

THE STAR



Developmental
Disabilities Association

WINTER
2019

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NEWSLETTER

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UPDATE ON OUR CLOTHING DONATION BUSINESS

After 40 years of service to Value Village and communities throughout the Lower Mainland, the Developmental Disabilities Association has ceased clothing pick-ups and donations.

DDA's used clothing contract was terminated, effective October 28, 2019. Fewer organizations are required to deliver used clothing and household items since most donors are now dropping off their used items directly at Value Village stores.

We are confident that our other sources of fundraising will replace the income lost from our business operations. Our clothing donations business has afforded us a legacy of financial stability that will carry on far into the future. The people who we support

will not be impacted in any way and we will continue to provide high-quality programs and services.

We thank you very much for your support of our clothing recycling program as well as the Developmental Disabilities Association. Your contributions over the past 40 years have meant a great deal to us and we hope that you will continue to look fondly upon our association as we work to support diverse, inclusive, healthy communities.

Yours sincerely,

Alanna Hendren
Executive Director



REFLECTING ON OUR CLOTHING DONATIONS BUSINESS

BY: ALANNA HENDREN

DDA delivered its last load of clothing to Value Village on October 20, 2019 – eight days before our delivery contract ended. We had to be sure we could sell everything we had at the donation station, and since our contract was cancelled due to an oversupply problem, Value Village asked us to load trailers to be sent off elsewhere in B.C.

We at DDA have been preparing for this eventuality for some time. Our partnership with Value Village started in 1979 – when the Board at that time agreed to sign a contract with Bill Ellison, who started a business in San Francisco selling used goods cheaply in well laid out and clean stores. His parents had worked with the Salvation Army, so he learned the thrift trade as a youngster and decided he could turn a profit by partnering with charities in communities to pick up and deliver gently used items to his stores. DDA was the first partnership he developed in Canada and from this origin, Value Village spread across Canada, brought used goods to thrift shoppers and enriched the budgets of charities to provide services otherwise unfunded by governments. In Canada, community living agencies, Big Brothers and the Canadian Diabetes Association dominated the pick-up and delivery market but in the U.S. many other charitable causes also benefitted.

Bill Ellison was a “handshake” sort of dealmaker. Our early contracts used language like “O.K.s” – units by which we were paid.

What’s an O.K.? Approximately a big garbage bag full of clothes. What’s “miscel”? Miscellaneous items like toasters or used hockey sticks. Over the years, as Value Village grew, weight measures were introduced along with standard corporate language and a more sophisticated headquarters culture. About fifteen years ago, the company negotiated with bankers to borrow money to expand and when “Wall Street” gets involved, they bring a greater focus on profitability. They are clearly not charities.

Value Village developed “Community Donation Centers” to encourage people to drop off their clothing directly to stores, an area of their business that experienced significant growth over the years. Charities receive money for these “on-site donations” but not as much as for delivered goods because there is no cost to the charity. Over time, our on-site donation revenue increased while our delivery revenue decreased because people were rewarded with discounts and other promotions for dropping their goods off directly at Value Village stores. This trend accelerated when the media reported stories about people dying while climbing into bins, which prompted municipalities to pass by-laws stating that all bins had to be certified by an engineer to be safe. The engineer we were working with said he could not guarantee that a plastic knife would be 100% safe in all circumstances and could not certify



our bins, although they had an open chute that had never been associated with any deaths anywhere.

With Value Village's oversupply problem due to the on-site donation trend, there was no sense in them continuing to purchase delivered goods from DDA, a local charity, when Big Brothers and the Canadian Diabetes Association are present across Canada and can adjust their supply based on store demand. Value Village, however, continues to partner with DDA as we will continue to receive credits for on-site donations until at least the end of February 2020.

The end of our Value Village business brought a sad farewell to over 40 years of community recycling service. We are proud to have diverted hundreds of thousands of pounds of used clothing and other items from Lower Mainland landfills through our partnership with Value Village. The revenue we generated has added strength and resilience to the Developmental Disabilities Association and Foundation that will serve us for years to come. We are grateful to have had such a wonderful opportunity to help our communities environmentally.

We are also exceptionally grateful to all of our community partners – the schools, clubs and other organizations that participated in

our Cash4Clothes program, our bin hosts, our municipal partners – thank you so much for your support. DDA was also very fortunate to have a dedicated Board of Trustees who guided our business development – Rick Hamilton, who led and participated for over 20 years, John Neilson, Brian Wilson and the late Bill Adams – who all supported us with their leadership, knowledge and enthusiasm.

We could not have generated this non-government revenue without the dedication of our staff. We already miss Deanna Barlow, who managed the business. She started working at DDA when she was 16 and never left. Deanna was a valued member of our senior management team because she brought her business perspective to all our discussions and enthusiastically led projects. She lived our mission and will forever be part of the DDA 'family'. We are also grateful to Jay Biddle, who worked for DDA for over 30 years, often mentoring other drivers, and Kamal Grounder, whose picture you may have seen on our trucks, always smiling while he went over and above the call of duty. We will miss them both very much.

Luckily, we are able to keep most of our other business employees and will be mobilizing them elsewhere at DDA. In this way, the legacy of our business will live on, even if we no longer deliver.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

BY: ALANNA HENDREN

Over the summer, our Board of Directors met to develop a new Strategic Plan that was adopted at the Board's September meeting.

Whenever we look into the future, consider our potential goals and the challenges we'll need to overcome to get there, we get excited about the possibilities and look forward to creating the kinds of connections, services and supports that will allow people with developmental disabilities to live quality lives in our communities.

This planning cycle, we decided to share this excitement and involve more representatives from our stakeholder groups to get broader feedback on what we need to improve, where we may need to expand and what goals we should prioritize for the coming few years. We received excellent input from our survey and focus groups as our strategic planning consultants at MNP facilitated sessions that elicited deep-felt responses. We are very fortunate to have such positive support from our families, staff, self-advocates, members and funders. We all have a responsibility to ensure our communities are safe, welcoming and inclusive of all abilities, races, ethnicities and sexual orientations from all

socio-economic levels. We have a long way to go and can only get there together.

Belonging resonated most with us as a major theme this year. We were challenged to move beyond inclusion to belonging, ensuring that people with developmental disabilities have places to go where they are not only welcomed but can feel free to be who they are without judgment because they are known, accepted and share common experiences with others. We all belong to our families but we also belong to our neighbourhoods, our work, our friends and our common-interest clubs or teams. Our job over the next few years will be to more fully deepen relationships in these areas and explore others.

Through this strategic planning process, we clarified our Vision, Mission and Values, then prioritized four strategic directions for the upcoming three to five years at DDA. We thank everyone who participated and invite one and all to join us in creating a diverse, welcoming community where people see the possibilities and everyone belongs.

OUR VISION

A diverse, welcoming community where people see the possibilities and where everyone belongs.

OUR MISSION

Unleashing the potential of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families through life-long programs, supports and advocacy.

OUR VALUES

EXCELLENCE

We are dedicated to quality.

INTEGRITY

We are honest, open and accountable for our actions.

RESPECT

We show admiration, patience and care for each other.

COMMITMENT

We are dependable, stable and committed to our communities.

BELONGING

We create inclusive environments within communities, where everyone belongs.

BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Foster relationships between DDA clients, families and the public.

Families of all ages connect, gather and learn from one another.

We retain and nurture life-long connections to our families and clients.

Our clients are supported through major life transitions.

CELEBRATING PEOPLE

Educate the public to advance community inclusion; Recognize and develop DDA staff.

We build the capacity of communities to be inclusive and welcoming of all abilities. Our staff are inspired to excel through recognition, training and meaningful career progression.

Our clients are affirmed and welcomed in their chosen communities.

PROTECTING OUR FUTURE

Ensure DDA can continue to support clients long into the future.

Our financial model is sustainable, accountable and built on stable partnerships and investments.

Our board represents the diversity of our communities.

We are visible advocates for the quality of life of our clients, families and staff.

DELIVERING EXCELLENCE

Demonstrate leadership in evidence-based program innovation and enable staff to deliver.

Our clients make meaningful contributions to DDA and in their chosen communities.

Our programs and services are based on sound practice and innovation, in welcoming environments.

DDA is an employer of choice for energetic, passionate professionals.



#MYVOTEMATTERS

BY: KEVIN CHAN

On October 4, we welcomed Elections Canada to talk to us about voter rights and the importance of getting out to vote! To spread the word, we've created a video that highlights why your vote matters and why voting is important for all Canadians.

To watch the video, visit our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/dda604



THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY SUPPORT

BY: FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP ATTENDEE

Having a child changes your life forever but in the case of a child with a disability, the impact is even more significant.

With an official diagnosis of a child's disability, parents go through mixed emotional reactions such as disbelief and denial, confusion, shock, anxiety, uncertainty, anger, and despair. I was not an exception. When my son was diagnosed with autism at age 3, I got totally lost and experienced a severe grieving period keeping asking myself, "Why me?"

This is why family support is important for parents. Through DDA's family support group, I was able to connect myself to many other Japanese parents. There may not be anyone else with the same constellation of symptoms as my son but there are other parents

facing similar challenges, not only their child's disability but also a language barrier and cultural differences. Simply knowing "I am not alone" and "I have someone that I can talk to" gave me emotional strength that helped me reduce my stress and improve my self-efficacy.

DDA's family support groups host informative workshops on a wide variety of topics inviting special guest speakers such as behaviour interventionists, speech therapists, therapeutic recreation specialists, and others to speak on transition planning, sexuality, Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP), wills and trusts, self-care, etc. This is a great opportunity to gain knowledge and meet all the specialists. If you have not had a chance to come to a meeting, you are missing out so much. I hope you join us!

FALL EVENTS





PROGRAMS

GRANDFRIENDS PARTNERSHIP AT CHAMPLAIN



BY: COLLEEN THOMAS

As a way to network in our community and bridge the gap between generations, Anna approached the Royal Arch Masonic Home about setting up visits. It reminded all of our team about how when we were young, we did visits to a neighbouring senior home with school. We recall this time fondly and wanted to offer the opportunity to the children enrolled. There is so much research about bridging generation gaps and the benefits. There is an opportunity for each group to learn from the other. It offers a warmth and sharing time that may not be available because of how each generation changes and moves as time passes. Many families move away and separate by choice or by circumstance leaving gaps between generations. Choosing to spend this quality time together gives our preschoolers and the seniors opportunities they may not experience otherwise. We are grateful to the team at RAMH for taking a chance on us and keeping this growing!



BY: JANET FONG

Twice a month, a small group of children walk to a neighbourhood retirement home to spend time with some of the seniors at Royal Arch Masonic Home. During each visit a music teacher leads the children and residents, whom we refer to as GrandFriends, in a variety of songs and interactive activities. Sometimes we spend time doing crafts, giving us a little takeaway project to share with our families and friends.

The group is able to bring these new songs, musical games and art ideas back to Champlain for sharing with teachers and other children at group time. Our group gets very excited and enjoy telling everyone about the decorations they see along the corridor of the home, and about the fish in the aquarium. On special occasions, like Halloween, we extend our costume parade to include a visit to our GrandFriends.

It sure does make them smile! What started as a small interaction, nearly two years ago, has grown to a wonderful addition in the lives of both the young and old.

WHAT THE ROYAL ARCH MASONIC HOME SAYS:

Children from the Champlain Child Development Centre have been visiting Royal Arch Masonic Home (RAMH) twice per month since May 2018. During their visits the RAMH Music Therapist assists seniors and children to make beautiful music together.

The Director of Recreation Services at RAMH states: "There are so many benefits to connecting these generations. This partnership

promotes feelings of community, nurture, purpose, and fun in both the senior and the children. It's a win-win!"

"Seeing the children often prompts the seniors to reminisce about special children who were in their lives."

"The seniors light up when they see the children."



TAKING THE FIRST STEPS TOWARDS A HEALTHIER YOU

BY: GORDON LAM

The Drop-In and Community Apartment Program hosted, in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health, a free three-day Healthy Living workshop called 'First Steps to Prevention'. The goal of the workshop was to create a relaxed, fun and informative environment where a dietitian and a nurse educate clients about healthy eating, physical activity and overall wellness. The clients' have enjoyed getting their height and blood pressure measured and taking part in group exercises. The biggest highlight was receiving their pedometer so they could see who could take the most steps in a day! Overall the course was very successful in supporting clients and providing them with resources needed to take steps towards leading a healthy life.



A WARM REMINDER OF FUN TIMES

BY: DAVID WONG

Every summer, DDA employs seasonal program workers from various post-secondary and educational institutions. DDA provides a valuable opportunity for students to learn how to support and advocate for people with disabilities in the community. In turn, the summer students bring new innovative ideas to each of the programs.

This year, the Drop-In Centre was fortunate to have a summer student from UBC, Ayan, who helped staff implement summer programming for our Drop-In participants. Ayan was very energetic

and were able to develop a good rapport with each of the participants. All of the Drop-In participants enjoyed Ayan's company and support throughout the summer and was sad when she had to leave to go back to school in the fall.

A couple of weeks after Ayan's departure, a surprising gift was delivered in the mail. It was a 2020 calendar that compiled pictures that the Drop-In participants took during the 2019 summer outings. The Drop-In participants and staff appreciate the gift and wish Ayan a bright future in her educational and career goals.

SCIENCE CLASS AT GRANDVIEW

BY BARBARA BALANKO



This year at Grandview, we have created a new class for our clients called Science Class. Grandview clients learn about many different science-oriented ideas and projects and are able to use critical thinking, evidence, and discussion to create solutions and make decisions.

Our clients are naturally curious, and feeding their creativity is enjoyable for everyone. Grandview clients have fun conducting science experiments and working as a team to answer questions. Sustaining a sense of awe and wonder of the natural and technological world, as well as developing the ability to ask more

questions, solve problems, and apply what they learn to everyday life. Staff have created a binder of different topics and experiments that can be easily referenced. This book includes subjects such as the solar system, the human body, bugs, fungi and more! All subjects include informative notes, a hands-on experiment, and a list of supplies.

We've made a volcano, nature slides for our microscope, homemade slime and many other fun projects. Participation in our creations and asking questions are encouraged.

We ask questions such as: "What do we use this for? What do you think will happen? How do we use this in our own lives? What is the smell, taste, or texture?" We then seek out the answers to these questions before cleaning up. If it is a nice day we may even take this class outdoors and do experiments outside.

Grandview's clients have fun being inquisitive and getting hands-on with the experiments. Conversing and learning about science may further clients' knowledge and promote curiosity. Through our clients' naturally inquisitive personalities, we hope they can take their newfound problem-solving skills and apply them to their everyday life.

THANK YOU

RIVER ROCK RESORT & CASINO!

BY: TERRY SCHENKEL

For many years, the River Rock Resort and Casino has sponsored our Respite program. Each year, more than twenty families receive a complimentary night stay so they may rest and relax. Often the daily demands of caring for someone with an intellectual disability deplete a family member's energy so a night of soaking in a tub, watching a movie or reading a book is exactly what's needed.

Again this year, the River Rock Resort and Casino offered to sponsor our program with a generous donation. The donation will be used to provide family members with complimentary hotel stays. We thank the staff at the River Rock for their generosity.

Are you interested? To be eligible, family members must live in Vancouver or Richmond. The person must be the primary caregiver to a person with a developmental disability, be a member of DDA, and receive support from any of the Association's programs.

DDA is fortunate to have partnerships with several sponsoring hotels in Vancouver and Richmond. For more information or



to apply, please contact Terry Schenkel, Assistant Director of Family Support Services at **604-233-5433** or email him at tschenkel@develop.bc.ca.



THANK YOU E & E GLOBAL FOUNDATION

BY: KATHY MONCALIERI

E&E Global Foundation held a summer Wellness Walkathon and donated 40% of the funds to Child and Youth Services. Many staff and their families participated in the starting laps at the new Minoru Centre for Healthy Living with an additional group who trekked the extended route from Richmond to the Olympic Village in Vancouver (approximately 21 kilometres).

\$6,200 was raised for DDA's Hot Lunch program; including a \$1,000 bonus for signing up the most participants! We were honoured to be among the four beneficiaries of this philanthropic event.

A big thank you to Esther Ho and E & E Global for the ongoing support to DDA!

WONDERFUL DONATION TO KIDS AT GF STRONG

BY: LEANNA LOGAN

What a wonderful donation to Kids at GF Strong!

Callum and Giulia, two wonderful children at GF Strong, decided to host a birthday fundraiser with the proceeds going to Kids at GF Strong. Together, they raised \$300.

Thank you to Callum, Giulia and their families.



JOBS WEST

Chris (left) & Ben (right), supervisors.



EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2019

BY: DELIA MEINHARDT

Each year, Jobs West recognizes an employer for their commitment to creating an inclusive workforce. While we have the pleasure of working with many fabulous employers, this year was an easy choice. Jobs West has presented the Employer of the Year award to CSN Collision Centres – Van Burn.

The owner, Dale, reached out to Jobs West in Fall 2018 after stumbling onto our website. He wanted to move forward with creating an inclusive business but didn't know where to start. Jobs West staff met with Dale to discuss their business needs and they agreed to have a candidate try a few tasks. Through trial and error (and lots of patience from the team), we identified a set of tasks that suited the individual's skill set. With job coaching supports from Jobs West, the employee developed the skills to excel as a tire specialist/shop assistant. The staff at CSN Collision Centres – Van Burn dedicated their efforts to supporting a customized position and continue to provide ongoing support and mentorship.

The employee has been with Jobs West since Fall 2018, as part of the WorkBC program. With our lead partner, YWCA, Jobs West provides customized employment services.

We would like to give our heartfelt thanks to Dale for taking the initiative to establish an inclusive business.



CONGRATULATIONS TO MATTHEW AT SAFEWAY

BY: AARON BOWBYES

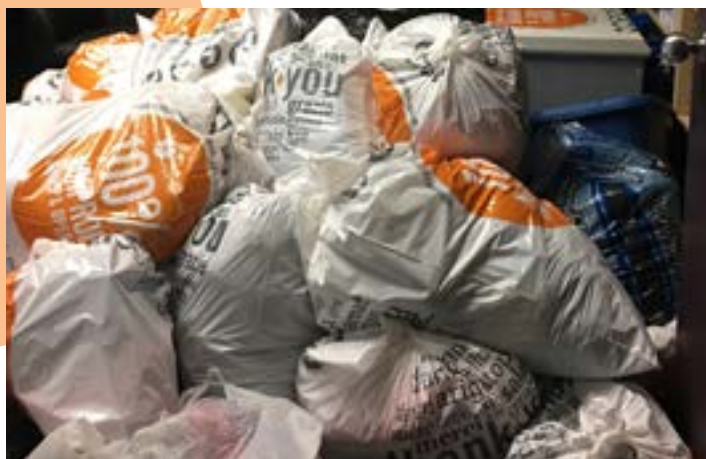
Matthew Cheng celebrated his 10-year anniversary at Safeway! Over the past 10 years, Matthew consistently attended shifts and performed his duties, all the while adapting to many staff changes. Congratulations Matthew!

DDA DECLUTTERS FOR THE UNITED WAY!

BY: KATHY MONCALIERI

This year, our staff, children, adults and their families came together in October to support our annual United Way campaign. We collected 255 full bags of used clothing and unwanted items for our fifth annual Cash4Clothes initiative - our largest collection ever! This added \$765 to our ongoing efforts to benefit the United Way.

Thank you to everyone for your continued help and participation.





ACTUALIZING FANTASY WITH MARIE

BY: MARIANNA SCHULTZ

When Marie's grandfather used to tell her stories through songs, Marie wondered if one day she could create the same kind of magic for other children. She has been pursuing her passion to write and share stories for much of her life. "It's a dream," says Marie, "you put a dream in your head and you feed it."

Marie has worked hard to achieve this dream. She has recently finished her first children's novel *The Royal Elf Princess*, a story about the rebellious princess Cynthia, navigating through a world full of witches, faeries and flying ships. The book is a collaboration between Marie and her co-writer Paige. Marie's imagination is the heart and driving force of the characters, themes, and story, while Paige takes care of the technical and structural aspects of writing.

This isn't Marie's first book. She's an experienced author, having produced two works over the past thirty years. Both *Stories, Poems and Reflections*, and *Mentally Handicapped Love* were published on a self-publishing website, and Marie sold print copies of the books as well.

DDA has encouraged Marie's aspirations by supporting her through various services throughout her life. She's been a DDA client for almost forty years and been a part of the Community Apartment Program (CAP) for over twenty years. CAP has helped Marie to live independently, with the support of life skills workers

who visit her home a few times a week and assist with tasks like grocery shopping, banking, and keeping track of appointments.

She also attends DDA's Drop-In, where she is often working on an online course called *How to Write Children's Books*. Marie is a driven student and studies diligently. Sometimes, she works with the help of a life skills worker, but she passes all of her tests by herself as a result of her own efforts. The Drop-In also recently hosted a public reading of *The Royal Elf Princess*, where the audience was reportedly captivated by Marie's story.

Next, Marie is seeking publication for her novel. With the help of CAP staff, Marie plans to send her manuscript to publishing houses with the hope it will eventually be sold in bookstores like Indigo. She's excited by the idea of her books appearing on the shelves, but this goal has deeper roots than the appeal of seeing her name in print. With the publication of a book, Marie hopes that her story can reach children in need. When hearing about tragic events in the news, Marie has worried about the affected children and wondered how to help them. She explains her solution was to "write a book, put it in stores, and they can relax and read a book." This escapist outlook is clear when reading *The Royal Elf Princess*. The story transports the reader to the magical world Marie has created, where good always triumphs and wishes come true.

TECH REVIEWS

PRODUCT

Prune

PRODUCER:

Joel McDonald LLC

COST

\$5.49 + tax

COMPATABILITY

iOS

CATEGORY

App

SUB CATEGORY

Sensory

STAR RATINGS

Ease of Use:

Grab & go



Adaptability:

Wide Variety of Settings

Available



Accessibility:

Suitable for Most Users



Cost vs. Value:

Worthwhile Expense



Overall Rating:



PRUNE

BY: KEEGAN NEWBERRY

Prune was developed by Joel McDonald LLC for iOS only but offers both an iPhone and iPad version of the app. It has been advertised as a game featuring minimalistic art and calming music for a relaxing game experience. Prune has won multiple awards including both Apple and TIME Magazine Game of the Year in 2015. Overall, this app focuses on providing a simple interactive game experience: the user grows a tree and must prune the branches back to help the tree avoid obstacles and reach the sunlight. Each level is quite short, though they do become progressively more challenging as you advance through the game.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Simple, visual instructions and limited gestures required for use (single finger swipe);
- Difficulty increases at a consistent, slow rate which decreases risk of frustration for user;
- Uses a musical soundscape rather than a repetitive loop, creating a soothing sensory experience;
- Level resets automatically if failed using a smooth transition, allowing the user to make multiple attempts without interruptions to gameplay and avoids 'level failed' screens which can discourage use.

LOWLIGHTS

- Not possible to make settings modifications to accommodate for differing ability levels;
- Minimal user prompts or hints when stuck on a particular level, relies on trial-and-error learning;
- Gameplay is over a grey-scale background making this app a less ideal choice for individuals with visual impairments.





FINAL WORD

Prune differs from other sensory apps as it was designed primarily as a game, not as a self-regulatory tool. Though this has significantly limited the adaptive flexibility of this app to only those modifications possible using built-in iPad accessibility features or external supports, it has also created a consistent, predictable digital environment allowing for a multi-sensory immersive user experience. Regardless of the initial intention for this app, it is extremely well-suited for use as an independent self-regulatory tool particularly for individuals who experience anxiety.

When supporting individuals with developmental disabilities, anxiety management is a common challenge frontline workers find themselves navigating for the individuals they support. Every individual is different in how they may experience symptoms of anxiety and there is an equal level of variance in factors which may trigger these symptoms. There are many apps available specifically geared towards anxiety management; however, Prune has emerged as a unique tool within that category.

Unlike many self-regulatory apps, Prune does not guide users through breathing routines or self-initiated exercises, but rather engages the user through the simple act of playing the game. Each level is goal-oriented to encourage the user to refocus their

attention on a single task. The musical soundscape is similar to what is used on many sound machines specifically designed for self-regulation through sensory stimulation, and it can easily be turned off if it is found to be more triggering than calming. The slow, consistent speed of each level and natural flow from one level to the next encourages reduced motor speed and mindful interactions. By slowing down one sensory system, other systems tend to naturally follow and this can potentially return breathing and heart rates, which often increase when an individual is experiencing anxiety, closer to their personal baseline level they may experience when calm.

It is important to note that every individual is different and anxiety management is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Overall, Prune is a quality app that shows significant potential as a self-regulatory tool. Though it is slightly more expensive than other apps in this category, it has a unique approach and solid platform which gives that added value. It may not be the best choice for all individuals, particularly those who require significant adaptive modifications or have fine-motor impairments; however, it is a worthwhile app to explore and at the very least provides an enjoyable gaming experience.



CODE
THE CHANGE
FOUNDATION



TAP FOR CHANGE

BY: KEEGAN NEWBERRY

We have been continuing research and development towards creating an alternative accessible communication device using the Tap™ Wearable Keyboard over the past several months.

September marked the beginning of a new stage in this project when we partnered with UBC's Code the Change Foundation to create an iOS/Android app that would allow the Tap™ device to be used as an assistive communication system with voice output for individuals with speech impairments.

Code the Change is a registered non-profit foundation that creates open-source technology and software solutions for other non-profit organizations to enhance programs and services for persons served. UBC's chapter is lead by co-presidents Pritpal Chauhan and Vinil Kumar, with Victor Sira acting as team lead for this project.

The development team began exploring the technology in early October, with initial design decisions being made shortly afterwards. Development of the app itself began late October and will continue through fall and winter, with the intention of having a working prototype ready for testing in spring 2020.

In addition to this project, Code the Change is also working on another mobile application for Jobs West, which should wrap up later this year! Stay tuned for more on this.

We are extremely grateful to the entire Code the Change team who have volunteered their time and incredible skillsets to help create a unique communication system for individuals in need. We look forward to sharing more updates along the way!

TO LEARN
MORE ABOUT THE TAP
DEVICE, GO TO
[WWW.DEVELOP.
BC.CA](http://WWW.DEVELOP.BC.CA)



DEANNE RECEIVES DAVID HUTSON LEADERSHIP AWARD

BY: KEVIN CHAN

Congratulations to our own Deanne Ziebart for receiving the David Hutson Leadership Award from The Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training (ASPECT) BC. The David Hutson Leadership Award is awarded to an individual who demonstrates exemplary leadership in the community-based training sector.

Deanne has been a long-time member of ASPECT, and even worked with David Hutson, who the award is named after, in her earlier years.

We are very glad that Deanne is part of our DDA family!



ATTENDING THE CLIMATE ACTION STRIKE

BY: ASHLEY FOUILLARD, JAMIE DRI & ANDREW JACKSON

On September 27, several clients and staff from the Community Apartment Program hit the streets to attend the Climate Action Strike, a global event with millions of people in attendance, all with the shared interest and concern for our planet.

First, we took the Skytrain to City Hall where we attended the rally and listened to speeches about climate concerns. Then we began marching through the streets. Some of us crossed the Cambie Bridge to continue through downtown while others had to get home before the rush. We were pretty nervous at the beginning of the rally, being around so many people (an estimated turnout of 100,000 people) but as we marched, we felt much more comfortable and really enjoyed it. We waved our signs in the air, reading "save the bees, protect the trees, clean the seas" and "climate action now!" It felt cool to be a part of something so big.

Here are some reflections by attendees:

"Nature is beautiful. I care about the environment, the animals and the trees. Trees help with pollution and our air quality. If we lose our trees, the air we breathe will become unhealthy. That is why I decided to participate in the strike. I think these events show the government how people feel and show them what is important. It may change what they do in the future. I'm glad I participated in this strike, it made my heart melt." – Andrew Jackson

"I decided to attend the strike because I care about nature, about the world and the animals. I like to spend time in nature, going to the beach and watching the water and animals. It bugs me a lot

that so many wild animals are dying, and the bees too. They're important. Climate effects animals, [access to] food and weather. I like to stand up for people and animals and I felt proud to have been a part of this strike. It sent an important message. I would definitely participate in something like that again." – Jamie Dri



What an incredible day to witness and be a part of. This strike teaches us, or reminds us, to see ourselves as not only members of our immediate environment and community but to also see ourselves as members of a global community. While we may be self-advocates for our own rights, we can also band together as advocates for the rights and wellness of the environment.

FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS

VANCOUVER CHINESE SUPPORT GROUP

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

Date: 3rd Saturday of the month.

Time: 6:30PM – 8:30PM

Location: 4948 Fraser Street, Vancouver

Childcare: Available on site when requested at least 1 week in advance of meeting.

Contact: Katherine Lee, katsalon@hotmail.com or
Fannie Huang, fannieh Huang525@hotmail.com

YOUTH IN TRANSITION

Support information for transition to adulthood.

Dates: Wednesday, December 4, 2019

March 4 and May 6, 2020

Time: 6:30PM

Location: 3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver

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

VIETNAMESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Support to families in Vietnamese.

Date: Second Thursday of the Month

Time: 6:30PM – 8:00PM

Location: 3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver

Childcare: Available on site when requested at least 1 week in advance of meeting.

Contact: Nikki Tran (778) 895-2535 from 6:00PM – 9:00PM

TWINKLE STARS LOWER MAINLAND JAPANESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Support to families in Japanese.

Date: TBD

Topic: Recreation programs in Vancouver

Time: 10:00AM – 2:00PM

Location: 3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver

Contact: Chigusa Barnes, twinklestars2017@hotmail.com

FIRST STEP JAPANESE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

General support to families in Japanese.

Date: TBD

Location: 3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver

Contact: firststepcanada@outlook.com

UPSIDE DOWN FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Support to families with Children with Down Syndrome.

Vancouver Location

Dates: Saturday, February 22, April 25, 2020

Time: 10:00AM – 12:00PM

Location: 3455 Kaslo Street, Vancouver

Contact: Aileen Mellors, amluyt@gmail.com or Shixin Gao,
sgao@develop.bc.ca

North Vancouver Location

Dates: January 25, March 28, May 23 and June 2 2020

Time: 1:15PM – 3:15PM

Location: Maplewood House, 399 Seymour River Place, North Vancouver

Contact: Aileen Mellors, amluyt@gmail.com or Shixin Gao,
sgao@develop.bc.ca

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Canadian Publications Agreement Number 40011236

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