of supports for families of special needs children, but it hasn't happened yet. With modern technologies, families should be able to enter the disability-support system at any point along the age continuum and access different supports as their needs change.

**Development of Adaptive/Assistive Technologies:**

To support people with developmental disabilities to achieve greater independence, we have been exploring, experimenting and innovating in the area of technological supports at DDA for two decades now and this year we

will be expanding our iPad and Assistive Devices services to adults at DDA while we continue to automate back-office functions to improve administrative accuracy and efficiency. The use of technology in the area of disabilities is just beginning – we need to discover where it can take us!

Of course, many of these issues have been outstanding for several years now and we know all these dreams will not come true in any single year, but there are opportunities for positive change that have not existed for a while and we intend to grab them!

.....

DDA'S HOLIDAY  
*Jingle & Mingle*  
OPEN HOUSE

DDA celebrated the holidays with an open house at our offices in Richmond. Our members, clients, and guests were welcomed with refreshments, music, and raffle prizes. Thank you everyone who attended and supported DDA, and a special thanks to our staff who helped with the event.







BY KATHARINE NAUGHTON

For the second year, the Child and Youth Services Department participated in the Christmas Wish Breakfast at the Pan Pacific Hotel on December 13th, to benefit the Lower Mainland Christmas Bureau. A few of the managers from the Child and Youth Services Department delivered two vehicles full of toys. Thank you to all who donated this year!

# christmas wish

## BREAKFAST

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

# festivities



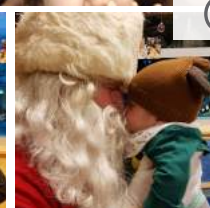
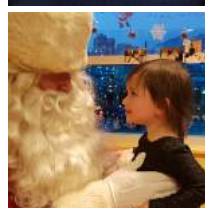
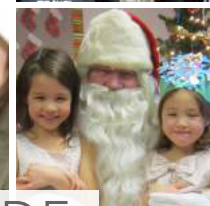
CHAMPLAIN



BERWICK



CREEKSIDE







## MINISTER OF STATE VISITS BERWICK CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

BY ANDREW ROETS AND KATHY MONCALIERI

Berwick Child Development Centre recently hosted Minister of State for Child Care Katrina Chen and the Assistant Deputy Minister with the Ministry of Children and Family Development Christine Massey for a tour of the facility, and chat about the accessibility of inclusive child care for families and spent some time with the children. Alanna Hendren, Executive Director, was on hand to share DDA's long history with child care and the present challenges we face. We appreciated the opportunity to speak candidly about the current state of child care and give suggestions for the future.

# LEISURE FAIR 2018

## JOIN US AT OUR UPCOMING LEISURE FAIR 2018!

Explore Lower Mainland recreation activities for children and youth with disabilities.

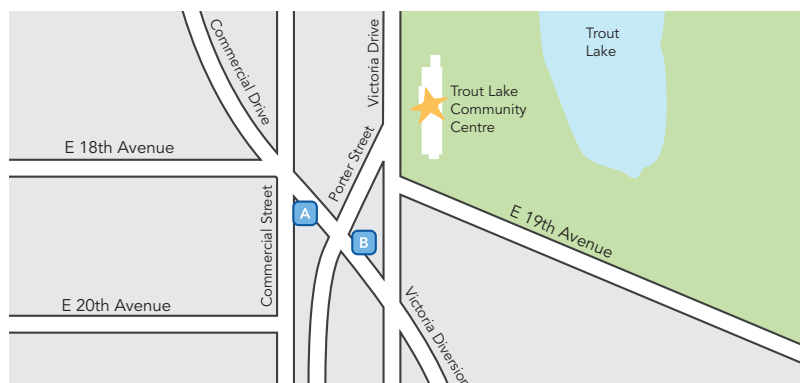
Children are welcome to attend!

**WHERE:** Trout Lake Community Centre  
(Grandview/Lakeview Room)  
3360 Victoria Dr.  
Vancouver, BC V5N 4M4

**WHEN:** Tuesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

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

For more information, contact Shixin Gao at [sgao@develop.bc.ca](mailto:sgao@develop.bc.ca) or 604 301 2831 or visit us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/leisurefair](https://www.facebook.com/leisurefair)





## AAC STAFF TRAINING AT DDA

BY LOUBNA KALAAJI

In 2017, DDA investigated technology solutions that can increase the capabilities of people with disabilities. DDA's goal is to develop and provide client-centred technological supports to optimize independence. The use of assistive technology promotes work towards independent living for people with disabilities.

To do this, DDA provides education for frontline staff and site managers to support assistive technology. We believe that there is an urgent need for effective collaboration among key stakeholders to support developmental activities. One area of promise is using assistive technologies to enhance communication outcomes for individuals who can benefit from Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

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We started 2018 with four training sessions that took place at four DDA vocational sites. The training was developed and presented by Lucy Grant, M.Sc., RSLP Speech Language Pathologist, and Tatjana Hamovic, SLPA Speech Language Pathology Assistant who presented Communication Assistance for Youth and Adults (CAYA). This training explores strategies for supporting adults who use AAC.

Nearly 50 staff from our residential and vocational departments attended the training sessions, which covered the definition of AAC, the variety of low- and high-technologies that can be used, the importance of modeling AAC systems, and the different types and levels of prompts that can be used to support individuals in learning AAC systems. Training concluded with a role play that let staff practice using low and/or high-tech systems. This gave participants an opportunity to learn from each other. Each session ended with an enthusiastic and thought-provoking dialogue among staff who shared their experience, concerns, and solutions they have used successfully.



## TAX PREPARATION CLINICS

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.

### Sikh Community Resource Center

604.322.5613 8000 Ross Street, Vancouver, BC

DATES: Year-round, Every Monday to Friday  
10:00am to 12:00pm

TYPE: Without appointment – Walk-ins are welcome

LANGUAGES: English, French, Hindi, Persian, Punjabi, Urdu

NOTES: Clinic location is wheelchair accessible  
Prior and current year returns

### Tenth Church

604.876.2181 11 W 10th Ave. Vancouver [taxhelp@tenth.ca](mailto:taxhelp@tenth.ca)

DATES: Year-round, Every Saturday 1:00pm to 4:00pm

TYPE: Appointment Only – Please CALL for appointments

LANGUAGE: Cantonese, English, Korean, Mandarin, Russian

NOTES: • Clinic location is wheelchair accessible  
• Prior and current year returns

### The Salvation Army Vancouver Harbour Light Center

[taxclinicsa@gmail.com](mailto:taxclinicsa@gmail.com) 119 East Cordova St, Vancouver

DATES: March 11, 2018 to December 02, 2018  
Every Saturday 10:00am to 3:00pm

TYPE: Appointments & Walk-ins are welcome

LANGUAGES: Cantonese, English, Mandarin

NOTES: Clinic location is wheelchair accessible

### Vancouver Aboriginal Transformative Justice Services Society

[administration@vatjss.com](mailto:administration@vatjss.com) 2982 Nanaimo St. Vancouver

DATES: Year-round, Every Wednesday & Saturday

TYPE: With appointment

LANGUAGE: English

NOTES: • Only serves a specific geographic location  
• Clinic location is wheelchair accessible  
• Current year returns only

## SPRING 2018 WORKSHOPS

**MAR 3**

10:30AM-1PM

FREE

### TECHNOLOGY AND APPS

Developmental Disabilities Association  
3455 Kaslo Street Vancouver

Contact Liz Cochrane [604-733-6252](tel:604-733-6252) or  
[transitionparents@gmail.com](mailto:transitionparents@gmail.com)

**MAR 24**

10AM-1PM

FREE

### REGISTERED DISABILITY SAVING PLAN (RDSP)

Developmental Disabilities Association  
3455 Kaslo Street Vancouver

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

\*\* This workshop will be provided in Japanese with some English\*\*

**APR 7**

10AM-1PM

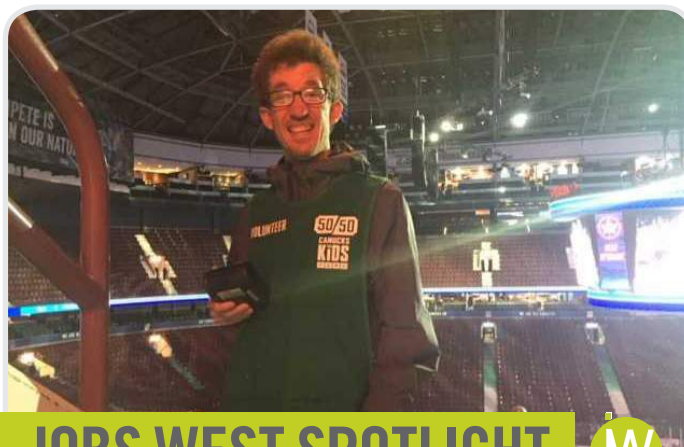
FREE

### POSITIVE BEHAVIOURAL SUPPORTS

Developmental Disabilities Association  
3455 Kaslo Street Vancouver

Contact: Nobuko at [nobuneedesu@hotmail.com](mailto:nobuneedesu@hotmail.com)

\*\* This workshop will be provided in Japanese with some English\*\*



## JOBS WEST SPOTLIGHT



### Casey at the Vancouver Canucks For Kids 50/50 Fund

BY MCKENZIE HANNEWYK

We would like to congratulate Casey on his volunteer work as a 50/50 ticket seller for the Vancouver Canucks For Kids Fund. A Jobs West client for several years, Casey continues to develop new skills in areas that interest him. A huge hockey fan himself, Casey loves interacting with fellow hockey fans, being part of the action, and contributing to a great cause. Alongside his co-worker, Casey's enthusiastic attitude shines as he prints off the tickets for fans or informs them of the ticket prices with a smile. For many games to come, Casey plans to continue delivering excellent customer service to guests and raising money for the Canucks For Kids fund. Nice work Casey! Casey also maintains his part-time job at Kerrisdale Lumber which he's held for over three years.

## in memory of

It is with deep sadness that we mourned the sudden passing of Bill Adams, a long-time board member, in December.

Bill had most recently been involved in recruiting and interviewing prospective new board members.

With a strong financial background, Bill helped us with our investments and participated on the DDA, Foundation and Trust Boards. He was very interested in our Value Village business and attended many conferences with us in an attempt to ensure that our operations resulted in maximum profits. He enjoyed business and provided DDA with a corporate perspective. We all learned a lot from Bill, who gave of his time with good humour, patience and thoughtfulness. He also knew how to live well and consequently supported high quality lives for everyone at DDA. We already miss him very much. His passing is so sad. He was smart, gregarious and kind. So many qualities we loved about him. Our best wishes go out to his caring wife Sally, his two sons and grandchildren.

The tide recedes, but leaves behind  
bright seashells in the sand.  
The sun goes down, but gentle warmth  
still lingers on the land.  
The music stops, yet echoes on  
in sweet, soulful refrains.  
For every joy that passes,  
something beautiful remains.  
(author unknown)

### William Alexander Adams

SEPTEMBER 1, 1940 — DECEMBER 13, 2017



### Jean Barrow Turner

MAY 19, 1938 – DECEMBER 28, 2017



Jean pictured here with her husband Stephen

It is with deep sadness that we announce the sudden passing of Mrs. Jean Turner on December 28, 2017 at St. Paul's Hospital. She is survived by her husband Stephen Haynes who resides at East 47th group home. They would have celebrated their 20 year wedding anniversary on February 14, 2018. Jean is pre-deceased by both of her parents.

Jean will always be remembered for her courage, tenacity and determination, humor, glam and queenly manner. She had much enthusiasm and passion for life. She enjoyed many hours with her husband, roommates, staff team and her 1-1 worker. She was adored by many, and greatly missed!

Jean started receiving services and support from DDA on November 13, 1963. She started at VARCO Training Center and retired from CORE in 1998. She then moved into the Semi-Independent program in the 90's with her husband. In 2003 Jean and her husband Stephen moved into East 47th group home.

Many thanks to Stephen, the East 47th staff team and her 1-1 worker for their complete devotion to Jean.





## VICTORIA DAY PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS AT BABYGOROUND AND BELKIN HOUSE

BY CANDANCE CHEN

At DDA, we recognize the importance of giving back to the community and the satisfaction that it brings. Victoria Day Program is excited to announce that we have started volunteering in our community at the Keep Vancouver Spectacular program, working in a community garden, volunteering at BabyGoRound and Belkin House. Most of our clients are recent high school graduates, so through these volunteering opportunities, they are gaining new skills and enhancing their existing skills, while exercising their social skills.

Our goal is to assist our clients to contribute to the community and to increase integration within the Victoria Day Program neighbourhood. Belkin House is our newest volunteer program which we started in October and is a great opportunity for our clients to gain experience in working as a team. At Belkin House, our clients are given the opportunity to practice more repetitive tasks such as pouring milk, cutting and peeling vegetables. All of the assigned tasks are easily adaptable and modified according to the cognitive level and motor skills of each individual. Each week our clients are gaining more experience and are building their critical thinking skills to improve the efficiency of their work. Social skills are practiced over and over during these volunteer experiences; our clients are making friends and continuing to build relationships. At the Victoria Day Program, we have noticed how significant the volunteer's jobs have enhanced our client's sense of belonging to the community through reaching out and helping in the best ways we can.

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With each week, our clients are gaining more experience and are building their critical thinking skills to improve the efficiency of their work.

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# SAVE THE DATE



**DDA NIGHT @ THE NAT  
BAILEY STADIUM**

**WED. JUNE 27, 2018**



## JOBS WEST SPOTLIGHT JV

### Kevin at the Vancouver Aquarium

Volunteering can provide valuable opportunities for clients to learn new skills, expand their resume, and improve their level of confidence in a work environment. At the Vancouver Aquarium, there are many opportunities to jump into various roles, depending on what skills you wish to work on and what interests you may have. Kevin, a volunteer since October 2017, has done just that. He thrives as a Stock Room Assistant and ensures that items for the gift shop are priced correctly and organized accordingly. Kevin's great attention to detail and steady work pace are essential to ensuring that each item is in mint condition and correctly priced before it is sent upstairs to the gift shop. In addition to his stock room duties, Kevin also spends some of his volunteering time maintaining the cleanliness in the Aquarium's many galleries and ensuring that guests are provided with the best visit possible. Great job Kevin!



## DDA AT THE VANCOUVER COUNCIL OF WOMEN LUNCHEON

BY TANYA CHEUNG

I had the opportunity to attend the Vancouver Council of Women monthly luncheon in November on behalf of DDA. DDA has been a long time member of the Vancouver Council of Women, a group of forward thinking, vibrant women who are keen on effecting positive change. The event involves a luncheon hosted by an organization (this month happened to be DDA as the luncheon host), followed by a presentation from a likeminded Organization. Joanne from the Canadian Red Cross was chosen to speak. She educated us on the mandate and mission of the Canadian Red Cross and how we can help. Here is a summary of her presentation.

### Canadian Red Cross shares "Power of Humanity"

From loaning health equipment to seniors to helping people who've been impacted by a natural disaster, the mission of the Canadian Red Cross is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity in Canada and around the world. Joanne Abshire, the Community Engagement Coordinator with the organization, presented to the Vancouver Council of Women at a recent meeting. Her "Power of Humanity" presentation outlined what the Red Cross does, its guiding principles, and how people in the community can get involved. One area of excellence for the Red Cross is helping people encountering disasters and emergencies. This was highlighted with a story shared about a 70-year-old woman named Pat Gauthier. She and her husband were evacuated from Boston Flats in the BC interior when the wildfires broke out this past summer. The Gauthier's lost everything they had including their four cats. The Canadian Red Cross was there to help people like Gauthier, but it also responded internationally when Hurricane Irma struck, and in Bangladesh to the crisis in Myanmar. This movement to help aligns with one of its fundamental principles, 'humanity', which means preventing and alleviating human suffering wherever it may be found. At the end of the presentation, council members were encouraged to help those who are in need by volunteering, educating, and donating.

## DDA AGM SAVE THE DATE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2018

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







## THINGS I LIKE TO DO ON THE IPAD

BY VICTOR AGUIRRE AND LISA SOUTH

This past fall, Victor was offered iPad training on Thursdays with Loubna. Victor really enjoys using the computers at the library and jumped at the opportunity to use one of our iPads. I recently had the chance to ask him a few questions about how his training is going.

**Lisa:** What have you learned to do on the iPad, Victor?

**Victor:** I have learned how to watch movies, the news and TV shows on YouTube. I have learned how to email my sister in Montreal. I have also learned how to take pictures on my iPad.

**Lisa:** Are you learning anything else on the iPad?

**Victor:** I am learning how to FaceTime on the iPad. Before Christmas, I went to visit with my mom and we FaceTimed with my sister in Montreal.

**Lisa:** What things do you like about using the iPad?

**Victor:** I like to look up places on Google Maps like where I used to live in El Salvador and where my grandmother lives in El Salvador. I also look at where my family lives in Montreal and Texas. I like to be able to see my sister when I talk to her on FaceTime. And it is easy to look up my favourite shows on the iPad.

**Lisa:** Do you think that using the iPad has changed the way you do things?

**Victor:** I like to be able to take it to my bedroom to relax while I watch my favourite shows and listen to music.

## PINK SHIRT DAY ANTIBULLYING AWARENESS



2018 FOCUS: CYBERBULLYING

## IN THE Villa Carital

BY MICHELLE WALE RYAN

All love home Villa Carital  
Good staff even the sweet boss  
Who staff helps, seniors like  
Cute even joy feel  
Villa Carital beautiful as a star  
Keep being strong and believe  
Villa Carital, see help, nice seniors

## ABOUT THE POET



Michelle attends the Fraser Day Program has been volunteering with Villa Carital for three years. She contributes by assisting with the bingo game and clean up afterward. She's enthusiastic about connecting socially with the seniors, as well as helping with wheelchair transport when needed. Michelle's assistance is very much appreciated by the centre and the residents enjoy her company a great deal. She finds it very rewarding as well.



# NEW WHITE CLOTHING BINS

**THANK YOU** to our new bin hosts for supporting DDA

Be sure to drop off your donations at any of our white clothing bins!



**Morgan Place**  
3288 156A St Surrey V3S 9Y7



**Chartwell Carrington House**  
Retirement Residence  
32679 6th Ave Mission V2V 1Y8



**Derby Manor**  
8601 16th Ave Burnaby V3N 0G1



**Mobil Lube Express**  
6869 Canada Way Burnaby  
V5E 3R3



**Puppy Trax**  
27099 8th Ave Aldergrove  
V4W 2G6



**Concord Retirement Residence**  
15869 Pacific Ave White Rock  
V4B 1S8



**Dream Pizza**  
1990 McCallum Rd Abbotsford  
V2S 3M6



**Second Look Autobody**  
12471 Vickers Way Richmond  
V6V 1J2



**Richmond Animal Hospital**  
9220 No. 3 Rd Richmond V7A 1V9



**Peace Arch RV Park**  
14601 40th Ave Surrey V3S 0L2



**Ladner Autobody**  
3561 River Rd Delta V4K 3N2



**Kent Place Apartments**  
533 Cottonwood Ave Coquitlam  
V3J 2R4

**Finnish Manor**  
3460 Kalyk Ave Burnaby  
V5G 3B2

**B & Y Crystal Shines Car Detailing**  
4403 Dawson St Burnaby  
V5C 4B8

**Skyline Apartments**  
15321 Russel Ave White Rock  
V4B 2P9

**Kinsmen Park Place**  
27402 32 Ave Aldergrove  
V4W 3J3

**Arcola Manor**  
7035 Arcola St Burnaby V5E 1H5

**By the Party Rentals**  
1300 Woolridge St Coquitlam  
V3K 6S4

**Northwest Gardening Services**  
7183 Curragh Ave Burnaby  
V5J 4V6

**Red Apple Food Store**  
32354 Marshall Rd Abbotsford  
V2T 1A4

**Andy Lal's Collision**  
10743 124 St Surrey V3V 4T5

**Evergreen Apartments**  
10525 150 St Surrey V3R 4B4

**Peace Arch Senior Citizens Housing Society**  
15468 Roper Ave V4B 2G5

**Maple Place Apartments**  
10675 150th St Surrey V3R 4C1

**Aldergrove Market & Super Canadian Pizza**  
27185 Fraser Hwy Aldergrove  
V4W 3R1

**Clover Heights Retirement**  
6209 184th St Surrey V3S 8B1

## LOCATE A BIN NEAR YOU AT

[www.develop.bc.ca](http://www.develop.bc.ca)





introducing our  
**NEW TRUCKS**  
picking up your  
donations

find a donation bin near you at [www.develop.bc.ca](http://www.develop.bc.ca)

or call 604.273.4DDA for complimentary pick up

## SPRING CLEANING YOUR GARAGE

For most families, the garage's primary purpose, a home for your car, naturally serves double-duty as a workshop, tool shed, storage for holiday décor, leftover paint, outgrown kids clothing, and a lot of stuff that you probably don't or want to remember. Over half of you of you store dangerous equipment such as saws and powertools, flammable liquids, toxic cleaning supplies, and lawn care in your garage. Whereas it's the "safest" place to store these items, it may not be safely stored in your garage. Let's take this opportunity to remind you of some safety and organizational tips for your beloved garage. .

### 1. Proper Storage

Start by investing in a heavy-duty storage system in your garage that comes with sturdy shelves, lockable cabinets, and heavy duty hooks of multiple sizes or use slatwalls. Think vertical and maximize your storage space by building shelves up to the ceiling. Storing mementos, outgrown kids clothes and toys or items that are not accessed regularly on these shelves as they are harder to reach and away from any potential water damage. Lockable cabinets are a place where you can store hazardous chemicals including paint thinner, bug killers, tools, or items that pose a risk to young children. Lastly, hooks and slatwalls are a great way to store brooms, rakes, bikes and skis. Check out your local hardware store for ideas, or call in the professionals to design your space. A great place to start is Garage Guru.

### 2. De-clutter and Donate

Before putting your items into place, think about the stuff. Do you really need it? How many rainy days have you been saving it for? Is it worth storing? Do you really need 8 bikes? If you haven't thought of it for over a year, then chances are you won't miss it. Start fresh and de-clutter. Benefit others by donating your gently used items. DDA has a home-pick up service, all you do is pick up the phone and we will do the rest. Call 604 -273- 4DDDA, or find a donation bin in your neighbourhood on our website: [www.develop.bc.ca](http://www.develop.bc.ca)

### 3. Categorize

Once you have determined what you need or want to keep, sort your items and categorize them according to coloured plastic bins. Invest in plastic bins that are durable, waterproof, and stackable. For example, clothing can be stored in blue bins, and holiday decor can be in red. Label each bin (Christmas decor, Halloween decor, etc). It will save a lot of time in the future when you are looking for something. Don't have a label maker? It's okay, just use plain paper, and cover the the entire area with clear packing tape. Treat your stuff in your garage like you would in your kitchen, give every bin a "home" that it can return to.

Happy Cleaning!

# BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

BY ALANNA HENDREN

Aggressive, inappropriate, and anti-social behaviours are some of the biggest barriers to inclusion for people with developmental disabilities in school, community, and the workforce. Such behaviours are also very hard on families. All people who demonstrate extreme behaviours, whether they have developmental disabilities or not, challenge inclusion and community acceptance.

There are some behaviours that people generally will not tolerate – usually those that cause harm to self or others. Behaviours like hitting, pinching, kicking, sexually stalking, attacking, yelling, screaming or spitting on others. These behaviours can get kids kicked out of school, adults fired from their job, jailed, and rejected from most social groups. Maladaptive behaviours are also a huge barrier to learning because they make concentration almost impossible.

One big thing that most people do not understand about behaviour is that some behaviours voluntary and some are not within one's control. Some people can control their swearing, for example, but people with Tourette's Syndrome cannot. Tourette's causes involuntary tics, behaviours and vocalizations. When people perceive or hear swearing, they automatically assume the person has control over their behaviour. Most people don't even know about Tourette's Syndrome. Virtually all involuntary behaviours have biological causes. Learned, controllable or voluntary behaviour problems usually have psychological or environmental causes.

It is very difficult to understand that some behaviours people display are not under their control, hence the social stigma placed on people with mental illness and some people with developmental disabilities. So the first question we must ask when dealing with someone acting in a strange manner is "What is driving this behaviour?" The first place to look is biology. Could the person be in pain? People with poor verbal abilities frequently cannot communicate that they are ill. Many behaviour problems disappear with a trip to the dentist or doctor.

Once physical causes are ruled out, the next question to answer: "Is this behaviour the result of a mental illness or is it a learned behaviour?" If the behaviour is due to a mental illness then the behaviour may be involuntary. If this is the case, diagnosis and treatment will usually point to medications that can help. This can take a while because psychoactive medication takes time to work and changes may be necessary due to negative side-effects.

If there are no physical or neurological/psychiatric conditions driving behaviour, then the behaviour is probably learned, or a product of the individual's environment. Only when behaviour is voluntary, under the person's

control, will it be amenable to behaviour management or ABA strategies. These interventions are sensitive to the interactions individuals have with their environment and the feedback loops created when stimulus-response chains are reinforced over long periods of time. If a little boy whines and cries at the store because he wants a treat and his mother buys him a treat every time this happens to get him to stop, it is no surprise that he will continue his whining, crying behaviour when they go to the store together because this behaviour has been regularly rewarded. A behaviour management plan might involve Mom firmly saying "no" and taking him out of the store every time he acts up. By doing this, the behaviour is no longer reinforced and will stop over time.

Most people believe and assume that all our behaviour is under our control.

Try concentrating on a simple task when you have to really, really go to the bathroom. Your performance will be sub-optimal because your mind is involuntarily somewhere else. A mental illness characterized by hallucinations or intrusive thoughts has a similar, albeit more extreme impact on an individual's thinking. If your communications skills are poor, you cannot express what is going on in your body or mind. Your strange behaviours will not go away until you have gone to the bathroom, just like the person with a mental illness will not find relief until some medication that can get rid of the hallucinations is obtained. Behaviour management similarly doesn't work on people having a seizure because seizures are biological/neurological in nature and people having a seizure have no control over their behaviours.

So when you see someone behaving in a manner that's strange to you, think about what might be driving the behaviour and whether or not the behaviour looks voluntary. I once worked at an association where I watched a video of my staff applying perfect behaviour management techniques to a behaviour that was not voluntary. One of the women living in the group home where they worked had come from Woodlands institution and banged her head so frequently and intensely that she already had a cauliflower ear and it affected her community life adversely in many, many ways. The staff were doing the best job they could do but watching the video was like watching someone being tortured. Imagine if you had to go to the bathroom and instead of finding you a toilet, your helpers were giving you treats to not go to the bathroom, then ignoring you when you finally lost control. We have to always remember that our behaviour – and that of others – is not always under our control. In these cases, we don't need behaviour management, we need compassion and the right kind of help.

“  
Virtually all involuntary behaviours have biological causes. Learned, controllable or voluntary behaviour problems usually have psychological or environmental causes.  
”



# INDO-CANADIAN CULTURAL FESTIVAL 2017

BY RATNAM MATHUR

In 2016, the Consulate General of India's office in Vancouver came up with an idea to showcase the rich cultural tapestry of the Indian diaspora living in British Columbia. This cultural festival was aptly named NAMASTE CANADA. Namaste in Indian culture signifies respectful greetings with both palms and fingers joined together, metaphorically depicting the union of two nations – Canada and India – their people, arts, language, cuisine joined together and celebrating a unity in diversity!

As one can imagine, this vision and theme caught on and widened its reach and appeal to a broad spectrum of people. Entering its second year, the 2017 festival brought together over 20-cultural societies from BC, representing the entire Indian sub-continent and their arts, music, dances, food and other cultural practices into a truly mega event, spread over 2-days (Bell Arts, September 3-4).

I was invited as one of the members of the organizing committee of this mega event. Among other things, the Consulate General introduced me to other members of the committee and touched on our work at DDA. This sparked an interest among the attendees and several people inquired further after the meeting. Among South Asians, particularly the new immigrants, there is a lack of awareness about developmental disabilities and what resources are available in BC, to help deal with their situations and needs for their loved ones. Needless to say that "Namaste Canada" is a great platform to shine light on this area and spread public awareness.

With the excellent help and support of DDA staff, our clients diligently and enthusiastically practiced to present their group dance to a very catchy Bollywood song. This is not the first time that our clients were performing.



In fact, they did in the inaugural 2016 festival. They continue to perform to packed audiences at the Shiamak's spring, summer, and winter funk festivals. It is only made possible by the dedication and voluntary commitments of our staff members. Special thanks to Danielle, Tasia and the Shiamaks instructor Jagmehar Grewal.

On behalf of the performers, I would personally like to thank DDA for engagement, encouragement and support in this inclusive endeavor!



## BOLLYWOOD DANCE

BY DOUG HARRISON

My name is Doug Harrison, and I have been part of the DDA Bollywood Dance group for approximately three years. I love to dance in front of other people, and show them how they can get involved. I like the music and the dance moves, and spending time with my friends. I used to get nervous dancing in front of hundreds of people, but now I'm getting used to it.

Our dance group was recently acknowledged by the Indian Consulate, for participating in Namaste Canada. Members of the Consulate saw us performing with Shiamak in September, and presented us with participation certificates. This makes me feel really great, and good on the inside. I like to look at it. It also makes me feel happy and excited, and very proud to be part of this group. Anybody who wants to come out and watch us perform is welcome!

# STARBURST

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.

**MEETING:** Saturday March 3rd at 10:30am  
Workshop! Technology and Apps (3455 Kaslo St., Vancouver)  
Saturday April 7 at 10:30am at the  
Vancouver Resource Society, 2006 West 10 Ave., Vancouver

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

## THE BREAKTIME GROUP

Support to families of all cultural backgrounds and languages.

**Meeting:** First Wednesday of the Month from 3:30pm to 4:30pm

**Place:** 4948 Fraser Street Vancouver

**Contact:** Shixin Gao [604-301-2831](tel:604-301-2831) [sgao@develop.bc.ca](mailto:sgao@develop.bc.ca)

## VIETNAMESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Support to Families in Vietnamese

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

**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](tel:778-895-2535) from 6:00 to 9:00pm

## LOWER MAINLAND JAPANESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

General support to Families in Japanese

**MEETING:** Saturday February 24 from 10am to 1pm Workshop Entitled "Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) workshop in Japanese!"

**PLACE:** 3455 Kaslo Street Vancouver

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

## FIRST STEP JAPANESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

General support to Families in Japanese

**MEETING:** Saturday April 7, 2018 at 10am to 1pm  
Workshop on Positive Behavioural Supports

**PLACE:** 3455 Kaslo Street Vancouver

**CONTACT:** Nobuko at [nobuneedesu@hotmail.com](mailto:nobuneedesu@hotmail.com)



# VOLUNTEER WITH DDA

DDA is currently seeking volunteers to help and participate in our Canada Day and Pride parade events!

If you're interested and capable of walking for a couple of hours at walking pace, please contact Rhea [RVillavicencio@develop.bc.ca](mailto:RVillavicencio@develop.bc.ca) ([604-233-5418](tel:604-233-5418)) for details and to register!

## VISIT OUR SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

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



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