

Kelowna and District Society for Community Living Newsletter

Our Community



Volume 1 Issue 3

September, 2002

OCTOBER IS COMMUNITY LIVING MONTH

Until the middle 1800's, most people with developmental disabilities either lived with their families or in foster families who received money from the town for their care. Some ended up in jail.

Institutions tried to prepare people for life in the community, but the community rejected them, unless there was a glut of jobs and a shortage of non-disabled people. This almost never happened, especially in times of large-scale immigration. Institutions began to plan to keep people for a lifetime.

In order to get state funds for their institutions, superintendents constructed "feble-mindedness"

as a social problem. In the early 1900's, it would be labeled a "menace."

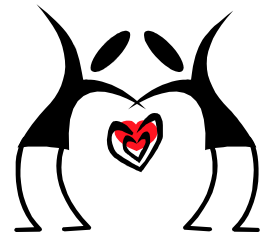
Parents were generally reluctant to have their children come home for visits, especially when institutions considered such visits harmful. Over time, many families lost contact with their institutionalized family members.

Today people with disabilities are members of the community. They live, work and contribute.

KDSCL continues to serve individuals and their families ensuring their rights are upheld and services are provided so they are included in their community.

In recognition and celebration KDSCL is hosting an OPEN HOUSE, October 9, 2002 from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm at 555 Fuller Avenue. Please come out and help us celebrate the achievements of people with disabilities and their families. There will be a free draw for 18 Speed CCM Mountain bike with a detachable trail buddy.

We hope to see you!



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Community Living Changing

Government in consultation with community established a Transition Steering Group (TSC) to transition community living services from a sole government responsibility to community.

The TSC is charged with developing recommendation for Minister Hogg, Minister of Child and Family Development (MCFD) for a new governance structure to administer community living services.

The recommendation are being developed by 6 separate committees, Human Resource & Finance, Accountability, Service to Children, Youth and families, Individualized Funding and Planning Options, Communications and Governance Structure.

The committees consist of government representatives, people with disabilities, their families and service providers.

Recommendations are expected to go forward to the Minister September 30.

For more information on the progress of the TSC please access the following websites <http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/change> or www.cltsbc.ca or contact KDSCL at 763-4837 for copies of minutes or bulletins.

We will continue to keep you updated.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER AND DANCE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2002

We are pleased to confirm that KDSCL will once again have its annual dinner and dance. However this year the location has changed. It will be held at the Rutland Centennial Hall on Rutland Road December 19, 2002.

The doors will open at 5:30 pm, dinner will be at 6:00 pm., entertainment and dancing from 7:00

pm to 11:00 pm.

Due to increasing costs, free tickets will only be available to participants (limit of 2), Board members, staff and spouses. If you would like extra tickets a nominal fee of \$10.00 will be charged for each additional ticket. All tickets must be picked up at 555 Fuller Avenue

by December 11. Tickets cannot be purchased or obtained at the door.

We will be collecting canned goods for the Kelowna Food Bank. Please remember to bring your donation.



Profile on DON BACH - ICO Support Worker

My Parents moved to Kelowna in 1928. They were married in the O'Keefe Ranch Church in Vernon. Their honeymoon consisted of riding in the back seat of Grandpa Dillman's car to Rutland where they settled into domesticity with my Grandparents. That house, built in 1901 still stands on Bach Road in Rutland.

I was born in 1951 in Kelowna. My Mom was 41 and my Dad was 43. My two brothers were already 18 and 20 years of age. I have been told my Dad was very surprised when Mom told him she was pregnant. I think he was shocked!

I graduated from Rutland Senior Secondary in 1970 and the University of Victoria in 1974 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree.

I have previously been employed as a Dog Kennel Manager - 14 years, Teacher/Vice-Principal - 14.5 years, Canadian Pacific Railroad Conductor and Brakeman - 2.5 years, Canadian National Railroad Train Order Operator - 2.5 years. During my early years I was a farmer's son who picked, mowed, changed sprinklers and drove tractor on the family orchard.

My first employment with KDSCL was in 1975, when I had the good fortune to meet Leigh Edwards and Rory Scott. My present employment with KDSCL began 10 years ago when I received a phone call from Leigh Edwards. I was organizing a local dog kennel. He was canvassing for employment opportunities for people that had life challenges. He asked if I could provide any opportunities. Thus I became a sponsor employer. Due to this connection, I eventually became a job coach.

In my present capacity at ICO, I work with a five man recycling crew. We collect recyclable paper products from a number of large and small facilities in Kelowna five days a week. We deliver the product to the Metro recycling plant on Cambro Road.

I organize the routes at the various contracted sites. I liaison with the Employers at each site and I keep track of the products and their worth. I assist with all the tasks involved and I submit very detailed reports. I am the driver of the Society's Recycling Van.

I attempt to understand the abilities of each of the members of the recycling crew. I then determine what support each person needs.

I have never had a better job, nor have I worked with better people. I have not worked in a better environment, nor have I felt more fulfilled in my duties as I have here in this Society. I believe ICO works well and sometimes the results of our efforts are marvelous.

Disability Benefits Update (provided by) BCACL - September 17, 2002

As most of you know, the BC government will be bringing in a number of significant changes to disability benefits over the next few months. Our latest information is that the two new acts governing income assistance will come into effect October 1, 2002. The *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act* governs people with disabilities, while the *Employment and Assistance Act* governs regular income assistance (welfare). In addition, some changes came into effect under the old legislation on April 1 and July 1, 2002. Those changes are summarized at the end of this update.

If you are considering applying for Disability Benefits, or have a child with disabilities turning 18 who will require disability benefits, you should apply right away. Until the new legislation is in effect, you can apply for the disability designation under the old legislation. On the application form, make sure to indicate that you intend to apply for financial assistance under disability benefits. Otherwise the application will be rejected.

If you need assistance with disability benefit issues, contact BCACL or a local advocacy group, or Advocacy Access (604) 872-1278.

For more information on disability benefit changes, check the BCACL website for regular updates. The Povnet website at <http://povnet.org> also includes excellent fact sheets on income assistance and disability benefits.

Changes to Disability Benefits that will come into effect with the new legislation (October 2002):

Reduced numbers of people on DB 1 and DB 2

- The ministry will soon send out 18,000 letters to people currently receiving DB 1 or DB 2, requesting that they reapply. They will have until Jan. 15, 2003 to return the completed application. The 18,000 will be selected based on what their disability is. It is not yet clear how this will affect people with developmental disabilities, particularly those who live more independently.
- **If you are receiving benefits and you get a letter from MHR - do NOT ignore it!** Make sure to read the letter and contact the ministry if you are asked to do so. If you are not sure what they are asking, contact an advocate or call the ministry.
- Several thousand people who now receive DB 1 or DB 2 will be disqualified due to a more restricted definition of disability.
- Medical and dental benefits for DB 2 recipients who find employment will be continued.
- Most short-term benefits supporting people on DB 2 to move into employment (transportation, clothing, childcare, etc) will be gone.

New application form

- Applicants (including those asked to reapply) will have to use a new application form that is 25 pages long.
- The application form has three sections to be filled out - one by the applicant, one by the physician, and one by a health professional providing a functional assessment.
- At this point, our understanding is that the form cannot be filled out by a family member or support person unless they are the legal guardian, committee or representative of the applicant.
- The doctor's fee for completing the medical portion of the application is \$75. This will be covered by MHR. There is no coverage so far for the cost of filling out the functional assessment section, unless it is done by a physician (who will be paid an additional \$25).

DB 1 to be eliminated

- DB 1 will no longer be a category. Many of those receiving DB 1 may be reclassified into a new category called "Persistent Multiple Barriers to Employment."
- BCACL succeeded in persuading the government to maintain the income assistance rate for this category (PMB) at the same level as DB 1 (\$608 per month).
- People in the PMB category will receive medical benefits and earnings exemptions the same as for DB 2. Like those on DB 2, they will not be subject to a time limit for how long they can receive benefits.
- At this point, those in the PMB category will not be eligible for bus passes and will not have an earnings exemption.
- The PMB category is governed by the *Employment and Assistance Act* for regular income assistance, rather than the legislation dealing with disability benefits.

Changes to Disability Benefits that are now in effect:

Earnings Exemption

- People on DB 2 now have a fixed earnings exemption of \$300 per month. Earnings up to \$300 can be kept. Any earnings above that will be deducted, dollar for dollar, from disability benefits.
- People on DB 1 have no earnings exemption.

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Dental benefits

- No expenditures over the maximum \$500 per year. No coverage beyond this annual limit except for emergencies and to relieve pain. After community outcry, MHR agreed to pre-authorize coverage for dentures.
- An additional \$500 is available for people on DB 2 who require general anesthetic for treatment.
- Dental treatment plans approved before July 1, 2002, will be honored if completed before December 31, 2002.
- Dental benefits continue for DB 2 if the person obtains employment or turns 65.
- Orthodontic treatment is limited to those with the "most severe need."

Diet assistance

- Diet assistance (nutrition allowance) is provided only for specific diagnoses or medical conditions, as recommended by a physician.

Orthotics (artificial limbs)

- Available only where they are medically necessary to help with basic mobility.

Crisis grants

- \$20 maximum for food a month
- \$100 maximum for clothing per year
- You have to apply for crisis grants, they are not automatic.

Vehicle ownership

- If you are on DB 2, you can own a vehicle for daily transportation (no change).
- If you are on DB 1 or regular welfare, you have to show that you have no more than \$5000 equity in your vehicle (that is, that you don't own more than \$5000 worth).

Tip Sheet for Self Advocates and Families

Over the next few months, there will be many changes taking place in the Ministry of Human Resources (MHR). MHR is the branch of government that provides disability benefits (DB 1 or DB 2).

You (or your family member) may get a letter from MHR. The letter will probably ask you to contact your MHR worker. It may ask you to send in a new application for benefits. Here are some tips about how to deal with MHR and make sure you protect your rights.

- Pay attention to any letter or phone call from MHR. Do not ignore them. Be sure to call your MHR worker as soon as possible and arrange a time to meet.
- If you get a letter from MHR and don't understand it, show it to someone you trust who can help you. You can also call your MHR worker and ask them to explain it.
- Take a friend, family member or advocate with you when you go to meet with MHR staff.
- Ask your friend, family member or advocate to take notes, or audiotape or videotape the interview, to make sure you know what was said.
- In all your meetings with MHR you have the right to:
 - ✓ Be treated with respect
 - ✓ Be given clear information
 - ✓ Have things dealt with as quickly as possible
 - ✓ Be told about decisions that affect you
 - ✓ Find out about your right to appeal a decision

Keep a record of who you talk to at the ministry and when, even if it's just on the phone. Write down the basic things they said.

- Ask the MHR worker to explain any changes to your benefits, and keep a record of what they said.
- Ask MHR staff to give you back a copy of any information papers you give them.
- If you don't understand something your MHR worker says, ask them about it right away.
- Remember, you have a right to apply for the benefits and programs you need!
- If you need help getting what you need from MHR, you can contact:
 - ✓ a friend or family member you trust, a local community living association or service provider
 - ✓ BCACL at 604 - 875-1119 or Advocacy Access at 604 - 872-1278
- For more updates and information on the internet about disability benefits, see the following websites:
 - ✓ Ministry of Human Resources website: www.mhr.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/ - government fact sheets on the latest changes
 - ✓ BC Association for Community Living - www.bcacl.org - updates on disability benefits and other issues
 - ✓ BC Coalition for People with Disabilities - www.bccpd.bc.ca/ - updates on issues that concern people with all disabilities
 - ✓ Povnet: www.povnet.org - excellent information on income assistance, disability benefits other advocacy issues.

Leave a Legacy is a grass roots public awareness campaign to increase charitable giving from British Columbians through their estates. Not-for-profit organizations (defined here as charities and non-profit organizations), allied professionals, the media and sponsors are collaborating in this mission.



The Vision is all British Columbians will be aware of their personal capacity to make a significant gift through their estate to a cause that is meaningful to them and they will know where to go for appropriate professional advice.

LEAVE A LEGACY
BRITISH COLUMBIA

The simple act of making a gift to charity through a will makes it possible for everyone to leave a legacy of good works. A charitable gift from an estate is a way to express compassion and provide support for a cause beyond one's lifetime. It is an enduring expression of leadership to create a better community.

Most people who have a will have not included a gift to charity. When asked, however, thirty-four percent of Canadians state they would consider making a charitable bequest if they were asked.

As governments continue to decrease financial support for the not-for-profit sector, the delivery of many services is at risk. Annual donations from individuals fluctuate from year to year, making it difficult for not-for-profits to plan to meet increasing needs.

Consider supporting KDSL. For more information please contact Leigh Edwards at 763-4839.

Travel Club

Effective September 24, 2002, KDSCL is no longer affiliated with the Kelowna Travel Club. The service will be administered by Rory Scott. All correspondence or inquiries should be directed to Rory at: Telephone: 762-0237
Mailing Address: 384 Yates Rd, Kelowna, BC, V1V 1R4.

KDSCL accepts no responsibility for the administration, operations or monitoring of this service.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Rory.

Confused by all the Acronyms

The following is a list of commonly used community living acronyms:

MCFD is the Ministry for Children & Family Development: Responsible for services to people with developmental disabilities.

TSC or TSG is the Transition Steering Group: Responsible for developing the new community living governance model.

DB is Disability Benefits: Financial assistance people with disabilities receive.

KDSCL is the Kelowna & District Society for Community Living: That's us!

KDI is Kelowna Diversified Industries: That's us again!

ICO is Integrated Community Opportunities: That's us again!!

BCACL is the British Columbia Association for Community Living: A provincial advocacy organization for people with disabilities.

BCCPD is the British Columbia Coalition of People with Disabilities: A provincial advocacy organization for people with physical disabilities.

CACL is the Canadian Association for Community Living: A national advocacy organization for people with disabilities.

CSSEA is the Community Social Service Employers Association.

Community Living Dance October 19, 2002

Where: the Performance Center
1379 Ellis Street
Doors Open: 6:30 pm

Live music by "Sundown"

Tickets available from participating agencies: Community Connections, Hildebradt Homes, KDSCL, Premium Productions, Provisions Resources, Sunshine Farms and T.I.E.R.

The Kelowna and District Society for Community Living (KDSCL)

Our Mission Statement is to enhance, empower, and support, both collectively and individually, every challenged person to achieve his or her potential and to access and enjoy the same rights, opportunities, responsibilities and quality of life as an equal member in our community.

WAYS TO HELP: * **Become a member of KDSCL** * **Be informed and involved**
***Volunteer a few hours each week** ***Involve yourself in a Committee** ***Support people to be included in their community** ***Make a tax deductible donations or bequeath** ***Just be a friend and we will all be winners!!**

Services: KDSCL provides opportunities for people to learn employment skills, work (both volunteer and paid), participate in community recreation and leisure activities and live as independently as possible.

Day Service, 555 Fuller Avenue, 250-763-4484

Opportunities for individuals to participate in community based recreation and leisure activities, do volunteer community work and contract work. Activities with an emphasis on maintenance and development of cognitive and social skills.

K.D.I. Wood Shop, 555 Fuller Avenue, 250-762-4915

Opportunities for individuals to work in an industrial wood shop setting. Wood products for sale. We also manage the "Lost & Stolen Bike Program" for the City of Kelowna.

Larry's Cycle & Sports, 535 Lawrence Avenue, 250-762-4915

Retail bikes and accessories for sale. Quality bike repairs. Bike assembly.

Wedding Belles and Baskets, 1881 Spall Road, 250-862-8113

Sales and rentals of all wedding supplies. Silk flower packages. Accessories and rental items. Party supplies. Wedding dresses on consignment.

Integrated Community Opportunities, 1931 Kent Road, 250-763-9499

Placement into real work situations with job coaching until independence is acquired. These placements may be paid or work experience. Also offer follow-up services, a job club and life skill development.

Residential Supports

Rental assistance: The Society administers 15 apartments rent supplements which allow people with limited incomes to live in apartments throughout our community.

Housing: Provide 24 hour support to assist individuals to live interdependently in their own home in the community.

Special Events/ Community Participation

Increase the participation of people with disabilities in community events, while fostering good community relations. Special events are planned on a regular basis.

Advocacy

Ensure the rights of people with disabilities are upheld.

