

Families United Network New Brunswick (FUN-NB)

December 2011

Welcome To Our First Newsletter!

In This Issue:

- Family Support Program
- NBACL Welcome Kits
- Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs)
- Online Learning Modules
- Taking The Journey
- "Welcome To Holland" by Emily Perl Kingsley
- Stay in Touch



Hello! My name is Jennifer McCumber-Parlee and I am the Provincial Family Support Facilitator with the New Brunswick Association for Community Living. We are very excited to launch this newsletter to families across the province! These newsletters will contain information and resources that are important and relevant for families who are raising a son or a daughter with an intellectual disability. This will include upcoming workshops/training, as well as links to resources and other materials.

The newsletters will also have stories, quotes, and links to videos that will hopefully inspire you, make you think, and maybe even make you laugh! We hope that you will find this newsletter very informative and useful. We are open to suggestions for content and resources to be included in up-coming newsletters. We also welcome any feedback that you may have as well.

The newsletters will be sent out on a quarterly basis. The next one will be March 2012.



New Brunswick
Association for
Community Living

Association du
Nouveau-Brunswick pour
l'intégration communautaire

The Family Support Program

With passion and commitment, we strive to hear the voices of families and ensure their voices are heard by others. We understand that families are empowered by information, resources and connections. We provide that support so families can be families first.

We value the family voice as the foundation of the organization. Families support and are supported by NBACL and continue to be a source of guidance in our work. NBACL takes a leadership role in the area of social policy, working with government to promote policies and programs that support people with an intellectual disability to live, learn and work in their communities. We also provide information, resources and training for families, services providers and others.

“We strive to hear the voices of families and ensure their voices are heard by others”

NBACL’s Manager of Family Support oversees all activities related to family networking, leadership and advocacy and is responsible for the management of all family-related projects and initiatives. NBACL’s Family Support Facilitators provide families with resources and information on various community and government supports. The Facilitators can be called to act as an advocate for families and individuals on an as-needed basis.

NBACL supports families with issues across the lifespan, including (but not limited to) the following areas:

- Early Learning and Childcare
- Inclusive Education
- Transition Planning
- Post-Secondary Education
- Employment
- Recreation, Leisure and Volunteerism
- Disability Supports
- Financial and Estate Planning
- Sexuality and Healthy Relationships
- Future Planning
- Supported Living
- Community Inclusion
- Aging Parents



Resource Corner

New to NBACL? Request a Welcome Kit!

NBACL has Family Welcome Kits available at no cost for families. The Kits are available in four categories:

1. Newborn/Early Childhood
2. School-Aged
3. Graduating/Recently Graduated/Young Adult
4. Adult

Family Welcome Kits include information on NBACL, staff and their areas of support, NBACL programs, as well as several of our resource guides. E-mail jmccumber@nbacl.nb.ca to request your kit today!

Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs)

In 2008, the government of Canada established a new tax deferred savings plan for people with disabilities. Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs) will provide opportunities for parents and others to make contributions and for people with disabilities to receive government grants and bonds.

NBACL has a detailed resource booklet for families who are interested in using an RDSP to plan for their child's future security.

Who Is Eligible?

A person can be a "beneficiary" of an RDSP if they are:

- A resident of Canada;
- Under age 60 when the plan is set up; and
- Eligible to receive the federal Disability Tax Credit (DTC)

Who Can Open an RDSP?

If the beneficiary is a minor, a parent or legal guardian can open an RDSP and become the "holder" of the plan. If the beneficiary of the plan is an adult, he or she can open an RDSP and become the holder of the plan. However, if the beneficiary is an adult but not considered 'competent' to enter into a contract, a legal guardian or another person who is legally authorized to act for the beneficiary can open the RDSP and be the plan's holder.

More detailed information can be found on the "Financial and Estate Planning for a Family Member with a Disability" online module on NBACL's website.

NBACL is authorized by the federal government to offer one-on-one support for families and individuals who want to learn more about RDSPs. Please contact FUN-NB for more information or to request assistance.

We also are doing many RDSP sessions around the province that are open to the public. Here are the dates/locations:

January 10 – Rothesay - Sobeys Community Room - 6:30-8:00pm - English Session
January 12 – Dieppe - Coastal Inn Lobby Room - 6:30-8:00pm - French Session
January 16 – Bouctouche - JK Irving Centre - 6:30-8:00pm - French Session
January 18 – Dalhousie - Best Western Salon B - 6:30-8:00pm - English Session
January 23 – Sackville - Civic Centre - 6:30-8:00pm - English Session
January 25 – Oromocto - Sobeys Community Room - 6:30-8:00pm - English Session
January 26 – Grand Falls - Sobeys Community Room - 6:30-8:00pm - French Session
January 30 – St. Quentin - Sobeys Community Room - 6:30-8:00pm - French Session

We also do RDSP sessions for private groups as well. If you have a group who would like to have a presentation done, please contact our Family Support Program staff by e-mailing funnb@nbacl.nb.ca.

Online Learning Modules

Financial and Estate Planning for a Family Member with a Disability

Financial and estate planning offer opportunities to help secure the financial well-being of a loved one with a disability. This is particularly important if your family member with a disability has limited opportunities to earn a good income from employment or has little or no other sources of income.

There are many issues to consider when making financial and estate plans for your family member with a disability. This on-line module provides information on a number of important topics as well as links to other resources that may be useful. Within this site you will find information about:

- The key elements of good financial planning;
- The tax system, including credits, benefits and deductions relevant to people with disabilities and their families;
- Registered Disability Savings Plans
- Estate planning considerations and options for a family member with a disability;
- Wills;
- Establishing a financial trust for a loved one with a disability;
- The impact of provincial social assistance laws and rules on financial and estate planning; and
- Planning for a home for a family member with a disability.

The module also contains a series of family financial and estate planning scenarios that offer some guidance from a qualified financial planner and a lawyer that address the situations presented.

Readers are encouraged to review this information carefully.

Please be advised that this module is not intended to provide financial planning or legal advice to address your specific situation. Consult with a qualified financial planner and legal expert for advice to develop your own financial and estate plans.

This module is available online at the following location:

http://www.nbacl.nb.ca/english/resources/estateplanning_module.html

Online Learning Modules

Inclusive Recreation Learning Module

Social inclusion is about experiencing a sense of belonging that involves having positive social relationships as well as opportunities to be actively engaged in the community. It means that people have choices about what they do based on personal preferences and interests.

Recreation plays an important role in the lives of most people. It provides us with opportunities to be with other people, learn new skills, develop friendships, have fun and do things that will improve our health and well-being.

Recreation offers specific opportunities for social inclusion that may not exist in other walks of life. Brian Abery, from the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota explains why recreation programs have a number of characteristics that make them good places to facilitate the social inclusion of people with disabilities (Abery, "Social Inclusion through Recreation: What's the Connection?", Impact: Feature Issue on Social Inclusion through Recreation for Persons with Disabilities, 2003).

1. *Recreation programs and activities bring together people (children or adults) who share similar interests and preferences. This is one of the main ingredients in the development of friendships.*
2. *Recreation programs and activities are on-going and allow people to meet and interact with others over an extended period of time.*
3. *Participation in recreation programs and activities has the potential to facilitate the development of personal capacities, attitudes and beliefs that support inclusion.*

Creating inclusive recreation programs does require a number of actions that are outlined in this module. Sometimes, there is some cost involved. For the most part, however, money is not the most important factor. Inclusion can and does happen when people have positive attitudes as well as the willingness and knowledge to make it happen.

This module is available online at the following location:

http://www.nbacl.nb.ca/english/resources/recreation_module.html

Taking The Journey

“Taking the Journey: Information and Advocacy for Families Supporting a Child with a Disability”

Raising a child with a disability often requires greater parental involvement to ensure that your child reaches his or her own potential and gets the things he or she may need. Your role as your child’s advocate may require additional effort, skills, and time.



NBACL has created “Taking the Journey,” a comprehensive resource for families who require information and strategies to ensure their child has the best opportunity to live a good life. It recognizes that families will be in different situations that will depend in part on the age of their child and on the circumstances or challenges that may be present from time to time. It also allows families to think and plan ahead on a variety of issues that may be on the horizon. The guide also talks about services systems and your role as an advocate for your child within these systems. Service systems can play a big role in all our lives and are often more involved in the lives of people who have a disability. It will be important to know how these systems work and how you can help them be more effective in helping your child have the best chance at success.

Development of “Taking the Journey” was made possible thanks to the funding from the Cristoforo Foundation, the Charles Johnson Charitable Fund, the Grand Falls Association for Community Living, the Regional Development Corporation, the Government of New Brunswick and the Greater Saint John Community Foundation.

To obtain a preliminary copy of “Taking the Journey,” please check back often to NBACL’s “Upcoming Events” page for a workshop near you. There will be several “Taking the Journey” workshops happening around the province in Spring 2012. Guides will be available in French and English to families across the province when printing is complete.

“Welcome To Holland”

By Emily Perl Kingsley

I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability - to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this...

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip - to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland."



"Holland?!?" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around...and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills...and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy...and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away...because the loss of that dream is a very significant loss. But...if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things...about Holland.

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Our Vision:

Full participation of persons with intellectual disabilities in all aspects of society.

NBACL works to ensure that people with intellectual disabilities, with the support of their families, have the option to choose the supports they need to live meaningful lives and participate in their communities as valued and contributing members.

For more information about anything you have read in this newsletter please visit our website. It contains a lot of information about all aspects of life for a person with an intellectual disability.